

# **Local Plan Committee**

**Town Hall, Colchester  
17 December 2012 at 6.00pm**

**This committee deals with**

the Council's responsibilities relating to the Local Plan.

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**COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL  
LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE  
17 December 2012 at 6:00pm**

**Members**

Chairman : Councillor Bill Frame.  
Deputy Chairman : Councillor Martin Goss.  
Councillors Elizabeth Blundell, Andrew Ellis, John Jowers,  
Kim Naish and Colin Sykes.

**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 interests they may have in the items on the agenda. Councillors should consult Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 for full guidance on the registration and declaration of interests. However Councillors may wish

to note the following:-

- Where a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest, other pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the authority and he/she is present at a meeting of the authority at which the business is considered, the Councillor must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest, whether or not such interest is registered on his/her register of Interests or if he/she has made a pending notification.
- If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting, he/she must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter at the meeting. The Councillor must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Where a Councillor has another pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting and where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgment of the public interest, the Councillor must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held unless he/she has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.
- Failure to comply with the arrangements regarding disclosable pecuniary interests without reasonable excuse is a criminal offence, with a penalty of up to £5,000 and disqualification from office for up to 5 years.

## **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 - 4**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2012.

## **7. Tiptree Jam Factory Plan Development Plan Document**

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See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

**8. Colchester Local List 39 - 42**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

**9. Better Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document 43 - 105**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

**10. Annual Monitoring Report 106 - 222**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

**11. Statement of Community Involvement 223 - 259**

See report by the Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration.

**12. 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 PLAN COMMITTEE

### 8 OCTOBER 2012

*Present :-* Councillor Bill Frame (Chairman)  
Councillor Colin Sykes (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors Elizabeth Blundell, Andrew Ellis,  
Martin Goss, John Jowers and Kim Naish

#### 12. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 August 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### 13. Street Services Delivery Strategy // Supplementary Planning Document

**Councillor Jowers (in respect of being a member of Essex County Council with a Cabinet responsibility for Communities and Planning) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).**

The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report on a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Street Services Delivery Strategy together with a draft SPD and a document giving further guidance to developers in respect of the cost of provision, maintenance and siting for various waste and recycling containers. Also provided was the Statement of Consultation. The Committee was invited to agree to adopt the Supplementary Planning Document document.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, Matthew Young, Head of Street Services, and Cheryl Pashley, Strategy and Performance Officer, attended to assist the Committee with its deliberations. The draft document had originally been published for consultation immediately prior to the National Planning Policy Framework being published. It had therefore been necessary to redraft the document to take account of advice in the NPPF in respect of not seeking standard charges in levels of detail down to waste sacks. As a consequence the appendices were now regarded as further guidance and would be identified as such on the website. The redrafted document should more appropriately address design issues such as waste vehicles not being able to reach properties.

Members of the Committee were supportive of the document but expressed a number of concerns such as:- the extent of CCTV provision; whether traffic regulation orders needed to be put in at an early stage; the provision of recycling sacks and containers; and how the cost of maintenance of recycling, litter and dog bins had been calculated. Members considered that an explanation should be provided where sums of money were referred to in the document. There were concerns about developers being required to provide CCTV and it was suggested that CCTV should only be installed where there was an identified need, for example in mixed developments, near shops and businesses. In respect of recycling sacks and containers there was a view that

developers should not be required to provide recycling containers which were normally provided by the borough council, but developers could provide the white garden waste sacks for which householders were required to pay. There was a view that estates should be self-sufficient in waste collection and removal; and that if too much was asked of developers there was a danger that affordable housing contributions could be negated. It was considered reasonable to ask the developer to pay for bins for litter and dog waste. Members queried what would happen if a development was moth-balled or in the event of the development not being adopted after five years.

The Spatial Policy Manager responded that there were three statutory tests, one of which was to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It was intended that the approach should be to look at the requirements of individual developments. The appendices were provided as a guide and did not form part of the Supplementary Planning Document.

The Head of Street Services explained that the intention was to avoid having to use non-standard refuse vehicles where estate roads had not been designed to accommodate standard refuse and road cleaning vehicles. He explained that a development comprising one thousand households would require a separate round with its own vehicles and staff. The provision of bins was only part of the cost; there were also ongoing maintenance/emptying costs. He supported the provision of a separate document to provide detailed guidance.

The Strategy and Performance Officer responded to members' queries. In particular she explained that the cost for a bin was based on an annual cost of £250 and multiplied for a 5-year period. CCTV would only be relevant where there was an identified need and would not normally be provided on residential developments. The section on Traffic Regulation Orders had been submitted to Essex County Council for consultation and their response was to request that the wording be amended to the effect that the need for Traffic Regulation Orders should be designed out as far as possible.

*RESOLVED* that –

- (a) The Street Services Delivery Strategy Supplementary Planning Document be approved and adopted.
- (b) The Spatial Policy Manager be authorised to make minor revisions to the document prior to publication in order to provide clarity where necessary. The final version to be sent electronically to the members of the Committee.

#### **14. Better Town Centre Plan // Supplementary Planning Document**

**Councillor Jowers (in respect of being a member of Essex County Council with a Cabinet responsibility for Communities and Planning) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).**



The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report on a draft Supplementary Planning Document in respect of the Better Town Centre Plan together with a Statement of Consultation.

Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager, attended to assist the Committee with its deliberations. She explained that this was an interim document which had, through its development, involved a significant degree of inter-departmental working through the Better Town Centre Steering Group. It also reflected stakeholder and public views. It was intended to publish a delivery plan alongside the SPD which would show progress on detailed proposals and which could be regularly reviewed by the Local Plan Committee. The Committee was requested to make comments on the document which would be taken into account in formulating the final draft document. It was intended to submit the final document to a future meeting of the Committee for approval and adoption.

Members of the Committee were in support of the document, and there was particular support for the Lanes-style project and for encouraging better residential use in the town centre. The Planning Policy Manager referred to the consultation having kick-started various conversations including the reasons why people were not using premises above the retail units. She also highlighted the need to identify landowners of properties located on the Roman walls because the tenant-occupiers were not in a position of influence. In response to members' queries regarding organisations which had been consulted as listed in Appendix 1, it was explained that the list of Statutory Consultees was set out in the Regulations; some consultees had changed. The list of Other Stakeholders had been compiled from previous consultations and was reviewed from time to time.

*RESOLVED* (UNANIMOUSLY) that the outcome of the public consultation exercise on the Better Town Centre Plan Supplementary Planning Document be noted and the Committee's comments be taken into account in finalising the document for approval at a future meeting.

## 15. Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area

**Councillors Jowers (in respect of being a member of Essex County Council with a Cabinet responsibility for Communities and Planning and a Rural Commissioner) and Naish (in respect of his association with the Environment Agency) each declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).**

The Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration submitted a report inviting the Committee to approve the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area in order to progress the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area had been advertised to enable those who lived, worked or carried on a business in the application area to make representations on the area.

Karen Syrett, Spatial Policy Manager, attended to assist the Committee with its

deliberations. She noted that the period of consultation ended on 2 October 2012 that no representations had been received to the consultation.

*RESOLVED* (UNANIMOUSLY) that the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area be approved for the purpose of developing a Neighbourhood Plan.



## Local Plan Committee

Item  
**7**

17 December 2012

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration	Author	Laura Chase 01206 282473
Title	Tiptree Jam Factory Plan Development Plan Document		
Wards affected	All		

**The Local Plan Committee is asked to recommend to Council the adoption of the Tiptree Jam Factory Development Plan Document (DPD).**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To recommend to Full Council that it adopts the Tiptree Jam Factory DPD at its next meeting as recommended by the Inspector in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
- 1.2 The Spatial Policy Manager be authorised to deal with all the necessary adoption documentation and other consequential matters in accordance with the appropriate Regulations.

### 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 The report of the Planning Inspector, following the Independent Examination in September, has been received by the Council. This report finds that the Tiptree Jam Factory Development Plan Document satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.2 Planning applications are expected for the site and it is considered important for the Council to have a comprehensive and effective local policy framework in place.

### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative option is to not to adopt the document. This is not advisable given the expectation that planning applications will be submitted.

### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 In 2011 Wilkin and Sons asked the Council to review land allocations in Tiptree, in particular land incorporating and adjacent their existing factory. They were seeking additional housing outside the Tiptree settlement boundary being justified as enabling development to fund construction of new factory accommodation within the village. The special circumstances of the case include that Wilkin and Sons is a major employer in Tiptree, with about 80% of staff living in the Tiptree area. The labour force has grown by 35% in the last five years and is expected to increase to 500 by 2030. Parts of the existing factory are over 100 years old and it has become increasingly challenging to make jam efficiently and to maintain the buildings to meet ever-more demanding food standards.

- 4.2 The Council considered that this issue could be revisited in the context of the Government's support for sustainable economic growth along with the localism agenda. The Council recognised that Wilkin and Sons plays a key role in providing local jobs in Tiptree and in enhancing the overall image of the Borough as the home of an internationally recognised brand. The Localism Act gives local communities more power to determine the amount of local development in their area. Government policy also seeks to promote economic development through the planning system as set out in the Plan for Growth and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3 Following various stages of public consultation the Tiptree plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. An Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State, conducted an Examination in September to consider the 'soundness' of the document. The Inspector has subsequently produced a report with recommendations that with modifications the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.4 The Inspector concludes that the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of this part of the borough to secure in the medium term a new jam factory, providing a number of modifications are made to it. A full copy of the Inspector's report is set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.5 The Inspector has proposed that a number of modifications are made which were all suggested by the Council. These can be summarised as follows:
- inclusion of the national model policy on the presumption in favour of sustainable development;
  - the commitment to a new factory before the residential development in policy TJF 1 to be made more specific and thus effective;
  - open space requirements to be met in full in order to alleviate visitor pressure on Abberton Reservoir (a Natura 2000 site);
  - implementation clarification in terms of the new factory's timing and clearer infrastructure requirements in Table 1 and policy TJF 1;
  - an effective indication that design and landscaping separation features will be required between all the new development and Tolleshunt Knights;
  - clearer, effective text about sustainable construction requirements;
  - clearer text about the means of implementation and monitoring; and
  - the correct plan area to be shown on the Appendix A map in the Plan, and the allotment area to be shown and the settlement boundary redrawn to exclude open space on the Policies Map.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Tiptree Jam Factory DPD.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 The Local Plan, which will incorporate the Tiptree DPD, helps the Council deliver its priorities for regenerating the borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure; it will improve opportunities for a local business to thrive; promote sustainability, support tourism, and enables local communities to help themselves.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Full consultation has taken place at various stages in the preparation of the DPD. Those who made representations were also able to attend and take part in the examination hearing sessions which were held in September.

## **8.0 Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 The regulations require the Council to publish details of the Inspectors recommendations and the reasons given. As soon as possible after adoption the Council must make available the Tiptree Plan, the sustainability appraisal and adoption statement. This could generate publicity for the Council, the majority of which should be positive.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 None

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

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view by clicking on this link:- <http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/4962/Strategic-Policy-and-Regeneration> or go to the Colchester Borough Council website [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) and follow the pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Strategic Policy and Regeneration and select Local Development Framework from the Strategic Planning and Research section.

- 10.2 There are no particular Human Rights implications.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 None.

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

- 12.1 None

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 Establishing a planning policy framework for the Factory site should minimise the risk of inappropriate development.



The Planning  
Inspectorate

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# Report to Colchester Borough Council

by **David Vickery DipT&CP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Date: 4th December 2012

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PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 (AS AMENDED)

SECTION 20

## **REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE TIPTREE JAM FACTORY PLAN**

Document submitted for examination on 28 May 2012

Examination hearings held on 12 and 26 September 2012

File Ref: PINS/A1530/429/6

## Abbreviations Used in this Report

AA	Appropriate Assessment
CS	Core Strategy
DPD	Development Plan Document
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LP	Local Plan
MM	Main Modification
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
RS	Regional Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy

### Non-Technical Summary

The Council has specifically requested that I recommend any modifications necessary to enable them to adopt the Plan. This report concludes that the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of this part of the Borough to secure in the medium term a new Jam Factory, providing a number of modifications are made to it. All of the modifications were proposed by the Council, and I have recommended their inclusion after full consideration of the representations from other parties.

The modifications can be summarised as follows:

- inclusion of the national model policy on the presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- the commitment to a new factory before the residential development in policy TJF 1 to be made more specific and thus effective;
- open space requirements to be met in full in order to alleviate visitor pressure on Abberton Reservoir (a Natura 2000 site);
- implementation clarification in terms of the new factory's timing and clearer infrastructure requirements in Table 1 and policy TJF 1;
- an effective indication that design and landscaping separation features will be required between all the new development and Tolleshunt Knights;
- clearer, effective text about sustainable construction requirements;
- clearer text about the means of implementation and monitoring; and
- the correct plan area to be shown on the Appendix A map in the Plan, and the allotment area to be shown and the settlement boundary redrawn to exclude open space on the Policies Map.

## Introduction

1. This report contains my assessment of the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It considers first whether the Plan's preparation has complied with the duty to co-operate, in recognition that there is no scope to remedy any failure in this regard. It then considers whether the Plan is sound and whether it is compliant with the legal requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 182) makes clear that to be sound a Local Plan should be positively prepared; justified; effective and consistent with national policy.
2. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the Council has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. The basis for my examination is the submitted draft plan (May 2012) which is not the same as the document published for consultation in March 2012. I deal with the differences later in the report.
3. My report deals with the main modifications that are needed to make the Plan sound and legally compliant and they are identified in bold in the report (**MM**). In accordance with section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act the Council requested that I should make any modifications needed to rectify matters that make the Plan unsound and not legally compliant and thus incapable of being adopted. These main modifications are set out in the Appendix.
4. The main modifications that go to soundness have been subject to public consultation and, where necessary, Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and I have taken the consultation responses into account in writing this report. I consider that none of the responses made it necessary for me to re-open the hearings.

## Assessment of the Duty to Co-operate

5. Section s20(5)(c) of the 2004 Act requires that I consider whether the Council complied with the Duty imposed on them by section 33A of the 2004 Act in relation to the Plan's preparation. A failure to do so would be fatal to the Plan as it would not be capable of correction.
6. The Duty requires local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in local plan preparation on strategic matters, and to consider whether joint agreements or plans are necessary. Authorities are also required to have regard to the activities of other bodies so far as they are related to local plan making.
7. The purpose of the Plan is to meet a particular local need to enable the provision of a new jam factory in Tiptree, and so it has a very restricted local impact. Nevertheless, the Council submitted a record of co-operation with neighbouring local authorities and other bodies to deal with cross-boundary issues arising from the Plan, such as traffic generation and possible settlement coalescence concerns. I am satisfied from the evidence presented that the Council has clearly demonstrated that the Plan has been prepared in full compliance with the Duty to Co-operate.



## Assessment of Soundness

### Preamble

8. Shortly prior to the submission of the Plan, the Government published in March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which combined previous national planning policies (e.g. in various Planning Policy Statements) into a shorter, comprehensive document. In order to clearly reflect and be consistent with the NPPF's policy of a presumption in favour of sustainable development, main modification **MM1** is necessary for soundness – it adds the national model policy to the Plan as policy TJJ 2, with explanatory text.
9. After publication of the Plan in March 2012, the Council found that the Appendix A map in the Plan incorrectly added two parcels of land which it had not intended to be part of the Plan area. These were the area of Birch Wood to the north-east of Area C, and a small area of land outside the existing factory area on the north-west corner of Area A. **MM2** is therefore recommended to remove both areas of land from the Appendix A map to show the plan area as intended and so make the Plan sound by making it effective in its delivery.

### Main Issues

10. Taking account of all the representations, written evidence and the discussions that took place at the Examination hearings I have identified two main issues upon which the soundness of the Plan depends.

#### **Issue 1 – Whether the harm caused by the potential loss of the Tiptree jam factory and the financial need for the proposed housing to provide for a new jam factory has a sound evidential basis**

11. The Plan proposes additional housing development over and above that allocated in the Core Strategy solely in order to enable Wilkin and Sons Ltd to fund a new, modern, purpose-built factory on land already allocated for employment purposes in the Council's Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). As the Plan states, the Wilkin family have farmed in the area for nearly 300 years and have been producing Tiptree preserves since 1885. The Council is keen to ensure the future economic prosperity of this local employer, and to retain the factory in Tiptree in order to maintain and, if possible, to increase local employment.
12. Parts of the factory are over 100 years old, and I accept that it is becoming increasingly difficult to make jam efficiently and also to comply with the increasingly more demanding food hygiene standards. I also accept that the site runs at a high capacity, as is evidenced by the shift working and the recent decision to store products off-site. Wilkin and Sons Ltd are clearly concerned local employers, as shown by its employee share and trust schemes, its policy of providing housing for its employees, and its active involvement in, and financial contributions towards, Tiptree's community life.
13. The factory is the largest private sector employer in Tiptree and one of the largest in the Borough – direct jobs in 2012 totalled 435, of which 307 were full-time. This clearly has a direct and indirect beneficial impact on the local and Borough-wide economies. In Tiptree itself the proposed new factory is

planned to increase full-time equivalent jobs from 267 in 2012 to 365 in 2021, and to 500 in 2030. If the factory was not constructed in Tiptree then the planned job increase might not take place or it might take place elsewhere. Whether the existing jobs would be lost is even more uncertain, but the lack of a modern factory in Tiptree would, at the very least, place a question mark over their retention as they would be dependant on the company's alternative plans for its business and where any new facilities might be located.

14. 51% of employees currently live within 2 miles of the factory. Thus, the retention of the factory in Tiptree would be a sustainable option due to the high number of local people able to walk or cycle to work. Moving the factory elsewhere would result in more journeys using the private motor car, even using the best location options canvassed during the Examination.
15. I am satisfied that not constructing a new factory would place future jobs, and possibly existing jobs, at substantial risk. The harm caused could be very significant, given not only the threat to jobs but also bearing in mind the company's close and intimate links with the local community, its role as a local social housing provider (73 homes), and the fact that it is a world famous food product which attracts tourists to the site with its associated Tea Rooms and Museum (120,000 visitors per annum). Moreover, it is the most sustainable development option in transport terms.
16. Thus, I find that the Council's intention in this Plan to assist Wilkin and Sons Ltd in the construction of a new factory is founded on a sound evidential analysis of the potential substantial harm that would otherwise be caused to the community and the Borough. It accords with the high priority that the Government gives to the promotion of sustainable economic growth and jobs as set out in the NPPF and in its 2011 "Planning for Growth" statement.
17. The questions that then arise are, firstly, whether the level of assistance is too little or too much and, secondly, how any residential development that might help pay for a new factory is tied (as a 'fail-safe') to its construction.
18. During the Examination the Council and Wilkin and Sons Ltd provided financial information to help answer the first question. This included an updated financial appraisal detailing costs and income, an independent report assessing the company's borrowing ability, a cashflow forecast covering the period of the proposed development from October 2013 to March 2017, and a copy of the company's published annual report and accounts for 2011. Much of this information has been prepared by the company's consultants, including their architects and quantity surveyors. However, the Council has also independently assessed the costs and projected income both through its own resources and by the use of outside consultant chartered surveyors.
19. In assessing the financial data I have had regard to the advice contained in *Viability Testing Local Plans* published in June 2012 by the Local Housing Delivery Group, which is a cross-industry group involving a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in home building in England, and which was carried out at the Government's request. I consider it to be directly relevant to the financial aspects of the Plan's proposals, and so I give its advice significant weight. The document was made part of the evidence base for the Examination so that all participants were aware of it.

20. I agree with the Council that the costs of implementing the proposed factory and the new residential development are reasonable and sufficiently detailed for this stage of the proposals' assessment. They have been accepted by the Council after independent assessment by its consultants. Given that the proposals are to be constructed within five years, I consider the detail of the costs complies with the advice in *Viability Testing Local Plans*.
21. I note that the proposed residential development would have a reduced level of affordable housing from that set as a target in the adopted Core Strategy policy H4 – 36 units overall rather than the 35% (88 units) set as the target. However, the policy allows for such flexibility, and the Council said that it had (as advised in the policy and its explanatory text) balanced the affordable housing requirement against other requirements, particularly the community's need for sustainable employment and the high development costs of delivering housing on the existing brownfield factory site. I do not disagree.
22. The income is based on four elements – a written offer by a developer made in Spring of 2012 for the Area C residential land (also extrapolated to the existing factory site's residential development); a loan to be taken out by Wilkin and Sons Ltd; income from the company's cash flow; and the sale of some of the company's assets (surplus land and buildings). On the last two income streams, I am satisfied that the evidence on their assumptions were realistic and reasonable. On the loan, I was provided with an initial indication from the company's bank, together with an analysis from an independent accountant who specialises in corporate finance, that a loan of the amount required would be realistic, with significant headroom for an increase. Although this was challenged at the Examination, I am satisfied that there is a reasonable prospect of the loan being made for the amount proposed.
23. This leaves the value of the residential land. The developer's offer, although confidential and not revealed in detail to the Examination, had been fully seen and assessed by the Council's independent chartered surveyors. I was told that it was a reasonable one for the current market and that, indeed, a higher value might be achieved if the land was fully marketed. It was made without conditions and assumed that the Area C land had planning permission, was fully serviced, and that the additional costs of the various requirements in the Plan were not included. Therefore all these costs had been included in the submitted financial viability and cashflow papers.
24. *Viability Testing Local Plans* advises in Appendix B that "*the impact of cashflow assumptions on viability assessments is an important consideration*", and one has been prepared here. Both the Council's cashflow analysis and the other financial viability papers were criticised for not being sufficiently 'stress tested' to apply known uncertainty factors. I accept that this has not been done in detail. However, the figures are prudent; contain robust assumptions with reasonable 'headroom' for increased costs; contain a reasonable 5% contingency; and apply over only a relatively short time period which increases confidence in their reliability because uncertainties are thus reduced. Moreover, policy TJF 1 contains a 'fail-safe' to prevent the residential development taking place without there being a commitment to the construction of the new factory (discussed below).
25. Overall, I am satisfied that the financial viability evidence demonstrates in

reasonable detail for this stage of the development process that additional finance of roughly the amount stated is required to enable the construction of the new factory and that, with the finance from all the sources set out above, the developments overall would be viable and deliverable. The proposals have met the advice set out in *Viability Testing Local Plans*.

26. On the second question, policy TJF 1 contains a 'fail-safe' to prevent the residential development taking place without a "commitment" to the new factory. The Council said that this "commitment" would be based upon the methods used for a similar successful scheme for Flakt Woods where a s106 obligation required that the residential development was not implemented until a contract to construct the new factory had been entered into and a material operation had been carried out in its construction. Unfortunately, the policy is not as clear as the Council's evidence and so it is not effective. To make it sound the **MM3** modification (as suggested by the Council) is recommended to state this "commitment" in the Flakt Wood terms.
27. Various suggestions were made about the Council's MM3 modification wording, and I have accepted one to make it clear that the operational start relates to the factory. Other suggestions made would water down the Plan's intention that there would be no residential development of the land to the north of the existing factory without, in effect, a new factory. And it has to be the new factory that is achieved by an operational start, not its ancillary elements such as the roundabout, access or sewerage works. However, I have added words to make it clear that this intention refers to the development of the land and not to its allocation.
28. It became clear during discussion on the financial aspects of the proposal that the new factory could not be provided in 2014 as required by the Plan. So in order to reflect that evidence and to be effective, and thus sound, point 1 of paragraph 6.2 has to be modified to say only that there will be a significant start on the new factory by 2014 (**MM4**).
29. Subject to the main modifications above, I consider that the Plan is based on a sound evidential basis which takes account of the financial issues, the viability of providing a new jam factory, and the potential harm that would otherwise result to the local community if a new jam factory were not to be constructed. I consider that the evidence justifies the principle of the Plan's development proposals. I turn next to their detail.

**Issue 2 – Whether Plan's proposals for employment and housing are positively prepared, justified by the evidence, consistent with national policy, and effective**

30. The Plan does not have as an objective or requirement that the proposed developments should meet reasonable levels of sustainable construction or renewable energy concerns under the Code or BREEAM, taking account of the relevant Core Strategy policy and the Council's SPD on the subject. This deficiency makes the Plan unsound as it would not be effective or consistent with national policy. The Council's suggested modifications at **MM5** would remove that unsoundness.
31. Policy TJF 1 allocates a site for a new sewerage works, but it is actually the

provision of the necessary infrastructure for the new development. In order to be clear, effective and thus sound I recommend modification **MM6** to clarify that this is just the provision of an associated infrastructure provision.

32. Table 1 sets out various infrastructure requirements which were refined during the course of the Examination. The nearby primary school, St Luke's, is currently full in three out of the seven year groups and is using three temporary classrooms. However, the Council said that there would be capacity at other primary schools in Tiptree for the proposed housing (e.g. at Tiptree Heath) and so overall capacity was not an issue. Therefore, the question of financial contributions towards primary education would be dependant on a future assessment of capacity and accommodation requirements. Table 1 does not say this and so it is ineffective, but the unsoundness can be removed by inserting a statement to this effect (**MM7**).
33. Open space infrastructure is mentioned in Table 1, but it does not indicate that this will also include allotments (which are a separate designation on the Policy Map), a children's play area, and associated car parking. This makes the Plan unsound as it is not effective in detailing all the facilities associated with the open space provision, but the **MM8** modification will remedy this.
34. The use of the existing Factory Hall on the factory site for the local community is included in the viability assessments but is not mentioned in the Plan. The evidence is that this would be used to supplement the existing community centre, which cannot cope with some community events and facilities, particularly with regard to a youth club. Modification **MM9** inserts this necessary infrastructure requirement into Table 1 of the Plan and so makes it effective and sound.
35. Policy TJF 1 says that design and landscaping features will be required to maintain the separation between Tolleshunt Knights and the factory site. But the Council explained that this was meant to also apply to the new housing on Area C. As the Plan does not say this, it is ineffective and thus unsound. The Council's suggested modification **MM10** makes the plan sound by applying this requirement to all new development in the policy. I agree with the Council that the proposals (particularly the new housing on Area C) would not adversely affect the perception of there being an adequate separation of open land between Tolleshunt Knights and Tiptree.
36. The Highway Authority assessed the likely traffic generation from both the proposed housing and the new factory based on a number of sources of information including from Wilkin and Sons Ltd consultant's Transport Assessment, the Council, and a recent traffic survey by Feering Parish Council on the A12 feeder roads in its area. The Highway Authority considered that its statement of October 2012 provided a full picture of the traffic implications of the Plan's proposals, and I agree.
37. I accept the Highway Authority's conclusions that the proposals would be unlikely to result in an increase in traffic flows above its 10% guidance limit, except on the localised road network around Factory Hill, Station Road, and Church Road (especially at their junction – see below). Above this 10% guidance limit a closer examination of the necessity for road improvements or other traffic measures would be necessary. Therefore, I agree that the

proposed improvement to Station Road at its junction with Church Road and Factory Hill, as set out in Table 1 of the Plan, is necessary in order to mitigate the impact of any additional queuing which may occur. This would also ensure that this part of the road network would continue to operate within its link capacities. I agree with the Highway Authority that the assessment does not justify any other road improvements, such as to the A12 feeder roads.

#### *Other considerations within Issue 2*

38. The Council's consultants have carried out a series of ecological surveys of Birch Wood and are of the view that a management plan would satisfactorily mitigate any harm caused by the Plan's proposals. There was no other contrary evidence, despite some doubts expressed about the reliability of the surveys. I am satisfied that the exact details of any management plan can be resolved as part of the relevant planning application, and that it should be implemented as stated in Table 1.
39. The monitoring of the Plan and its implementation are unclear and so the Plan is unsound in this respect. The Council said that the Plan would be implemented by means of planning applications, and that it would be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report – and so modification **MM11** says this and thereby removes the unsoundness.
40. I conclude on this issue that, with the above modifications, the Plan is sound in that its proposals for employment and housing are positively prepared, justified by the evidence, consistent with national policy, and effective.

### **Assessment of Legal Compliance**

41. My examination of the compliance of the Plan with the legal requirements is summarised in the table below. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) did not comply with legal requirements because it did not adequately give the reasons for rejecting any reasonable alternatives. The Council said that it had previously considered two alternative areas of land owned by Wilkin and Sons besides that selected in the Plan, but had rejected them for a number of reasons (all of which I consider to be valid). The Council remedied this failure by republishing the SA with the alternative sites included and adding its reasons for rejecting them.
42. I agree with the Council that other areas of land suggested during the Examination are not reasonable alternatives and so do not need to be included in the SA. In particular, the "Area D" land promoted at the Examination (either on its own or in partial combination with other land) is not a reasonable alternative as it is clearly separated from the settlement boundary, would not be a logical extension of it, and would result in an isolated protrusion of built development into the countryside.
43. As I set out below, the SA concluded that the effect of potential visitors on the nearest Natura 2000 site at Abberton Reservoir would be unlikely to be significant. However, the Council said that on a precautionary basis increased levels of open space should be provided on the Area C land. However, policy TJF 1 does not actually say this and so the policy would be ineffective, not consistent with national policies, and thus unsound. The Council's suggestion in **MM12** of additional wording to clearly state that the open space

requirement must be met in full (with the reason for it) are therefore needed to make the Plan sound.

44. The Core Strategy sets out the minimum housing need figures for the District, which have been implemented in the Council's Site Allocations DPD. These can be exceeded provided the justification is sound and the infrastructure is provided. I have concluded above that the Plan meets these criteria.
45. The Site Allocations DPD allocates two parcels of land north and south of Grange Road, Tiptree for residential development and open space, upon which depends a community training and sports facility by Colchester United Football Club. The Council said that both this allocation and the Plan's proposals could be developed concurrently. It justified this with evidence showing that the probable delivery rate from both sites (estimated at around 85 dwellings per year for the period 2014-19) would be within an acceptable level of demand for the housing market area (and Tiptree in particular) and not out of proportion compared to the last ten years of housing delivery. I have no reason to disagree with this evidence.

<b>LEGAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The Plan is identified within the approved LDS of January 2011 (amended November 2011) which sets out an expected adoption date of July 2012. The Plan's content is compliant with the LDS, although its adoption timing has slipped.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and relevant regulations	The SCI was adopted in June 2011 and consultation has been compliant with the requirements therein, including the consultation on the post-submission proposed 'Main Modification' changes (MM).
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	SA has been carried out and is adequate (see above). The SA included a screening opinion under the Habitats Regulations which concluded that the effect on the nearest Natura 2000 site at Abberton Reservoir would be unlikely to be significant. Thus a Habitats Regulation assessment is not necessary.
National Policy	The Plan complies with national policy except where indicated, and modifications are recommended.
Regional Strategy (RS)	The Plan is in general conformity with the RS.
Adopted Development Plan	The Plan is consistent with the adopted Development Plan, particularly the Core Strategy the Site Allocations DPD.
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	Satisfactory regard has been paid to the SCS.
2004 Act (as amended) and 2012 Regulations.	The Plan complies with the Act and the Regulations.

## **Overall Conclusion and Recommendation**

- 46. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in relation to soundness and legal compliance for the reasons set out above which mean that I recommend non-adoption of it as submitted, in accordance with**

**Section 20(7A) of the Act. These deficiencies have been explored in the Main Issues and Legal Compliance sections set out above.**

**47. The Council has requested that I recommend main modifications to make the Plan sound and legally compliant and capable of adoption. I conclude that with the recommended main modifications set out in the Appendix the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.**

*David Vickery*

Inspector

This report is accompanied by the Appendix containing the Main Modifications



## Appendix – Main Modifications

The modifications below are expressed either in the conventional form of ~~strikethrough~~ for deletions and underlining for additions of text, or by specifying the modification in words in *italics*.

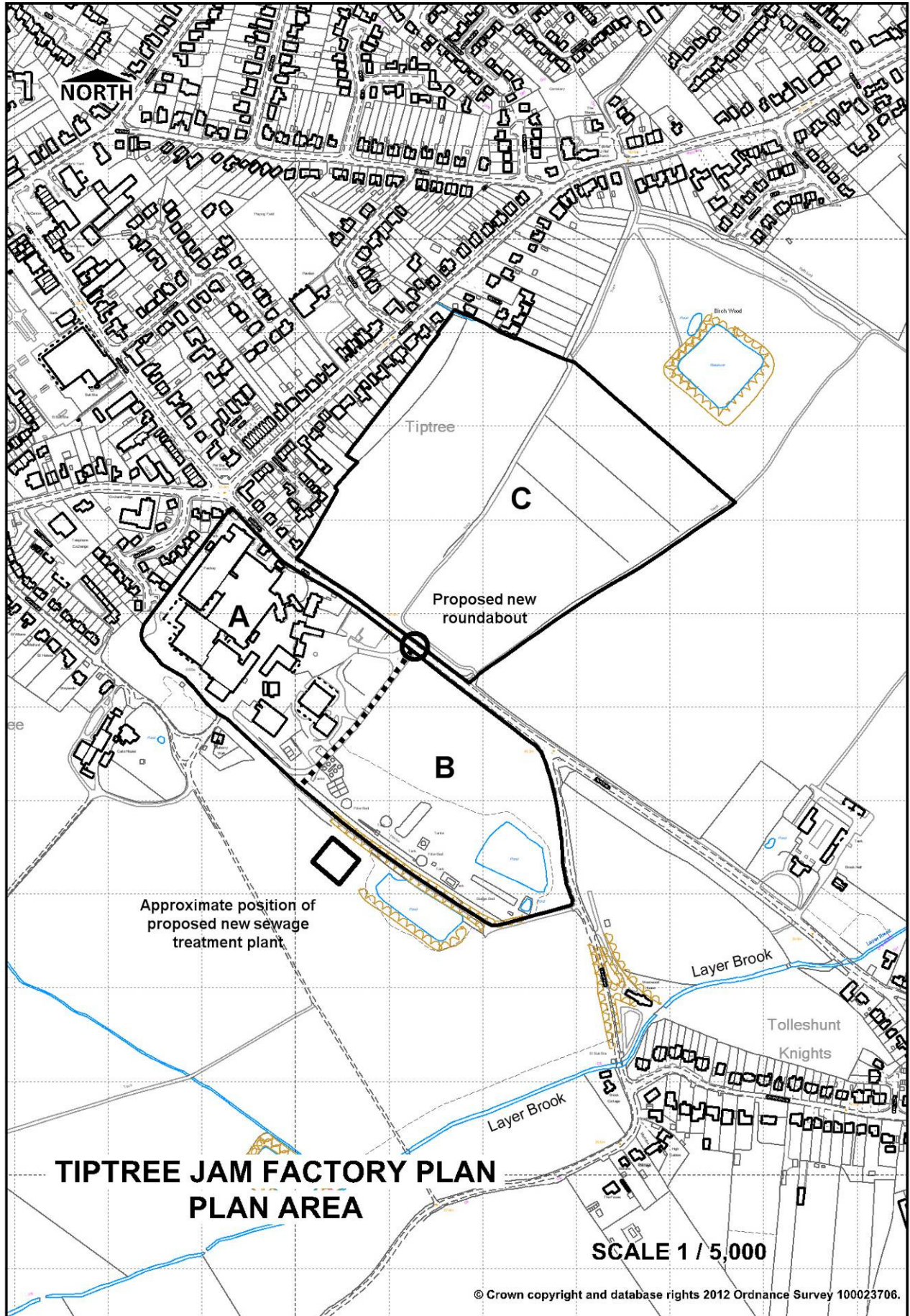
The page numbers and paragraph numbering below refer to the submission Plan, and do not take account of the deletion or addition of text. They do not include any minor changes (“additional modifications”) that might be proposed by the Council on adoption.

Mod	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Main Modification
MM4	5	6.1	1. To identify sites for residential development which enable the <del>provision of</del> <u>commencement of a significant start on a new Jam Factory in Tiptree in by</u> 2014
MM5	6	6.2	<i>Insert at end:</i> <u>10. To promote the highest practicable standard of resource and energy efficiency in new developments</u> <u>11. To provide clear guidance for developers about adapting to or mitigating the harmful impacts of climate change</u>
MM5	7	7.8	<i>Insert after paragraph 7.8:</i> <u>7.9 Proposals for development within the plan area should be built to the highest possible standards of sustainable design and construction and should be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy ER1 relating to energy, resources, waste, water and recycling and with paragraphs 95, 96 and 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposals should also take into account the guidance set out in the Colchester Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document which will be a material consideration in making decisions on planning applications within the plan area.</u>  <u>7.10 New development in the plan area should:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Be built to a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 and BREEAM very good,</u></li> <li>• <u>Minimise energy use in building design and construction to minimize climate change,</u></li> <li>• <u>Conserve water,</u></li> <li>• <u>Avoid waste,</u></li> <li>• <u>Protect and enhance biodiversity,</u></li> <li>• <u>Minimise flood risk.</u></li> </ul> <u>7.11 Planning applications should include a statement on the potential implications of the development on sustainable design and construction. The statement should address demolition, construction and long term management.</u>  <u>7.12 An assessment of energy demand and carbon dioxide emissions of proposed major development will be required to</u>

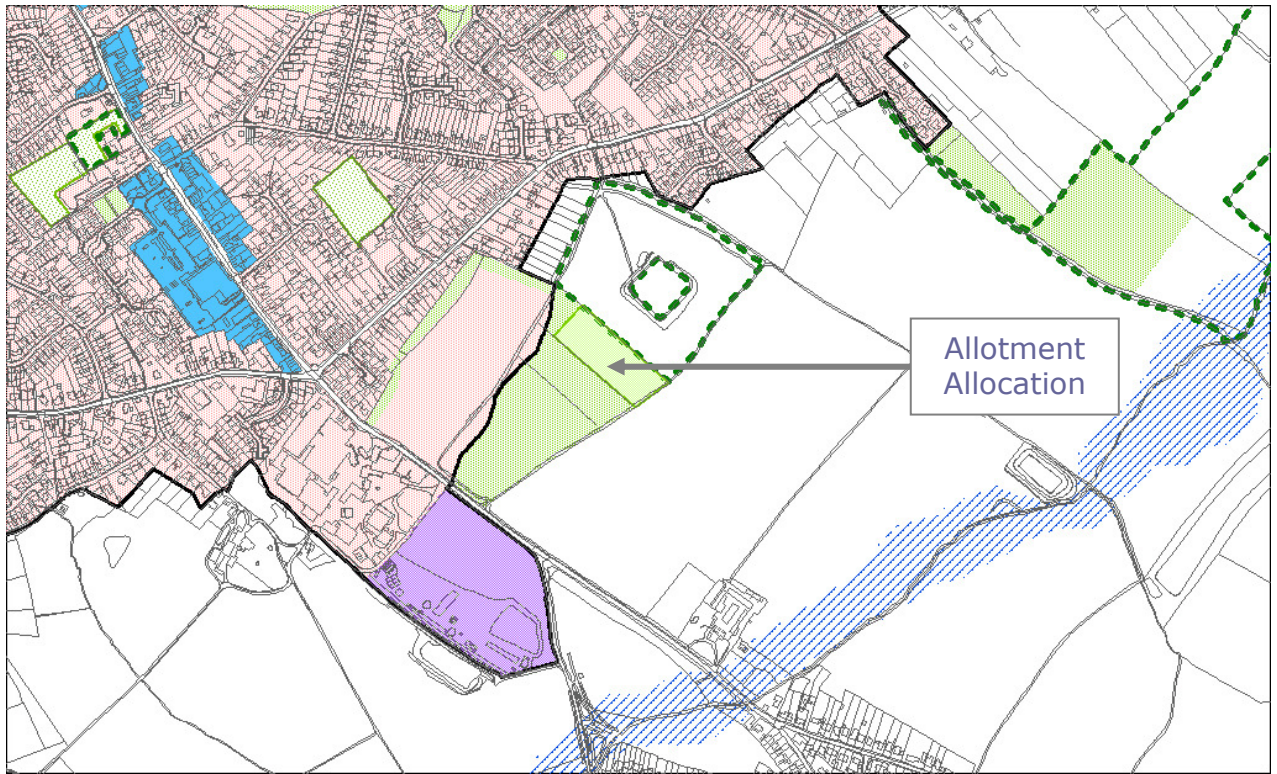
Mod	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Main Modification
			<u>explain the steps taken to reduce the energy needs of the development, to supply energy efficiently and make use of renewable energy. The feasibility of a combined Heat and Power system should be investigated.</u>
MM7	10	Table 1	<i>Under 'Primary School Improvements' in the 'Further Considerations' column insert:</i> <u>Contingent on demonstration of capacity and/or accommodation requirements</u>
MM8	10	Table 1	<i>In the 'Infrastructure' column:</i> Provision of open space <u>including children's play areas, allotments and ancillary car parking</u>
MM9	10	Table 1	<i>Add new row at the bottom of Table 1:</i> <i>Infrastructure column:</i> <u>Provision free of charge of Factory Hall for use as a Youth Club</u> <i>Provider column:</i> <u>Developer</u> <i>Timing column:</i> <u>Prior to residential development on the former factory site</u>
MM11	11	12.6	<i>Insert after paragraph 12.6:</i> <u>12.7 The Plan provides a framework within which planning applications for development within the plan area can be considered. It will be for Wilkin and Sons to bring forward planning applications to set out the details of the proposals and subsequently to implement the development. The Council will monitor the progress of the development through its normal processes and will report this in its Annual Monitoring Report.</u>
MM10 MM6 MM12  MM3	11	TJF 1	... between the new <del>factory site</del> <u>development</u> and Tolleshunt Knights. A site for a new sewage treatment works <del>is allocated</del> <u>will be provided</u> to the west of the new factory site. ... items mentioned in Table 1 above. <u>The total area of open space proposed in the plan will be expected to be provided in full to meet new community needs in Tiptree and to alleviate visitor pressure on Abberton Reservoir.</u> The provision of affordable housing ... The allocation of land to the north of Factory Hill for residential development is solely to enable the development of the new Jam Factory on the allocated site and <u>that residential development will not be permitted to proceed without there being a commitment to the construction of the new factory therefore not be permitted to proceed without the relevant landowner(s) first entering into a legal agreement with the Council to ensure that no residential development can be commenced without a contract being entered into for the construction of the factory and an operational start being made in respect of the factory in accordance with Section 56 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.</u>
MM1	11		<i>After policy TJF 1 insert new paragraph:</i> <u>12.8 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to include a model policy within Local Plans to</u>

Mod	Page	Policy/ Paragraph	Main Modification
			<u>demonstrate that the presumption in favour of sustainable development has been taken into account.</u>
MM1	11		<p><i>After policy TJF 1 and new paragraph above, insert new policy:</i></p> <p><u>When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that applications can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.</u></p> <p><u>Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</u></p> <p><u>Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking account whether:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole: or</u></li> <li>- <u>Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.</u></li> </ul>
MM2		Appendix A	<i>Amend the map in Appendix A to show the correct area covered by the plan as indicated after this table.</i>
		Policies Map	<i>Amend the Policies Map to alter the settlement boundary (black line) to exclude the open space allocations and to show the allocation of allotment land, as indicated in the plan after this table.</i>

Appendix A Plan (not to stated scale)



## Policies Map



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# **TIPTREE JAM FACTORY PLAN**

**Adopted February 2013**

**TIPTREE JAM FACTORY PLAN**

## **1. Introduction to Plan**

- 1.1 This Plan has been prepared to review the planning policy for the Tiptree Jam Factory and adjoining land. It provides a policy framework in which planning applications for the area can be considered. It has been prepared in response to a particular local need to enable Wilkin and Sons to build a new factory in Tiptree.
- 1.2 The national planning policy context changed over the course of plan development. Initial work on the plan was carried out further to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 as amended in 2008. The final stages were governed by the 2012 amendments to the Regulations issued in April 2012 and which replaced Local Development Frameworks with Local Plans. The adopted plan is part of the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan. Consultation on the plan included initial consultation by Wilkin and Sons in summer 2011 followed by formal consultation by Colchester Borough Council in Nov 2011-Jan 2012 and April-May 2012.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Tiptree Jam Factory is owned by Wilkin and Sons. The Wilkin family have farmed in the area for nearly 300 years and have been producing Tiptree preserves since 1885. Since production began in Tiptree the factory has been continually added to and refurbished. Today parts of it are over 100 years old and it has been increasingly challenging to make jam efficiently and to maintain the buildings to meet ever-more demanding food standards. A new factory is critical to enable the company to maintain its market position and to grow. The company has a long association with Tiptree and is a significant employer in the village. The company currently provides 270 full-time and 125 part-time jobs with about 80% of staff living in Tiptree and a further 10% within a distance of 10 miles. The labour force is expected to grow to 500 by 2030. The company farms about 320 hectares (800 acres) of land around Tiptree. Because of the strong links with the local area the company's preference is to build a new factory in Tiptree on land to the south-east of the existing factory. However because Wilkin and Sons has calculated that the costs of building a new factory in Tiptree exceed those of converting an existing building elsewhere in the County, they intend to part-fund factory construction with the development of new housing on the existing factory site and on land to the north of Factory Hill. This Plan therefore deals with the planning policy issues relating to the new factory and the associated housing development that is required to support it.

### **3. Location and Area Covered**

- 3.1 Tiptree is located about 10 miles south-east of Colchester in north Essex. It is bisected by the B1022 Colchester to Maldon road and the B1023 Kelvedon to Tollesbury Road. It lies about 3 miles to the east of the A12 trunk road with access to it via junctions at Kelvedon, Feering and Rivenhall End. The nearest railway station is at Kelvedon, about 4 miles away.
- 3.2 The Tiptree Jam Factory is located to the south-east of the village on the south side of Factory Hill. This plan covers the existing factory site (Area A), land to the south-east of it extending to Tudwick Road (Area B) and land to the north of Factory Hill and east of Quince Court and Chapel Road (Area C). The map is attached as Appendix A.

### **4. Policy Context**

- 4.1 The most relevant planning policy for the plan area is set out in national planning policy and in the Council's adopted planning documents. This DPD should be read alongside the other documents within Colchester's adopted Local Development Framework, which include the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Policies DPDs, Proposals Map and Supplementary Planning Documents. Policies and allocations within these documents provide further guidance on policy for the area.
- 4.2 The Colchester Core Strategy adopted in 2008 identifies Tiptree as one of the main district settlements in the Borough which provide an important range of shopping, services and facilities to the surrounding hinterland and are expected to be the focus of limited new development. The Core Strategy therefore provides for a minimum of 680 new homes to be developed in Tiptree in the plan period to 2023 of which approximately 500 had been developed or permitted in 2006.
- 4.3 The Colchester Site Allocations Document adopted in 2010 provides for an additional allocation for housing and open space in Grange Road, Tiptree to meet the housing requirement identified in the Core Strategy. The existing Tiptree Jam Factory site is allocated as an employment policy area together with land to the south-east of it extending to Tudwick Road. The village settlement boundary bisects the existing factory site. The land to the north of Factory Hill is shown as countryside outside of the settlement boundary.
- 4.4 Wilkin and Son submitted a request for allocation of a greenfield site for housing during the initial Regulation 25 stage of consultation on the Site Allocations, but did not submit any supporting evidence concerning the requirement for enabling development. The council accordingly drafted its allocations for Tiptree on the basis of housing targets for Tiptree and Sustainability Appraisal work. Wilkin and Sons submitted



further evidence on the requirements for enabling development at the Regulation 27 submission stage for a smaller residential scheme. By this stage, however, the Council had produced what it considered to be a 'sound' plan and was not in a position to alter allocations unless this was required to make the overall document sound. Debate at the examination on Tiptree was focused on the level of new allocations it required, and the Inspector's conclusions reflect the view that the Council had made an appropriate allocation reflecting housing requirements and the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal. It is accordingly considered that while the Site Allocations DPD development process addressed the requirements of matching allocations to minimum housing targets for Tiptree, it did not address the detailed circumstances supporting enabling development for Wilkin and Sons.

- 4.5 At the national level the most relevant guidance is set out in the Plan for Growth, the National Planning Policy Framework and the provisions of the Localism Act. It is not the role of LDF documents to repeat policies set out in Government guidance but this Plan is consistent with the policies to promote sustainable housing and economic growth as set out in the aforementioned documents.
- 4.6 Government policy provides a context in which additional development in Tiptree can be considered. In his statement dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 the Minister of State for Decentralisation urged local authorities to make every effort to identify and meet the housing, business and other development needs of their areas and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. This statement was in response to the Government's Plan for Growth which required local authorities to put in place development plans that are pro-growth. The National Planning Policy Framework published on 27 March 2012 seeks to boost significantly the delivery of new homes. It states that the housing supply in authorities with good delivery rates should include an additional allowance of 5% to ensure choice and competition for the market for land. At the same time the Localism Act is introducing a new type of development plan, the neighbourhood plan, which enables local communities and businesses to bring forward proposals for development in their areas, which as a minimum must meet Core Strategy requirements but can provide for additional development if there is local community support. This Plan is therefore being prepared in the context of new Government policy to provide for additional housing development in Tiptree to secure the retention and growth of a significant local employer.
- 4.7 The Plan is consistent with Colchester's Community Strategy approved in 2007 in which the vision for 2020 and beyond includes the Borough being renowned for sustainable economic growth.

## 5. Spatial Portrait of Tiptree

- 5.1 Tiptree is the largest village in Colchester Borough with a population of 7,516 at the time of the 2001 Census and is now estimated to have grown to 9,206. (CBC estimates) There are two main employment areas in the village at the Tower Business Park off Kelvedon Road and the Tiptree Jam Factory at Factory Hill. The 2001 Census indicates 3,700 work trips from Tiptree ward of which 23% remain in the ward with 12% and 11% respectively going to the adjoining Districts of Braintree and Maldon. There is a range of shops and services, mostly concentrated along Church Street, which serve the village and surrounding area. The village has four primary schools and a secondary school, which incorporates a sixth-form. The village is served by two main bus routes, the 75 between Maldon and Colchester and the 91 between Witham and Tollesbury. National Cycleway Network Route 1 between London and Ipswich passes through the village. Further residential development in Tiptree will add to demand for infrastructure, and Table 6d of the Core Strategy highlights that expansion of primary school facilities; sports pitches and allotments; and further Health Centre facilities would be expected to be delivered in the period to 2021.

## 6. Vision

**Retention and expansion of Wilkin and Sons in Tiptree will promote the sustainable co-location of jobs and houses thereby minimising traffic impacts; support the community through the provision of open space and community facilities; and add to the stock of well-designed and sustainably constructed housing in Tiptree.**

- 6.1 The aim of the Plan is to provide a planning framework which enables a new Jam Factory to be constructed in Tiptree, along with additional residential development.
- 6.2 The objectives of the Plan are:
1. To identify sites for residential development which enable the commencement of a significant start on a new Jam Factory in Tiptree by 2014
  2. To maintain a balance between housing and employment
  3. To provide a variety of house types, tenures and sizes within the development
  4. To promote high quality design and layout
  5. To promote active and healthy lifestyles
  6. To provide high quality open space

7. To support and promote the growth of tourism
8. To protect and enhance the natural and historic environment
9. To facilitate the provision of the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support the new development
10. To promote the highest practicable standard of resource and energy efficiency in new developments
11. To provide clear guidance for developers about adapting to or mitigating the harmful impacts of climate change

## **7. Planning Considerations**

- 7.1 Part of the area covered by this Plan is already allocated as an employment policy area by the Site Allocations Document adopted in 2010. The main planning issues therefore relate to the redevelopment of the existing factory site and the greenfield land to the north of Factory Hill.
- 7.2 The primary justification for development of the greenfield land is that its development for residential purposes is required as enabling development to help fund construction of a new factory within Tiptree to avoid the need to relocate the business elsewhere. Wilkin and Sons have accordingly submitted viability information to substantiate the costs involved in constructing a new factory and the revenue anticipated from use of the company's land for residential development. This information has established a general case for enabling development, but it is appreciated that changing financial circumstances could change the detailed figures and alter Wilkin and Sons preferred course of action. Accordingly, approval for greenfield development needs to be clearly tied to construction of the factory to ensure that residential construction does not occur on its own leading to an unsustainable pattern of out-commuting and the loss of local jobs.
- 7.3 Parts of the existing factory are over 100 years old and the land has been subject to industrial processes for that period. There are therefore potential issues relating to contamination that will need to be addressed as part of any redevelopment. The existing factory site also has heritage interest with Trewlands Farmhouse and the adjacent wall being listed as Grade 2. These heritage assets will need to be protected and enhanced as part of any development proposal.
- 7.4 In terms of landscape setting and capacity the area was assessed by the Landscape Capacity Study of Settlement Fringes in 2005. The plan area fell within Landscape Setting Area 2 of the Tiptree fringes and was identified as having moderate landscape value and sensitivity and with limited capacity for development. The Site Allocations DPD allocated land for a new factory outside the Tiptree settlement boundary which reduced the extent of separation between Tolleshunt

Knights and Tiptree. Proposed factory schemes address this issue through the use of design and landscape measures and these will need to be confirmed through the planning application process.

- 7.5 Although the Tiptree sewage works has some capacity to accommodate new residential development Anglian Water has established that the sewerage network is in need of improvement. Alternative treatment facilities will therefore be required as part of any development of the plan area.
- 7.6 The plan area is accessible to the main built-up area of Tiptree by foot and cycle. The site is also accessible to the bus services that run through Tiptree with bus stops being located on both sides of Church Road just north of the junction with Factory Hill and Station Road. A transport assessment has indicated that development of the plan area can be accessed via a new roundabout junction to Factory Hill and that the traffic generated from the development of the plan area can be accommodated on the local road network with minor improvements.
- 7.7 Birch Wood, located within the plan area, is identified as an Essex Wildlife Site. The ground flora in the wood is suffering from recreational pressure and dense shading with large areas of bare and trampled ground, while in addition the understory is lacking in structure. A management plan will be required for the woodland to show how these issues can be addressed.
- 7.8 The Health Impact Assessment submitted as part of the Evidence Base for the plan has indicated capacity problems for health care provision in Tiptree. The proposal will accordingly be required to address this issue through contributions to be agreed toward the provision of premises and/or land for new healthcare floorspace.
- 7.9 Proposals for development within the plan area should be built to the highest possible standards of sustainable design and construction and should be in accordance with Core Strategy Policy ER1 relating to energy, resources, waste, water and recycling and with paragraphs 95, 96 and 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposals should also take into account the guidance set out in the Colchester Sustainable Design and Construction which will be a material consideration in making decisions on planning application within the plan area.
- 7.10 New development in the plan area should:
- Be built to a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 and BREEAM very good,
  - Minimise energy use in building design and construction to minimize climate change,
  - Conserve water,
  - Avoid waste,
  - Protect and enhance biodiversity,

- Minimise flood risk.

- 7.11 Planning applications should include a statement on the potential implications of the development on sustainable design and construction. The statement should address demolition, construction and long term management.
- 7.12 An assessment of energy demand and carbon dioxide emissions of proposed major development will be required to explain the steps taken to reduce the energy needs of the development, to supply energy efficiently and make use of renewable energy. The feasibility of a combined Heat and Power system should be investigated.

## **8. Evidence Base**

- 8.1 The Plan is supported by a range of specialist studies and reports which are published separately. These include:
- A Transport Assessment
  - Contamination Reports
  - Ecological Assessment
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - Tree Survey
  - Drainage Strategy
  - Financial Viability Assessment
  - Health Impact Assessment
  - Landscape Strategy.

## **9. Options Considered**

- 9.1 As part of the preparation of this plan 4 options have been considered and have been the subject of consultation. These are:
- Option 1: No change
  - Option 2: Development of a new factory in accordance with the Adopted Site Allocations DPD
  - Option 3: Visitor Centre and Thursday Cottage retained, main factory moved out of Tiptree
  - Option 4: Redevelopment of the existing factory site for residential purposes, residential development on land to the north of Factory Hill, development of new factory to the south of the existing factory.
- 9.2 Following consultation on the options in 2011 and early 2012 the Council has selected Option 4 as the preferred option and this forms the basis of the proposals within this Plan.
- 9.3 The Proposals include:
- The redevelopment of the existing factory site for housing

- The residential development of land to the north of Factory Hill
- Public open space on land to the north of Factory Hill
- A new factory on land to the south of the existing factory on the employment site allocated in the Adopted Site Allocations Document

## **10. Sustainability Appraisal**

- 10.1 A sustainability appraisal has been carried out of the Plan proposals and the options considered. This has been published separately. The conclusion of the appraisal in respect of the Plan proposals is:

“This option has positive impacts as a result of the retention of the factory in Tiptree but there are negative impacts as a result of the loss of greenfield land and the impact on Birch Wood. Wilkin and Sons is an important part of Tiptree’s culture and heritage and the loss of the factory would bring many adverse effects to the character and economy of Tiptree. This has been recognised by the adopted Site Allocations Document which allocates a site for a new factory to the south of the existing factory. The additional impact of this option therefore relates to the land to the north of Factory Hill. This option will require measures to mitigate the impact on Birch Wood.”

## **11. Consultation**

- 11.1 The proposals included in this Plan have been the subject of extensive consultation between July 2011 and November 2012. A separate report setting out the details of the consultation and the responses supports this Plan.
- 11.2 In July 2011 Wilkin and Sons carried out its own consultation on the options. This included a local public exhibition, a facebook page and consultation with other organisations. In general terms some 98% of the 1475 responses received following the exhibition in Tiptree in July 2011 supported the development of new housing on land to the north of Factory Hill to enable the factory to remain in Tiptree. Details of the proposed scheme were amended in response to this consultation including the nature of the open space to be provided, the design of the new housing and the proposed style of the new factory.
- 11.3 At its 2 November 2011 meeting, the Council’s Local Development Framework Committee agreed that the Wilkin and Sons’ proposals could best be addressed through preparation of a development plan. Accordingly, consultation on the options under regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Town and Country Planning) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 was carried out by the Council between November 2011 and January 2012. This included two local drop-in sessions and meetings with Tiptree and Tolleshunt Knights Parish Councils and Maldon District Council and with the consultation

material being available on the Council's website. 265 responses were received with 59.2% expressing a preference for Option 4.

11.4 The main issues raised during the consultation were:

- traffic impact on the local and wider road network, with access to the A12 through Feering and Kelvedon being a particular issue
- the impact on local services and facilities, particularly schools, doctors and dentists
- visual impact and impact on the countryside, particularly in the gap between the plan area and Tolleshunt Knights
- the impact on Birch Wood, which is a designated wildlife site.

11.5 Consultation on the Submission version of the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan ran from 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012 to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012. A total of 275 responses were received to the consultation. Of these 225 considered the Draft Submission Plan to be compliant/sound and 50 responses considered the Plan not to be compliant or sound. The submission document and all representations made were then submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in May 2012 for public examination in September 2012.

## **12. The Plan Proposals**

12.1 The Council's Core Strategy promotes sustainable development to deliver jobs and houses subject to considerations of impact and capacity. It provides for the development of 680 housing units over the period 2001-2021, but these are minimum figures. Government policy encourages the development of additional housing beyond minimum levels, particularly when it has local support. In this instance, the Council considers that background work has demonstrated the sustainability, viability and deliverability of the proposal along with the provision of satisfactory mitigation for identified impacts and high levels of community support.

12.2 This Plan therefore proposes the allocation of land as set out in Option 4 above. This includes:

- The redevelopment of the existing factory site for housing
- The residential development of land to the north of Factory Hill
- Public open space on land to the north of Factory Hill
- A new factory on land to the south of the existing factory on the employment site allocated in the Adopted Site Allocations Document. This allocation will supersede that shown in the Site Allocations Document reducing the employment use from 8.95 ha to 4.52 ha.

12.3 The indicative number of dwelling units to be provided for the two residential sites is 250. This reflects the site's location at the edge of the village adjacent to the countryside which precludes development at a higher density.

- 12.4 These allocations will be shown on the Proposals Map.
- 12.5 However in order to mitigate the social and environmental impact of the proposals there will be a need for the development to be accompanied by improvements to infrastructure and social and community facilities as set out in the Table below.

**Table 1  
Tiptree Jam Factory Plan – Infrastructure Improvements**

<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Further considerations</b>
Provision of new roundabout on Factory Hill, footpath and cycleway improvements	Developer	Prior to construction of new factory and residential development	
Junction improvements at Factory Hill/Church Road/Station Road	Developer	Prior to occupation of new factory and residential development	
Primary School Improvements	ECC	To be determined	Contingent on demonstration of capacity and/or accommodation requirements
Improvements to Tiptree Health Centre	PCT	To be determined	
Additional Dentists Surgery	PCT	To be determined	Wilkin and Sons to provide land
Off-site planting and landscaping	Developer	Prior to completion of development	Maintenance to be secured through planning conditions
Provision of open space including children's play areas, allotments and ancillary car parking	Developer	Prior to completion of development	Management plan for Birch Wood required Maintenance to be secured through planning



<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Further considerations</b>
			conditions
Provision free of charge of Factory Hall for use as a Youth Club	Developer	Prior to residential development on the former factory site	

- 12.6 The developer will be required to make appropriate contributions to the improvement of the social and community facilities to be determined through section 106 agreements for the planning applications in accordance with Policy SD2 of the adopted Core Strategy.
- 12.7 The Plan provides a framework within which planning applications for development within the plan area can be considered. It will be for Wilkin and Sons to bring forward planning applications to set out the details of the proposals and subsequently to implement the development. The Council will monitor the progress of the development through its normal processes and will report this in its Annual Monitoring Report.

#### **Policy TJF 1**

**The existing Tiptree Jam Factory Site and land to the north of Factory Hill, Tiptree is allocated for residential development to enable the development of a new Jam Factory on a site to the south of the existing Jam Factory. A site is also allocated for 4.5 hectares of open space on land to the north of Factory Hill. A buffer strip will be required between Chapel Road/Quince Court/Wood View and the new housing. Design and landscaping features will be needed to maintain separation between the new development and Tolleshunt Knights. A site for a new sewage treatment works will be provided to the west of the new factory site. The development will be required to contribute to infrastructure provision in accordance with the Councils adopted policies. This includes community infrastructure and open space and may include those items mentioned in Table 1 above. The total area of open space proposed in the plan will be expected to be provided in full to meet new community needs in Tiptree and to alleviate visitor pressure on Abberton Reservoir. The provision of affordable housing will reflect the importance of increasing the supply of affordable housing as covered in Core Strategy Policy H4 (Affordable Housing) balanced against viability considerations arising from enabling development. The allocation of land to the north of Factory Hill for residential development is solely to enable the development of the new Jam Factory on the allocated site and will therefore not be permitted to proceed without the relevant landowner(s) first entering into a legal**

**agreement with the Council to ensure that no residential development can be commenced without a contract being entered into for the construction of the factory and an operational start being made in accordance with Section 56 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

- 12.8 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to include a model policy within Local Plans to demonstrate that the presumption in favour of sustainable development has been taken into account.

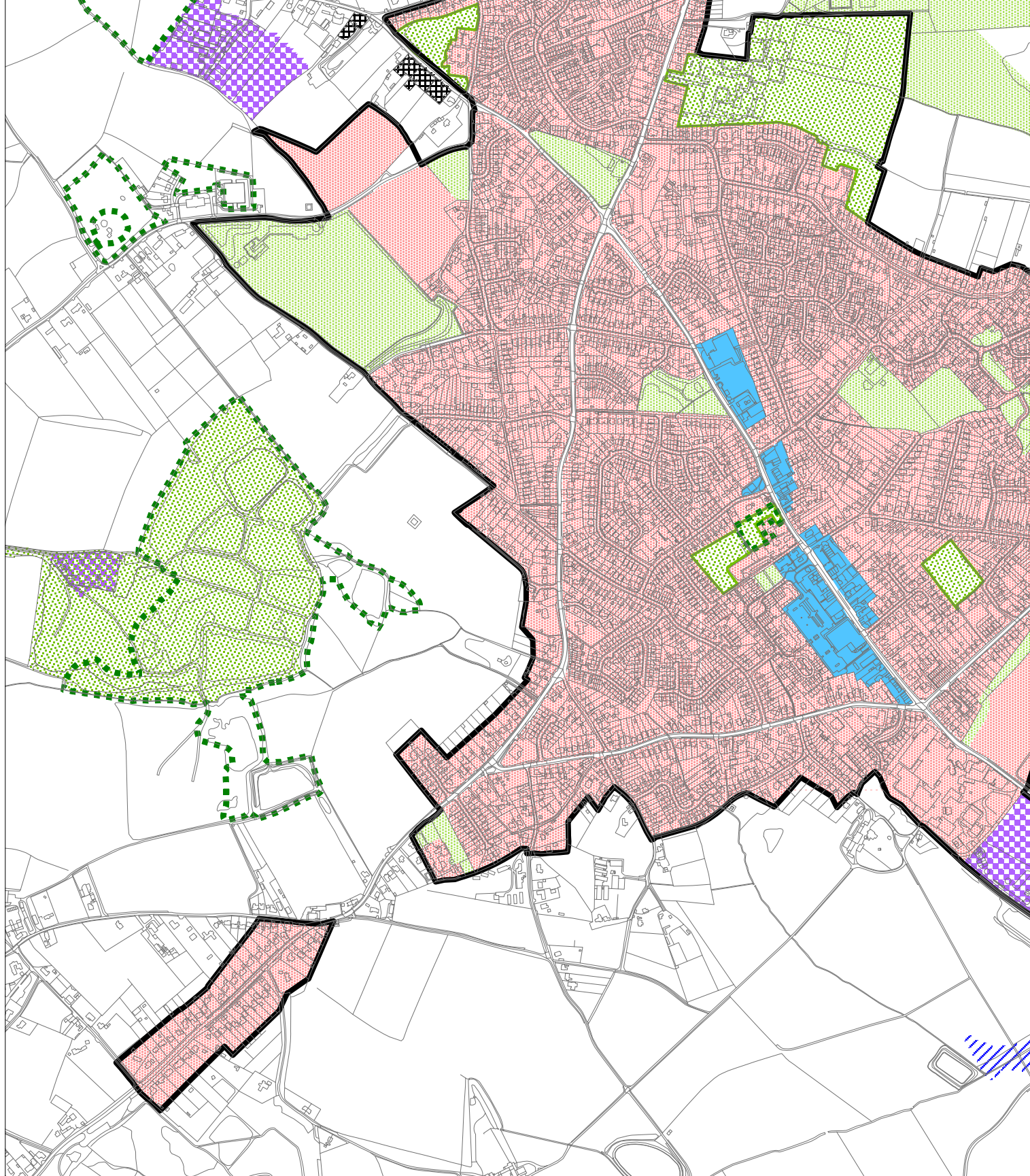
### **Policy TJF2**

**When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that applications can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.**

**Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.**

**Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking account whether:**

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole: or**
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.**












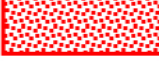






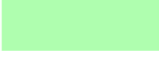






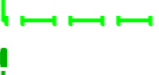



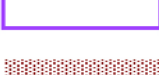











Colchester Borough Council Local Plan

# TIPTREE INSET POLICIES MAP

DECEMBER 2012

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	MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT		CULTURAL FACILITIES
	MIXED USE		WEST MERSEA WATER AREA OF SPECIAL CONCERN
	INNER CORE		HISTORIC PARKS AND LANDSCAPE
	OUTER CORE		COLCHESTER LOCAL LANDSCAPE
	NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES		SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
	RURAL DISTRICT CENTRES		REGIONALLY IMPORTANT (AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL)
	URBAN DISTRICT CENTRES		RAMSAR
	CAR PARKS		COASTAL PROTECTED ZONE
	PARK AND RIDE PLUS SERVICE STATION		SPECIAL AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
	OPEN SPACE		SPECIAL PROTECTION ZONE
	PRIVATE OPEN SPACE		AREA OF OUTSTANDING LANDSCAPE VALUE
	CEMETERIES		RIVERSIDE WALKS
	ALLOTMENTS		PROTECTED LANES
	UNIVERSITY PURPOSES		GREEN LINKS
	COMMUNITY STADIUM		CONSERVATION AREA
	CARAVAN PARKS		LOCAL NATURE RESERVE
	GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ALLOCATIONS		CBC SCHEDULED MONUMENTS
	TRANSIT CORRIDOR		ENVIRONMENT AGENCY FLOOD RISK ZONE
	ROAD IMPROVEMENT		COLCHESTER BOROUGH BOUNDARY
	JUNCTION 28 (A12)		

17 December 2012

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Beverley McClean</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Colchester Local List</b>		<b>01206 282480</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All</b>		

**The Local Plan Committee is asked to review the adopted Colchester Local List and formalise procedures in relation to the List.**

## 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to make two decisions;
- Review the existing Colchester Local List
  - Formalise procedures in relation to the List, including any necessary changes to the Constitution.

## 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 The Local List for Colchester is not a static list and is likely to change over time in response to planning decisions taken or as a result of new buildings being proposed for inclusion. When the Local List for Colchester was approved by the Local Development Framework Committee in December 2011, it was agreed that it would be reviewed annually.
- 2.2 At the meeting it was agreed that the Spatial Policy team would be responsible for managing the content of the Local List but no formal processes were set out. The purpose of this report is to set out procedures for updating the Local List.

## 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative option is to not define clear processes for proposing and making changes to Colchester's Local List. This is not a desirable approach as changes could be made to the Local List record on an ad hoc basis making it difficult to maintain a definitive List. The inclusion of a building, architectural feature or historic asset on the Local List is a material consideration where a planning application relates to them. The lack of a properly maintained Local List would reduce the Council's ability to conserve buildings or historic assets that are architecturally or historically significant within Colchester.

## 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 129) states that Local Authorities should identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of available evidence and any necessary expertise. The NPPF includes buildings or assets that are locally listed.

- 4.2 A Local List is essentially a list of heritage assets that although not suitable for designation as Listed Buildings are considered historically or architecturally important at a local level. The List can include a range of historic assets including individual buildings or whole streetscapes. It can also include individual features on buildings such as railings, lamp posts or post boxes as well as locally valued archaeological features i.e. crop marks. The important factor is that the assets included on the Local List are of historic interest locally and/or make a significant contribution to the character and setting of the area in which they are located and are valued by the local community.
- 4.3 Colchester Borough Council set out their intention to prepare and adopt a Local List in Development Policy DP14 (Historic Environment Assets). Drawing on a previous study completed by Mansell Jagers in 2007 an expert panel with an extensive knowledge about historic buildings/environment and architecture started developing the Local List for Colchester in 2009.
- 4.4 A survey of the built historic assets in and around urban Colchester resulted in approximately 600 buildings/features being identified for inclusion on the draft Local List for Colchester. Following extensive consultation the first Local List for Colchester was adopted by the Local Development Framework (LDF) Committee in December 2011. The Colchester Local List information is currently stored on the Colchester's Historic Buildings Forum website ([www.colchesterhistoricbuildingsforum.org.uk](http://www.colchesterhistoricbuildingsforum.org.uk)) however it is now also available on the Council's C-maps system and it will shortly be deployed onto CIVICA as well for use by Development Management when determining planning applications
- 4.5 In March 2011 the LDF Committee adopted an addition to the Local List covering Wivenhoe. The survey work was undertaken by a different group and referral to Committee allows not only for scrutiny of the list but also ensures a consistent approach to listing.

## **5. Proposals**

### **5.1 Procedures**

The procedures set out below are being proposed to enable new assets to be added to the list and existing assets to be removed from the Local List for Colchester. This term will be used to cover the whole borough and will incorporate the parts of the borough that have already been surveyed and any others that come forward in due course.

- 5.2 Any person or group of people is able to propose an asset for inclusion on the Local List. If a group is looking to survey an area they should contact the Spatial Policy Team before commencing work. A meeting will be arranged to discuss how the survey should be conducted, the type of information to be collected and how it should be presented to the Council.
- 5.3 Where new buildings or historic assets are being proposed for inclusion on the Local List the applicant should submit their proposal and any supporting information to the Spatial Policy Team. The application will be assessed by the Council's Conservation Officer against the criteria used to draw up the original Local List. Where necessary the Council will also approach the Colchester Historic Building Forum for advice. Consultation will take place with the owner if this has not already happened.
- 5.4 Where a building or asset originally included on the Local List has been altered to the point its architectural or historic interest has been lost or it has been demolished, a written request to remove the building or asset from the Local List should be submitted to the Spatial Policy Team. An assessment will take place as detailed above in para. 5.3.

- 5.5 The borough wide Local List will be reviewed once every year in March which also coincides with the review date for the Wivenhoe part of the list. All changes to the Local List will be reported to the Local Plan Committee for consideration. The Committee will be able to approve, refuse or amend the assets on the Local List when making its decision. Once agreed, amendments will be made to the Council's c-maps and CIVICA records. Owners will also be notified about any changes to the Local List.
- 5.6 The Council's Constitution details that the Local Plan Committee has authority to determine the preparation and approval of various documents including the adoption of non statutory planning documents. The Local List falls within this remit but for clarity it is recommended that the Constitution is amended to specifically make mention of the Local List.
- 5.7 **2012 Review**  
Officers have reviewed the existing Colchester Local List and are of the opinion that no changes currently need to be made to it. Since its adoption in December 2011, no buildings on the Local List have been demolished and no requests have been made to add new assets. The annual review which will happen in March 2013 will provide another opportunity to amend the List.
- 5.8 The committee is accordingly asked to approve the procedures detailed above and agree that no changes should be made to the content of the Local List at this stage.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 The Local List provides evidence to help the Council deliver its priorities for regenerating the borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure, promoting sustainability, supporting tourism, heritage and the arts and enabling local communities to help themselves.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Owners of proposed assets will be notified if it is intended to add an asset to the Local List. Owners will also be advised when it is intended to remove an asset from the list. The agreed procedures will be set out on the Council's website as well as the Colchester Historic Building website.

## **8.0 Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 None

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 None

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

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view by clicking on this link:-

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/4962/Strategic-Policy-and-Regeneration>

or go to the Colchester Borough Council website [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) and follow the pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Strategic Policy and Regeneration and select Local Development Framework from the Strategic Planning and Research section.

10.2 There are no particular Human Rights implications.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

11.1 None.

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

12.1 None

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

13.1 Establishing procedures for the Local List will help minimise the risk of misunderstanding the purpose of the List.





## Local Plan Committee

Item  
**9**

17 December 2012

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Laura Chase 01206 282473</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Better Town Centre Plan Supplementary Planning Document</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All wards</b>		

**The Local Plan Committee is asked to approve the adoption of the Better Town Centre Plan Supplementary Planning Document.**

### **1. Decision(s) Required**

- 1.1 To approve the adoption of the Better Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

### **2. Reason for Decision**

- 2.1 The Plan takes the form of a Supplementary Planning Document which is intended to supplement existing policies in the Local Plan by providing more detailed guidance. The adoption of this guidance will help inform development of the area and will be used as a material consideration in the determination of any planning application submitted for the area.

### **3. Alternative Option**

- 3.1 The alternative is not to proceed with the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document and to develop proposals and consider planning applications for the Town Centre on the basis of less specific national and local policies.

### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The Better Town Centre Plan sets out the Council's aspirations and plans for Colchester's Town Centre. The Local Plan Committee approved a draft version of the Plan for consultation at its 11th June 2012 meeting, and the 8<sup>th</sup> October meeting considered consultation responses to the draft plan.
- 4.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) cannot set out new policy, but instead expand upon how Local Plan policies should be applied. In this case, the Town Centre SPD provides detailed guidance on the delivery of the vision set out in the Core Strategy for the future direction of Colchester's Town Centre and the appropriate uses outlined in Site

Allocations Policy SA TC1 (Appropriate Uses within the Town Centre and North Station Regeneration Area).

- 4.3 Work on the Better Town Centre Plan SPD has involved a significant degree of inter-departmental working through the Better Town Centre Steering Group. The document reflects the group's wide ranging agenda and also reflects stakeholder and public views arising from a number of consultations carried out by the Steering Group on Town Centre issues. The full report on consultation was appended to the update on SPD consultation made to the October 2012 meeting of the Local Plan Committee and is available on the Council's website.
- 4.4 The Introduction to the plan sets out the local and national planning context for Town Centre work which includes both responding to the changing retail environment and the new national planning policy framework.
- 4.5 Chapter 2 provides a spatial portrait of the Town Centre explaining key functions and links. Chapter 3 identifies the following issues and challenges for the Town Centre:
- Meeting the challenge of climate change
  - Keeping ahead in a fragile global economy
  - Ensuring an appropriate mix of uses to create activity and to provide employment, services, culture, leisure and housing opportunities
  - Maintaining a high standard of design, local distinctiveness and environmental quality in Britain's oldest recorded town
  - Importance of public realm in creating an active town centre
  - Need to address access to and circulation within the town centre
  - Serving a rapidly growing population.
- 4.6 Chapter 4 outlines the consultations on Town Centre issues that have informed the Plan and provides a link to the more detailed Report on Consultation that is required to accompany a Supplementary Plan Document. Brief summaries on the 2,000 year history of Colchester's Town Centre and planning policy over the last fifty years are then provided in Chapters 5 and 6 to highlight the town's rich heritage and how planning policies have sought to enhance it.
- 4.7 Chapter 7 contains the vision and key objectives that structure the remainder of the Plan. The document proposes the following four main inter-linked themes based on policy, consultation responses and discussion of objectives at the Town Centre Steering Group:

#### Sustainability

*How can the Town Centre achieve sustainability in its widest sense, including prioritising reductions in the town centre's carbon footprint, enhancing the resiliency of Town Centre commercial and social businesses, and promoting social inclusion?*

#### Activity

*What uses and activities should be supported to create a lively 21<sup>st</sup> century town?*

#### Heritage and Design

*How should we enhance the old while also creating tomorrow's heritage?*

#### Movement

*How can we achieve a safe and accessible Town Centre?*

- 4.8 Chapter 7 includes detailed guidance and proposals for each topic area and illustrates relevant proposals with a map. Chapter 8 discusses proposals for the nine Character Areas within the Town Centre.
- 4.9 The final version has been changed from the draft consultation to include minor changes made in response to consultation responses. It has been edited to be easy-to-use on the internet by incorporating illustrations/graphics and links to relevant documents and websites including related policy and evidence base documents such as the Sustainability Appraisal.

### **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee adopt the Better Town Centre Plan Supplementary Planning Document so it forms part of the Local Plan and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

### **6. Strategic Plan Reference**

- 6.1 Development of the Better Town Centre Plan SPD will inform the Council's vision to be a place where people want to live, work and visit. It will also contribute to the following Council priority areas and outcomes: regenerating our borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure; improving opportunities for local business to thrive including retail; promoting sustainability and reducing congestion; and bringing investment to the borough.

### **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Formal consultation on the SPD ran from 22 June to 27 July and included drop-in sessions attended by 643 people at St. Nicholas House held on Thursday 28 and Saturday 30 June 2012. 26 individuals and organisations submitted formal comments on the SPD (their responses are summarised in the Consultation Report available on the Council website and previously considered by the 8<sup>th</sup> October Local Plan Committee).

## **8. Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 Colchester's Town Centre continues to be the subject of media interest which will be proactively managed by the Council and its Communication team. The Council has developed a Better Town Centre webpage which will feature information on the Plan, in addition to its inclusion on the Council planning webpages.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 No direct implications. Indirectly, the plan is intended to help direct the effective expenditure of limited Council resources in the Town Centre.

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

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view by clicking on this link:-

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/4962/Strategic-Policy-and-Regeneration>

or go to the Colchester Borough Council website

[www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) and follow the pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Strategic Policy and Regeneration and select Local Development Framework from the Strategic Planning and Research section.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 One of the key objectives for the Better Town Centre Group is 'Ensuring Clean, Safe Places and Spaces' and the plan contains guidance on high quality design, street furniture, lighting, and activity to help meet this objective.

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

- 12.1 No direct implications

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 The adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents is intended to support adopted planning policies and reduce the risk of inappropriate development. The Plan provides consistent advice to landowners, developers, officers, Councillors and members of the public.

## **Background Papers**

None

# BETTER TOWN CENTRE PLAN

# Colchester



Colchester Town Centre Supplementary  
Planning Document (SPD)



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# Chapter One Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the Council's aspirations and plans for Colchester's Town Centre. The Council appreciates that helping the Town Centre to flourish in challenging times requires co-ordinated action and has developed a range of initiatives to help achieve this under a 'Better Town Centre' banner. The following Better Town Centre Plan is intended to provide a guiding framework for these initiatives. It takes the form of a Supplementary Planning Document which provides detailed planning guidance building on Colchester's general policies as set forth in its adopted Local Plan (previously known as the [Local Development Framework \(LDF\)](#). SPDs cannot set out new policy, but instead expand upon how Local Plan policies should be applied. In this case, the Town Centre SPD provides detailed guidance on the delivery of the vision set out in the [Core Strategy](#) for the future direction of Colchester's Town Centre. The SPD provides an holistic approach to the reinvigoration of spaces, uses and activity in Colchester's historic centre during the day, evening and at night that will ensure its continued vitality in a 21st Century context of economic challenges, climate change and new ways of spending leisure time.
- 1.2 Nationally, the challenges facing town centres are being approached both through the planning system, with policies safeguarding the role of town centres forming a key element of the National Planning Policy Framework, and through the wider economic and political agenda with many towns choosing to take up the challenge posed by the Mary Portas review to remake their town centres. In Essex, the role of Colchester town centre is highlighted in the plan guiding future planned investment in the County, the [Integrated County Strategy](#). It states that town centre regeneration is a key driver for development and identifies opportunities for Colchester Town Centre to consolidate its position as a focus for the Haven Gateway area of the region.
- 1.3 [The Core Strategy](#), adopted in 2008, sets the overall direction for all subsequent planning policy documents in the Local Plan, including this SPD. It highlights the role of the Town Centre as the cultural and economic heart of the Borough, and provides that it will be enhanced and extended through regeneration, public realm improvements and a balanced mix of uses that sustain activity throughout the day and evening. The adopted Development Policies and [Site Allocations documents](#), adopted in 2010, provide further guidance on appropriate town centre uses. The general support for mixed uses is tailored to ensure that future development builds on the strengths of existing uses and local character. Relevant planning policies are attached as [Appendix A](#). The Council adopted a Town Centre [Public Realm Strategy](#) along with a [Lighting Strategy](#) in June 2011 and these are attached as Appendices D and E to the SPD. These Strategies should be read alongside this document to give a complete picture of how public spaces in the Town Centre should be designed, built and maintained. In addition, the Council has already adopted an SPD on [Shopfront Guidance](#) which is a further important detailed guidance document for the Town Centre.

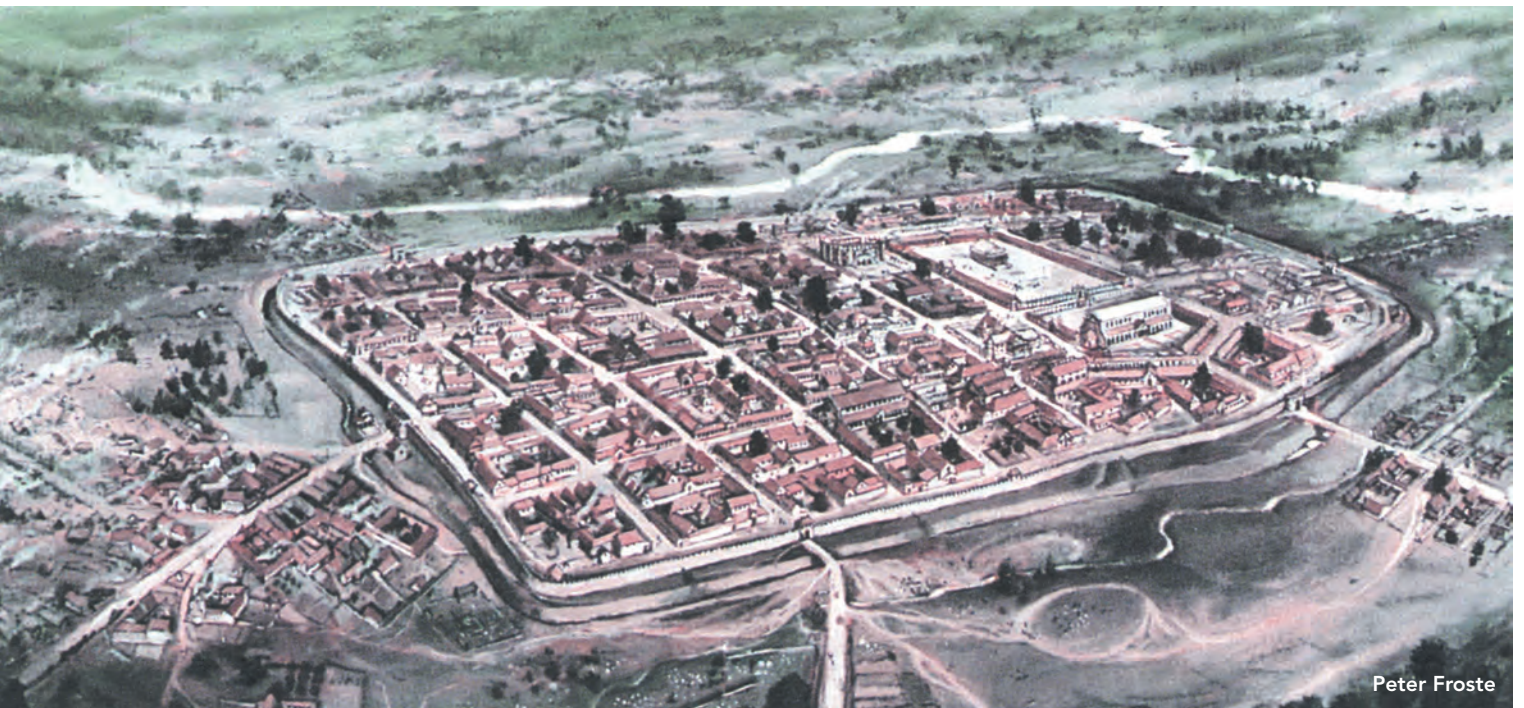
# Chapter One Introduction

- 1.4 The SPD and other associated planning documents do not provide specific detail on the masterplanning of particular sites, rather they provide guiding principles which should then be applied in the process of developing individual proposals for the Town Centre. The SPD provides a means for co-ordinating and directing the incremental change that will occur over the coming period as the Town Centre adapts to changing economic, environmental, technological and social circumstances.





# Chapter Two Spatial Portrait



Roman Colchester in about AD 250, rebuilt after the Boudican rebellion with a defensive wall around the town.

- 2.1 The Town Centre's hilltop location reflects the strategic choices made centuries ago by Roman colonisers, a legacy that remains in the street grid pattern that still underpins the modern town. The Wall erected around the Roman town also still continues to define the Centre, both by its physical presence in many areas and by defining the compact commercial core of the town, which tends to be of a higher density and different character to development outside the walls. The insertion of new roads on Balkerne Hill and Southway in the 1960-70s created strict boundaries between the Town Centre and surrounding residential areas to the west and south sides.
- 2.2 Key landmarks in the Town Centre include the green oasis of Castle Park to the north, which ascends the slope from the River Colne to abut the High Street. The historic restored Castle, built by the Normans on the ruins of Claudius's temple sits at the top of the park. The High Street is distinguished by the park entrance at one end and the Victorian 'Jumbo' water tower visible at the other end, with a range of period commercial buildings and the Edwardian Town Hall with its clock tower in the middle.

## Chapter Two Spatial Portrait

- 2.3 Functionally, the Town is characterised by a shopping core centred around the High Street, Culver Square, Lion Walk and the lanes running along the Roman Wall. The St. Botolph's Quarter area to the east is the main focus for new development in the town centre, with the new firstsite gallery development providing the catalyst for culture related development. Residential uses predominate in the historic Dutch Quarter tucked in behind the High Street, North Hill and Castle park, while other residential units are scattered throughout the Town Centre above shops and mixed in with other uses. Office uses are concentrated in the Town Centre fringe, which contains a number of larger modern office buildings, although some of the historic Town Centre buildings have been adapted for office use.
- 2.4 The boundary of the Town Centre is illustrated on the Central Area plan of the [Local Plan Proposals Map](#) and is based on the historic and topographic considerations described above. It excludes Castle Park, but since no new development would be expected to be approved within the park, it is not considered necessary to include it within the Town Centre boundary.
- 2.5 The Town Centre boundary defines the area within which 'town centre uses' are to be located within Colchester. Town Centre uses appropriate to Colchester's town centre are defined by Core Strategy Policy CE2a as including retail, offices, leisure and cultural facilities. The Town Centre is the preferred location for these uses. Proposals for these uses outside the Town Centre will be required to demonstrate they could not be accommodated within the Town Centre, in line with policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.



# Chapter Three Issues and Challenges

## Meeting the challenge of climate change

- 3.1 The need for more sustainable forms of development to address climate change is a key driver for Town Centre planning in the future. Innovative solutions will be required to the problems of traffic congestion; poor air quality; energy hungry buildings; providing shade and scarce land and raw material resources for new development.

## Keeping ahead in a fragile global economy

- 3.2 In common with town centres around the country, Colchester's retailers are faced with an array of challenges including the growth of internet shopping, increasing costs, competition from out-of-town centres and restrictions on consumer spending. [Mary Portas's High Street review \(Dec. 2011\)](#) has highlighted a number of recommendations to support town centre vitality, with a focus on partnership working and a willingness to try new ideas. These recommendations accord with the finding of the [Council's Town Centre Retail Study \(Nov. 2011\)](#) which found that while Colchester was maintaining a reasonably robust retail position, it would need to continue to innovate and develop new retail space to remain competitive. While Colchester's Town Centre shops have a large hinterland, geographical position alone will not be enough to secure recovery from recession and ensure renewed vitality. Colchester businesses will need to exploit the potential of new technologies and digital connectivity [[link to Digital Strategy](#)] to retain their competitive positions.

## Ensuring an appropriate mix of uses to create activity and to provide employment, services, culture/leisure and housing opportunities

- 3.3 Colchester has a diverse mix of uses and activities in its Town Centre, but will need to retain and strengthen this diversity of employment opportunities, mix of independent and national retailers, and range of services to ensure resilience in times of recession. A mix of uses and activities is also important in creating an animated atmosphere and active street scene that is physically accessible in both day and evening hours which contributes to the quality of life for residents and the attractiveness of the town to visitors.

## Maintaining a high standard of design, local distinctiveness and environmental quality for Britain's oldest recorded town

- 3.4 Colchester's uniqueness is underpinned by its rich historic legacy of buildings, streets and spaces. Safeguarding this legacy will rely on reinvigoration of historic environments with new uses; interpretation of characters and historic events as well as heritage to promote its appreciation; and the creation of new well-designed accessible buildings and high quality materials that will become the legacy for the future.
- 3.5 Interpretation is defined by the Association for Heritage Interpretation as 'the art of helping people explore and appreciate our world to enrich our lives through engaging emotions, enhancing experiences and deepening understanding of places, people, events and objects from the past and present'. The aim of interpretation is to improve the image and reputation of the place, enhance the experience of the place and in so doing manage or mitigate unruly behaviours and create a sense of civic pride.

# Chapter Three Issues and Challenges

## Importance of public realm in creating an active town centre

3.6 While the Town Centre contains a number of attractive spaces and streets, links between these are fragmented and there are many areas that warrant upgrading. An enhanced public realm will be critical to strengthening the role of the town centre as a welcoming gathering space that serves a wide and changing range of users, including those with disabilities, at different times of the day and night.

## Need to address access to and circulation within the town centre

3.7 A successful Town Centre inevitably creates significant movements of people. The challenge is to manage this process to encourage more people to travel by bus, foot and cycle to minimise congestion while providing sufficient vehicular access and parking to sustain economic activity and facilitate accessibility where appropriate.

## Serving a rapidly growing population

3.8 [Colchester's Core Strategy](#) has responded to the ever-increasing population pressures on the south-east by providing for the development of 19,000 new housing units for the period 2001 – 23. The Town Centre will accordingly need to serve more people as a sustainable hub for services, jobs, shops and leisure activities.



# Chapter Four

## Process for developing the plan

### Consultation and partners

4.1 Development and implementation of the Better Town Centre Plan does not just involve land use considerations but touches on a variety of issues and requires the continued involvement of different organisations and interests. The dialogue on these issues has been ongoing, and the Supplementary Planning Document synthesises the results of a number of previous consultations that the Council has carried out through the Better Town Centre initiative. The issues accordingly aren't new, but the proposed approaches in the SPD reflect the latest co-ordinated thinking on these topics and places. The Council's Better Town Centre initiative has relied on a cross-departmental approach in developing the plan, with direction given by a Town Centre Steering Group composed of representatives from each main section of the Council as well as representatives from Essex County Council on transport and urban design. [www.bettertowncentre.co.uk](http://www.bettertowncentre.co.uk). The Council has carried out a number of consultation exercises on the following nine components of this cross-cutting programme to improve the town centre;

- Improving Colchester for you and your family
- Creating quality public spaces and places
- Bringing new buildings and street scenes
- Supporting business and retailers
- Making it easier to get to and around Colchester
- Promoting Colchester
- New things to see do and visit
- Ensuring clean and safe places and spaces
- Changing Colchester after dark

4.2 Consultations on the Better Town Centre programme were themselves following on from a number of consultations:

**Colchester 2020 Transport Assembly (February 2009)**

**Night Time Economy Task and Finish Group (2009)**

**Castle Park consultation (October 2009)**

**Street Care Strategy (February 2010)**



# Chapter Four

## Process for developing the plan

### Evidence

4.5 The SPD is informed by a number of studies carried out by the Council. In the first instance, this includes the wide range of studies carried out for the Local Plan documents that underpin and precede this latest plan for the town centre. These are listed in [Appendix B](#). More specifically, the Council has carried out a [Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal \(2007\)](#) and a [Town Centre Retail Study \(2011\)](#) to inform consideration of particular Town Centre locations and issues.

### Sustainability Appraisal

4.6 The Council has undertaken a [Sustainability Appraisal](#) for this document to inform the plan's content and to ensure the plan promotes sustainable development. The 2009 Regulations remove the duty to provide a Sustainability Appraisal report for SPDs. However, since the Council is still required to carry out an environmental assessment on all Local Development Documents in accordance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive where significant environmental effects are likely, the Council considered it appropriate to consider these environmental effects alongside the social and economic effects covered by a Sustainability Appraisal. The Council published a Scoping Report for consultation by the relevant statutory bodies (Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) during the period 4 November – 9 December 2011 and the comments made have been incorporated into the final Sustainability Appraisal.

# Chapter 5 Historic Background

- 5.1 Colchester has been the principal town in north Essex for as long as those words have had any meaning. Modern Colchester, seamed with new roads and ringed with housing estates, industrial parks and hypermarkets may seem far removed from its Roman and medieval ancestors, but like them it is shaped by its site and the surrounding countryside.
- 5.2 The history of Colchester begins before the Roman occupation of Britain. At the beginning of the first-century AD the British king Cunobelin (Shakespeare's Cymbeline) ruled over the kingdoms of the south-east from a capital upon the Colne. This capital was called Camulodunum, after the Celtic war god Camulos.
- 5.3 Camulodunum was a natural objective of the Roman army when Britain was invaded in AD43, and the ridge to the south-east of the native capital was chosen as the site of a legionary fortress succeeded by the first colonia of veteran soldiers to be founded in Britain. This colony became a prosperous town and an important pottery and tile making centre. In the later first century it was fortified with walls which, like the monumental west or Balkerne Gate are still standing today.
- 5.4 The main streets of the Roman town have become the main streets of modern Colchester, except that the High Street once ran through to the Balkerne Gate in the west wall, whereas today it stops at the line of North Hill and Head Street.
- 5.5 By the time of the Norman Conquest Colchester was a town of some importance, with a mint and a court, and the strongest defences in Essex. The Domesday Book shows Colchester to have been a populous place in 1086 with several churches. Of the churches standing today, Holy Trinity has a Saxon tower and St. Peter's is mentioned by name in Domesday Book. The lost church of St. Runwald's in the High Street (demolished 1878), seems to have been another Saxon foundation.





## Chapter 5 Historic Background

- 5.6 By the end of the eleventh-century a castle had been built, the largest known of its kind, raised over the base of the Roman temple, all surrounded by a timber and earth rampart with a defensive ditch, around which the High Street has to deviate and bend to the south. A series of recessions in the cloth trade had a severe effect on the town's economy. Salvation came however with the Protestant refugees who fled from Spanish rule in the Netherlands. Those Flemings or Dutch as they were locally known are still recalled today in that area of the town centre north of the High Street which bears their name.
- 5.7 The Siege of Colchester in 1648 was the last time the walls were used defensively to protect the Royalist occupiers against the Parliamentary armies. The built-up area continued to be constrained within them apart from some ribbon development along the approach roads until the early Victorian period when the first of the substantial extra-mural housing developments began.
- 5.8 The Napoleonic Wars brought a garrison to Colchester, but these buildings were demolished in 1817. The military did open a permanent military camp in 1856 thirteen years after the arrival of the railway line from London. The railway fed an engineering industry and encouraged the town to expand rapidly. The churchyards within the town were closed and a municipal cemetery opened in 1856, and six years later the cattle market was moved from the High Street to the foot of North Hill (Middleborough), where it remained for over 100 years. The general market remained in the High Street.
- 5.9 At the centre of the town a bus park, now the site of St. John's Walk shopping precinct, was opened in 1923, and chain stores arrived in the High Street in the early 1930s. The growth of motor traffic began to choke the main streets, and in 1933 a by-pass road was opened on the north side of town, (Avenue of Remembrance/ Cowdray Avenue). By 1939 the by-pass had attracted ribbon development with service roads, and extensive demolition for car-parks had begun in the old town. After the war the unfinished public library in Shewell Road (most recently occupied by Superdry (Fashion Retailer) in Culver Precinct was finally opened to the public.
- 5.10 It was not until the late 1950s that the town's public face began to change noticeably. There was much new housing, commercial and industrial developments as the rail links to London were improved. Above all motor traffic increased. The most important single change was probably the introduction of a one-way traffic scheme in 1963 that temporarily swept the Saturday market out of the High Street. Five of the central parish churches were closed in 1954 with one, St. Nicholas, being demolished, to be replaced by the Co-operative Store, though the churchyard has been kept as a small garden. The bus park moved to East Hill in the 1960s bringing a heavy flow of traffic into the area enclosed by the town walls.
- 5.11 The 1970s saw the construction of a new dual carriageway motor road around the southern and western edge of the historic town, and the town centre saw a major pedestrian shopping development at Lion Walk (opened 1976), followed a decade later by a similar scheme off Culver Street (opened 1987) both of which served to cut Culver Street in two. Both of these developments inaugurated a new street pattern at the heart of the town centre.

# Chapter 5 Historic Background

## Town Centre Planning Policy History

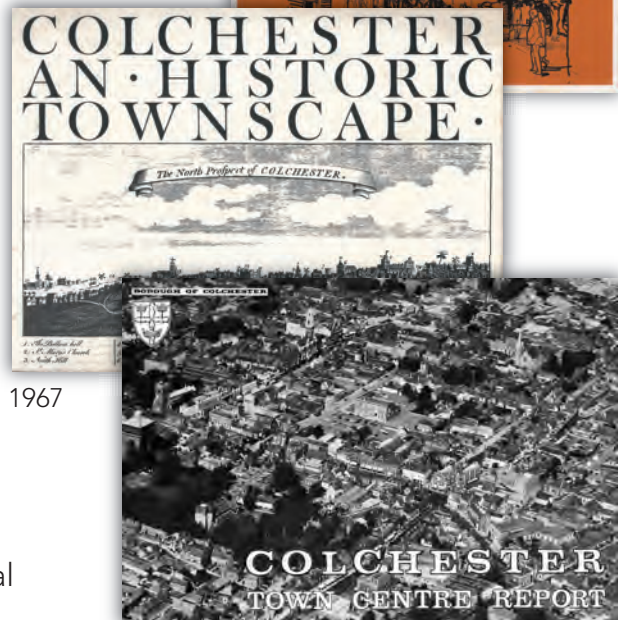
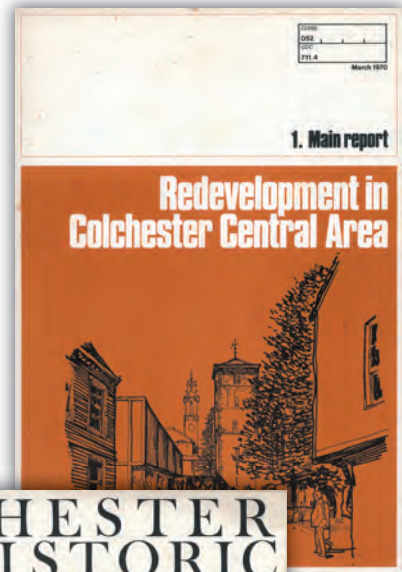
5.12 A review of earlier plans for Colchester's town centre highlights the enduring tension between commitments to preserve and enhance the historic environment and pressures to redevelop to meet market demands, the rise in car ownership, and changes in employment and shopping trends.

5.13 Postwar plans for the town centre emerged slowly. A development plan prepared by the County Council was approved in 1957 for the period to 1971. It was based on survey work undertaken during 1949-52.

*'Like many other towns, Colchester produced a series of tentative central area plans in the post-war period. As these were largely highway and traffic management based it was not surprising that the overall fabric and townscape was somewhat neglected when in 1967 the Borough Council proceeded with an extensive study of the area in advance of the preparation of a Town Centre Plan.'* (Report on Town Centre Revitalisation, 1976)

5.14 The Town Centre plan, published in 1969, reflected the prevailing goal of a functional and attractive townscape, and large scale redevelopment was accepted as part of that objective. It was assumed that the centre would remain the focus for shopping and jobs and the plan proposed redevelopment in areas now known as Lion Walk, Culver Precinct and St. John's/Vineyard. Car traffic has consistently been seen as an inappropriate element in the historic core. The 1968 Town Centre Report by Colchester Council stated: *'It is evident from the studies that long term unrestricted vehicular entry cannot be tolerated and private car usage must be limited by the restriction of internal parking space, the improvement of peripheral parking facilities and what is more important the improvement of public transport facilities. Traffic management must play its part and further restrictions on complete accessibility in the town and through traffic must be planned. It is inevitable that these policies will not be wholly popular. However, in the interest of retaining the town's character the unimpeded entry of traffic into the town with its prejudicial attributes must be stopped.'* Extensive constraints on the car in general, however, were not of course supported in the years predating concerns about climate change and a less interventionist view was put forth in the 1967 Land Use/Transportation Study noted:

March 1970



1967

May 1968

# Chapter 5 Historic Background

*'It is thought undesirable to restrict the use of motor vehicles more than is absolutely necessary and although some form of pricing to control car parking is recommended, this general restriction is not a course which would be suggested without a full investigation of alternatives.'*

5.15 The decision in the 1960s to carve out a set of relief roads around the Town Centre was accordingly intended to limit car access to the Town Centre rather than to limit car journeys in general, although the need to provide good public transport was consistently noted. The physical impact of the creation of new roads was the isolation of the Town Centre from the Victorian estates to the south and west. Peripheral car parks were also meant to be part of the solution, although they were never provided at the level anticipated in the early 1960s when it was thought that 10,000 spaces would be needed by 1981. 6300 spaces were proposed in the 1969 Plan, while 3,252 were actually being provided in the 1984 Plan. There was also a commitment to transferring day-to-day food shopping to 'effective suburban centres' to lessen demand in the town centre.

5.16 The success of this approach, however, was questioned by a 1976 study which commented:

*'Apart from Kingsway and the new Lion Walk Precinct, the centre of Colchester has recently become a scene of development stagnation and considerable dereliction caused by the run-down of several existing trades and businesses. This is completely in contradiction of the ambitious plans of the 1960s when the centre's economy was buoyant and wages in general continued to spiral in an upwards direction. Today both the national economy and the purchasing power of the weekly wage packet have to a large extent diminished. The traumatic affect of this financial situation upon the town centre has resulted in a drastic slow-down in the previously approved Plan, as developments are postponed and car parks abandoned or shelved and the number of empty shops increase. The opening of the major redevelopment at Lion Walk could not have happened in a worse economic climate as there is a decrease in demand for new commercial premises which has caused shops vacated by occupiers of new accommodation in the Precinct to remain unfilled. Certain commercial stagnation is undoubtedly further affected by the failure to keep up with the planned provision of parking spaces in the town and the present shortage of car parking has made Colchester town centre extremely vulnerable to peripheral shopping pressures.'*

5.17 The Colchester Central Area Local Plan, adopted in 1984 confirmed the shift to a more incremental approach. The Plan reflected a 'growing financial restraint and a shift in attitudes away from comprehensive redevelopment towards improvement and small scale new building works'. It noted that only two of the originally envisaged redevelopment areas, Lion Walk and St. Peter's Street had been completed. (Culver Precinct was granted planning permission in 1983, but not completed until 1987-89) The shift to out-of-town shopping was now perceived to be a mixed blessing, with the Council seeking to resist some new development which was considered to harm Town Centre shopping. Clearly, resistance was limited in its effect, particularly since it ran counter to the Council's largely accommodating view of new development.

# Chapter 5 Historic Background

5.18 A study of UK planning first published in the late 1980s used Colchester as an example of 'trend planning' that sought to tread a delicate path between placating local conservation interests and accommodating new developments, with the balance very much in favour of accommodating new development. (*Remaking Planning: The Politics of Urban Change*, Brindley, Rydin and Stoker, Routledge, 1989). The study used the example of the complicated planning history of Culver Square to illustrate the point that the goal of preserving the Town Centre was bound to be diluted by the constraints of market demand, the Council's interests as a property developer, and the goal of modernising facilities. An additional factor for both Lion Walk and Culver Square was the desire to provide delivery servicing for lorries to minimise the effects of traffic on the High Street and pedestrian precincts. The achievement of this goal required significant excavations at the expense of the loss of sections of the Roman Wall, historic buildings, and at Lion Walk, the medieval street network, with Culver Street cut in two.

5.19 The Plan included what it branded as two new planning concepts:

- Mixed Use Areas – they were located around the primary commercial core and were designed to retain the existing range of uses, and to resist large scale development
- Areas of Development Opportunity – they were similar to the previous redevelopment areas, but broader and more flexible in concept. They included both comprehensive redevelopment and improvement to existing buildings. The 1984 Plan considered a much larger area than the previous Town Centre Plan based on the identified need to provide new offices and residential outside the core area to avoid traffic impact, and the ADOs were largely on the fringe of this wider area;

1. Essex Hall (hospital site, redeveloped for housing)
2. Colne Bank (new housing along river behind North Station Road)
3. Headgate
4. Whitewell Road
5. Vineyard
6. Magdalen Street.

5.20 The Mixed Use Areas are still with us, although the Core Strategy policies have relaxed the distinction between them and the retail core in the interests of introducing more early evening leisure uses into the retail core. Areas of Development Opportunity have, however ceased to exist since they've mostly been redeveloped (with the exception of Vineyard Gate). The Core Strategy returned the focus to a more tightly drawn town centre, given the continuing need to focus on traffic, public realm and the mix of uses in the historic core.

# Chapter 5 Historic Background

- 5.21 The 1984 Plan noted that conditions for pedestrians and cyclists had deteriorated in recent years as traffic flows increased, but proposed to address this by providing a largely traffic free area in Lion Walk and the Culver Precinct. Provision outside this area had a vaguer commitment predicated on additional road capacity – *'further measures to help pedestrians and cyclists...may be possible when further traffic management measures are introduced and new road schemes built.'*
- 5.22 The 1995 and 2004 Local Plans continued the approach established by the 1984 Plan of promoting the Town Centre as the primary focus for comparison retail, with outlying bulky goods parks and supermarkets considered to complement rather than weaken the Town Centre's pre-eminence. The focus on the distinction between comparison and convenience retail was mirrored by the methodology of retail studies which measured supply and demand for bulky and non-bulky comparison goods and convenience shopping. This distinction between separate types of demand has tended to become less relevant with the growth of ever larger supermarkets that provide both types of shopping.
- 5.23 The SPD is accordingly the latest attempt to seek a balance between change and preserving a unique resource. This view of the problem from the 1960s is familiar:
- There are....two competing elements – the future increase in demand which an enlarging and more affluent population will make upon all central area services and facilities versus the overriding need to conserve and enhance the fabric and environment of a unique and precious historic centre. (Colchester Town Centre Plan, 1969)*
- 5.24 The main difference now is that the assumption of ever increasing prosperity and growth has started to be replaced by a focus on sustainability as well as an awareness that Town Centre issues need to be addressed through collective effort, with planning documents linked to actions delivered by a range of partners.



# Chapter 6 Vision and Objectives

## Vision

6.1 The historic Town Centre will be the cultural and economic heart of the Borough, surrounded by thriving suburbs, villages and countryside. New cultural, retail, office and mixed use developments will be delivered through regeneration of the Town Centre and its fringe.

6.2 The town centre will be an even better place for people; a place where local people, business people and visitors want to be. It will be a place which is more accessible with a greater choice of things to see and do for all tastes and ages, during the day, in the evening and into the night. Colchester will be a cleaner place with interesting buildings and streets, where people feel safer and more comfortable and where people can walk and cycle more easily. It will continue to be a place for enterprise with a rich mix of businesses which thrive in reality as well as online, providing people with jobs and purpose. All this will enhance Colchester's image, reputation and competitiveness in the world and provide a firmer platform for future growth, opportunity and local pride.



Figure 1



# Chapter 6 Vision and Objectives

## Objectives

6.3 There are a number of key objectives which underpin the Supplementary Planning Document. They are all inter-related as illustrated by Figure 1 on page 18. They are listed below together with their links to the [Better Town Centre project](#).

6.3.1 **Sustainability** – Promoting sustainability in its widest sense, including prioritising reductions in the town centre’s carbon footprint, enhancing the resilience of Town Centre commercial and social businesses, and promoting social inclusion and accessibility.

**Innovation** – Ensuring that development in Colchester Town Centre promotes and secures innovation in new techniques for enabling sustainable growth, including encouraging the local business community to implement them.

- [Creating Quality Public Places and Spaces](#)
- [Bringing New Buildings and street scenes](#)

6.3.2 **Activity** – Supporting uses for a lively Town Centre;

**Diversity** – Ensuring a healthy mix of retail, leisure/culture, business and residential uses.

**Retail:** Retail is the key driver of the Town Centre economy, and maintaining an appropriate balance between different types of successful retail uses (including both national chains independent retailers and market traders) and between other activities in the main Town Centre shopping areas will be critical to securing its future vitality.

**Leisure/Culture:** Expansion of leisure and cultural offerings appropriate to different areas of the Town Centre (ie: arts-related activities in St. Botolph’s Quarter, entertainment/restaurants in the shopping core), outdoor spaces offering multi-functional areas for informal recreation and relaxation, and use of traditional, new and social media to publicise and promote these attractions.



Creating a place for you and your family



Creating new public spaces and places



Bringing new buildings & Street scenes



Supporting and growing business and retailers

# Chapter 6 Vision and Objectives

**Offices and Residential:** Supporting the provision of office and living space based on the Town Centre's high quality environment, accessibility, and digital connectivity.

**Creating welcoming spaces and events through the day and into the evening** – Providing a wide range of accessible facilities and spaces for events and activities that bring people into the town centre throughout the day and year. Developing the evening economy so that the town feels safe and inviting after dark.

- Improving Colchester for You and Your Family
- Supporting and Growing Business and Retailers
- Promoting Colchester
- New Things to See, Do and Visit
- Changing Colchester After Dark

6.3.3 **Heritage and Design** – Enhancing the old, creating tomorrow's heritage;

**Identity and Unique Character** – Reinforcing, interpreting and safeguarding the distinctive character and identity of Colchester and its rich heritage, including its Roman core street grid, unique views, changes in elevation, historic buildings, green spaces, and street scenes. Enriching the existing environment using a creative and dynamic approach to new spaces and buildings.

**Amenity** – Providing a safe, attractive and accessible town centre that is well maintained.

**Quality** – Providing a set of design principles for all new development within the town centre to promote a continuous and consistent high quality well-maintained environment.

- Creating Quality Public Places and Spaces
- Bringing New Buildings
- Ensuring Clean, Safe Places and Spaces



Getting to and around Colchester



Promoting Colchester



Things to see and do in and around Colchester



Safe and clean places and spaces.



# Chapter 6 Vision and Objectives

## 6.3.4 Movement – Creating a safe and accessible town centre to;

- Manage unnecessary through traffic in the town centre, enhancing pedestrian priority
- Provide priority to more sustainable modes of transport including public transport, cycling and walking
- Improve use and operation of public transport
- Deliver a sustainable transport infrastructure to accommodate future growth and enable a vibrant strong economy



Changing Colchester after dark

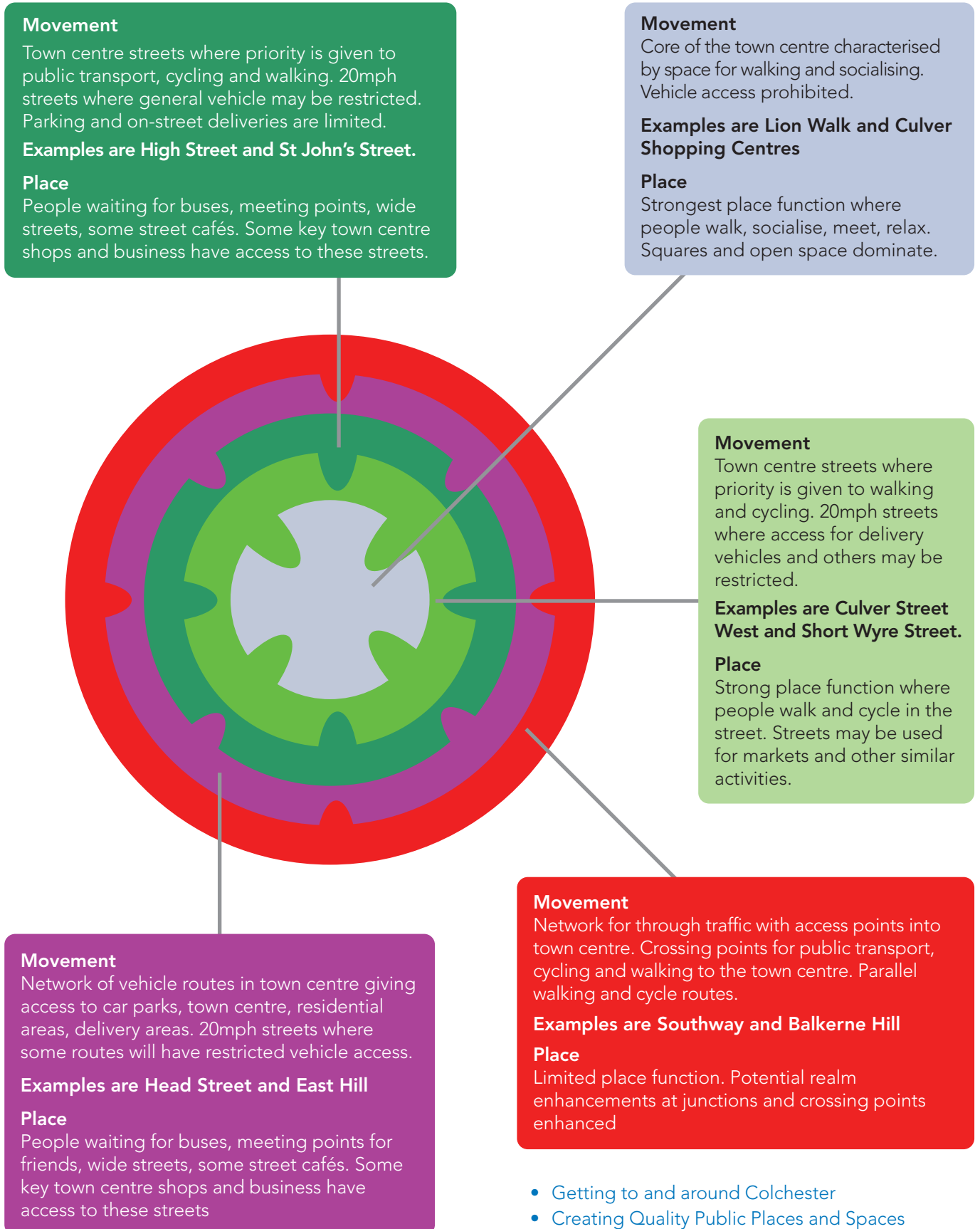
Town centres should be the most walkable part of the network, and should accommodate public transport services, cycle routes and cycle parking, while providing suitable vehicular access and parking to sustain economic activity and facilitate accessibility where appropriate. As centres of public life, town centres must actively enable access by all in society, as well as supporting appropriate access by delivery, service and emergency vehicles. At the same time they should be attractive places to shop, eat, drink, work, play, do business, meet, study, hang around in and look at.<sup>1</sup> Through a range of measures greater priority is given over to more people orientated forms of movement. This approach is generally accepted to help strengthen the economy of a street or area. This approach is being applied to Colchester town centre. Figure 2 on page 22 illustrates the priorities to be given to different transport modes in different parts of the Town Centre.

- [Getting to and around Colchester](#)



# Chapter 6 Vision and Objectives

Figure 2– Principles of Movement and Place in and Around the Town Centre



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre



- 7.1 The Supplementary Planning Document expands on but does not duplicate policies found in national policy (National Planning Policy Framework) or in local policy as set forth in the Core Strategy, Development Policies and Site Allocations Development Policy Documents. The following section lists policies to help deliver the 4 main objectives listed above will be for the Town Centre.

## Sustainability Policy Base

National Planning Policy Framework

Core Strategy Policies SD1 – Sustainable Development and ER1 – Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

Development Policy DP25 – Renewable Energy

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

## Sustainable Design and Construction

- 7.2 All development in the Town Centre will be expected to meet the highest possible standards of sustainable design and construction. Major new commercial development should seek to achieve a minimum **BREEAM** level of 'excellent'.
- 7.2.1 The Council has adopted a Sustainable Design and Construction **Supplementary Planning Document** which highlights the national commitment to increasing standards of sustainable construction, with progressively higher standards over time for both residential (Code for Sustainable Homes) and commercial (BREEAM). New developments in the Town Centre will be expected to meet and where possible exceed these standards.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

7.2.2 The following sustainable design and construction measures feature in two case studies of best practice retail development:

- Effective procurement and locally sourced materials
- Use of local labour
- High recycling rates
- Natural ventilation
- Use of high efficiency lamps and intelligent lighting controls
- Rainwater harvesting
- Exceeding Building Regulations on insulation
- Ecological enhancement
- Car parking policies

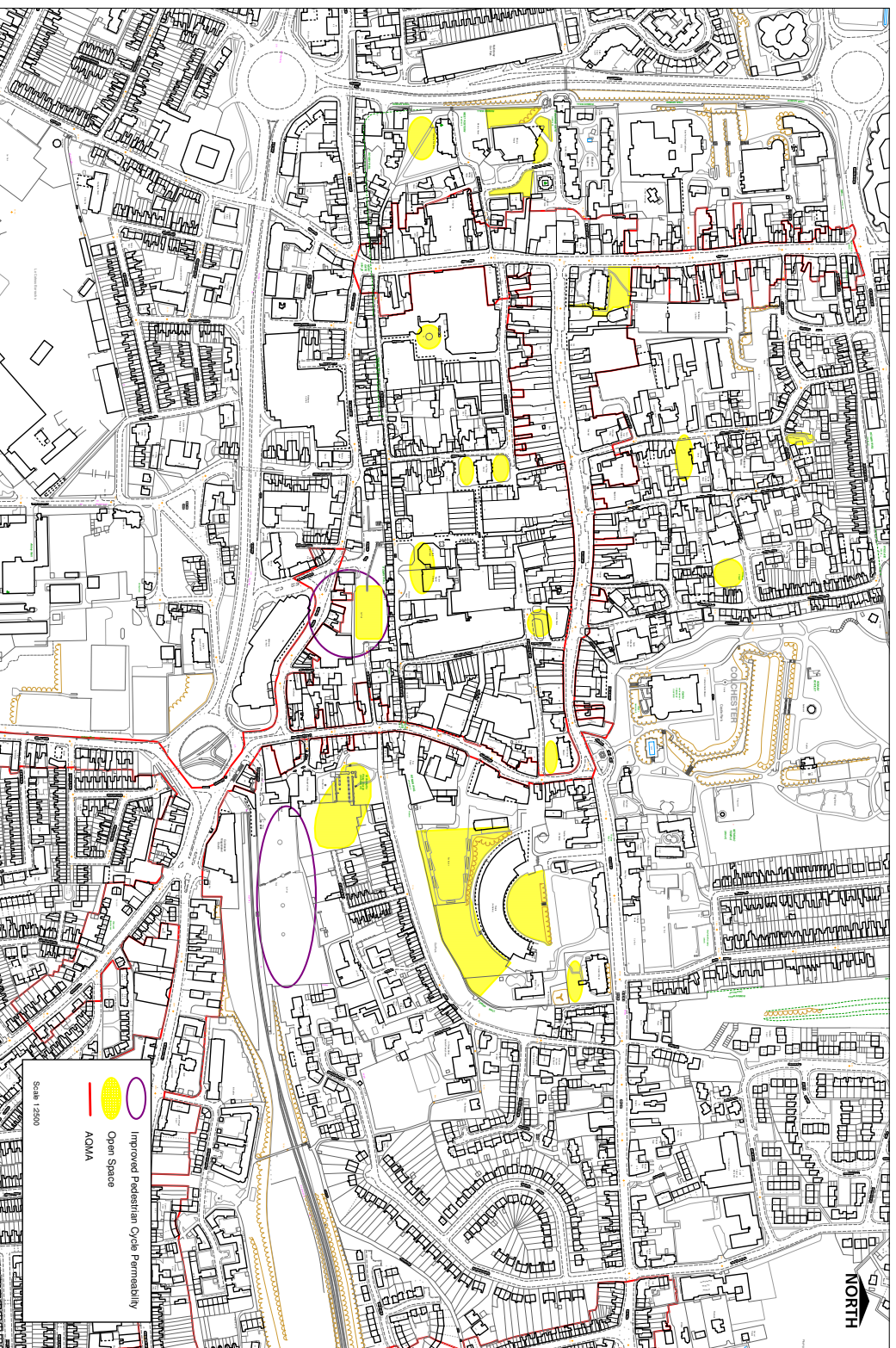
7.2.3 Whilst the Council encourages a flexible approach to BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes and does not want to be prescriptive in terms of which credits should be achieved, applicants should consider incorporating the above measures into proposals.

7.2.4 There is a two stage approach to sustainable energy; reducing energy demand and providing energy sustainably. Development should be designed to reduce energy demand through passive design and energy efficiency measures. For example, buildings should be orientated to make maximum use of daylight and designed to make the best use of natural ventilation to provide cooling in summer; this is particularly important for retail and office developments.

7.2.5 Proposals for new buildings in the Town Centre should include information on the energy performance of the proposed building. For minor development it will be acceptable for information to be included in the Design and Access Statement. Applications for major development should be submitted with an Energy Strategy. Energy Strategies should include, but not be limited to, a description of the development, commitment to carbon reduction and sustainable design, description of how the energy hierarchy has been followed, and what is being done above current Building Regulations. Where different renewable energy technologies have been considered and dismissed this should be explained in the Energy Strategy.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Sustainability Map



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

7.2.6 Proposals for the re-use of existing buildings will also be expected to incorporate sustainable design measures. However, it is vital that the unique characters of historic buildings and the Town Centre conservation area are not put at risk by unsympathetic alterations, unnecessary intervention, or changing environmental conditions. Opportunities for improving energy efficiency and incorporating renewable energy may be limited for historic buildings and proposals should focus on other sustainability measures such as reducing water consumption, introducing landscaping, promoting sustainable travel and effective waste management.

## Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

7.3 The Council will expect new development to incorporate renewable and/or low carbon energy technologies. The delivery of an integrated Combined Heat and Power and District Heating and Cooling network will be supported to enable existing and new development to achieve significant carbon savings.



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

- 7.3.1 Whilst individual schemes to deliver renewable energy schemes will help address climate change, over the longer term it will be important to develop integrated Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and district heating and cooling to enable existing and new development to achieve significant carbon savings. The Council considers that gas CHP would be preferable to other sources as whilst the carbon savings are not as great gas CHP does not result in transport or air quality issues. Applicants of large scale schemes, particularly schemes that can act as anchor loads<sup>3</sup>, will be encouraged to work with the Council to initiate district-wide energy schemes, especially where there is an opportunity to link to existing development. Large schemes with a mixture of phases should consider the need to provide space for an energy centre and for buildings that come forward as part of the early phases to be capable of connecting to a district heating at a later date.
- 7.3.2 The Vineyard Gate retail development provides a good opportunity to develop a CHP district heating network. The proposed mix of uses will ensure a diverse energy density. The Council will discuss the opportunity for CHP district heating early on in pre-application discussions for this site and if it is not viable evidence should be submitted as part of the planning application to demonstrate this.
- 7.3.3 Solar photovoltaics (PV) is particularly suitable to the Town Centre. Unlike some other renewable technologies solar PV panels do not take up land (if mounted on the roof), which is a key consideration in town centres. Solar PV also does not require frequent deliveries of raw materials, another key consideration in a town centre site, and is viable on a small scale basis. All new buildings in the Town Centre should consider orientating the roof to face South East to South West with a pitch of 30 to 50° to maximise the potential for solar PV. However, this should not be at the expense of good design principles and the protection of the historic environment. The visual impact of PV panels will be of particular concern in town centre Conservation Areas.

<sup>3</sup> Anchor loads are buildings that have a large heat demand and act as a catalyst for district heating schemes. Heat demand is often steady over the course of the day.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Adding to Green Infrastructure

**7.4 The Council will encourage development proposals which add to the Town Centre's green infrastructure and enhance its biodiversity through such means as green roofs and walls, tree planting and the provision of green links.**

- 7.4.1 Green infrastructure provides a multitude of functions. It protects and enhances biodiversity, provides space for water, encourages healthy living and promotes sustainable modes of transport. It has a key role to play in climate change adaptation by making places more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate.
- 7.4.2 Every development provides opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Green roofs and walls, which convert a roof or a wall into an area where plants can grow, are examples of an enhancement whose benefits could serve as a Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SuDS), a biodiversity habitat, an open space (for a green roof) and an insulation source as well as being an attractive design feature.
- 7.4.3 Colchester Borough Council's Comprehensive [Climate Risk Assessment \(March 2010\)](#) looked at climate projections for Colchester and identified numerous risks that are or will be facing the Borough as a result of a changing climate. Of particular relevance to this SPD are an increased risk of flooding, water resource shortages, higher temperatures and the urban heat island effect, and managing ground conditions. The Risk Assessment highlighted a number of adaptive actions that could reduce the identified risks with the expectation that these actions would be progressed into an ongoing Adaptation Action Plan. The delivery of green roofs, green walls, tree planting, SuDS, open space, and sustainable design and construction are all identified as adaptive actions. Development proposals for the Town Centre provide opportunities to implement some of these adaptation measures.



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Air Quality

**7.5 New development will have regard to the need to improve air quality in the Town Centre. Applicants may be required to carry out assessment into the air quality impact of their development and implement mitigation measures if required.**

7.5.1 Many of the main streets within and leading to the Town Centre have been designated as Air Quality Management Areas, reflecting their high levels of traffic congestion. The affected streets are shown on the Sustainability Map. The Council is developing an Air Quality Management Plan for these areas which will incorporate a range of measures, including traffic management; improvements to public transport, pedestrian and cycle networks, technological innovations and continuous monitoring. New development in the Town Centre will be evaluated for its effect on the air quality of the area, and required to implement appropriate measures to improve air quality, in line with Development Policies DP1 and DP2. Specific advice on air quality assessments for new development is published separately as a [Guidance Note](#)



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre



## Digital connectivity

7.6 New development will be encouraged to capitalise on the advantages being provided by the expansion of the Town Centre's digital network outlined in the [Council's Digital Strategy](#) To permit e-commerce and increasingly, mobile or m-commerce which will enable consumers and businesses to research, compare and buy goods and services and engage with companies, organisations and each other.

7.6.1 Colchester is pursuing development of a next-generation broadband network using its existing CCTV network which will put it in the forefront of technological innovation. New development will benefit from this enhanced access and will be encouraged to develop innovative approaches to design and provision of facilities which capitalise on this feature.

### Evidence Base

Air Quality Management Plan  
Digital Strategy

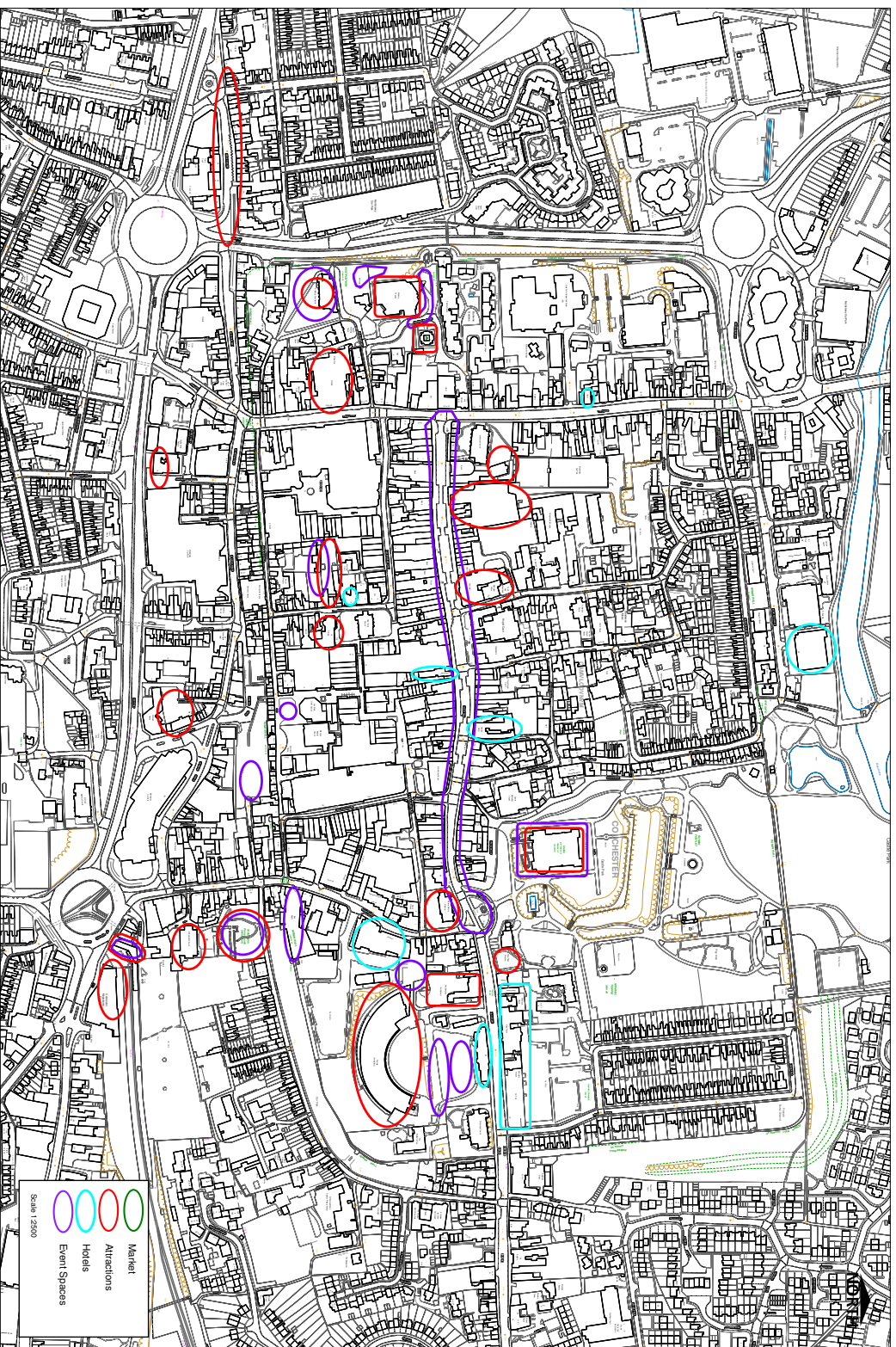
### Activity

#### Policy Base

National Planning Policy Framework  
Core Strategy CE Policies (Centres and Employment)  
Dev Policy DP6 (Town Centre Uses)  
Site Allocations SA TC1 (Appropriate Uses within the Town Centre and North Station Regeneration Area)

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Activity Map



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Mix of Uses

7.7 The Town Centre will incorporate a mix of uses to promote a distinctive identity, maintain street activity, and support economic vitality. In accordance with Core Strategy Centres and Employment policies, the town centre will be the primary location for retail, office, leisure and entertainment uses.

Development in the regenerated St. Botolph's Quarter will reflect the focus on culture with the firstsite gallery at its heart.

The balance between retail and non-retail uses will be guided by the approach in Development Policy DP6 which provides for at least 85% retail frontage in the Inner Core, 50% retail in the Outer Core. A more flexible criteria based approach is applied in the outlying Mixed Use Areas which allows for a wide range of uses as long as they contribute to the area's design quality, activity levels and character and have no significant adverse impact on neighbourhood amenity.



7.7.1 A focus on diversity of use that capitalises on Colchester's unique offer will drive initiatives to invigorate the Town Centre. This emphasis is also found in the [Creative Colchester Strategy](#), which provides a framework for capitalising on the town's creative industries. As the Mary Portas review of high streets observes, town centres should 'become places where we go to engage with other people in our communities, where shopping is just one small part of a rich mix of activities'. A flexible approach to uses in Mixed Use areas is intended to support this rich mix and increase the attractiveness of the Town Centre as a destination for a range of activities.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

7.7.2 Overall levels of development and types of use in the Town Centre are set forth in the adopted Core Strategy as follows:

Residential use – Core Strategy Table H1a lists that the Town Centre and fringe area will accommodate 2000 additional units over the period 2001-2021.

Offices – In accordance with Core Strategy Policy CE2a, the Town Centre will seek to deliver 40,000 sqm of gross office floor space in the Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Town Centre Fringe in the period 2006-2021.

Leisure – The Council will promote a wide range of leisure activities and cultural events in the Town Centre, in particular supporting use of the public realm as a space for art, music, markets, socialising, recreation and relaxation.

This mix of uses is designed to provide a sustainable central focus of activity which can be easily accessed by non-car means of transport.

## Street Markets

7.8 The Council will promote and sustain the town's historic street markets and will allocate additional areas as needed for expansion, development and/or relocation of the market on selected days.



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

- 7.8.1 Colchester Charter Market has been in place in some form since 1189 and it is currently situated in various pedestrianised areas of the town centre, including Culver Street West, Long Wyre Street and Culver Street West on a Friday and Saturday. In addition to the official Charter Market, there are further opportunities to expand specialist markets to new locations and times.

Colchester's current market arrangements needs to be set within the wider local and national consideration of the role markets play in contributing to the social, environmental and economic well-being of communities. Studies have identified the role markets play in:

- Providing a sense of place
- Being part of the nation's cultural heritage
- Remaining an important element of the economy, particularly in relation to independent retailing, local employment and business start-up opportunities.
- Offering local access to fresh produce and other commodities
- Reducing environmental impacts e.g. by eliminating excessive packaging/waste.

*(Markets 21, A Policy and Research Review of UK Retail and Wholesale Markets in the 21st Century, Retail Markets Alliance, Nov. 2009)*

- 7.8.2 Given the restrictions on the availability of Council funding, securing more investment in markets, will require the Council to pursue innovative new approaches to funding and partnerships. Under any scenario however, the Council would retain control over the location of markets. It is accordingly important for new locations to be identified to address the longer term operational and expansion needs of the markets. Sites will accordingly be developed to meet the need for market development based on the following criteria:

- Central to other Town Centre retail facilities
- Adequate facilities and space to accommodate stalls based on stall holder input
- Potential for integrating with related activities and events to create an active public space
- Potential for public realm enhancement and improved streetscape

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Supporting the Evening Economy

**7.9** The Council will seek to create a welcoming Town Centre after dark by encouraging a diverse range of uses that provide activity without compromising amenity. The Council will work to achieve and maintain 'Purple Flag' status in recognition of a well-managed town centre at night in order to encourage a high quality and diverse evening and night time economy. This will entail pursuing strategies which cover both the early evening hours when there are opportunities to provide more activities and uses catering to families, older people and town centre workers as well as the provision of bars, clubs and restaurants which predominate in the late evening hours.



**7.9.1** The late evening economy is currently most visible along Head Street and the High Street and Queen St/St Botolph's Street. This concentration is considered to amplify problems of noise and anti-social behaviour rather than to allow them to be minimised and controlled. The Council will accordingly work with other agencies to identify monitor and manage the 'stress area' of the evening economy so that resources can be more effectively focused. There will be a focus on the creation or redefinition of spaces for evening economy uses, which diversify the evening/night time offer rather than replicate existing activities in the following areas, including improvements to lighting specified in the Lighting Strategy -

Existing areas – Head Street, North Hill, High Street

New areas – St. Nicholas Square, firstsite and associated open space/related uses, Mercury Theatre area

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

- 7.9.2 The Colchester Night Time Economy study commissioned by the Council provides an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Colchester's night time economy among users; perceived issues among non-users as well as the economic impact in terms of spend and employment.
- 7.9.3 Colchester town centre is a relatively small geographical area so visitor management principles are being adopted by a variety of town centre stakeholders in order to manage anti-social behaviours, facilitate safe and effective movement through the town centre and encourage a more balanced use of the town centre in the evening and into the night-time. These actions are being consolidated through pursuit of 'Purple Flag' accreditation which recognises well managed town centres at night.

## Supporting Tourism

7.10 The Council will pursue innovative approaches in interpreting the town's rich heritage for visitors and the local community. New attractions and visitor accommodation in the Town Centre will be supported subject to their compliance with other planning requirements in line with the Council's planning policy on tourism (Development Policy DP10's) focus on urban areas of Colchester.



## Evidence Base

2011 Retail Study

Cambridge Model to Estimate the Economic Impact of Tourism on Colchester Borough (collected annually)

Destination Benchmarking Visitor Opinion Surveys

Local Distinctiveness Audit, Heritage Economic and Regeneration Trust, Norwich, April 2012



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Heritage and Design

### Policy Base

National Planning Policy Framework

Core Strategy Policies UR1 Regeneration Areas, UR2 Built Design and Character, PR2 People-Friendly Streets

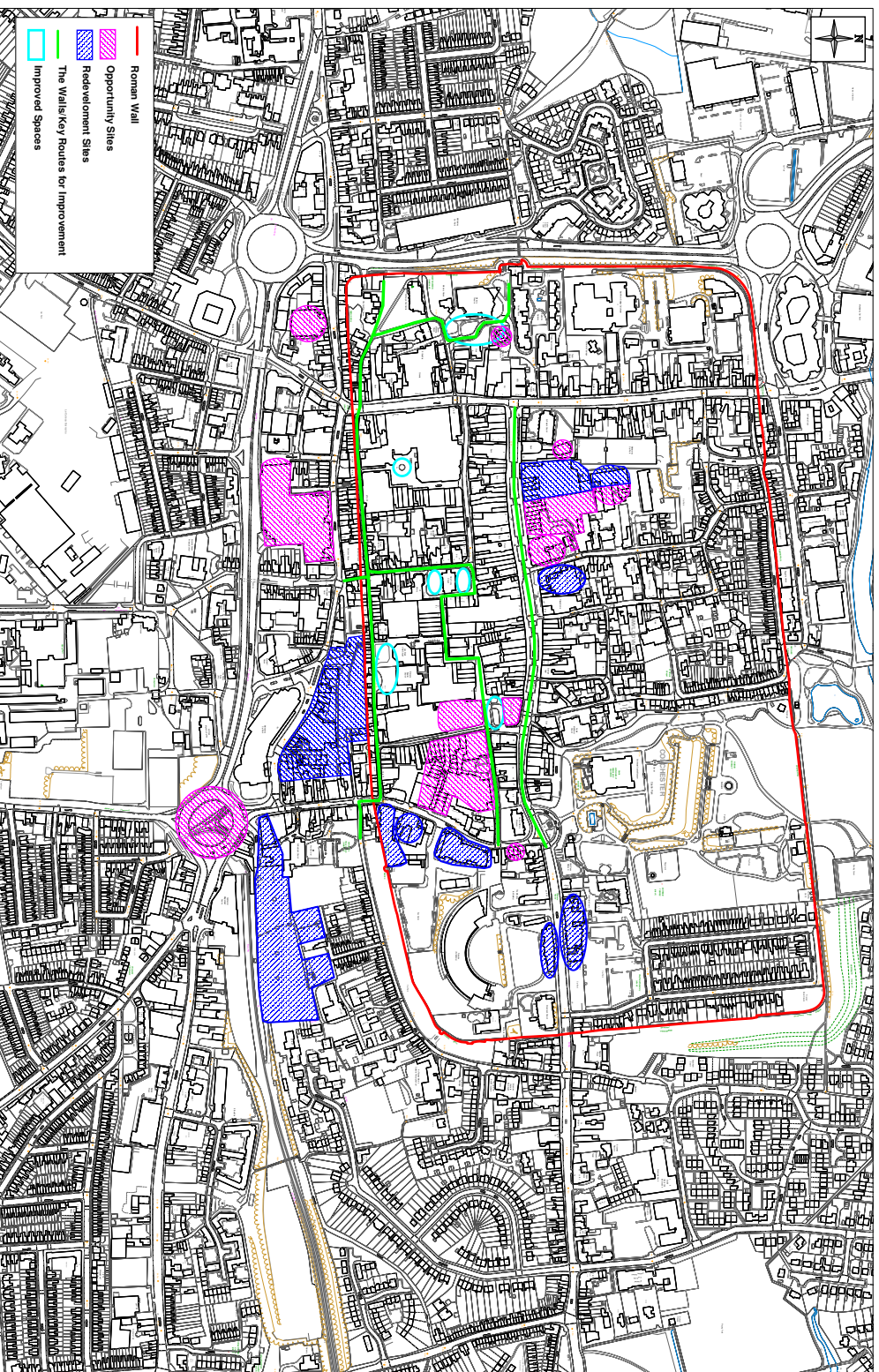
Development Policy DP14 Historic Environment Assets

Shopfront Design Guide SPD



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Heritage and Design Map



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Public Spaces

**7.11 The Council will work with landowners and stakeholders to make the most of spaces in the town, including the spaces managed by the Council. The Council will support rejuvenation of the key public spaces listed below through a series of linked designs that reflect the historic ties between spaces and yet gives each space a special, unique identity.**

### Key spaces –

**St. Nicholas Square**

**Eld Lane Baptist Church/United Reform Church open space**

**St. Botolph's Priory**

**Trinity Church Yard**

**Mercury Theatre/Balkerne Gardens**

**firstsite open space**

**Vineyard Gate open space**

7.11.1 Spaces are distinct from pavements and movement corridors and provide the opportunity to stop and enjoy the surrounding activities and environments. Town centre developments should provide spaces as appropriate which should be available for all people and which generate interest through the quality of the landscaping, public art; interpretation of heritage features as well as commercial opportunities for street markets, cafés and restaurants.

7.11.2 There are a number of underused spaces in the town centre, some of very poor quality. Many are gated churchyards, with restricted hours of opening. All, however, have the potential make a better contribution to amenity in the town centre and the Council will seek to secure funding for their improvement through associated development, its Community Infrastructure Levy, and grant funding. Further detail on design, materials and maintenance of public spaces is contained in the Public Realm Strategy. ([Appendix D](#))

## Enhancing the historic environment

7.12 The Council will work with Town Centre businesses and residents as well as statutory bodies and interest groups to secure preservation, interpretation and enhancement of the wide range of the Town Centre's rich historic and archaeological heritage, including the Roman Wall, numerous listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and landscape/streetscape features. The Council will pursue a co-ordinated and innovative approach to the interpretation of the historic environment.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

7.12.1 The Council and its partners pursue a number of strategies and projects to safeguard and promote Colchester's unique heritage, including an updated Roman Wall Management Plan which is being developed, in partnership with Friends of the Roman Wall.

## Town Centre wayfinding and links

7.13 The Council is developing integrated solutions to access to the Town Centre to reduce congestion and facilitate access by public transport and cycling. Within the historic core, access and movement by pedestrians will be prioritised. Any additional waymarking signs will be evaluated in terms of their appropriateness to the existing system. New wayfinding measures will be informed by the findings of [research involving older people's use of Colchester](#) Town Centre which highlighted the importance of landmarks in navigating through the town as well as the correct positioning of signage and its limitation on the pavement.

The Council will develop the following routes to highlight their historic/environmental importance and to link key areas of the Town Centre:

- The Walls – Historic Town Walls, parts of which date back to Roman times, encircle many parts of the Town Centre. The route leading from St. Botolph's Priory to the Hole in the Wall pub, includes many small independent retailers atop the walls. The Council will work with these retailers to develop designs, interpretation and related branding to capitalise on this unique area in terms of offering new opportunities for businesses along this route, new visitor experiences and engender a sense of civic pride by highlighting one of the town's greatest historic assets. The Council commissioned a Local Distinctiveness Audit to initiate the project which identifies the opportunities for improvement in the area along with options for delivering them.
- Tree Trail – The Town Centre includes a number of large and unique trees, with many in Castle Park and other fine specimens associated with other historic buildings, churchyards and streets in the Town Centre. A route for visitors highlighting these trees is under development.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Attractive streetscapes

Please also refer to the Public Realm Strategy ([Appendix D](#)) for specific details

- 7.14 The Council will pursue co-ordinated action on the following elements of the streetscape which contribute to its overall look and feel.
- 7.14.1. Reducing clutter – All schemes affecting the public realm will be reviewed to ensure they maximise opportunities to reduce clutter, including the hazard to movement it can represent. A rationalisation of the town’s signage and street furniture will add to the quality of the environment by reducing pavement clutter and freeing up space for movement.
  - 7.14.2. Materials – New developments and public realm schemes will be required to use high-quality materials which enhance the surrounding environment.
  - 7.14.3. Local Distinctiveness – The Council will support the provision of unique street furniture for Colchester which will highlight its local distinctiveness; enhance the space around it; encourage use; and interpret historic events and characters.
  - 7.14.4. Maintenance – New public realm improvements will be designed for ease of maintenance and longevity, and the responsibility for maintenance will be clearly delegated to the appropriate body.
  - 7.14.5. Lighting – Proposals for new lighting will be expected to comply with the [Town Centre Lighting Strategy](#), Appendix E.
  - 7.14.6. Banners – Banners for public events will only be permitted, subject to appropriate approvals, when suitably designed and in locations supported by adequate infrastructure.
  - 7.14.7. High-quality shopfronts – Applications for new shopfronts will be required to comply with the requirements set out in the Council’s adopted [Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#). This includes sympathetic signage. The SPD provides that A-boards outside shops and within the Highway will not be permitted unless permission is sought from and granted by the Highway Authority.
  - 7.14.8. Incorporation of public art to enhance interpretation – The Council will identify key opportunities and locations for public art in appropriate town centre locations, including temporary projects such as hoardings around building sites. Art projects will provide visual interest; stories about people and places; and prompts for contemplation or conversation. The Council will seek contributions for public art through Section 106 agreements and through other funding sources.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

7.14.9. Pavement cafés – Pavement cafés will be welcome to add activity to the street in appropriate areas. The extent of areas occupied by tables and chairs will be regulated through a co-ordinated approach with licensing and highways to ensure pedestrian accessibility is not compromised. A map will be made available showing areas where pavement cafés will be encouraged as well as areas which are not considered appropriate for pavement cafés based on the following criteria:

- Pavement width
- Street slope
- Health and safety issues including air quality
- Accessibility

Pavement cafés for other Town Centre areas will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

7.14.10 An attractive streetscape involves a number of inter-related elements, including unifying design themes alongside unique architectural statements; clear but non-obtrusive signage and advertising; well-managed activity levels and high quality street furniture. The above guidelines are intended to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the individual components that together support a successful urban environment. Further details on streetscape design, materials and maintenance is contained in the Public Realm Strategy. ([Appendix D](#))

## Integrating new developments into the town

**7.15 New developments in the Town Centre should be designed to integrate seamlessly into the existing fabric. Street connections and new streets must provide continuity, accessibility, and legibility for desire lines from existing quarters whilst expressing the significance of new primary attractors.**

7.15.1 New developments need to respect their context, but that does not mean they need to be anonymous. There will be opportunities for them to enhance their surroundings by contributing new public spaces to add to the variety of environments on offer in the Town Centre and the ability to support a range of events and exhibitions available to all. They can also enhance strategic green links. Whilst additional trees are not appropriate in the established street pattern of the historic core, new developments can create opportunities for a softer, green public realm although regard needs to be paid to archaeology and other constraints. New trees and plant material can be placed in containers to address such constraints. New development sites are the only large sites where the public desire for more trees in the town centre can be realised.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Policy and Evidence Base

Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal

Study on Older People's Use of Space (OPUS) 2010 – looked at older people's experience of navigating Colchester Town Centre

Local Distinctiveness Audit 2012, Heritage Economic and Regeneration Trust, Norwich, April 2012

## Movement

### Access to and within the town centre

#### Policy Base

National Planning Policy Framework

Core Strategy Policies TA1 Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour, TA2 Walking and Cycling, TA3 Public Transport, TA4 Roads and Traffic, TA5 Road Network Improvements  
Development Policies DP17 Accessibility and Access, DP19 Transport Infrastructure Proposals, DP19 Parking Standards.

- 7.16 Transport improvements in the Town Centre are designed to enhance the pedestrian environment and reduce unnecessary traffic across the town centre. This will help to boost the town's vitality and economic prosperity, while improving air quality at key locations and the reliability of public transport. The changes will also support the park and ride service.
- 7.17 Successful towns are those that are busy with people. The challenge is to bring as many people as possible to the Town Centre and once there will hopefully enjoy the experience. There have been a number of towns and cities that have reduced the level of motor vehicles in their centres such as Oxford, York, Chester, Nottingham and Lincoln following the principles of giving space to people in the Town Centre. In these towns vehicles can still access the centre but is either controlled by time or access restriction where through movement is not possible in the town centre streets. Through movement is possible on routes around the Town Centre.
- 7.18 The Borough Council has been seeking to reduce traffic in the town centre to create a more people friendly environment for many years as the Planning Policy History section above explains<sup>456</sup>. The aspiration back in 1968 included the construction of Balkerne Hill and Southway dual carriageways for through traffic and loops to allow those vehicles needing access to the Town Centre to do so.

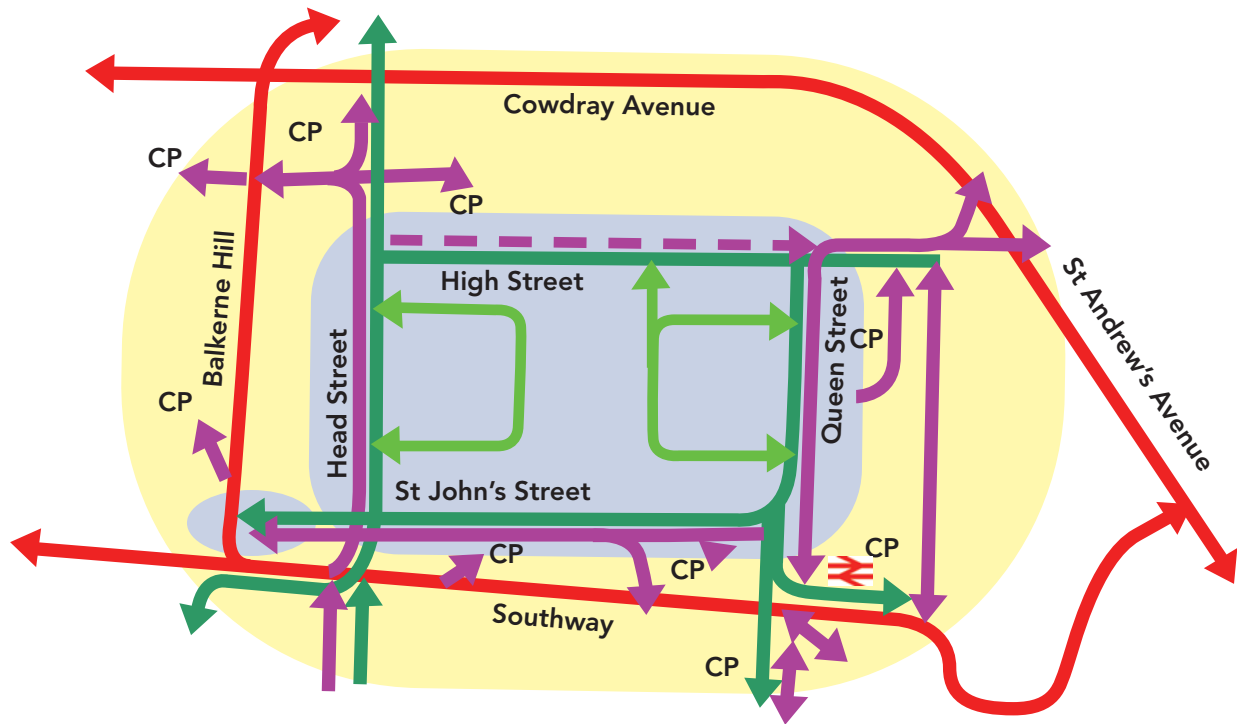
4 Colchester Town Centre Report (1968)








5 Colchester's New Transport Strategy (2001)

6 Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008 – policy PR2 People Friendly Streets, policy TA2 Walking and Cycling, policy TA3 Public transport

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

Figure 3 Schematic – Movement and Access to the Town Centre



-  Main retail area, mixed with some residential, business and leisure uses – pedestrian movement has priority in squares, shopping centres and passageways
-  Town centre residential areas
-  Streets for walking, cycling, market type activity and timed deliveries
-  Main passenger transport access and streets in the town centre
-  Restricted vehicle access street
-  Vehicle access street into/out of the town centre
-  Main vehicle routes around the town centre
- CP** Car parks

(Figure 3 illustrates how greater priority is to be given to people in Colchester Town Centre. It is not intended to be a detailed plan of all routes.)



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

The centre of town is characterised by squares and shopping centres where the priority movement is on foot. There are a number of narrow streets and lanes which give access to the central areas of shops, cafés and bars. These streets act as shared spaces where priority is for walking and cycling movements with part of the streets being used for market stalls, pavement cafés, where appropriate, timed deliveries and residential access.

## **7.20 The Council, in partnership with Essex County Council, will seek to improve access to the Town Centre by non-private car means including bus priority, reconfigured road arrangements and improved cycle/pedestrian links across major cross-town routes.**

- 7.20.1 Linking these narrow streets to the main passenger transport streets are small passageways, steps and routes through shops giving good permeability from the box of streets around the town centre. High Street, Queen Street, St Botolph's St, Osborne St, St John's St and Head Street form the main box around the core of the town centre and will become the main passenger transport drop off, pick up and interchange areas in the town centre. General vehicle access will be restricted in the High Street throughout the day resulting in a significant improvement in the environment for people whether they are shopping, waiting for a bus, socialising or passing through. In the morning and evening, traffic will be allowed into the High Street for deliveries, pick up and drop off in parking bays and through movement.
- 7.20.2 Vehicles will still be given access to Head Street, North Hill (via Head Street), Queen Street, St Botolph's St, Osborne Street and St John's Street throughout the day. These streets give access to some of the car parks which are located on the edge of the town centre. The underground delivery areas serving Lion Walk and Culver Square will continue to be accessible. Disabled parking and delivery bays will be available. The residential areas remain accessible from St Peter's Street, St John's Street, St Nicholas Square, Priory Street and Head Street.
- 7.20.3 The main vehicle routes (red) – A133 Colne Bank Ave/Cowdray Ave/ St Andrew's Avenue, A134 Westway/Balkerne Hill/Southway/Magdalen Street are the main routes for traffic not needing to enter the town centre area. Movement patterns to access inside of these main routes may need to change.
- 7.20.4 The principle is similar to Essex County Council's Traffic Management Strategy Functional Route Hierarchy, but in the town centre area recognises that the people and place function have an important role in the vitality as well as the movement function of a street.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

- 7.20.5 The most sustainable way to access the town centre is to either walk or cycle. New and improved routes will be considered to encourage these modes, for example removing the no cycling order on subways, improving crossing points on roads which sever the town centre from its neighbourhoods, and giving better access by bike on route which lead to the town centre. Walking will similarly be encouraged by an improved walking environment and clearly marked routes.
- 7.20.6 Buses bring many people into the Town Centre. Bus priority will be made, where appropriate, on the main access routes to allow them fast access into, and better circulation around the Town Centre. Colchester Town rail station allows access into the heart of the Town Centre from the mainline rail network. The station forms an important function for the number of people who live, work and visit the Town Centre. The Council will encourage the rail operators to maintain and improve, where appropriate, services to this station.

## Movement networks and priorities within the Town Centre

**7.21 The Council will develop and maintain new and existing links for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles as illustrated by Figure 3. On some roads this may be achieved by sharing the road space for all users. Some roads may have differing priorities for different modes according to the time of day to maximise pedestrian space during the day and allow for deliveries outside main shopping hours. Vehicular movements will be regulated to minimise their negative effect on air quality and congestion and give priority for buses, taxis and cyclists.**

### Pedestrians and cyclists

- 7.21.1 Reducing unnecessary traffic in the town centre will improve the street environment and will make more space of other uses for example for pedestrian to stop, browse and mingle; and more space for cafés, stalls and events.
- 7.21.2 Access within the town centre by bike will be improved by allowing cyclists to travel through one way and access only points as well as investigating new routes into the town centre. Suitable cycle parking must be provided at new and existing locations where there is a need, either on street or within buildings (i.e. a cycle centre)

### Public transport users

- 7.21.3 The Council will seek to support efficient interchanges between public transport routes, pedestrian links and key Town Centre facilities. The Council will work with public transport providers to promote the frequency, duration, speed, reliability, and capacity of services.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

- 7.21.4 Bus circulation within the Town Centre core is important to serve those shopping working, living or visiting the Town Centre. Reducing congestion in the Town Centre helps buses' reliability, thereby making travelling by bus more attractive. It is anticipated that Park and Ride will be available in 2013 and dedicated Park and Ride buses will serve the town centre. Traffic management measures which assist with the circulation of buses also helps the Park and Ride buses.
- 7.21.5 One of the ways to encourage people to use buses is the provision of quality bus information. This applies to information before they travel so they can make informed choices, information at stops telling them where they have to wait and real time information so they have confidence in knowing how long they have to wait. Whilst waiting, the bus user will need quality waiting facility by way of shelters or waiting areas.

## **Car users**

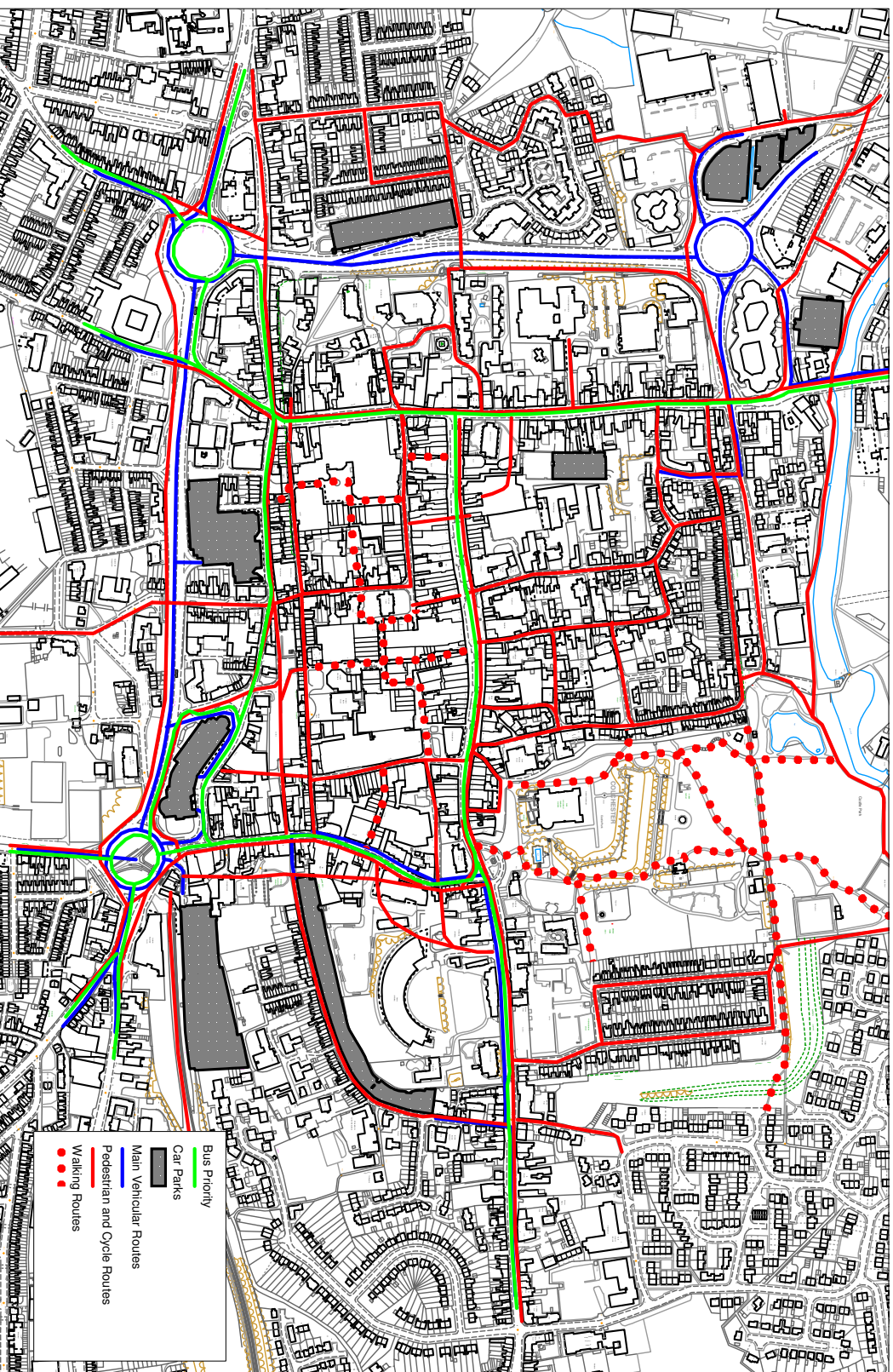
- 7.21.6 The Council will provide appropriate levels of short-stay parking in the Town Centre during the day, evening and overnight, to support the town's commercial activity.
- 7.21.7 The provision of P&R will enable some long stay car drivers who currently park in the town centre core to park in the P&R site, thereby not having to access the core by car. The parking pricing strategy will help ensure the town centre is kept viable and vibrant by offering attractive prices to those that need to park in the Town Centre. The strategy will encourage car traffic to use the most appropriate car parks, therefore helping to manage congestion and demand.
- 7.21.8 Drivers with disabilities can park in designated bays in the car parks, as well as suitable on street provision where appropriate.

## **Taxi and private hire users**

- 7.21.9 Taxis form an important part of the public transport system and should be allowed good access to the Town Centre at all times. Taxis will be allowed in some roads where private vehicles are restricted and ranks provided where possible for dropping off and picking up passengers.

# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Movement in the Town Centre Map



# Chapter 7 Planning Policy in the Town Centre

## Access for deliveries

7.21.10 Deliveries to the shops in the Town Centre as well as other service vehicles are the lifeblood of the town. Suitable access must be made available for them. However due to conflicting demands for the roadspace and the need to improve air quality, deliveries will be timed on some roads.

## Motorcycle users

7.21.11 Motorcycles will be allowed to access the town centre during the times vehicles are restricted via the bus priority points.

7.21.12 Motorcycle parking will continue to be provided within car parks and on street where appropriate, to help encourage this mode.

## Behavioural change and working with others

7.21.13 The Council will work with organisations in and adjacent to the town centre, to help them manage their travel. This could be by way of travel planning for staff and visitors of Town Centre businesses and attractions.



# Chapter 8 Character Areas and Opportunity Sites

- 8.1 The Town Centre contains within it a number of areas with a unique identity and function. The following maps illustrates these areas as well as proposals and guidelines to retain and enhance the areas' locally distinctiveness buildings, spaces and functions. Further detail on the Character Areas is contained within the Public Realm Strategy [Appendix D](#) which provides guidelines for uses, materials and urban design.
- 8.2 The Character Areas include both functional areas such as the Shopping Core; and single streets such Head Street/ North Hill. Each Character Area includes a number of strengths and weaknesses which form the basis of enhancement proposals. Key sites for redevelopment/reuse are identified for each Character Area as appropriate and are illustrated on the maps that follow along with the area specific proposals and issues identified on the Key Themes maps (Sustainability, Activity, Movement and Heritage and Design).

## The Character Areas are:

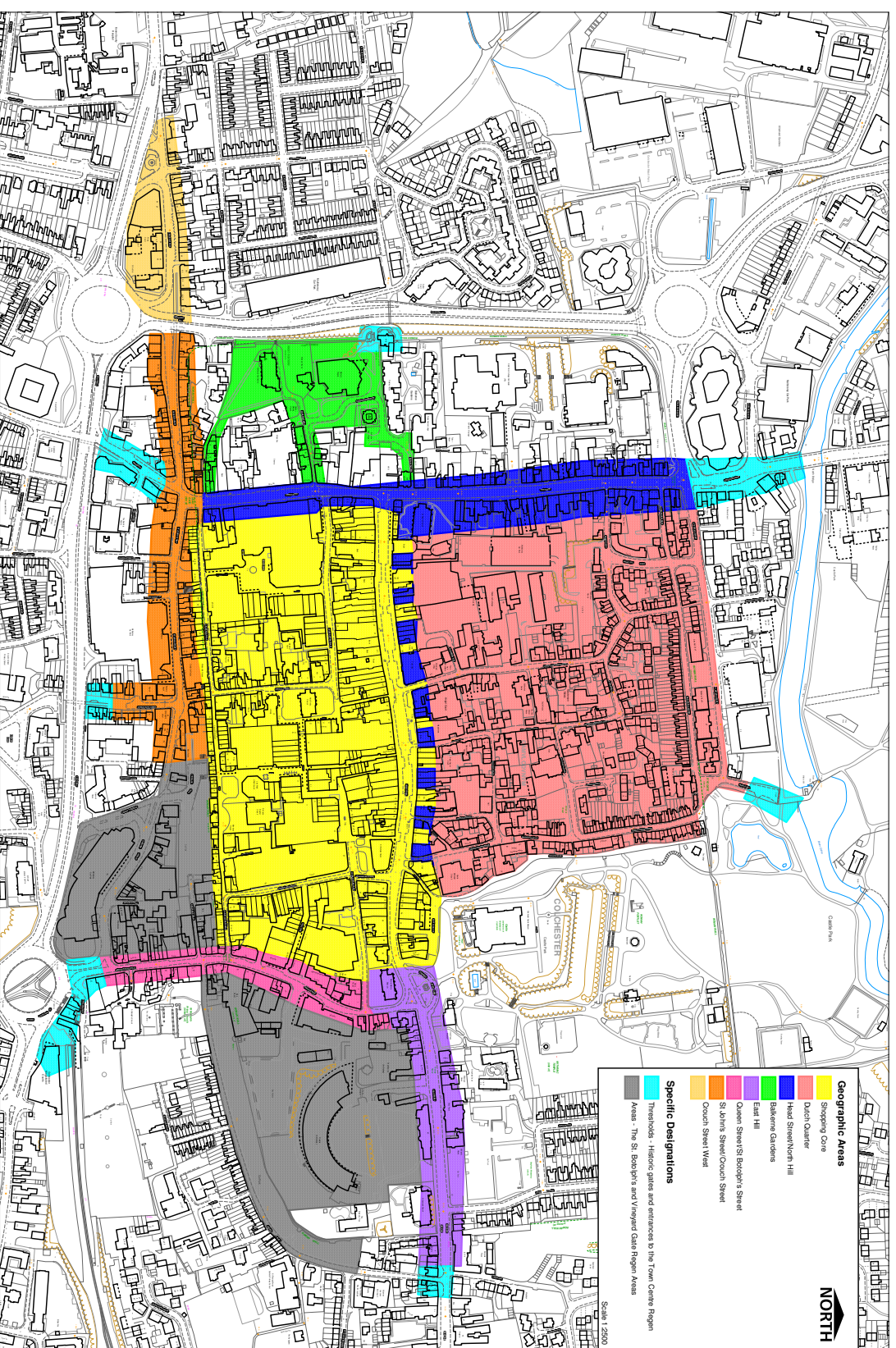
1. Shopping Core
2. Dutch Quarter
3. Head Street/North Hill
4. Balkerne Gardens
5. East Hill/High Street
6. Queen's Street/ St. Botolph's Street
7. St John's Street/Crouch Street East
8. Crouch Street West
9. Vineyard Gate/ St Botolph's Quarter.



West Stockwell Street in the Dutch Quarter

# Chapter 8 Character Areas and Opportunity Sites

## Geographic Areas Map



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# Chapter 9 Delivery Strategy and Schedule

## Delivery Strategy and Schedule

### Partnership Working

9.1 Delivery of the plan relies on an integrated and coordinated approach. Within the Council, the Town Centre Steering Group will coordinate delivery of the Action Plan associated with the SPD. This group will coordinate with a wide range of public, private sector and third sector partners including:

#### Public Sector

Essex County Council  
Essex Police  
NHS and Primary Care Trusts

#### Business

Colchester Retail Business Association (CORBA)  
Chamber of Commerce  
Individual Town Centre businesses  
Colchester Business Group  
Large Retailers Forum  
Market and Street Traders  
Walls Working Group  
Colchester & District Hospitality Association  
Pubwatch  
Colchester Business Against Crime (COLBAC)

#### Transport

Colchester Hackney Carriage Association  
Taxi Drivers' Association  
Bus Operators  
CBus (Bus users group)  
Colchester Cycle Campaign  
Greater Anglia Rail Operator

#### Cultural

firstsite Gallery  
Slack Space  
Mercury Theatre  
Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service  
Headgate Theatre  
Colchester Arts Centre



# Chapter 9 Delivery Strategy and Schedule

## Other Institutions

University of Essex  
Garrison

## Residents' Associations and Amenity Groups

Colchester Tourist Guides' Association  
Friends of the Roman Wall  
Destination Colchester

## Castle Ward Neighbourhood Action Panel

Fair Access to Colchester  
Civic Society  
Friends of Castle Park  
Colchester in Bloom

## Voluntary Groups

Colchester Community Voluntary Services (CCVS)  
Open Road

## Funding

9.2 Commitments within this plan will be delivered through a variety of public and private funding sources. Key among these will be:

- Community Infrastructure Levy charges
- Section 106 payments linked to specific developments
- Grant opportunities at national and European level.

## Delivery plan

9.3 The Council's Better Town Centre Steering Group co-ordinates the delivery of Town Centre projects and programmes. Information about how projects are being delivered is available on the [www.bettertowncentre.co.uk](http://www.bettertowncentre.co.uk) website.

## Monitoring

The success of Town Centre SPD will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR monitors all Colchester planning policies. It was first published in 2005 and has been continually published each December. Each AMR looks back over the previous year and assesses how the adopted documents have performed in relation to the aims and objectives set out. The success of this SPD will accordingly be measured through the indicators set for the planning policies that underpin it.

# Appendices

## Appendix A – List of Local Plan policies

The Local Plan (formerly the local Development Framework) provides the overall strategic guidance for the Borough of Colchester, including the Town Centre.

The following policies are of particular relevance:

### Core Strategy

- SD1 – Sustainable Development Locations
- SD2 – Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure
- CE1 – Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy
- CE2a – Town Centre
- H1 – Housing Delivery
- H2 – Housing Density
- H3 – Housing Diversity
- H4 – Affordable Housing
- UR1 – Regeneration Areas
- UR2 – Built Design and Character
- PR1 – Open Space
- PR2 – People Friendly Streets
- TA1 – Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour
- TA2 – Walking and Cycling
- TA3 – Public Transport
- TA4 – Roads and Traffic
- TA5 – Parking
- ER1 – Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

### Site Allocations

- SA TC1 – Appropriate Uses within the Town Centre and North Station Regeneration Areas

### Development Policies

- DP1 – Design and Amenity
- DP3 – Planning Obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy
- DP6 – Colchester Town Centre Uses
- DP11 – Flat Conversions
- DP14 – Historic Environment Assets
- DP16 – Private Amenity Space and Open Space Provision for New Residential Development
- DP17 – Accessibility and Access
- DP18 – Transport Infrastructure Proposals
- DP19 – Parking Standards
- DP25 – Renewable Energy

# Appendices

## Appendix B – List of LDF Evidence Base documents

### National Planning Guidance

Department of Communities and Local Government,  
*National Planning Policy Framework* (March 2012)

Department for Transport, *Manual for Streets 2*, September, 2010

### Essex Level Documents

Essex County Council, *Integrated County Strategy*, December 2010

Essex County Council, *Essex Design Initiative, Urban Place Supplement*, May 2007

Essex Parking Standards, 2009

### Colchester Policy Documents

Colchester 2020, *Sustainable Community Strategy*, October 2007

*Statement of Community Involvement* (adopted 2006, amended in October 2008 and June 2011)

*Annual Monitoring Report* (December 2005 and annually thereafter)

Supplementary Planning Guidance

*Affordable Housing* – August 2011

*Community Facilities* –September 2009)

*Cycling Delivery Strategy* – January 2012

*Shopfront Guidance* – June 2011

*Sustainable Construction* – June 2011

*Vehicle Parking Standards* – November 2009

*Adopted Core Strategy*, December 2008

*Adopted Development Policies*, October 2010

*Adopted Site Allocations*, October 2010

*Digital Strategy* (June 2012)

Equality Impact Assessment for the Local Development Framework, revised 2012

# Appendices

## Colchester Studies

Cambridge Model to Estimate the Economic Impact of Tourism on Colchester Borough (collected annually)

Chris Blandford Associates, *Townscape Character Assessment*, June 2006

Chris Blandford Associates, *Assessment of Open Countryside Between Settlements in Borough of Colchester* (July 2009)

Destination Benchmarking Visitor Opinion Surveys

Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch, *Colchester Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project*, June 2009

Fordham Associates, *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*, February 2008

GVA Grimley, *North Essex Retail Study, Stage Two Report, Colchester Borough*, February 2007

Heritage Economic & Regeneration Trust (HEART), *Colchester Town Centre Project, Local Distinctiveness Audit*, March 2012

Humberts Leisure, *Hotel Market Demand Appraisal and Sequential Site Assessment*, April 2007 and update June 2009

J Mansell Jagger, *Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal*, 2007

King Sturge, *Colchester Town Centre Retail Study*, Nov. 2011

Lambert Smith Hampton, *Employment Land Study*, May 2007

PMP Consultants, *Colchester Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study*, November 2007

Roger Tym and Partners, *Strategic Housing Land Availability Study*, November 2007 and June 2008 update

Royal Haskoning, *Colchester Appropriate Assessment*, November 2007

Scott Wilson, *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment*, November 2007

University of Swansea, *Study on Older People's Use of Space (OPUS)* 2010

# Appendices

## Appendix C

### Glossary

**Better Town Centre** – The Better Town Centre improvement programme is a Colchester Borough Council initiative providing a co-ordinated approach to Town Centre working based on the following nine inter-related themes:

- Improving Colchester for You and Your Family
- Creating Quality Public Places and Spaces
- Bringing New Buildings
- Supporting Business and Retailers
- Making it Easier to Get To and Around Colchester
- Promoting Colchester
- New Things to See, Do and Visit
- Ensuring Clean, Safe Places and Spaces
- Changing Colchester After Dark

These themes have been integrated into the key objectives of this document.

**Core Strategy** – The Core Strategy, adopted in December 2008, sets out the long-term vision for the sustainable development of Colchester and the strategic policies required to deliver that vision. It provides for the enhancement of the environment, as well and defines the general locations for delivering strategic development including housing, employment, retail, leisure, community and transport, which are then given precise boundaries in the Proposals Map.

**Community Infrastructure Levy** – The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which local authorities may impose on new development to help fund new strategic infrastructure.

**Development Policies** – The Development Policies document forms part of the Local Plan (previously known as the Local Development Framework). It provides further details to assist the delivery of the strategic objectives and policies found in the Core Strategy. The Development Policies will affect allocations and designations set by the Site Allocations document and shown on the Proposals Map.

**Evidence Base** – The Evidence Base for Colchester's adopted planning policies includes all the documents used to inform its policies and allocations, including studies, strategies, and national, regional and local policies. Evidence Base documents can be viewed via links on the Council's LDF website page.

**Integrated County Strategy** – The document sets out infrastructure and investment opportunities for Essex. It was produced by the Essex Chief Executives' Association with agreement from all fifteen county, unitary and district authorities in Essex. In particular, it highlights the role of Colchester Town Centre as a key focus for sustainable growth.

# Appendices

**Local Development Framework (LDF)** – This is the term set by 2004 national legislation which was given to the portfolio of documents which provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area. The National Planning Policy Framework, adopted in March 2012, changed the collective term for local planning policies to ‘Local Plan’.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policy including the primacy of Local Plans and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

**Public Realm** – Public realm relates to all those parts of the built environment where the public has free access. It encompasses all streets, square and other rights of way, whether predominantly in residential, commercial or community/civic uses; open spaces and parks; and the public/private spaces where public access is unrestricted (at least during daylight hours). It includes the interfaces with key internal and private spaces to which the public has normally has free access.

**Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)** – The Site Allocations document sets out the criteria for the boundaries shown on the Proposals Map and provides area and use specific allocations.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – A document produced by the Council to add further detailed guidance and information on a particular subject such as Sustainable Construction or Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities. An SPD is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** – An appraisal of the economic, social and environmental effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, so that decisions can be made that accord with sustainable development.

**Town Centre** – The extent of Colchester’s Town Centre is still defined by the walls first built by the Romans two thousand years ago. The precise boundary is illustrated by the Proposals Map and includes the built-up area surrounded by the Walls as well as the St. Botolphs quarter to the east and a further commercial area to the south bounded by Southway. Colchester planning policies place the Town Centre at the heart of its policies for sustainable development.

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**December 2012**





## Local Plan Committee

Item  
**10**

17<sup>th</sup> December 2012

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Laura Chase</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Annual Monitoring Report</b>		<b>01206 282473</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	All		

### The Local Plan Committee is asked to approve the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

#### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the 2011-12 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for publication on the council's website.

#### 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 Until the Localism Act came into effect in April 2012, Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act required that every local planning authority (LPA) should prepare and publicise an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which the policies set out in Local Development Documents (LDDs) and local plans are being achieved. The Localism Act removed the requirement for local authorities to submit their AMR to Government, but retained a duty for local authorities to monitor policies. The Council accordingly still needs to demonstrate the effects of its policies, and the format developed for previous AMRs is considered to remain appropriate for this purpose.

#### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 There are no alternatives as the Borough needs to provide an annual source of information on the delivery of its planning functions.

#### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides key information that helps the Borough Council and its partners establish what is happening now within Colchester Borough, what may happen in the future and compare these trends against existing planning policies and targets to determine if any action needs to be taken. The full report covering the period April 2011 to March 2012 is attached as Appendix 1 and will be available to view on the council's website [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) and upon request to the Planning Policy team. The electronic version will have 'hot links' to relevant policies and evidence based documents to facilitate cross-referencing and ease of use.



- 4.2 As part of the Localism Act, authorities can now choose which targets and indicators to include in their monitoring reports as long as they are in line with the relevant UK and EU legislation. Their primary purpose is to share the performance and achievements of the Council's planning service with the local community. The format of this AMR accordingly is designed to clearly demonstrate how the Council is meeting targets and indicators arising from the adopted policies contained in its Local Plan. The AMR also has a wider role in helping the Council and its partners monitor the success of the Local Investment Plan and other plans, and can also be used by other agencies wishing to amend their plans and actions.
- 4.4 The planning system has been through a number of procedural changes over the last decade. The publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Localism Act in 2012 introduced a return to the process of Local Plans, following a seven year period when the Local Development Framework process applied. Colchester demonstrated its success in producing LDF plans, and was among the small percentage of authorities nationally who had adopted a comprehensive set of documents to guide the development management process. This currently comprises the strategic policies in the Core Strategy adopted in December 2008 and the supporting Site Allocations and Development Policies documents adopted in October 2010. The Borough is accordingly confident it can continue this forward momentum under the new NPPF Local Plan system. This year's AMR reflects the Council's achievement in securing an up-to-date policy framework that has helped support sustainable development in the face of a variable economic climate. The Council will be starting a review of the Core Strategy in 2013 to ensure its policies remain appropriate to the new national planning system and to a changing political and economic context.
- 4.5 The AMR is divided into a number of Key Themes covering progress in meeting Local Development Framework policy aspirations across a variety of areas. Key findings include:
- The level of new planning applications continues a gradual increase from the low in 2009-10. 1544 planning applications were received in 2011-12 in comparison to 1,525 in 2010-11, 1,311 in 2009-10, 1,416 in 2008/09 and 2,015 in 2007/08.
  - House building has slowed down for several years due to the recession but deliver levels recovered last year. Over the 15 year period the Council is on course to achieve the target to allocate and build a minimum provision of 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023 in accordance with the adopted Core Strategy. This is an average of 830 dwellings per year. Colchester has already delivered 10,383 new homes between 2001/02 and 2011/12, or an average of 943 dwellings a year. The Colchester Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment also identified additional capacity within developed areas to accommodate the required housing.
  - The housing trajectory included in this report shows that a net figure of 1036 homes were built between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. This is an increase on the previous year's total of 673. This positive result reflects the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes

forward, including securing grants and a flexible approach to scheme cost appraisals. The Council has developed its capacity to monitor housing numbers in-house and no longer uses the County Council monitoring service. The Council's in-house capacity is intended to ensure a reliable report of trends in future delivery, which could then inform reviews of allocation requirements. The transfer and different way of monitoring may account in part for the high delivery levels this year.

- 366 units of affordable housing were completed between April 2011 and March 2012 or 35.3% of all units. The high percentage reflects the fact that the total includes some schemes which were 100% affordable schemes. The Council has been successful in bringing affordable housing projects on in a difficult economic climate, including seeking grant funding where larger sites have stalled. The achievement of the Council's 35% affordable housing target in the future is, however, likely to be constrained by the fact that the increased rental income stream resulting from the new affordable rent tenure is seen by Government as a replacement for grant.
- Approximately 88% of new and converted dwellings were on previously developed land, in line with planning policies giving preference to brownfield sites.
- The LDF provides for the identification of appropriate sites to meet the needs of gypsies/travellers and travelling showpeople. The Site Allocations DPD and accompanying Proposals Map includes 30 pitches for gypsies and travellers.
- Employment land is being provided in suitable locations within the Borough to meet Core Strategy targets. The delivery of additional employment and retail developments are however dependent on external factors unrelated to planning such as market interest and the overall state of the economy. The total of 2,051 square metres completed employment floorspace in 2011/12 compares with 5,294 square metres in 2010/11. It indicates that the commercial market in Colchester is lagging further behind the residential market in showing signs of recovery.
- The weak commercial market is also demonstrated by the zero return for new floorspace in the Town Centre. The redevelopment of the Williams and Griffins department store points, however, to investor confidence in the longer term prospects of the Town Centre. Additionally, the commercial property market for existing Town Centre property is buoyant and vacancy rates continue to be below national averages of approximately 12-13%. In particular occupancy rates in the Walls/Lanes area of small shops are improving. The Council is working with traders in the area to develop a programme of improvements including interpretation, presentation and physical enhancement.
- The challenging issue of transportation is being tackled through a number of approaches including new transport infrastructure (i.e. the new A12 junction and improved cycle routes such as the Braiswick link to Colchester station) as well as behavioural change measures such as

travel plans, which support shifts away from car based means of transport. New developments are continuing to be built within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.

- With regard to biodiversity, it appears that the policies, which seek to protect areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value and priority habitats and species are generally working. However, there is a need to continue to protect habitats and species from development that causes harm or damage.
- The Council signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Scheme (LACM) in 2007 and with guidance from the Carbon Trust have substantial energy savings in our day-to-day operations. Between April 2011 and March 2012 there was a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Council operations and buildings of 6%, which is just under 540 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have reduced by a total of 16.17% between the baseline of 2005 and 2010. Per capita emissions for Colchester residents are now 5.7 tonnes having fallen from a baseline of 6.8 tonnes per capita.
- The AMR shows that there has been no loss/damage to listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or (SSSIs), Local Wildlife Sites, key community facilities or loss of designated allotment sites.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee agree to adopt the Annual Monitoring Report.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 Effective strategic planning supports the Strategic Plan Vision for Colchester as a place to live, learn, work and visit, and in particular informs the priorities of leading for the future, being cleaner and greener, and listening and responding.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 The Annual Monitoring Report considers the effectiveness of Local Plan policies which have been through a comprehensive consultation programme as set forth in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

## **8. Publicity Considerations**

- 8.1 The AMR demonstrates the Borough's success in delivering new development in difficult times which should warrant press attention.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications. The AMR, however, provides evidence to evaluate the effect of wider economic influences on Council planning policies

and highlights the potential for the Council to benefit from Government funding linked to housing delivery.

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

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view by clicking on this link:-  
<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/4962/Strategic-Policy-and-Regeneration>  
or go to the Colchester Borough Council website [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) and follow the pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Strategic Policy and Regeneration and select Local Development Framework from the Strategic Planning and Research section.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

- 11.1 None

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

- 12.1 None

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

- 13.1 Monitoring policies to ensure their effectiveness is intended to reduce the risk of inappropriate development. It will provide consistent advice to landowners, developers, officers, Councillors and members of the public.

## **Background Papers**

None

# ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2012

## COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL





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# Map of Colchester's Wards and surrounding areas





# 1. Executive Summary

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## 1.1 Background to the Report

This Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) contains information about the extent to which the Council's planning policy objectives are being achieved. The report covers the period from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. During this period, the National Planning Policy Framework came into effect which modified the plan-making process. It provides that planning policies to achieve sustainable development should be covered by a Local Plan, replacing the previous process for local authorities' adoption of a series of documents comprising a Local Development Framework.

## 1.2 Introduction

The Localism Act removed the requirement for local planning authorities to produce an annual monitoring report for Government, but they did retain an overall duty to monitor policies. Authorities can now choose which targets and indicators to include in their monitoring reports as long as they are in line with the relevant UK and EU legislation. Their primary purpose is to share the performance and achievements of the Council's planning service with the local community. The format of this AMR accordingly is designed to clearly demonstrate how the Council is meeting targets and indicators arising from the adopted planning policies.

Information on the timetable for preparation and adoption of plan documents is contained in the Local Development Scheme, [\(link\)](#) which is updated on a regular basis. The overall strategic policies for Colchester contained in the Core Strategy [\(link\)](#) were found 'sound' by a Government appointed Inspector and it was adopted by the Council in December 2008. Two further Local Development Documents, Development Policies and Site Allocations [\(links\)](#), were found sound and adopted in October 2010. A review of the Council's planning policies will begin in 2013 to ensure that they are appropriate in the context of changing local and national circumstances and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## 1.3 How well are the Council's policies working?

The AMR is divided into a number of Key Themes covering progress in meeting planning policy aspirations across a variety of areas. Appendix 3 provides a list of targets developed for adopted Local Development Framework documents and the indicators that have been selected to measure them. The key findings of the indicators are set out below:

- House building has showed a recovery from the recession this year, with a return to delivery figures that exceed the average target of 830 dwellings per year. Over the 15 year period to 2027 the Council is on course to achieve the above target. Colchester has already delivered 10,838 new homes between 2001/02 and 2011/12 at an average rate of 943 dwellings per year.
- The housing trajectory included in this report shows that a net of 1036 homes were built between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. This is an increase on the previous year's total of 673. This is a very encouraging result in the context of a continuing national downturn. This positive result reflects the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes forward, including a flexible approach to scheme cost appraisals.
- 366 units of affordable housing were completed between April 2011 and March 2012 or 35.3% of all units. The high percentage reflects the fact that the total includes some schemes which were 100% affordable schemes. The Council has been successful in

bringing affordable housing projects on in a difficult economic climate, including seeking grant funding where larger sites have stalled. The achievement of the Council's 35% affordable housing target in the future is, however, likely to be constrained by the fact that the increased rental income stream resulting from the new affordable rent tenure is seen by Government as a replacement for grant.

- Approximately 88% of new and converted dwellings were on previously developed land, in line with planning policies giving preference to brownfield sites.
- The LDF provides for the identification of appropriate sites to meet the needs of gypsies/travellers and travelling showpeople. The Site Allocations DPD and accompanying Proposals Map includes allocations for 30 pitches for gypsies and travellers.
- Employment land is being provided in suitable locations within the Borough to meet Core Strategy targets. It is recognised however, that both the delivery of additional employment and retail development are dependent on external factors unrelated to planning such as market interest and the overall state of the economy. The net balance of new employment floorspace shows a low level of increase for 2010-11 which reflects the current economic climate. The total of 2,051 sqm was down on last year's level of 5,294 sqm. The lack of new Town Centre commercial completions is discouraging, but the commercial property market for existing Town Centre property is buoyant and vacancy rates continue to be below national averages of approximately 12-13%. The proposed redevelopment of Williams and Griffins demonstrates confidence in the Town Centre over the longer term.
- The challenging issue of transportation is being tackled through a number of approaches including new transport infrastructure (i.e. the new A12 junction and improved cycle routes) as well as behavioural change measures such as travel plans, which support shifts away from car based means of transport. A high percentage of new developments are continuing to be built within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.
- With regard to biodiversity, monitoring has established that policies which seek to protect areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value and priority habitats and species are generally working. However, there is a need to continue to protect habitats and species from development that causes harm or damage.
- The policies have also been successful in ensuring that there has been no loss/damage to listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or (SSSIs), Local Wildlife Sites, key community facilities or loss of designated allotment sites.
- The Council signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Scheme (LACM) in 2007 and with guidance from the Carbon Trust have substantial energy savings in our day-to-day operations. The overall target set by the Carbon Trust is a 25% reduction in energy usage by 2012. Between April 2011 and March 2012 there was a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Council operations and buildings of 6%, which is just under 540 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have reduced by a total of 16.17% between the baseline of 2005 and 2010. Per capita emissions for Colchester residents are now 5.7 tonnes having fallen from a baseline of 6.8 tonnes per capita.
-

#### **1.4 Evaluation of Planning Policies**

Colchester demonstrated success in transferring from the old Local Plan system to the Local Development Framework process established in 2004. Prior to the changes to the national planning system proposed by Government in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Borough was among the small percentage of authorities nationally who had adopted a comprehensive set of documents to guide the development management process. This currently comprises the strategic policies in the Core Strategy adopted in December 2008 and the supporting Site Allocations and Development Policies documents adopted in October 2010. The findings of the AMR are considered to demonstrate the continuing appropriateness of the Council's planning policies, but since 4 years have now elapsed since the Core Strategy was approved, it is appropriate to begin a review of planning policies and produce a new Local Plan for the Borough in compliance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## 2. Introduction

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### 2.1 Background and Purpose of the Colchester AMR

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides key information that helps the Borough Council and its partners establish what is happening now within Colchester Borough, what may happen in the future and compare these trends against existing planning policies and targets to determine what needs to be done. Monitoring will help to address questions such as:

- Are policies achieving their objectives and in particular are they delivering sustainable development and key infrastructure?
- Have policies had unintended consequences?
- Are the assumptions and objectives behind policies still relevant?
- Are the targets being achieved?

Requirements for an AMR were previously set forth in Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which required that every local planning authority (LPA) should prepare and publicise an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) containing information on the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which the policies set out in Local Development Documents (LDDs) and local plans were being achieved. These regulations are superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework, which give authorities more latitude in how they monitor policies. While the new system provides less specific regulation, the focus on local priorities has not diminished the role of effective monitoring, and it continues to be expected that the monitoring process will ensure that local policies are addressing locally identified targets and objectives.

The AMR accordingly sets out how it will update and amend components of the Local Plan and other plans to reflect changing circumstances. The AMR also has a wider role in helping the Council and its partners monitor the success of the Local Investment Plan and other plans, and can also be used by other agencies to amend their plans and actions. The AMR will provide the opportunity to consider the Council's track record in delivering key infrastructure to support growth and the effectiveness of its use of funds gathered in for both strategic (Community Infrastructure Levy) and local (Section 106 agreements) funding.

The Council's Local Plan Committee reviews the adequacy of our AMR and the way we use monitoring as a key element of the plan-making process. It will also be a major consideration for the independent Planning Inspectors who will assess the soundness of our plans. Planning Inspectors will consider:

- Whether policies are founded on a robust and credible evidence base; and
- Whether there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.

The AMR will also be a key element in the monitoring requirements that arise from Sustainability Appraisals and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

### 2.2 Scope and Coverage

This report covers the following matters:

- Information for each document in the LDS, indicating the stage it has reached, whether this accords with the timetable set out, any reasons for delays or changes and further steps required to progress the work.

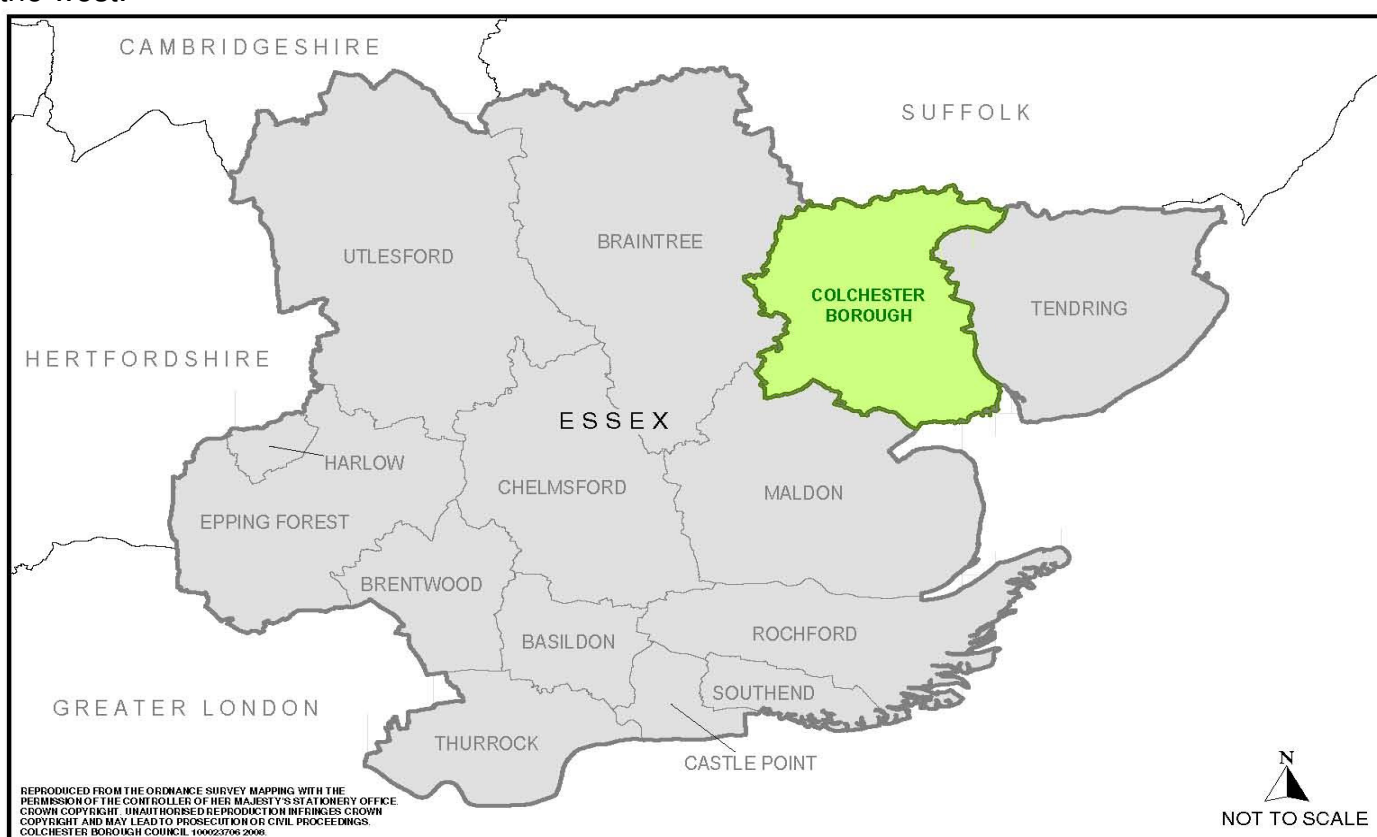
- Progress on policies and targets in the Adopted Colchester Borough Local Plan, which currently comprises the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Policies DPDs including the reasons for any slippage.
- What significant effects implementation of the policies are having on the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainability is defined and whether these effects are as intended;
- Whether the policies need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or because there have been changes in national or regional policy; and the actions we will take to achieve this.

## 3. Portrait and Vision for Colchester

### 3.1 Location and General Character

The Borough of Colchester is located in the county of Essex in the east of England, covering an area of approximately 329 square kilometres. The Borough is situated 62 miles north east of London. The main urban areas account for 67.6% (122,343 people) of the Colchester population<sup>1</sup>. The rural areas of the Borough account for 34.4% of the population (58,673 people) and the countryside areas are mainly used for agriculture.

The Borough lies in a key gateway location between the UK and Europe, with access to Europe via the nearby Ports of Harwich and Felixstowe to the east and Stansted Airport to the west.



The following sections provide a general profile of the Borough. Further statistical information is available in the Key Themes sections noted below as well as in the Evidence Base for the Local Investment Plan (updated July 2012) available on the Council's website ([www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)).

### 3.2 Population

Data from the 2011 Census put the Borough population at approximately 173,100. This figure is an 11.0% increase from the 2001 Mid Year Estimate (MYE) of 156,000. The population of Colchester has been rising over the last ten years, and is forecasted to continue to grow over the next ten years.

<sup>1</sup> Mid-2010 Population Estimates (wards). Population Estimates Unit, ONS © Crown Copyright, 2011. \* Stanway ward is included as an urban ward.

As the second largest district in Essex County (behind Basildon), Colchester accounts for 12.4% of the Essex population, and based on the 2011 Census figures the average population density of Colchester was 526 people per square kilometre. This is an increase from 2001 when there were 474 people per sq km.

Estimates suggest that from 2012-2022 the population of Colchester is expected to grow by 14.3% to 206,000 people. This is an increase of 25,700 people over a 10 year period. By the same measure this is the second largest population growth in Essex County; Uttlesford had the highest at 14.7%.

There has been an increase in ethnic minority groups since Census Day 2001, from 3.8% to an estimated 11.1% of the Colchester population in mid 2009. This is higher than the Essex proportion of 8.2%.<sup>2</sup>

### **3.3 Households**

At 31 March 2012 there were approximately 75,945 dwellings within the Borough of which 6,257 were owned by the local authority.<sup>3</sup> The average household size was 2.33 people per household in 2011, this has decreased from 2.37 in 2001 (Census findings).<sup>4</sup>

A total of 1036 homes were built between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. Under current policies, 830 dwellings are expected to be built in the Borough each year. There have been 366 recorded affordable housing completions. During this same time period 88% of residential completions were located on previously developed land (brownfield sites).

The average household price in April 2012 across Colchester Borough was £214,573. This illustrates a 4% increase on the 2011 figure of £214,573. The 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) observed that few households aspiring to home ownership had access to enough money to purchase a home in Colchester, and annual updates since 2007 have not found any change to this position. The SHMA identified a need for 1,082 affordable homes per year, which is very high given the total housing provision in the Core Strategy is only 830 per year. The SHMA findings support the Affordable Housing target of 35% in the Core Strategy.

For more housing information please see **6.2 Key Theme: Housing**.

### **3.4 Heritage and Habitat**

Colchester has a rich and vast heritage. As Camulodonum, it was the first capital of England and it is also Britain's oldest recorded town, recorded by Pliny the Elder in AD77. The Borough has a rich archaeological and cultural heritage, dating back to at least 4,000BC. There are 22 conservation areas, some 2,560 listed buildings and 52 Scheduled Monuments. There are 4 parks within Colchester on the National Register of Special Historic Interest including Colchester Castle Park, Severalls Hospital, Layer Marney Tower gardens and Wivenhoe Park.

The rural landscape of the Borough has a rich ecological character, influenced by geology and landform. Habitats include woodland, grassland, heath, estuary, saltmarsh, mudflat and freshwater and open water habitats. There is a substantial amount of coastline. Many sites are recognised for their value by international and national designations, including the coastal and estuary areas in the south east and the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the north of the Borough.

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<sup>2</sup> Mid-2009 Experimental Population Estimates by Ethnic Group (ONS). © Crown Copyright, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> ELASH Return & Council Tax Data. Colchester Borough Council, 31 March 2012.

<sup>4</sup> 2001 and 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics (ONS). © Crown Copyright, 2012.

For more information on the environment please see **6.5 Key Theme: Environment & Heritage**

### **3.5 Economic Activity and Prosperity**

Research by the Centre for Cities published in July 2010 indicates that Colchester has performed relatively well during the recession in relation to other areas and fits within the 'buoyant' category of cities (in contrast to stable or struggling).<sup>5</sup> In April 2012 the Javelin group published a report documenting town centres deemed as the most 'robust' and those most 'at risk'. 'At risk' is defined as those town centres that are most at risk of future decline, with the robust centres being those that are in the strongest position to defend themselves. In the largest location grades assessed, Colchester was included as one of Great Britain's most robust retail destinations<sup>6</sup>. Results from Colchester's Quarterly Economic Report (September 2012) indicate that 79.7% of Colchester's working age population were economically active in 2011/12, and the unemployment rate was 5.9%. The percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) has decreased very slightly (when compared to the same period as last year). The percentage of 16-19 year olds Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) has decreased considerably when comparing monthly figures from July 2011 to July 2012.<sup>7</sup> The latest data shows that number of Job Seeker's Allowance claimants decreased slightly from 2.8% to 2.7% between August 2011 and August 12 (working age resident based proportion), which is still below the Great Britain average, which decreased from 3.9% to 3.8%.

Colchester's main employer is the Army Garrison, which has close links with the town and there are also sizeable educational employees, including the University of Essex. Colchester is a flourishing destination for tourists and in 2010 tourism was worth £224.8m, to the Borough economy, a rise of 256% from £63.1 million in 1993.<sup>8</sup>

The Borough is relatively prosperous, ranking 205 out of 326 districts on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (rank 1 being the most deprived). It is estimated that approximately 5% of people in Colchester live in seriously deprived neighbourhoods. However, this is somewhat lower than the relative proportions in Basildon (18%), Tendring (18%) and Harlow (12%).<sup>9</sup>

For more information on Colchester's economy please see **6.3 Key Theme: Economy & Business**

### **3.6 Community**

The community has access to a wide range of Council run services and facilities, with 31 parish councils. Facilities include country parks at Cudmore Grove, East Mersea and Highwoods, Colchester, a leisure centre (Leisure World) including swimming pools and a 1,200 capacity event venue, and four multi-activity centres. There are also smaller community centres, village halls and activity centres in many areas around the borough which provide a range of activities and spaces to hire.

There are 79 maintained schools: 64 primaries, 11 secondaries and 4 special schools. There are two further education colleges, Colchester Sixth Form College and the Colchester Institute, plus the University of Essex, making the Borough a major educational base and significantly adding to the diversity of the population.

<sup>5</sup> 'Colchester, Ipswich and the Haven Gateway sub-region: comparative analysis.' Centre for Cities, July 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Javelin - Battlefield Britain: Survivors and Casualties in the Fight for the High Street, 2012

<sup>7</sup> Data from Essex CCIS.

<sup>8</sup> Economic Impact of Tourism Report on the borough of Colchester, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Indices of Deprivation, ONS, 2010.



For more information on community facilities please see **6.6 Key Theme: Accessible Services & Community Facilities.**

### 3.7 Health

The health of people in Colchester is generally better than the England average. Deprivation is lower than average; however, it is estimated that 5,565 children live in poverty.

Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average but there are inequalities across the Borough. Life expectancy is 8.4 years lower for men and 4.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Colchester compared to the least deprived areas.

Over the last 10 years 'all cause mortality rates' in Colchester have fallen. Early death rates for cancer and from heart disease and stroke have also fallen and are better than the England average<sup>10</sup>. In 2011, there were 1,432 registered deaths<sup>11</sup>. An estimated 23.6% adults are obese and an estimated 19.6% of adults smoke. There were 2,692 hospital stays for alcohol related harm in 2010-11, marking an increase on previous years but a lower rate than most other areas<sup>12</sup>.

In terms of child health, the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) (the number of deaths at ages under one year, per 1,000 live births) in 2010 was 3.2. This is a decrease from 3.6 in the previous year, and is below the Essex value of 4.0<sup>13</sup>. About 16.5% of Year 6 children (10 and 11 year-olds) in Colchester are classified as obese, slightly better than the national average but still significant cause for concern. 73.0% of mothers initiate breast feeding, which is better than the national rate, but smoking in pregnancy rates remain high at 19.7% of expectant mothers. A higher percentage than average of pupils spent at least three hours each week in on school sport in 2009/10.<sup>14</sup>

In 2011 there were 2,190 live births in Colchester, a small decrease from 2,204 in 2010. The 'Total Fertility Rate' (TFR) indicates the average number of children that would be born to a woman if the current age-specific (the number of live births per 1,000 woman of each age) patterns of fertility persisted throughout her childbearing life. In 2011 the TFR in Colchester was 1.68 a fall from the 2010 figure of 1.70, and below the Essex average of 1.95<sup>15</sup>. In 2011 in Colchester, 18.9% of live births were born to non-UK born mothers<sup>16</sup>.

### 3.8 Transport

The Borough is connected to a comprehensive network of major roads via the A12 and A120, which provide routes to London, the M25, Harlow and Cambridge. The Borough also lies in close proximity to the major seaport of Harwich (20 miles) and Stansted Airport (30 miles).

Public transport provision includes six railway stations, bus routes operated by ten bus companies and several cycle trails including National Cycle Route One.

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<sup>10</sup> Colchester Health Profile, 2012, Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO)

<sup>11</sup> Provisional Mortality Statistics: Deaths registered in England and Wales by area of usual residence, 2012, Office of National Statistics

<sup>12</sup> Colchester Health Profile, 2012, Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO)

<sup>13</sup> Mortality Statistics: Deaths registered in England and Wales by area of usual residence, 2010, Office of National Statistics

<sup>14</sup> Colchester Health Profile, 2011, Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO). This indicator was not available in the 2012 refresh.

<sup>15</sup> Births Summary Tables, England and Wales, 2011 (Provisional), Office of National Statistics

<sup>16</sup> Parents' Country of Birth Tables England and Wales, 2011, Office of National Statistics

One of the biggest challenges to Colchester is population growth and the dominance of the car as the main mode of travel. Significant congestion can occur during peak times within Colchester, the A12 and on several of the minor roads to the south of the Borough.

For more information on transportation please see **6.4 Key Theme: Transportation**

### **3.9 Regeneration**

The Borough is engaged in an ambitious regeneration programme in five areas of Colchester; North Colchester, the Garrison, St. Botolph's, East Colchester and North Station. The redevelopments will collectively provide new housing, employment, the University knowledge gateway, new army garrison, a visual arts facility and new community stadium.

### **3.10 Growth**

Colchester's Local Development Framework (LDF) contains a number of planning policies designed to meet the need for new homes established by the local evidence base. This document seeks to measure their performance in delivering new homes and supporting infrastructure. The Council is intending to help fund strategic infrastructure to support growth through adoption of a charging schedule for a Community Infrastructure Levy.

### **3.11 Vision**

Revisions to the Council's Strategic Plan in 2009 have allowed the organisation to focus more on their customers and their expectations and needs. :

Key objectives are:

- Listen and Respond
- Shift Resources to Deliver Priorities
- Be Cleaner and Greener

Priorities are:

- addressing older people's needs
- addressing younger people's needs
- community development
- community safety
- congestion busting
- enabling job creation
- healthy living
- homes for all
- reduce, re-use, recycle.)

These priorities and agendas are the Council's quality standards and set a bar against which the organisation can measure its progress and achievements.

### **3.12 Delivery**

Colchester produced a Local Investment Plan which was updated in July 2012. (link) It provides the evidence base for agreement over investment priorities for Colchester for the Homes and Communities agency as well as many other partners such as the Haven Gateway Partnership and Essex County Council. It also informs the Integrated County Strategy which gives a strategic focus in three areas; low carbon energy, key towns and Thames Gateway South Essex. The Council is in the process of developing a charging schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy which will, when adopted, fund strategic infrastructure projects prioritised by the Council and published in an annual list.

### 3.13 Outcomes

By 2021, Colchester will have reduced the gap between the better off and less well off communities and have produced a better quality of life for all. We will have created quality places with better environments in which people live, work and visit. Transport will have been improved with better bus and rail services and car usage down, but with traffic flowing freely on roads when used. Infrastructure will have been provided. Crime will be down. Resources will be conserved and more 'sustainable' building promoted. We will have a prosperous economy with a broad balance between local jobs and local labour supply and higher wages. Colchester town centre will be an attractive, vibrant and accessible regional centre with a range of excellent facilities and an increased number of visitors. The countryside will still be rural and the rural towns and villages will have retained their unique identities and benefit from improved access to services and better public transport and thriving local enterprise. The special character and quality of the coast and countryside will have been maintained and enhanced.

### 3.14 Objectives

Colchester's Core Strategy (December 2008), includes the following principal objectives:

#### Sustainable Development

- Focus new development at sustainable locations to support existing communities, local businesses, sustainable transport and promote urban regeneration to protect greenfield land.
- Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.
- Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.
- Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture.
- Reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and respond to the effects of climate change.

#### Centres and Employment

- Create a significant regional centre and a vibrant network of district and local centres that stimulate economic activity and provide residents' needs at accessible locations.
- Provide for a balance of new homes and jobs to support economic prosperity of our growing community and reduce the need to travel outside the Borough for employment.

#### Housing

- Provide high quality and affordable housing at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community.
- Provide a range of different types of new housing to meet the diverse needs of the whole community.

#### Urban Renaissance

- Revitalise rundown areas and create inclusive and sustainable new communities.
- Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology.

#### Public Realm

- Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.

#### Accessibility and Transportation

- Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel.
- Develop Colchester as a Regional Transport Node, improving transport connections and gateways within the Borough and to the wider region.
- Provide excellent public transportation, walking and cycling connections between centres, communities and their needs.
- Improve the strategic road network and manage traffic and parking demand.

#### Natural Environment and Rural Communities

- Protect and enhance Colchester's natural environment, countryside and coastline.
- Support appropriate local employment and housing development in villages and rural communities.

#### Energy, Resources, Recycling and Waste

- Encourage renewable energy and the efficient use of scarce resources.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

## 4. Progress on Plan-making

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This section examines progress in development of a planning framework for Colchester. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out key documents and timetables, and these are noted below along with progress to date, any issues, potential delays, problems and revisions to our approach. The section concludes with a summary identifying strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

### 4.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) [link](#)

Timetable for production:

- Survey and Participation on options: January - December 2005
- Formal 6 week consultation on *preferred* options and representations: January - February 2005
- Submission to Secretary of State & formal 6 week consultation: 23 March 2005 - 20 April 2005
- Independent examination: n/a
- Approval: May 2005
- Revised and submitted to GO-East: October 2006
- Approval: November 2006
- Revised and submitted to GO-East: February 2007
- Approval: September 2007
- Revised and submitted to GO-East in October 2008 following publication of new regulations
- Adopted: November 2008
- Revision and Submission to Government to reflect addition of new work: February 2011
- Revision to reflect changes to timetable and addition of new work – December 2011 (submission to Government no longer required)
- Revision to reflect requirements of National Planning Policy Framework and new/revised work

**On Target?** - Yes,

### 4.2 Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) [link](#)

Timetable for production:

- Survey and Participation on options: November 2004 – March 2005
- Formal 6 week consultation and representations: January - February 2005
- Submission to Secretary of State & formal 6 week consultation: October 2005
- Independent examination: March 2006
- Adopted June 2006
- Revised October 2008 following publication of new regulations
- Revised SCI adopted April 2011 following changes to regulations

**On Target?** – Yes

### 4.3 Core Strategy [link](#)

Timetable for production:

- Survey and Participation on options: March – April 2006
- Formal 6 week consultation on preferred options and representations: November – December 2006

- Formal 6 week consultation on amendments to the preferred options and representations: June-July 2007
- Submission to Secretary of State & formal 6 week consultation: November-December 2007
- Independent examination: June 2008
- Adoption: December 2008
- Review: See Local Plan below

**On Target?** – To be replaced by Local Plan

#### 4.4 Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) [link](#)

Timetable for production:

- Pre-submission consultation on issues and options: November-December 2007
- Six week consultation on preferred options and representations: January-February 2009
- Formal 6 week consultation on Submission Document: September-October 2009
- Submission to Secretary of State: November 2009
- Independent examination: March-April 2010
- Adoption: October 2010
- Review: See Local Plan below

**On Target?** To be replaced by Local Plan

#### 4.5 Development Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) [link](#)

Timetable for production:

- Pre-submission consultation on issues and options: November-December 2007
- Formal 6 week consultation on preferred options and representations: January-February 2009
- Formal 6 week consultation on Submission Document: September-October 2009
- Submission to Secretary of State: November 2009
- Independent examination: March-April 2010
- Adoption: October 2010
- Review: See Local Plan below

**On Target?** To be replaced by Local Plan

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#### 4.6 Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

- Consultation on draft Charging Schedule – August-September 2011
- Consideration of submission schedule by Local Development Framework Committee – November 2011
- Consideration of revised submission schedule by Local Plan Committee – January 2013
- Submission to Government and public consultation – Early 2013
- Examination – Summer 2013
- Adoption – Winter 2013/14

**On Target?** Yes, Original time schedule revised due to need to reconsider viability evidence and charging levels

#### 4.7 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- Title – Backland and Infill Development [link](#)

- Status – SPD
- Timetable – Adoption September 2009
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title – Community Facilities [link](#)
- Status – SPD
- Timetable – Adoption September 2009
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title – Affordable Housing [link](#)
- Status – SPD
- Timetable – Adopted August 2011 (Further work on below-threshold contributions pending)
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title – Parking Standards [link](#)
- Status – SPD
- Timetable –Adoption November 2009
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title – North Station Masterplan
- Status – SPD
- Timetable – Adoption Feb. 2013
- On Target?** – On hold - awaiting further transport work
  
- Title – North Colchester Masterplan [link](#)
- Status – SPD
- Timetable – Adoption June 2012
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title – Stanway Masterplan
- Status – SPD
- Timetable – TBD
- On Target?** – On hold - awaiting evidence base work and initial developer options
  
- Title – Town Centre Action Plan SPD [link](#)
- Status – SPD
- Timetable –Adoption December 2012.
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title –Cycle Delivery SPD [link](#)
- Status – SPD
- Adoption – January 2012
- On Target?** – Yes
  
- Title –Tiptree Jam Factory DPD [link](#)
- Status – DPD
- Adoption – January 2013
- On Target?** – Yes

#### **4.8 Documents to be produced as Evidence Base for the plan-making process**

Title – Sustainability Appraisal for the Core Strategy [link](#)  
 Timescale – Completed November 2007

**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Sustainability Appraisal for the Site Allocations DPD [link](#)

Timescale – Submission to Secretary of State with DPD in November 2009

**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Sustainability Appraisal for the Development Policies DPD [link](#)

Timescale – Submission to Secretary of State with DPD in November 2009

**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Townscape Character Study [link](#)

Timescale – Completed June 2006

**On Target?** - Yes and complete.

Title – Strategic Housing Land Availability Study [link](#)

Timescale – November 2007 and updated annually in AMR.

**On Target?** - Yes, updated annually in AMR.

Title – Retail Study [link](#)

Timescale – Completed February 2007, updated October 2009.

**On Target?** - Yes and complete.

Title – Landscape Character Assessment [link](#)

Timescale – November 2005

**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Employment Land Study [link](#)

Timescale - June 2007

**On Target?** - Yes – update to be programmed.

Title – Strategic Housing Market Assessment [link](#)

Timescale – February 2008 followed by annual updates.

**On Target?** –Updates for 2009 and 2010 published, current update underway.

Title – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment [link](#)

Timescale - November 2007

**On Target?** - Yes – update to be programmed.

Title – Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy [link](#)

Timescale - November 2007

**On Target?** - Yes and complete

Title – Appropriate Assessment of the Site Allocations [link](#)

Timescale - November 2009

**On Target?** - Yes and complete

Title – Open Space Study [link](#)

Timescale – November 2007

**On Target?** - Yes – update to be programmed

Title – Assessment of Open Countryside Between Settlements [link](#)

Timescale – July 2009

**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Settlement Boundary Review [link](#)

Timescale – July 2009 and update to begin Jan 2013

**On Target?** – Yes.

Title – Historic Environment Characterisation Project [link](#)



Timescale – June 2009  
**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Local Wildlife Sites Survey [link](#)  
Timescale – December 2008  
**On Target?** – Yes – update to be programmed.

Title – Hotel Study [link](#)  
Timescale – April 2007 and update June 2009  
**On Target?** – Yes and complete.

Title – Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study (Phase 2) [link](#)  
Timescale – October 2009  
**On target** – Yes – update to be programmed

Title – CIL Viability Evidence [link](#)  
Timescale – March – July 2011  
**On target** – Yes

Title – Colchester Green Infrastructure Study [link](#)  
Timescale – October 2010 – March 2011  
**On target** – Yes

Title – Colchester Town Centre Retail Study [link](#)  
Timescale – October 2011  
**On target** - Yes

#### **4.9 Other Documents or Reports that affect the timescales of planning policy development**

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), also known as the East of England Plan, formed part of the Development Plan during the development and adoption of Colchester's Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Policies. It accordingly also formed part of Colchester's Development Plan during the period covered by this document, although it has now been abolished through the Localism Bill.

The Council has prepared a Local Investment Plan to provide the basis for agreement over investment priorities for Colchester for the Homes and Communities Agency and the Local Economic Partnership as well as many other partners such as Essex County Council. It is designed to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it can respond to emerging opportunities and changing circumstances.

The Colchester Investment Plan has informed the Essex Integrated County Strategy (ICS) which gives a strategic focus in three areas;

- Low carbon energy
- Key towns
- Thames Gateway South Essex.

This approach is designed to maximise the greatest return on investment in times of reduced funding being available. The ICS ambition is 'to create a highly performing and competitive economy that makes a significant contribution to UK economic growth and recovery; provides for the successful regeneration of Essex communities; promotes healthy communities and supports vulnerable people; and provides a high quality of life for residents.'

The Council will also be supporting infrastructure delivery through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and will be finalising a charging schedule which will then be examined and adopted to allow for new development to pay a standard charge toward strategic infrastructure projects. The AMR will be a key source for monitoring information to inform review of infrastructure delivery and prioritisation of projects to be funded through CIL.

Colchester was amongst the relatively small number of local authorities nationally who achieved the adoption stage for key Local Development Framework documents, and the Borough intends to continue to respond quickly to the plan-making requirements set forth in the National Planning Policy Framework. The next year will see the Council initiate a thorough review of its planning policies. The planning policy process will continue to need to account for internal and external documents that are being produced by other departments within the Council and other partners. In addition to the Investment Plan noted above, these include strategies such as the Economic Prosperity Strategy and the Housing Strategy. There will be a need for the planning policy team to liaise closely with groups across the Council so that the team can ensure that all relevant objectives are accounted for in the planning policy review process.

#### **4.10 Monitoring of the Core Strategy Infrastructure Projects and future indicators**

To ensure the future success of Colchester's planning policies it is essential that the relevant indicators are identified and a system of monitoring progress is agreed. The AMR includes the indicators set out in the Local Development Framework along with progress on monitoring these indicators. These indicators are summarised in Appendix 4. In addition to the Core Strategy indicators, a number of Supporting Indicators are also included to provide a more complete picture of progress on key objectives. Appendix five identifies the infrastructure projects that have also been included in the Core Strategy and the table is followed by information on progress in infrastructure delivery.

## 5. Difficulties Collecting Data

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In collecting the baseline data for this Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) many different sources of information have been used. One of the difficulties faced in collecting data has been finding data at a Borough level. For example, in several instances environmental data is usually only collected at a County or Regional level, which consequently limits local data and policy analysis.

Borough-level data from the 2011 Census is starting to be available but is not yet available at ward level, so several pieces of baseline data continue to be based on Census information from 2001. However, where possible, more recent updates from other sources have been provided to try and counterbalance the limitations of older data sources.

The 'Civica' monitoring system is used by the development control and building control teams to enter key information for each submitted planning application and now provides an important source of data for the AMR.

As with any quantitative data sources, it is wise to approach the indicators with a degree of caution as the way in which they are collected can often impact significantly on their reliability. It should be noted that data published in this report was correct at the time of printing. A list of data sources can be found in Appendix 1.

## 6. Monitoring Indicators

### 6.1 Background

As part of the Annual Monitoring Report, the Council will monitor key indicators on an annual basis. The monitoring of general performance will take place through considering the following information:

**Indicators** – Prior to changes in the national planning system, the Government published AMR guidance which provided for both core indicators set nationally as well as scope for local authorities to select indicators appropriate to their area. The planning system now gives local authorities flexibility to set their own indicators. The Core Strategy included a list of core and local indicators (Appendix 4) which were examined and approved by the Inspector along with the rest of the document in 2008. A few further indicators were subsequently added following adoption of the Development Policies in 2010. This year's AMR retains all these indicators as they are considered to remain appropriate.

**Background Information**– These indicators help to provide a backdrop against which the effects of policies can be considered. They provide information on all key changes that are taking place in the borough in the wider social, environmental and economic context. The information includes significant effects indicators linked to sustainability appraisal objectives which consider how local authorities are applying the principles of sustainable development planning. This information provides a backdrop against which the effects of policies can be considered.

Planning Applications from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011		
6.1.1	The total number of applications received	1,544
6.1.2	The total number of applications determined*	1,574 (includes 111 Withdrawn)
6.1.3	The number of applications approved	1,225
6.1.4	The number of applications refused	179
6.1.5	The number of appeals made	46
6.1.6	The number of appeals allowed	9 (1 Partial, 1 Withdrawn & 32 Dismissed)
6.1.7	The number of departures	3 (for determinations within the period)

\* includes withdrawn applications.

The total number of applications received between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012 showed a slight increase on last year's total of 1,525, although the total is still below the pre-recession figure of 2,015 in 2007-08. For the current time period, Colchester exceeded the Government's target of 65% of minor applications to be decided within 8 weeks (80%). Performance in the 'major applications' category improved from the previous year and stood at 80% for Largescale Major applications although the 62.8% for Smallscale Major applications was fractionally down. However both figures are comfortably above the government target. 'Other applications' also exceeded the 80% national target with 88.4% being achieved (up from 86.3% in 2010-11).

## 6.2 Key Theme: HOUSING

<b>Core Strategy Policies</b>	
SD1	Sustainable Development Locations – Will promote sustainable development and regeneration to deliver at least 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023, and 14,200 jobs between 2001 and 2021, and growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations.
H1	Housing Delivery – Will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of over 19,000 homes in Colchester between 2001 and 2023. Housing will be focused in growth areas in Colchester including urban extensions to the north and the southwest.
H2	Housing Density – Will seek housing densities that make efficient use of land while ensuring that new housing developments be informed by the local built character and the accessibility of the location.
H3	Housing Diversity – Will seek to secure a range of housing types and tenures on developments across the Borough in order to create inclusive and sustainable communities.
H4	Affordable Housing – Will seek to secure 35% of new dwellings be provided as affordable housing.
H5	Gypsies and Travellers – Will identify sites to meet the established needs of gypsies and travellers in the Borough.

<b>LDF Development Policies</b>	
DP1	Design and Amenity – Ensures that residential development is designed to a high standard, avoid unacceptable impacts on amenity and demonstrate social, economic and environmental sustainability.
DP11	Flat Conversions- Provides criteria for the conversion and sub-division of existing premises into flats and other self-contained residential units
DP12	Dwelling Standards –Guides residential development to ensure protection of residential amenity, provision of appropriate layouts and design; and adequate vehicle parking and refuse arrangements
DP13	Dwelling Alterations, Extensions and Replacement Dwellings- Provides criteria to ensure appropriate development of alterations, extensions and replacement dwellings

### Overview

Colchester needs to allocate and build 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023 in accordance with the adopted Core Strategy. National Planning Policy also requires the Borough Council to ensure it provides a 5 year supply of specific deliverable sites and identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15. Therefore an additional 3,320 homes will be required between 2023 and 2027. Overall, this involves provision of 830 dwellings on average per year up to 2027. The additional post-2023 figure is currently being calculated by rolling forward the current 830 target, but the forthcoming review of the Council's strategic policies will allow this target to be reviewed.

The majority of this housing is already accounted for by previous Local Plan allocations, housing completions and planning permissions. Colchester had already delivered 10,383 new homes between 2001/02 and 2011/12 at an average rate of 943 dwellings per year. The Colchester Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment also identified additional capacity within developed areas to accommodate the required housing and shows a 15 year supply of housing land.

The housing trajectory included in this report shows that a net figure of 1036 homes were built between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. This is an increase on the previous year's total of 673 and shows a return to housing delivery levels that are higher than the target of 830 per year. This positive result reflects a change in the way monitoring is carried out and the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes forward, including securing grants and a flexible approach to scheme cost appraisals. The Council has developed its capacity to monitor housing numbers in-house and no longer uses the County Council monitoring service. The Council's in-house capacity is intended to ensure a reliable report of trends in future delivery, which could then inform reviews of allocation requirements. The transfer and different way of monitoring may account in part for the high delivery levels this year.

New housing development in Colchester Borough will seek to reduce the need to travel, support regeneration and protect greenfield land. The Core Strategy focuses development in the following key areas:

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

Colchester will seek to focus housing delivery on previously developed land (PDL) and will also ensure that a sufficient supply of developable land is available to deliver 830 new homes each year on average during the plan period. For more information on Colchester Borough Council's housing aspirations please refer to 'Colchester's Core Strategy' document available at [www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf)

<b>6.2.1</b>	<b>Housing Trajectory 2011-2012</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policy H1</b>
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A net of 1036 homes were built between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. Under current policies, an average of 830 dwellings are expected to be built in the Borough each year up to March 2026.

The housing trajectory is updated each year and illustrates:

- I. The number of net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, whichever is the longer;
- II. The number of net additional dwellings for the current year;
- III. The projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or over a ten year period from its adoption, whichever is the longer;
- IV. The annual net additional dwelling requirement; and
- V. The annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances.

In earlier years of the 2001-2021 plan period, Colchester's housing delivery was consistently and significantly in excess of the minimum requirements for housing delivery provided for in the Council's Core Strategy. This was then followed by two years of delivery below the target figure of 830 houses a year. The figure for 2011-12 of 1036, however, shows a return to higher than average delivery rates consistent with the overall improved economic climate in the Southeast and provides some reassurance that Colchester will be able to meet overall housing targets. This positive result reflects the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes forward, including a flexible approach to scheme cost appraisals. In addition the Council has developed its capacity to monitor housing numbers in-house and no

longer uses the County Council monitoring service. The Council's in-house capacity is intended to ensure a reliable report of trends in future delivery, which could then inform reviews of allocation requirements. The transfer and different way of monitoring may account in part for the high delivery levels this year.

The table below provides a projection of housing delivery through the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy identified broad areas for greenfield urban extensions and regeneration of previously developed land, to provide that housing provision delivered 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023 at a rate of 830 per year. In particular greenfield urban extensions are expected to deliver an additional 3,000 homes between 2016 and 2023. The Site Allocations DPD, which was adopted in October 2010, allocates the land required to achieve this housing delivery.

The figures set out in the Core Strategy are based on the requirements of the East of England Plan (RSS). The RSS set a target of 17,100 new homes to be achieved by 2021 and this figure informed an annualised delivery rate. The Core Strategy adopted a similar timeframe but extended it by 2 years to demonstrate a 15 year supply.

Year	Average annual target	Net additional completions per year	Cumulative target	Cumulative completions	The annual net additional dwelling requirement	Projected net additional dwellings per year	Projected Cumulative Completions
2001/02	830	566	830	566	830	-	-
2002/03	830	980	1660	1546	841	-	-
2003/04	830	916	2490	2462	835	-	-
2004/05	830	1,277	3320	3739	831	-	-
2005/06	830	896	4150	4635	811	-	-
2006/07	830	1,250	4980	5885	807	-	-
2007/08	830	1,243	5810	7128	785	-	-
2008/09	830	1,028	6640	8156	761	-	-
2009/10	830	518	7470	8674	746	-	-
2010/11	830	673	8300	9347	759	-	-
2011/12	830	1036	9130	10383	765	-	-
2012/13	830		9960		746	756	11139
2013/14	830		10790		745	785	11924
2014/15	830		11620		739	967	12891
2015/16	830		12450		717	1006	13897
2016/17	830		13280		689	972	14869
2017/18	830		14110		659	844	15713
2018/19	830		14940		637	854	16567
2019/20	830		15770		624	810	17377
2020/21	830		16600		613	845	18222
2021/22	830		17430		591	799	19021
2022/23	830		18260		562	676	19697
2023/24	830		19090		533	649	20346
2024/25	830		19920		495	423	20769
2025/26	830		20750		531	250	21019
2026/27	830		21580		811	50	21069
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>21580</b>				<b>21069</b>

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the relevant national guidance on the monitoring and delivery of housing. It requires local authorities to:

- identify and maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements. The supply should include an additional allowance of 5 per cent (moved forward from later in the plan) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. The NPPF states that where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% but as demonstrated above there has not been an under delivery in Colchester and only 5% is required.
- identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15
- not make allowance for windfall sites in the first 10 years of supply, or in the rolling five-year supply, unless there is compelling evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends
- illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and, for market housing, set out a housing implementation strategy describing how delivery of a five-year supply of housing land will be maintained to meet targets

The Council has considered its own targets and the evidence base, (primarily the Strategic Housing Market Assessment) in light of the new national approach and has decided to continue to retain the overall requirement to deliver 19,000 new dwellings by 2023. Policy H1 of the Core Strategy reflects this and also states that the Council will ensure there is an adequate supply of land available to deliver 830 new homes each year.

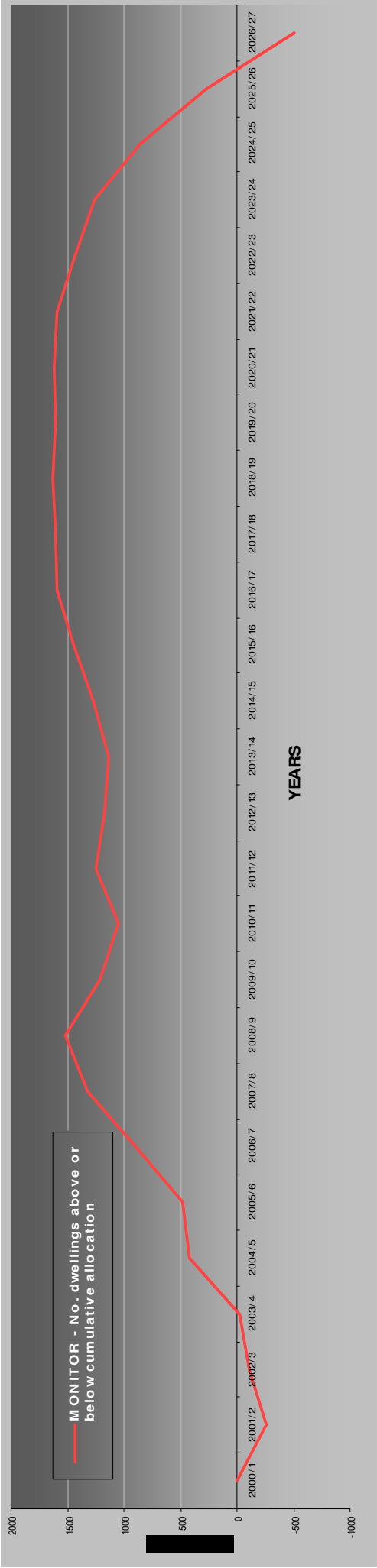
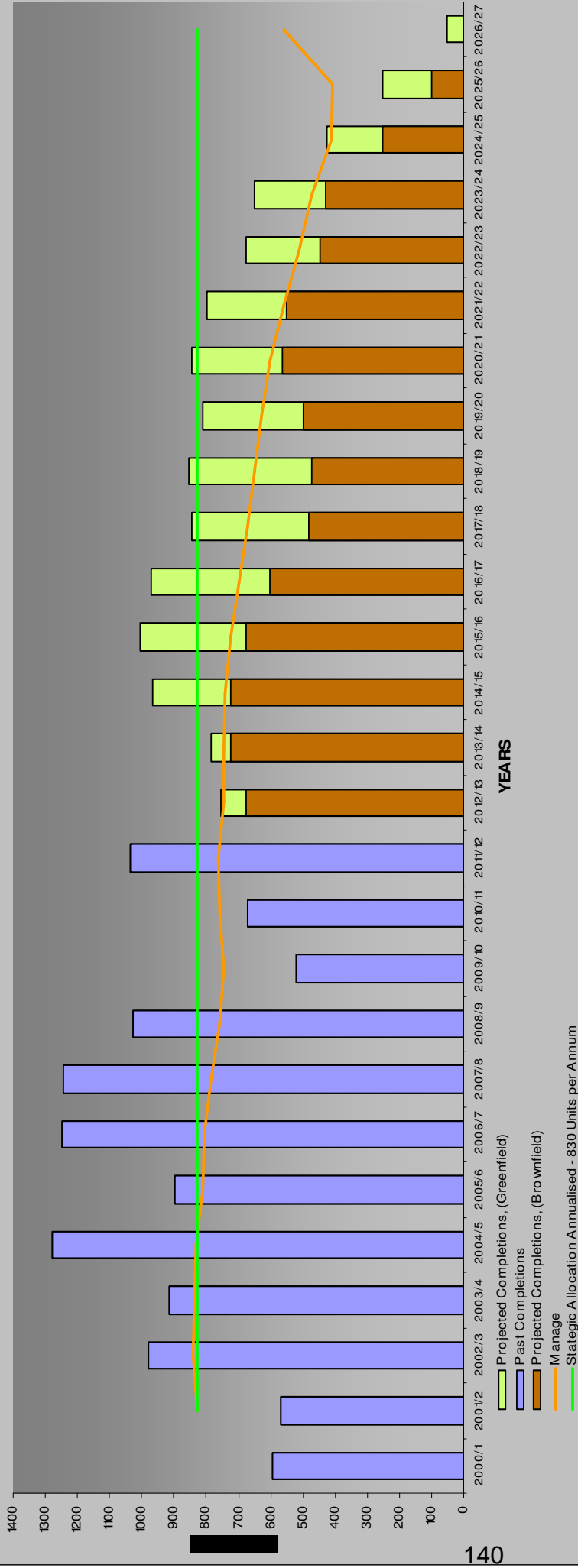
The Council can ensure there is an adequate supply of housing land available but there can be no guarantee in the current uncertain economic climate that units will be delivered each year. A pragmatic approach has to be taken which reflects the over supply to date the expectation that the market will improve over time and the need to meet the overall target to address housing need in Colchester. Since 2001 10,383 new dwellings have been built in the borough set against a target of 9130, providing an over supply of 1253 units. In view of the localism agenda the Council has considered the impact national factors will have on the local housing market to identify any implications for the borough. In addition the results of the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) have been considered. The changes to the planning system have left authorities free to set their own housing targets, provided they are based on robust evidence. Whilst the Council accepts that it would be unwise to put too much weight on the extent of the upward trend in the context of a fragile global economy, the upward trend in 2011 does validate the Council's overall assumption that peaks and troughs in housing delivery rates will be averaged out over the longer term, allowing housing targets to be met..

The Housing Trajectory was revised in 2010 to show a reduced delivery target for the short term, and these more conservative estimates for the immediate future have been retained. The Council remains confident, however, that the overall target of 19000 dwellings will still be delivered by 2023 on the basis that peaks and troughs in demand are compensated for over the longer term. The Council will monitor its delivery carefully to address the requirement to meet the estimated demand and need set out in the evidence base and ensure it can be adequately met.



The Housing Trajectory is updated on an annual basis and reflects information provided by developers and landowners. Through this it has been established that Colchester should be able to continue to meet its delivery targets. The SHLAA guidance sets out the requirements for the 5 year supply but was written in a different climate. Sites now may be deliverable and developable but there may be no incentive to bring them forward because of the lack of finance available to purchasers, although the Government is seeking to address this point with new initiatives. Evidence from the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment update shows the effects of the current restrictions on mortgage finance. Deposits needed by first time buyers are roughly equivalent to a year's average household income needed to make the mortgage affordable.

**COLCHESTER BOROUGH HOUSING TRAJECTORY SHOWING GREENFIELD AND PDL SEPARATELY - Includes Sites**



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**Detailed Housing Trajectory to be presented at Local Plan Committee**

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**Detailed Housing Trajectory to be presented at Local Plan Committee**

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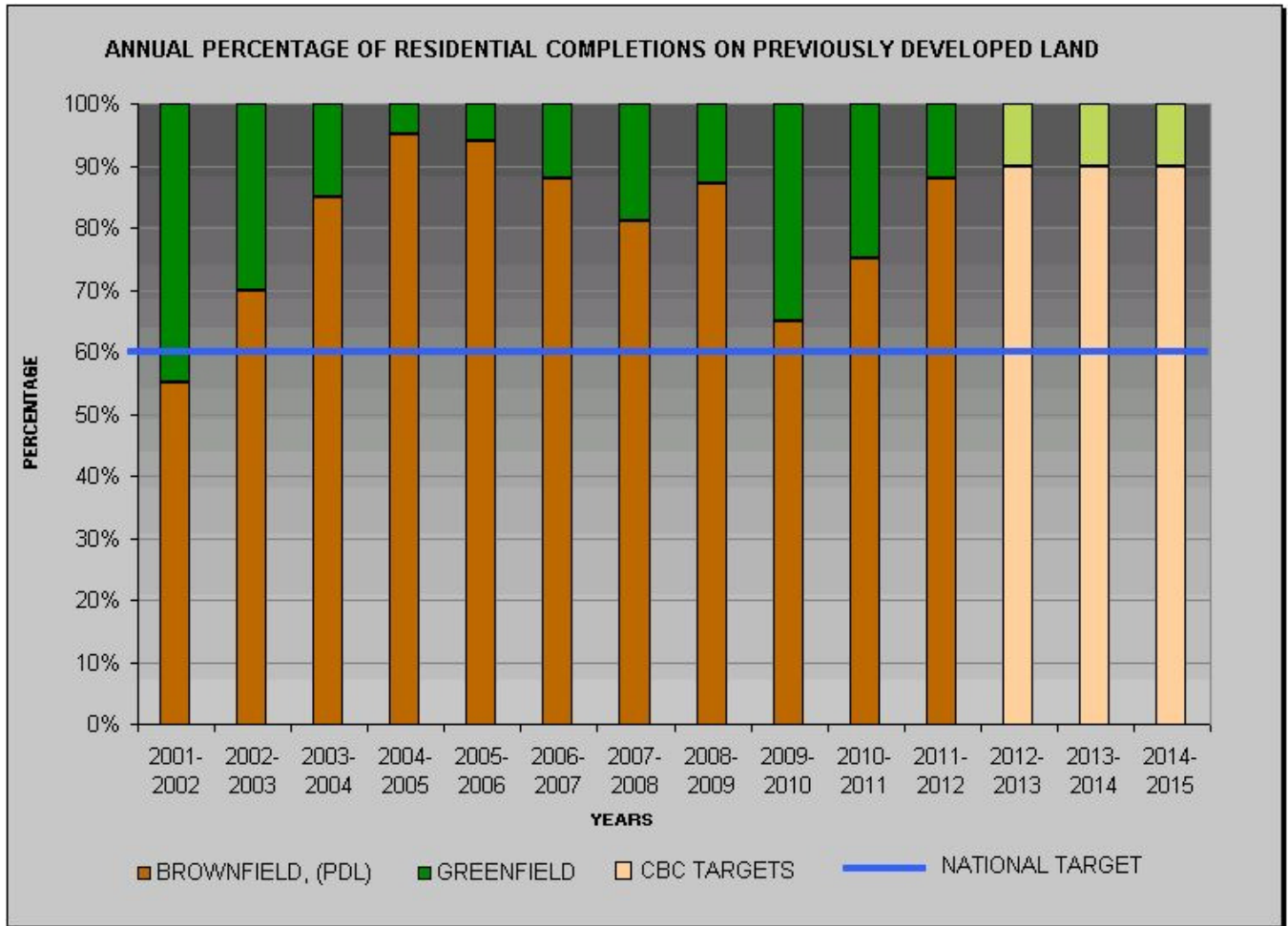
**Detailed Housing Trajectory to be presented at Local Plan Committee**

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**Detailed Housing Trajectory to be presented at Local Plan Committee**

6.2.2	Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land	Indicator for Core Strategy Policies SD1, H1 and UR1
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Between 2011 and 2012, there was a gross of 1094 permanent dwellings built in Colchester. A total of 967 of these dwellings were completed on previously developed land, accounting for 88% of all built dwellings.



Between 2011 and 2012, there were existing permissions for over 4798 (gross) new homes and approximately 94% of these were on previously developed land (PDL). Completions on PDL for the current year have increased to just above 88% of total housing delivery due to brownfield developments in East Colchester, Flakt Woods, Turner Rise and the Garrison.

6.2.3	Affordable housing completions	Indicator for Core Strategy Policies H4
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366 units of affordable housing were completed between April 2011 and March 2012. A total of 271 were social rented, 61 intermediate tenure (shared ownership) and 33 units were built through the Homebuy Direct scheme which offers equity loans towards the purchase of a new build home on selected developments.

The Core Strategy provides that the Council will seek to secure 35% of new dwellings to be provided as affordable housing, with thresholds of 10 units in urban areas and 3 units in rural areas.

The year end figure of 366 affordable homes is 36.0% of all units provided. The high percentage reflects the fact that the total includes some schemes which were 100% affordable schemes. The Council has been successful in bringing affordable housing projects on in a difficult economic climate, including seeking grant funding where larger sites have stalled. The achievement of the Council's 35% affordable housing target in the future is, however, likely to be constrained by the fact that the increased rental income stream resulting from the new affordable rent tenure is seen by Government as a replacement for grant.

<b>6.2.4</b>	<b>Percentage of affordable housing in rural areas</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policies H4 and ENV2</b>
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There were no affordable housing completions in rural areas between 2011 and 2012, which reflects both the wider downturn in the housing market as well as the particular difficulties in delivering rural exception sites. New Government policies intending to address these issues such as the Community Right to Build initiative and the Neighbourhood Planning process have yet to impact on delivery rates.

<b>6.2.5</b>	<b>Number of new homes and employment development completed at ward level within Growth/Regeneration Areas</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policy UR1</b>
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Between 2011 and 2012 there were 486 residential units completed in a growth/regeneration area during the period. During this same period development of 3239 sqm of non-residential land was also completed. The table below outlines the areas where this development took place.

<b>Residential</b>	<b>Units</b>
North Growth Area	92
Garrison Regeneration Area	112
East Colchester Regeneration Area	272
North Station Regeneration Area	0
Town Centre	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>486</b>
<b>Non-residential</b>	<b>Sqm</b>
North Growth Area	724
East Colchester Regeneration Area	606
North Station Regeneration Area	0
Stanway Growth Area	0

<b>6.2.6</b>	<b>Percentage of residential completions that are two or three bedroom properties</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policy H3</b>
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Between 2011 and 2012, 75.7% of residential completions were either two or three bedroom properties. This shows a similar percentage to the previous year which was 76.4%. The residential completions for two and three bedroom properties was identical at 414 units for



each. A further 14.8% of dwellings had four or more bedrooms at this time, compared to 11.9% the year before. The above figures indicate that the supply of one-bedroom flats is still low in response to a lack of current market demand for flats despite the fact that the number of one bed units has nearly doubled compared to the previous year. Longer demographic trends (e.g. smaller households), housing affordability trends (e.g. price of large houses is unaffordable to many), and sustainable development trends (e.g. compact urban form) may affect the trend in future. The Core Strategy encourages a balanced mix of housing delivery to reflect demographic trends, housing needs and market demand. Core Strategy Policy H3 provides that applications for new housing should be guided by an appraisal of community context and housing need. The planning application process will accordingly be used to address any significant imbalances in the mix of housing sizes.

<b>6.2.7</b>	<b>Gypsy and Traveller Issues</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policy H5</b>
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The January 2012 caravan count showed that a total of 18 caravans were present in Colchester all of which were on private sites. 17 caravans were on authorised sites (permanent sites with planning permission). 1 caravan was ‘tolerated’ on an unauthorised site without planning permission.

The caravans present in Colchester accounts for just 1.7% of the Essex total of 1076 caravans. Across Essex 236 of the caravans were socially rented, however, there were no socially rented caravans in Colchester at the time of the last count.

There were 103 caravans belonging to travelling showpeople in Essex at the time of the January 2012 count. None of these were in Colchester.

The January 2012 count showed there were 169 Local Authority pitches across Essex containing 374 caravans. None of these were in Colchester. The Severalls Lane Local Authority site in Colchester was under construction during the current monitoring year and will provide for 12 pitches. The site opened in April 2012 and information from the Essex Countywide Traveller Unit shows that it is now fully occupied.

At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 there were planning permissions for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation on 10 different sites within the Borough. There was one application within the monitoring year which granted conditional approval for the change of use of land to form 3 pitches at Vernons Road, Chappel (application 111335). The total permitted provision in the borough is 28 pitches and 40 caravans. At the end of the monitoring year, some of the sites were subject to personal or temporary permissions.

In addition to these planning permissions there is one site of 2 caravans / 1 pitch where the use is tolerated and considered lawful due to the length of time it has occurred.

The above figures represent the total permitted number of pitches/caravans in the Borough. This may differ from the actual number of caravans present in the Borough at any point in time and explain any differences between the number of caravans permitted by planning applications and the number of caravans recorded in the caravan count.

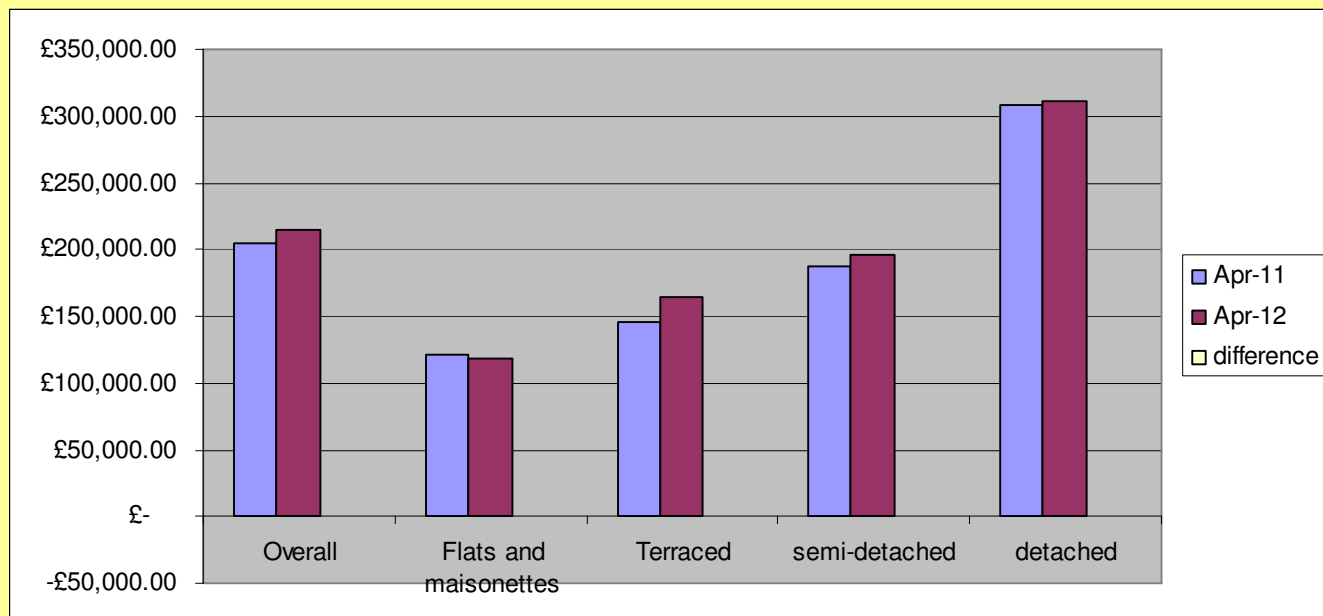
The Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD seek to identify sites to meet the established needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people in the Borough. The Core Strategy states that a suitable site for gypsies and travellers is being provided in Severalls Lane, North

Colchester. Additional sites are identified in the Site Allocations DPD. These allocated sites are identified as suitable for a number of pitches. The size or capacity of a pitch will vary as explained in the Site Allocations DPD and therefore the allocated number of pitches cannot be directly compared to a specific number of caravans. The final version of Policy SA H2 allocates 30 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation in the Borough. The policy also states that the Council will consider the need to allocate additional sites to provide for provision post-2011 in light of further government guidance and that any such review will have regard to the need identified in the Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). Although no need for travelling show people has been identified, Core Strategy Policy H5 states that the matter will be kept under review.

The Council is working with other districts to commence a review of the Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to help provide an assessment of the future need for pitches in the borough.

### 6.2.8 Background Information

- At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 there were approximately 75,945 dwellings within the Borough of which 6,257 were owned by the local authority. The average household size was 2.33 people per household in 2011 which shows a small decrease from the 2001 figure of 2.37.
- The average household price in April 2012 in Colchester was £214,573. This illustrates a 4% increase from £205,063 in April 2010. The figures reflect an upturn in the housing market, with the highest percentage increase for terraced houses at 11%. Last years increase for flats of 8% has been counter-balanced by a 2% decrease this year. The table below demonstrates this.



- As of 31 March 2012 there were 1,695 vacant dwellings in Colchester, a decrease from 2,006 in March 2011.
- Between 2011 and 2012 0% of council homes were classified as 'non-decent'. This is a result of a planned programme of work which took place over the last year. Going forward, the aim is to continue to achieve full stock decency at the end of each year; properties identified as potentially falling into non-decency are programmed into work throughout the year and the Council continues to carry out stock condition surveys to update its asset management database.
- Between April 2011 and March 2012, 296 people were accepted as homeless by Colchester

Borough Council. As of 1 April 2012 there were 4,877 people on the Colchester Borough Council Housing Register. This figure excludes transfer applicants (those already living in social housing that are seeking a transfer).

- At the end of March 2012, there were 171 households in temporary accommodation, which shows a small upturn from last year's figure of 163. The Council and its partners have undertaken a considerable amount of positive work to prevent homelessness, and also work to help homeless people housed in our temporary accommodation move on quickly.

### **Potential Issues**

Colchester's housing market continues to improve, with housing completions up on last year and once again above target. The strength of the recovery is, however, uncertain, as the market continues to be fragile at national level and new Government housing and planning initiatives will take a while to take effect. Restrictions on lending continue to limit the entry of first-time buyers in particular into the market. The level of new planning applications has increased slightly this year, but is still below pre-recession levels. To support housing market recovery and unlock sites, the Council will continue to pursue a range of funding sources for associated major infrastructure projects including Government programmes, forward funding, and implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

## 6.3 Key Theme: ECONOMY AND BUSINESS

<b>Core Strategy Policies</b>	
CE1	Centres and Employment Hierarchy – Will encourage economic development and will plan for the delivery of over 14,000 jobs in Colchester between 2001 and 2021. The Council will promote the redevelopment of existing mixed use Centres and Employment Zones, while focusing employment developments towards accessible locations.
CE2	Mixed Use Centres – Will promote a mix of development types and scales in accordance with the Centre and Employment Hierarchy, and focus new retail and office development in or around the Town Centre.
CE3	Employment Zones – Employment Zones will accommodate employment developments that are not suited to mixed use Centres, including industry, warehousing and business.
UR1	Regeneration Areas – Enhance Colchester as a prestigious regional centre, to regenerate rundown areas, deprived communities and key Centres, with the purpose of building successful and sustainable communities.
ENV2	Rural Communities – Will enhance the vitality of rural communities by supporting small-scale housing and employment development that will enhance the character of villages.

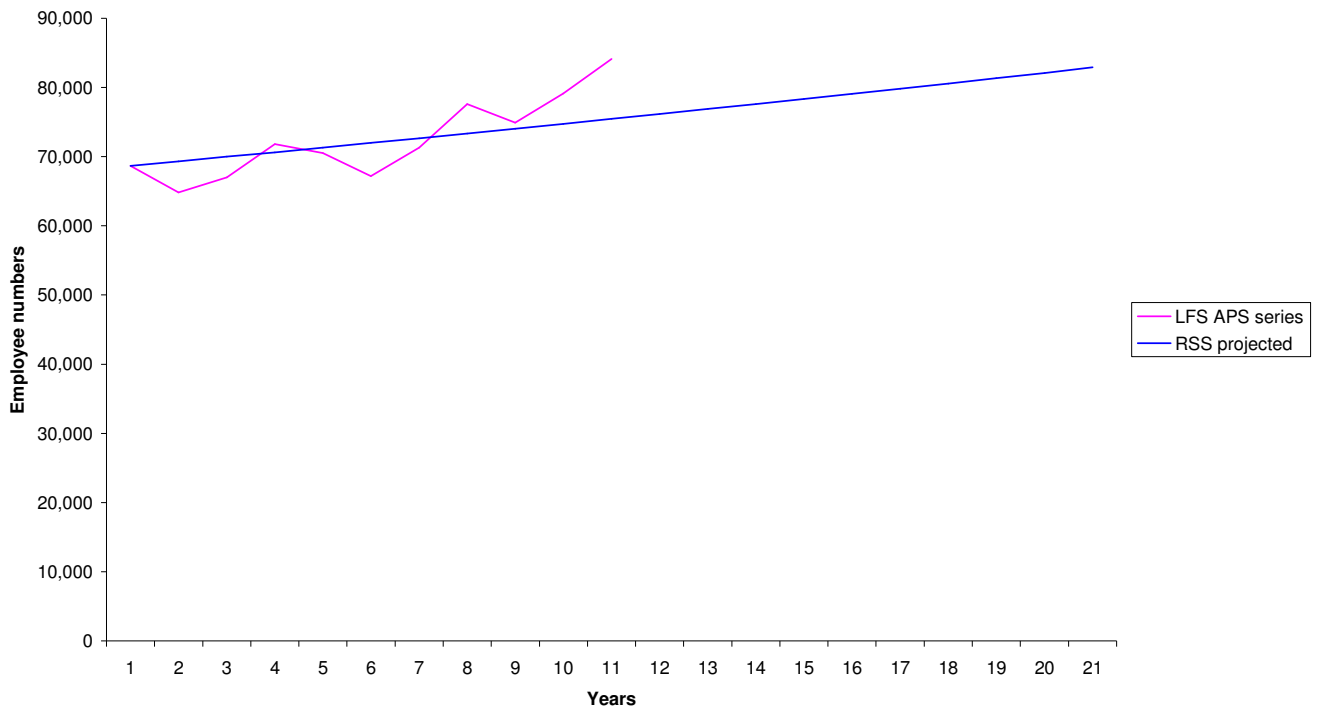
<b>LDF Development Policies</b>	
DP1	Design and Amenity – Ensures that development is designed to a high standard, avoid unacceptable impacts on amenity and demonstrate social, economic and environmental sustainability.
DP5	Appropriate Employment Uses and Protection of Employment Land and Existing Businesses- .Specifies appropriate employment uses within designated employment sites and zones and provides for safeguarded sites used for employment uses.
DP6	Colchester Town Centre Uses -Ensures an appropriate balance of uses in the Town Centre and sets levels of retail use on streets frontages in the Inner and Outer Core.
DP7	Local Centres and Individual Shops - Safeguards the primary retail role of Neighbourhood and Rural District Centres as well as providing criteria for safeguarding individual shops.
DP8	Agricultural Development and Diversification- Provides support for existing agricultural uses and sets criteria for appropriate farm diversification proposals.
DP9	Employment Uses in the Countryside -Supports appropriate employment uses in the countryside by providing criteria for conversions, extensions, replacement and new rural employment buildings.
DP10	Tourism, Leisure and Culture – Provides criteria to encourage the development of appropriately located tourism, leisure and culture facilities.

### Overview

Providing jobs for Colchester's growing community is a central objective of the Core Strategy. It assumes a floor target of approximately 14,200 employee jobs, although many jobs have already been created since 2001. The Council cannot deliver the additional employment directly, but it can help to protect existing employment, stimulate new employment-generating developments and accommodate these in the most suitable locations. To help deliver employment, the Borough will need to take advantage of growth employment sectors and minimise job losses in declining sectors.

Currently the Borough is on track to achieve the job target total; the chart below illustrates Annual Population Survey (APS) job growth to date (2011 is the most recent figure) against the projected target. (From 2001-2004 the dataset was known as the Labour Force Survey (LFS) . Major employment-generating projects in the Regeneration Areas and Employment Zones will boost progress towards the target as they come on-stream over the next few years.

Actual and estimated employee job growth: Colchester, 2001-2021



The Council commissioned studies for the Core Strategy for projected growth in retail, business and employment and used this evidence to plan and facilitate future economic development and employment delivery in Colchester. Over the 2006 to 2021 period, the borough will need to accommodate the following development:

- 67,000sqm (net) of retail floorspace, predominantly in the Town Centre (Retail Study, Feb. 2007)
- 106,000sqm (gross) of office floorspace (Use Class B1a & B1b), predominantly in the Town Centre and at the University Research Park. (Employment Land Review, May 2007)
- 45,000sqm (gross) of business floorspace (excluding offices), predominantly in Strategic Employment Zones (Employment Land Review, May 2007)

The Borough is well connected to the strategic road, rail, air and port networks between London and East Anglia and the Region and the European continent. Express rail travel to London from the Borough is only 45 minutes journey time; Stansted Airport is 40 minutes drive-time away while Colchester is within the Haven Gateway sub-region and its three commercial ports which collectively form the largest near-sea and deep-sea container port complex in the Country with a significant roll-on, roll-off and passenger ferry function. These three ports, Harwich, Ipswich and Felixstowe, are of national and regional economic importance for trade and as transport gateways. This strategic position has meant the Borough has been a magnet for growth resulting in a healthy and vibrant economy with the average gross weekly pay level in excess of the GB average and above that of the Region; see below.

**Earnings by residence (2011)**

	Colchester	East	GB
<b>Gross weekly pay (£)</b>			
Full-time workers	530.2	528.5	503.1

In 2008 (latest data, information not currently collected), the Department for Communities and Local Government reported that Colchester contained 388,000 sqm of retail floorspace and, 226,000 sqm of office floorspace. The Borough also held 342,000 sqm of factory floorspace and 318,000 sqm of warehouse floorspace. The overall stock of floorspace reported in 2007 totalled 1,329,000 sqm, a fall of 32,000 sqm over the total for 2007.

In order to fulfil Core Strategy 2021 targets, the Borough will need to provide a further 48,259 sqm of retail floorspace in the town centre.

### Use Class Order Examples

The following table of examples will help to explain the data within this chapter.

Use Class	Examples
<b>A1</b>	Shops, post offices, travel/ticket agencies, sandwich shops, hairdressers, funeral directors, dry cleaners, internet café.
<b>A2</b>	Professional and financial services, banks, building societies, betting shops, estate and employment agencies.
<b>B1</b>	Offices not within class A2. Research and development of products or processes, laboratories, light industry.
<b>B1a</b>	Offices not within class A2.
<b>B2</b>	General industry.
<b>B8</b>	Use for storage or as a distribution centre.
<b>D2</b>	Assembly and leisure. Cinemas, concert/dance halls, sports halls, swimming pools, skating rinks, gymnasiums, other indoor and outdoor sport and leisure uses.

<b>6.3.1</b>	<b>Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type (sqm).</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3</b>
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The purpose of this indicator is to show the amount and type of completed employment floorspace (gains and losses and net balance).

	<b>B1a</b>	<b>B1-B8</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gains</b>	0	2381	2381
<b>Losses</b>	0	330	330
<b>Net balance</b>	0	2051	2051

The total of 2,051 square metres completed employment floorspace in 2011/12 compares with 5,294 square metres in 2010/11. It indicates that the commercial market in Colchester is lagging further behind the residential market in showing signs of recovery.

<b>6.3.2</b>	<b>Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type, which is on previously developed land (PDL) (sqm).</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policies SD1, CE1, CE2, CE3, UR1</b>
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The purpose of this indicator is to show the amount and type of completed employment floorspace (gross) coming forward on previously developed land (PDL).

	<b>B1a</b>	<b>B1-B8</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gross on PDL</b>	0	2051	2051
<b>% on PDL</b>	NA	100%	100%

Last year, the total of brownfield completions had fallen to 25% due to development on several greenfield sites. This year's total of 100% of new employment floorspace completed on brownfield sites compares with 91.7% in the previous year. While the percentage is based on a low total, it reinforces the continuing availability of brownfield sites.

<b>6.3.3</b>	<b>Employment Land available by type (Ha)</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3</b>
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The purpose of this indicator is to show the amount and type of employment land available.

	<b>B1a</b>	<b>B1-B8</b>	<b>Other employment uses (A and D-class) uses</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Extant Planning Permissions</b>	1.66	2.09	7.31	39.65

Between April 2011-March 2012 a total of 11.06 hectares of land had planning permissions for employment-generating uses.

<b>6.3.4</b>	<b>Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses' (sqm)</b>	<b>Indicator for Core Strategy Policy CE2a</b>
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The purpose of this indicator is to show the amount of completed floorspace (gross and net) for town centre uses within (i) town centre areas and (ii) the local authority area.

<b>(i) Town Centre areas</b>				
	<b>A1-A2 Retail</b>	<b>B1a Offices</b>	<b>D2 Leisure</b>	<b>A1-D2 Total</b>
<b>Gains</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Losses</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Net balance</b>	0	0	0	0

<b>(ii) Local authority area</b>				
	<b>A1-A2</b>	<b>B1a</b>	<b>D2</b>	<b>A1-D2 Total</b>
<b>Gains</b>	1458	0	0	13654
<b>Losses</b>	270	0	0	746
<b>Net balance</b>	1188	0	0	12908

The lack of activity in new floorspace for Town Centre uses reflects the overall weakness of the commercial market. The redevelopment of the Williams and Griffins department store points, however, to investor confidence in the longer term prospects of the Town Centre. Additionally, the commercial property market for existing Town Centre property is buoyant and vacancy rates continue to be below national averages of approximately 12-13%. (9.7% in May 2011, King Sturge Colchester Town Centre Retail Study). In particular occupancy rates in the Walls/Lanes area of small shops are improving. The Council is working with traders in the area to develop a programme of improvements including interpretation, presentation and physical enhancement.

<b>6.3.5</b>	<b>Town Centre Retail Frontage Percentages</b>	<b>Indicator for Development Policy DP6</b>
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The table below shows the level of A1 use along each frontage as recorded in spring 2012. The previous year figures are also provided to show areas of change in the 2011/12 monitoring period. Town Centre monitoring is undertaken to record the current (or last known) ground floor use of units within the Town Centre Inner and Outer Core areas.

Frontage	Allocation	Target	Year	
			2011	2012
Culver Square & Shewall Walk	Inner Core	85%	98%	98%
Culver Street East (north side)	Inner Core	85%	100%	100%
Culver Street East (south side)	Inner Core	85%	100%	100%
Culver Street West (south side)	Inner Core	85%	90%	90%
Culver Walk (north side)	Inner Core	85%	95%	95%
Culver Walk (south side)	Inner Core	85%	86%	86%
Eld Lane	Inner Core	85%	80%	80%
Head Street (east side)	Inner Core	85%	96%	96%
Lion Walk	Inner Core	85%	80%	80%
Long Wyre Street (east side)	Inner Core	85%	88%	80%
Long Wyre Street (west side)	Inner Core	85%	100%	100%
Priory Walk (north side)	Inner Core	85%	90%	87%
Priory Walk (south side)	Inner Core	85%	100%	100%
Queen's Street	Inner Core	85%	65%	65%
Red Lion Yard (east side)	Inner Core	85%	83%	83%
Red Lion Yard (west side)	Inner Core	85%	87%	87%
Short Wyre Street	Inner Core	85%	90%	90%
Sir Issac's Walk	Inner Core	85%	75%	73%
St Nicholas Passage	Inner Core	85%	100%	100%
Trinity Square (east side)	Inner Core	85%	100%	100%
Trinity Street	Inner Core	85%	54%	54%
Vineyard Street	Inner Core	85%	29%	29%
Bank Passage	Outer Core	50%	100%	100%
Crouch Street	Outer Core	50%	66%	66%
Culver Street West (north side)	Outer Core	50%	52%	52%
Head Street (east side)	Outer Core	50%	14%	14%
High Street	Outer Core	50%	54%	54%
Queen's Street	Outer Core	50%	51%	51%
St Botolph's Street	Outer Core	50%	56%	56%
St John's Street (north side)	Outer Core	50%	67%	67%
St John's Street (south side)	Outer Core	50%	90%	90%

	Frontage above policy target
	Frontage below policy target

As shown by the table and the 2012 figures, there has been very little change in most of the frontages since 2011. Only one frontage (Long Wyre Street, east side) has fallen below the threshold but this was the result of a new A3 use being introduced in that location.

Over the past 12 months the Council has been able to retain the level of A1 use within the Town Centre and successfully use Development Policy DP6 to guide future development and resist change of use applications in areas which are close to the thresholds prescribed within the policy.



The table shows that the main shopping areas within the Town Centre are performing well with regards to the level of A1 retail use in these locations. 64% of the frontages within the Inner Core are operating above the 85% policy threshold. The frontages which are below the threshold are predominately the streets near where the Inner Core meets the Outer Core which reflects the fluid nature of the Town Centre and the different areas within it. Certain frontages within the Inner Core are operating well below the target threshold so these areas need greater attention and focus through policy mechanisms such as the Town Centre SPD to promote town centre vitality.

Within the 2011/12 monitoring period the uses within the Town Centre have remained fairly static but various units have become vacant or been converted for another similar use so although the level of uses has remained similar the actual business may have changed. Numerous units have also been renovated within the past year.

The policy thresholds found with Policy DP6 are broadly accurate and reflective of how the Town Centre is currently operating but will need to be closely monitored as the Council undertakes work on the production of a new Local Plan to replace the current Local Development Framework in the next few years, which will provide an opportunity to revisit the role of retail in the town centre and its relationship to other uses, food and drink in particular.

6.3.6	Number of jobs in rural areas	Indicator for Core Strategy Policy ENV2
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Cuts at the Office of National Statistics have ended this source of statistical information on rural jobs and means that the Council needs to develop alternative ways of monitoring this important issue, such as forthcoming detailed information from the 2011 Census.

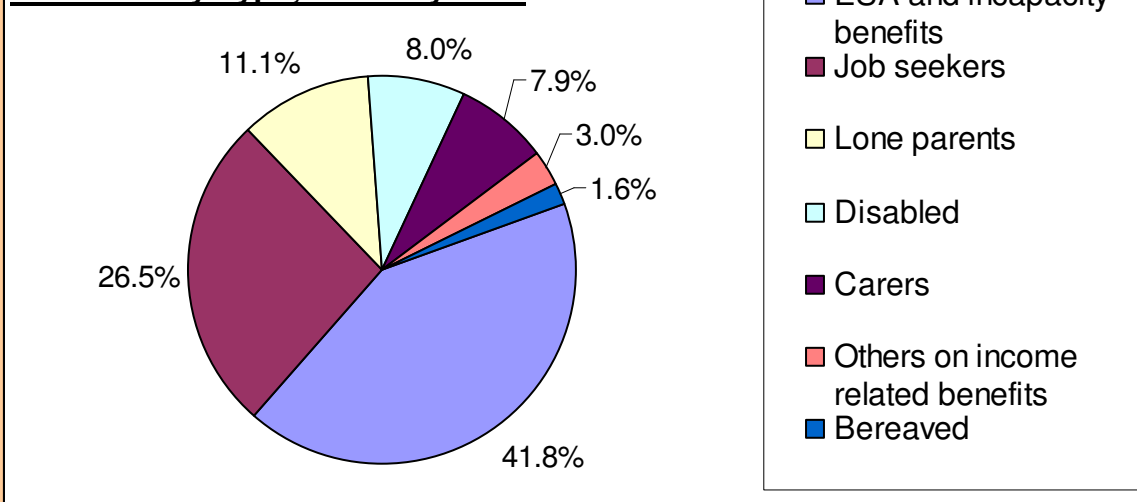
### 6.3.7 Background Information

- From April 2011 to March 2012 data from the Annual Population Survey estimated the percentage of economically active people in Colchester as 79.7% of the working age population. This figure was the same as the regional figure, and higher than the Great Britain average of 76.5%. The number of economically active individuals was 100,900 of which 94,800 were in employment. Broken down further, this was composed of approximately 81,200 employees and 13,100 self employed plus 6,000 people who were unemployed. The latter figure (5.9% of the economically active population), was lower than the East (6.6%) and significantly lower than the GB (8.1%) average.
- Nomis data indicates that there has been a decrease in the number of inactive working age individuals; from 25,200 (Apr-10 to Mar-11), to 24,900 (Apr-11 to Mar-12).
- Nomis data for Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants in August 2012 (most recent data), calculated a total of 3,299 claimants (1,192 female and 2,107 male). Compared to September 2011 data published in the previous AMR, this is a decrease of 70 JSA claimants. When this is broken down by gender and the split compared, the proportion of female claimants has decreased by 3.6%, and male claimants have decreased by 1.2%
- Data from the Annual Population Survey (Apr-11-Mar-12) estimated 20.3% of Colchester's working age population as inactive (24,900 people). However, 25.5% of working age females were in this category, and only 15.0% of males. Of the inactive working age

population 18.2% (4,500) were inactive-wanting a job and 81.8% (20,400 people) were inactive- and not wanting a job.

- Nomis data shows that in February 2012, 13,490 (11.1%) of Colchester's working age population were claiming worklessness benefits, compared to 13,930 (10.6%) of the working age population in February 2011. The chart below shows the benefit types claimed by the Colchester workless population, Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and incapacity accounting for 41.8% of all claims, followed by 26.5% JSA claimants (no change in rankings from last year).
- Annual population Survey data (Apr-11-Mar-12) shows that by occupation, the largest number of Colchester's working age population, at 22,000, were employed in professional occupations, and represented 23.2% of the population in employment. Managers, directors and senior officials made up the second largest number of working age employees, at 13,100 (13.8%). Administrative and secretarial occupations were the third highest employee group in Colchester, making up 12,600 employees (13.3%).
- Business Register Employment Survey (BRES) 2010 data reveals education and health represented a large proportion of employee jobs (30.1%), motor trades, wholesale and retail also made up a substantial proportion (18.9%).

**Claimants by Type, February 2012**



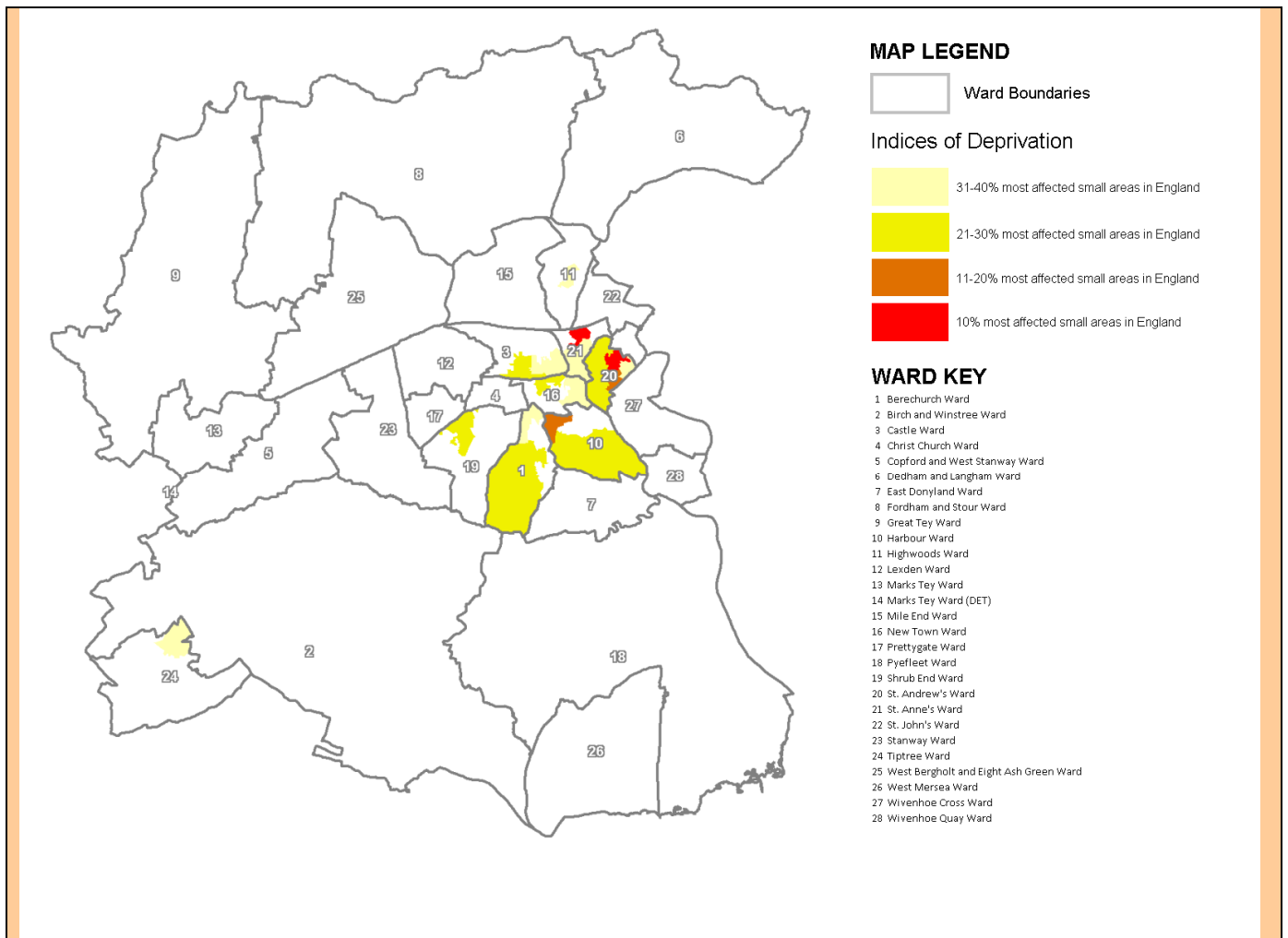
- Tourism was worth £231.6, to the Borough economy in 2011, which is a rise of approximately 3% from £224.8m in 2010, and 267% from 1993.
- In total, it is estimated that 4,071 full time equivalent jobs are supported by tourism, equating to 5,529 actual jobs. 1,799 actual jobs are supported by staying visitors and 3,729 by day trips.
- Colchester attracted just under 5.0m visitor trips in 2011. This is approximately 6% higher than in 2010 (4.7m) and 79% higher than the 1993 figure of 2.8m visitor trips. This can be broken down as follows:
  - 64,000 staying trips taken by overseas staying visitors;
  - 222,000 staying trips taken by domestic staying visitors; and
  - 4.7m day trippers.
- In 2010, it was estimated that there were 88,000 jobs in Colchester. This equates to a job

density of 0.72, i.e. the ratio of total jobs to working age population. This was slightly lower than the Eastern job density of 0.75 and a slight increase from 86,000 in 2009.

- In March 2011 there were 5,895 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses in the Borough. These businesses accounted for 7,235 local units – effectively “workplaces” and were distributed by number across a wide range of sectors.
- Educational achievement in Colchester is generally good. The working age population is defined as those aged between 16 and 64 years, male and female). Between January and December 2011, approximately 46,100 residents were qualified to NVQ4 level or above (HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent), accounting for 38.1% of the working age population. This is approximately 9% higher than the Eastern figure of 29.2%. A further 88,600 people were qualified to NVQ2 level and above (5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C, intermediate GNVQ, NVQ 2, intermediate 2 national qualification (Scotland) or equivalent), accounting for over two thirds of the working age population (68.5%). During this time period the number of people in Colchester with no qualifications at all stood at 4.7% (5,700 people).
- In 2007, none of the small areas in Colchester appeared in the top 10% most deprived in England. However, in the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation two small areas were in the top 10% most deprived in England. These were Magnolia in St Andrew’s ward and St Anne’s Estate in St Anne’s ward. In the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (IMD07) there were three small areas out of all 104 in the borough in the 20% most deprived in England, in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 this had increased to four small areas. In IMD07, St Anne’s Estate in St Anne’s ward and Magnolia in St Andrew’s ward were the small areas with the highest levels of deprivation in Colchester (ranking first and second respectively). Although these were the two most deprived in 2010, their position had switched: In IMD10, Magnolia was the most deprived small area followed by St Anne’s Estate.

**Deprived small areas in Colchester wards (Indices of deprivation 2010)**

***(40% most deprived small areas in England)***



In July 2010 the Haven Gateway Partnership commissioned 'Centre for Cities' to undertake some research about how the economic performance of Colchester, Ipswich and the local authorities comprising the Haven Gateway sub-region rank in comparison to English cities. The analysis uses a typology of economic performance developed in a recent report, Private Sector Cities: a new geography of opportunity. The study categorises the economies of England's cities as buoyant, stable or struggling. Centre for Cities considered that If Colchester was included in England's list of 56 cities, it would rank as one of the country's most buoyant economies. Between 1998 and 2008, the number of private sector jobs in Colchester grew by 11.5 % (which would have been the ninth highest percentage growth of any city in England).

### Potential Issues

The key sustainability issues for economic well-being in the future centre around maintaining a healthy, vibrant and diverse economy that can successfully weather the challenges of the economic downturn.

Sustainable economic growth for the future will continue to involve matching the needs of the local workforce and urban employment and regeneration areas with the opportunities for growth and inward investment presented by Colchester's regional status as a major employment hub accessible both to London and Europe.

No less important is policy support for the rural economy which has been affected in recent years by falling incomes from farming. As a significant part of the Borough's area – around two-thirds - is rural, there is a need to encourage revitalisation of the rural economy including farm diversification schemes. More importantly, improving access in rural areas to non-land-based jobs and services will contribute significantly to this aim.

Improved transportation and attractive travel links are a major issue for Colchester, and it is essential that planning for transport is an integral part of the whole Local Development Framework, including the location of jobs near homes to reduce the need to travel. It is particularly important to improve and maintain Colchester's transportation infrastructure so that the Borough can continue to attract businesses, employees, shoppers and tourists, therefore boosting the local economy. No less important is the ability of Borough businesses and residents to obtain Next Generation Access to Information and Communication Technology and the increasing growth of home-working and home-based enterprises requires Colchester to make a step-change in digital connectivity.

The Core Strategy provides for five major regeneration sites in the Borough, each of which will significantly contribute to employment and business growth. Within these areas the provision of attractive, accessible and flexible business premises will also help generate new investment opportunities and encourage businesses to remain in Colchester. The visitor economy has been identified as a growth area, especially with the opening of the Firstsite contemporary visual art gallery in September 2011. The Town Centre remains the key focus for improvement and developments there include new public spaces (such as that around the Firstsite gallery); the new Magistrates' Court which opened in April 2012; new hotel/restaurants on East Hill; the proposed redevelopment of Williams and Griffins department store; and the planned development of Vineyard Gate as a further retail development.

## 6.4 Key Theme: TRANSPORTATION

<b>Core Strategy Policies</b>	
TA1	Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour – Will work with partners to improve accessibility and change travel behaviour as part of a comprehensive transportation strategy for Colchester.
TA2	Walking & Cycling – Will work with partners to promote walking and cycling as an integral, highly sustainable means of transportation.
TA3	Public Transport – Will work with partners to further improve public transport and increase modal shift towards sustainable modes.
TA4	Roads and Traffic – Will work with partners to accommodate necessary car travel, manage demand in urban areas, and facilitate freight and servicing.
TA5	Parking – Will work with partners to ensure that car parking is managed to support the economy and sustainable communities.

### **LDF Development Policies**

- DP17 Accessibility and Access – Requires that all development should seek to enhance accessibility for sustainable modes of transport by giving priority to pedestrian, cycling and public transport access. A Travel Plan and/or Transport Assessments will be required for proposals with more significant traffic generation impacts.
- DP18 Transport Infrastructure Proposals – Ensures that developments that provide transport infrastructure, such as Park and Ride, freight servicing, new highway network improvements and new public transport facilities, are appropriately located, justified and environmental acceptable.
- DP19 Requires new development to have regard to the Vehicle Parking Standards developed by Essex County Council.

### **Overview**

The Borough is connected to a comprehensive network of major roads via the A12 and A120, which provide routes to London, the M25, Harlow and Cambridge. The Borough also lies in close proximity to the major seaport of Harwich (20 miles) and Stansted Airport (30 miles). As a Regional Interchange Centre, public transport provision includes extensive rail and bus services. This consists of:

- six railway stations with train services to London and Norwich on the mainline as well as links to Cambridge, Clacton etc on the branchlines, operated by National Express East Anglia,
- a network of frequent bus services across the urban area linking key services, principally operated by First and Network Colchester
- a number of other complementary bus services provided by a number of operators linking to other towns e.g. Chelmsford and Clacton, rural locations and dedicated services including to schools, for football matches and supporting Colchester's night time economy, and
- inter-urban coach services linking to destinations across the UK including London, Stansted airport and Liverpool.

Engaging with the community as part of Colchester's Core Strategy development has illustrated that transportation and traffic issues are very high up on the public's list of priorities.

The LDF Core Strategy sets out the borough council's approach to transport, which seeks to change travel behaviour to manage demand, especially of peak hour car traffic. Certain major infrastructure is to be provided through development in north and west Colchester. Park and

Ride is to be provided in north Colchester and a planning permission has been granted for the site. Improvements for cycling and public transport are also being sought along with initiatives to reduce traffic in the town centre. The Council's current car parking strategy aims to find a balance between supporting town centre vitality; minimising peak hour journeys; and set robust but responsive pricing structures that also support car park running and refurbishment costs. A range of special parking offers is available that compare favourably to Colchester's competitive towns.

## **Cycling in Colchester**

The Colchester Cycling Delivery Strategy has been adopted in January 2012 which sets out how we can encourage more cycling in the borough. The document includes new cycle routes as well as proposals for promoting cycling and cycle training. The document will be used in negotiations with developers to ensure investment in cycling is made which benefits the developments new community. The document will also be used in bidding for other funding sources where appropriate.

A number of training and promotional campaigns have also been delivered as part of the project to encourage residents to take up cycling. This includes Bikeability training programmes delivered within Colchester Schools. The number of years 5 and 6 children attending cycle training between April 2010 and March 2011 was 639 pupils.

## **Station Travel Plan**

The Colchester Station Travel Plan national pilot project has been completed, and due to its success the Station Travel Plan will continue. During this year the following initiatives have been implemented including -

- Getting to the Station guide to show station users how to travel to and from the station;
- Dedicated web site, regular newsletters and posters at the station keeping station users and stakeholders informed of progress;
- Campaign to encourage more people to travel to the station by bus with discounted PlusBus bus tickets and better bus information;
- Major refurbishment of the station which includes the south side ticket hall and forecourt with new cycle parking areas.

## **Major Infrastructure**

A new vehicle route onto the north side of the University of Essex Campus has been constructed as part of the Knowledge Gateway Development at the University. This is accessed off a new junction on the A133 Clingoe Hill, also providing a safe crossing point for students.

As part of the development of the former Garrison Barracks (Meane & Hyderabad) site, a new through road (Roberts Road) is being created linking Mersea Road and Military Road.

Work has begun on the Stanway Western Bypass which will provide a link between London Road and Warren Lane. This is a developer funded scheme.

Extensive negotiations have been held with ECC and the landowners to forward fund the early delivery of the Northern Approaches phase 3, linking together the existing NAR through to Axial Way/United Way giving access to the A12.

A Growing Places Funding Bid has been provisionally allocated by the Local Enterprise Partnership which included the cost of constructing the Colchester Park and Ride and the NAR2 Rapid Transit Corridor. The target date for the Park and Ride to open is the end of 2013.

### Travel Change Behaviour - Colchester Travel Plan Club

The Travel Plan Club has remained highly active over the last year. Work has included the following :

- Assisted TPC members to achieve the Essex County Council’s Business Travel Plan Accreditation and sponsored a Sustainable Travel category as part of the prestigious NQE Business Awards;
- Reviewed communication methods with members, resulting in a new website, social media and themed TPC meetings;
- Communications support for the Cycle Colchester Project and supported members to promote sustainable travel at events e.g. fresher’s fairs, car share coffee mornings;
- Promoted the Travel Plan Club and Cycle Colchester at the Colchester Carnival;
- New bus ticketing initiatives e.g. Network Colchester carnets and setting up systems to administer discounts;
- Developed relationship with the voluntary group “Walk Colchester” (WC), working jointly on “walk to work week” events, and having our own blogspot;
- Helped CBC promote a pool bike scheme;
- Promotion of local bike week events to our members. We also promoted other local cycling events through the year including a popular family ride, and sporting events;
- Undertaken snapshot on line survey across Travel Plan Club members, plus an initial travel survey for new members to establish base line data;
- Made a successful submission to DEFRA for [www.Loveurcarcolchester.co.uk](http://www.Loveurcarcolchester.co.uk) to help address air quality issues in Colchester by promotion to the travel plan club members. The promotional campaign was launched in February 2012.

### Transport and Accessibility Indicators

A number of the indicators below are linked to data collected for the Essex Local Transport Plan (LTP) or the Local Area Agreement. Previously, the Council had access to journey to school and bus passenger levels, but as this data is no longer available at a Borough level, these indicators are no longer included in the AMR. Further changes in future years may result from changes to the National Indicator set and LTP3.

6.4.1	<b>Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies SD1 and SD2</b>
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The Council has reviewed planning permissions granted during 2011-12 and has established that all the new residential developments were within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre. This shows that development has been located where there is access to public transport and there is a good coverage of public transport.

6.4.2	<b>To obtain an agreed Travel Plan for all major commercial/community developments</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy TA1</b>
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Two travel plans were approved through major development applications in Colchester during 2011/12. Seven existing travel plans in Colchester were also accredited during 2011/12.



Travel plans are accredited against a list of travel plan measures, the level of survey responses and the targets they meet.

In addition to this, 827 residential travel information packs have been provided for residents of four new developments in Colchester during 2011/12.

The 2011 snapshot survey showed that 53% of members travelled sustainably to work during June/July. Surveys over the previous few years, show an ongoing reduction in the number mainly driving alone to work from 59% in 2008, 56% in 2009 and 53% in 2010.

6.4.3	<b>Comparison of long and short stay car parking demand and duration in public car parks in the Town Centre (with a view to reducing long stay)</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy TA5</b>
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Statistics unavailable at time of writing – to be tabled at Local Plan Committee.

6.4.4	<b>Annualised indicator of Cycling Trips (increased to reflect Colchester's cycle town status).</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies TA1, TA2 and PR2</b>
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During November 2011, there were approximately 58,937 cycle trips recorded at 13 automatic sites across the town. This is a 25% increase compared to approximately 46,893 cycle trips in November 2010. It should be noted that both the 2010 and 2011 data sets have been cleansed since the 2010 figures were last reported. Further analysis of the data shows a reduction in numbers of cyclists from the middle of November 2010 which corresponds with cold/freezing temperatures and snowfall.

Counts were also undertaken in Colchester on 6 Cycle Town Sites. During November 2011 there were approximately 21,278 cycle trips recorded on these sites. This is an increase compared to approximately 12,199 cycle trips in November 2010. Again however, a reduction in the number of cyclists from the middle of November 2010 corresponds with cold/freezing temperatures.

6.4.5	<b>Motor vehicles entering Colchester on the main radial corridors</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, TA5</b>
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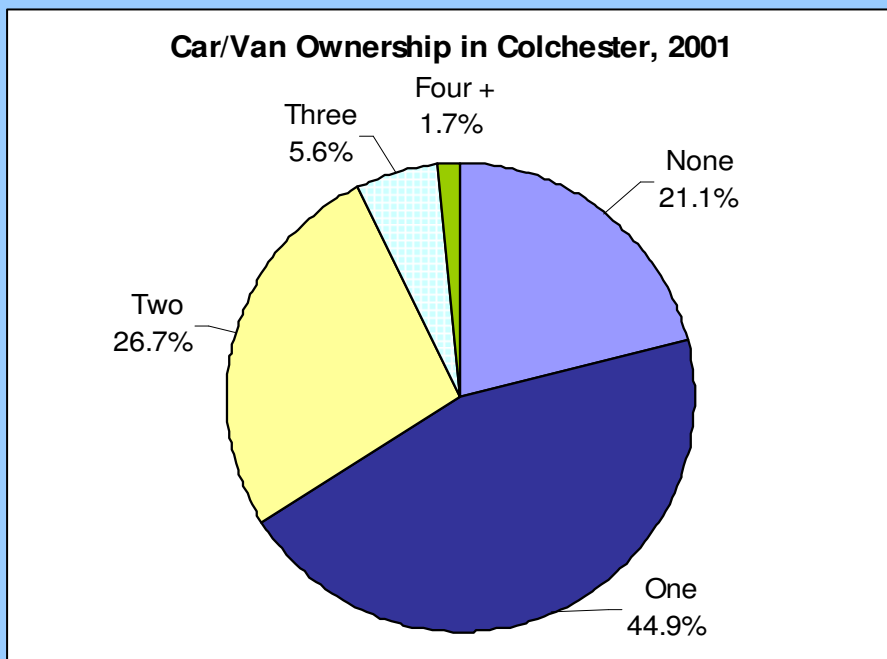
28,494 vehicles entered Colchester town centre in the peak period in 2011 (ECC LTP Indicator 12b). This is below the target value of 33,000.

The level of cars entering Colchester in the morning peak has shown a small decrease against 2010 when the figure was 28,749.

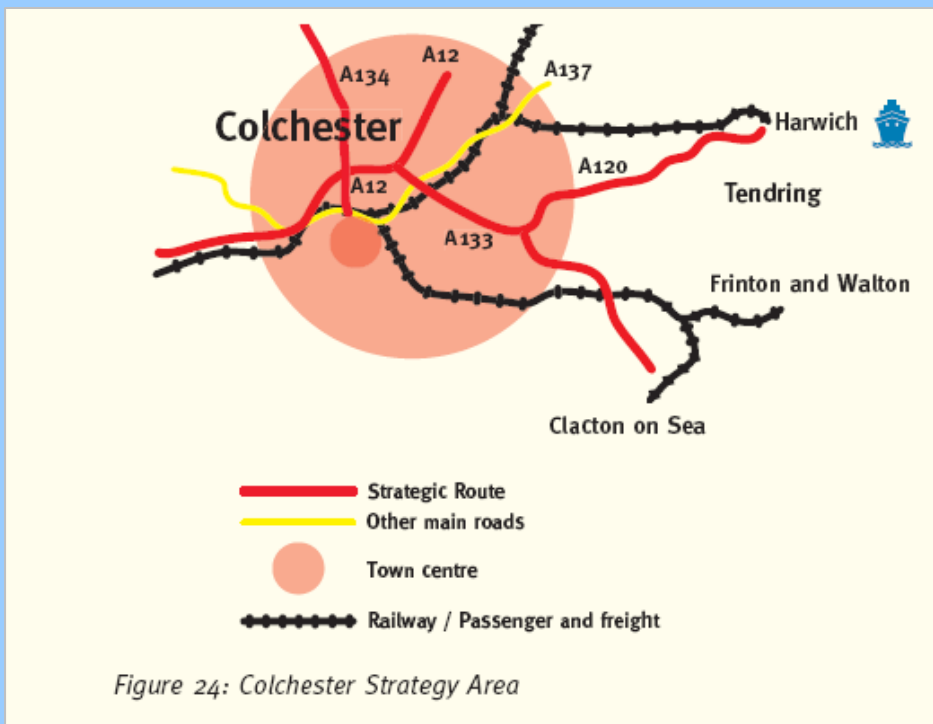
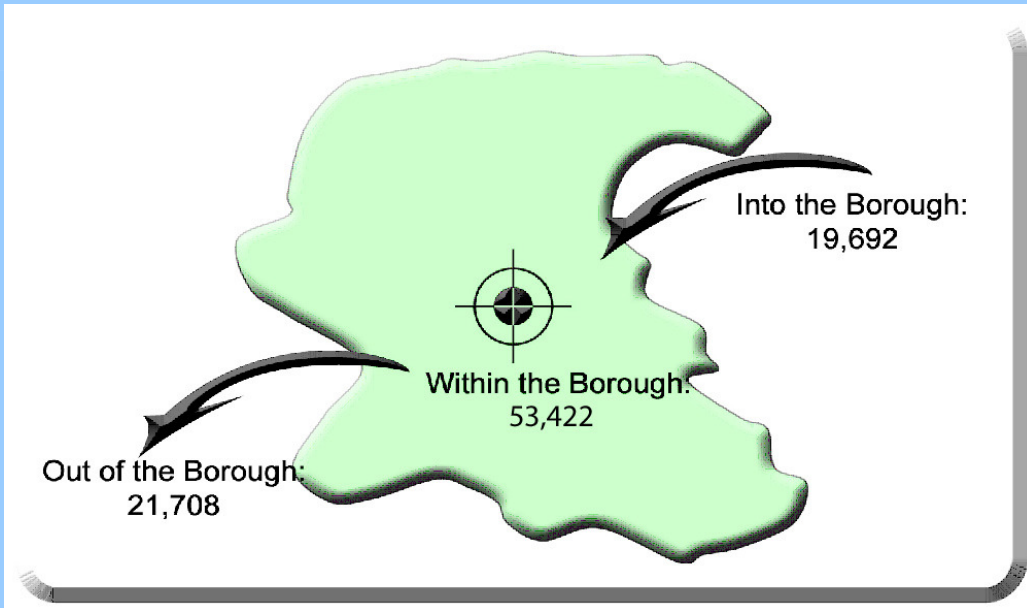
### 6.4.6 Background Information

In order to understand Colchester's commuter patterns more accurately, a significant amount of work has been carried out within the Council on 'Travel to work' data, collated as part of the 2001 Census. Data shows that:

- The Borough has high levels of car ownership. In 2001, 63,706 households owned a car compared to 13,473 households who did not own a car. The pie chart below shows this breakdown in more detail.
- The car is the most popular method of transport used by residents in the Borough to travel to work. In 2001, 41,528 people used the car, as opposed to 5,210 who used the train and 4,587 that travelled to work by bus.
- There were 94,822 work related trips within, to or out of the Borough in 2001. There were 75,130 employed residents in the Borough who either work within or outside the Borough. 53,422 (71%) of employed residents make an internal trip (from any ward in Colchester to any ward in Colchester).
- In addition, 21,708 (29%) of employed residents leave the Borough – 25% to Greater London, 16% to Braintree District, 14% to Tendring District and a further 12% to Chelmsford Borough.
- It was also estimated that 19,692 people come in to Colchester – 45% (8,767) coming from Tendring District alone.
- In 2001, Colchester was a net exporter of 2,016 employees.



### Trips into the Borough:



## 6.5 Key Theme: ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

<b>Core Strategy Policies</b>	
SD1	Sustainable Development Locations – Will promote sustainable development and regeneration to deliver at least 14,200 jobs between 2001 and 2021 and 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023. Growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations.
UR2	Built Design and Character - Will promote and secure high quality, inclusive design in all new developments that makes better places for residents and visitors and conserves and enhances the built character, historic assets and public realm of the Borough.
PR1	Open Space – Will maintain strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces, while also providing a network of open spaces and recreational opportunities that meet local community needs and facilitates active lifestyles.
ENV1	Environment – Will conserve and enhance Colchester’s natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The network of strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces and areas of accessible open space that contribute to the green infrastructure across the Borough will be protected and enhanced. Development adversely impacting on Natura 2000 sites or the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will not be supported. Development will also be directed away from land at risk from either fluvial or coastal flooding.
ER1	Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling – Will promote the efficient use of energy and resources, including the delivery of zero carbon homes and renewable energy projects, while working towards waste minimisation and increased recycling to reduce the Borough’s carbon footprint.

<b>LDF Development Policies</b>	
DP1	Design and Amenity – Will ensure that development is designed to a high standard, avoid unacceptable impacts on amenity and demonstrate social, economic and environmental sustainability.
DP14	Historic Environment Assets – Will ensure that development does not adversely affect a listed building, conservation area, historic park or garden or important archaeological remains.
DP20	Flood Risk & Management of Surface Water Drainage – Will ensure that development minimises the risk of flooding and incorporates measures for the conservation and sustainable use of water.
DP21	Nature Conservation and Protected Lanes – Will conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.
DP22	Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Will ensure that development makes a positive contribution to the special landscape character and qualities of the AONB.
DP23	Coastal Areas – Will provide an integrated approach to coastal management within the coastal protection belt and along the undeveloped coast. Proposals within the West Mersea Waterside Area of Special Character will be expected to enhance the traditional maritime character of the area.
DP25	Renewable Energy – Will support proposals for renewable energy schemes and encourage renewable energy technologies into all development where viable.

### Overview

The natural environment of the Borough has been shaped by both physical process and land management over time. These two processes have created the high quality landscapes and diverse habitats and biodiversity/geodiversity within the Borough. These include internationally significant areas of coastal and intertidal habitats, mudflats and salt marsh and shell banks, which constitute some of the features of interest within the Mid Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC). New development has the potential to lead to the loss of

habitat and species and this must be prevented where possible and mitigated in all other circumstances.

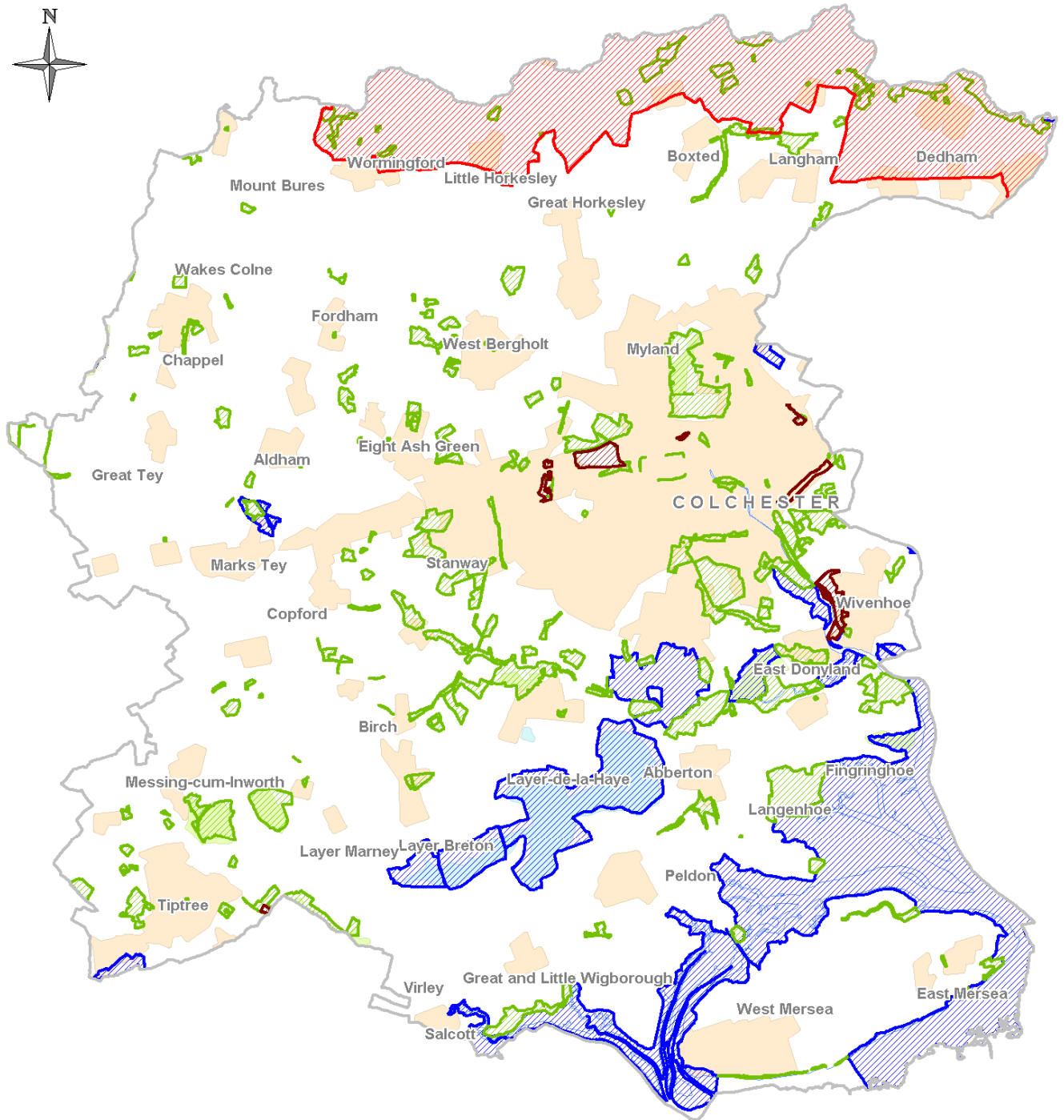
Colchester's Local Development Framework (LDF) promotes the reuse of land (i.e. development on brownfield sites) and require a density of development that makes the most efficient use of land. This will reduce the pressure for greenfield sites, where landscape and biodiversity value can be high. Brownfield sites however can sometimes also have high biodiversity importance, providing unique refuges for species in an otherwise urban area. Brownfield habitats have been proposed for inclusion on the UK Biodiversity Priority Habitats list therefore the biodiversity interest on such sites will need to be fully considered as part of new developments.

The Council seeks to conserve and enhance Colchester's natural environment, countryside and coastline as well as preserving its archaeological and built heritage. It also aims to conserve the Borough's diverse biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance.

The Urban Archaeological Database was established in the Museum department of Colchester Borough Council nearly 10 years ago, in partnership with and benefitting from English Heritage funding. It aims to record all archaeological information within the Town Centre, including both individual sites or monuments and key archaeological finds. It also records information produced through events such as excavations and surveys in the town, which are often prompted by development. The database helps inform the planning process as the Archaeological Officer references it when responding to planning applications.

The Council's Geographical Information System (GIS) layers presently contain 3410 monument records and 5791 event records.

# Colchester Borough's Environmental Designations 2012



## MAP LEGEND

- AONB Site
- Local Nature Reserve
- LoW Site
- SSSI Site
- District Boundary

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6.5.1	<b>Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy for ENV1</b>
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Between April 2011 and March 2012 no planning applications were approved contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency.

Colchester Borough Council will continue to direct development away from land at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding. Development within flood risk areas will need to be managed to ensure that it will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The Council will also seek to ensure that new development does not increase the risk of flooding either on or off site through the increased use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) where appropriate or adversely affect ground water quality.

Overleaf is a flood zone map, based on the Environment Agency's data, showing those areas of Colchester that are high flood risk, i.e. have a 1% (1 in 100) or greater annual probability of fluvial flooding or a 0.5% (1 in 200) or greater annual probability of tidal flooding regardless of current flood defences.

The Flood and Water Management Act implements Sir Michael Pitt's recommendations following his review of the 2007 floods. The Act provides for better, more comprehensive management of flood risk for people, homes and businesses.

Defra recognises that serious flooding can happen any time. Both national and local climate projections suggest extreme weather will happen more frequently in the future. Colchester is also projected to experience wetter winters in the future as a result of climate change. The Flood and Water Management Act aims to reduce the flood risk associated with extreme weather.

Essex County Council is the lead local flood authority under the Act. They are responsible for dealing with flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. The Environment Agency continues to maintain responsibility for dealing with coastal flooding and flooding from main rivers.

Essex County Council is currently preparing a Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management. A consultation on a draft strategy was held in April 2012. The Council is a member of the Essex Flood Management Partnership and plays an active role in formulating the Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Risk Hazard Maps.

Colchester is currently working with Essex County Council to prepare a Surface Water Management Strategy for Colchester Borough. This is expected to be completed in April 2013.

Essex County Council has also prepared new Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) guidance which was adopted in July 2012. Essex County Council will be the SuDS approval body for major planning applications as of April 2013.

# Colchester's Flood Zone Areas 2012



**MAP LEGEND**

- Flood Zone 3 (1/100 year)
- District Boundary

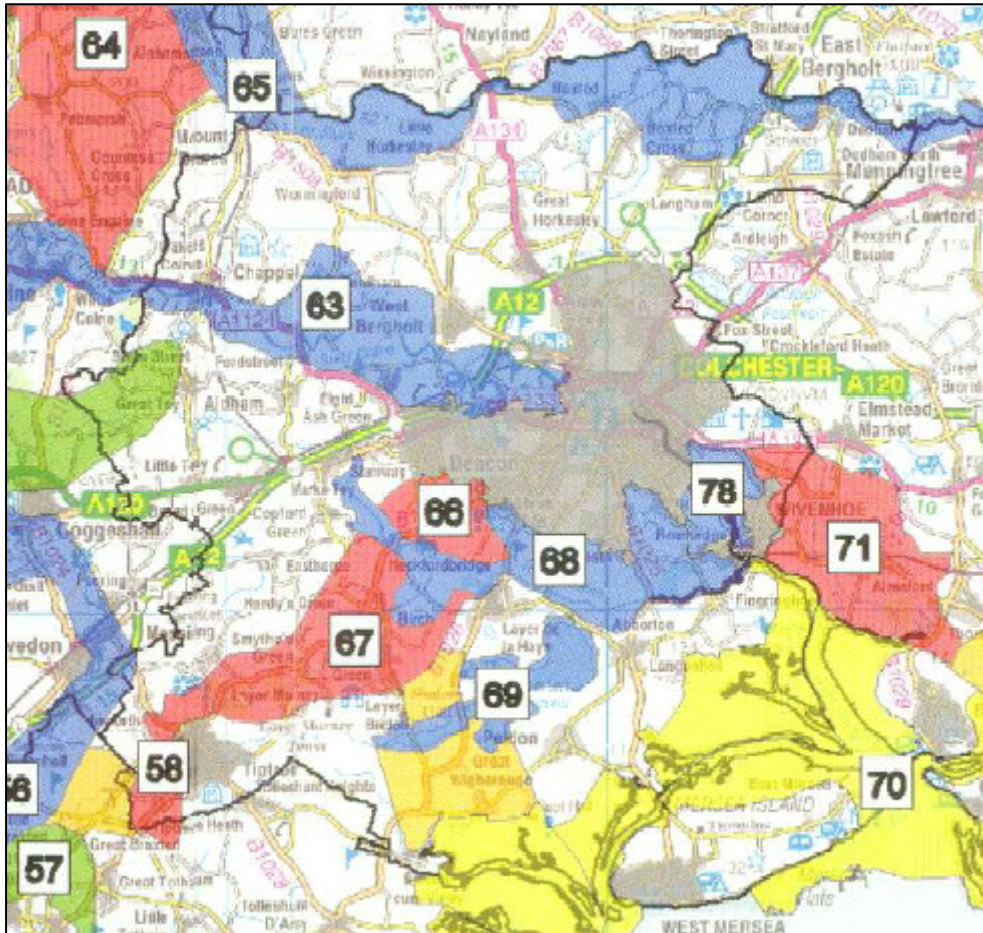
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6.5.2	<b>Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance including:  Change in priority habitats and species (by type); and  Changes in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national regional, sub-regional or local significance</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV1</b>
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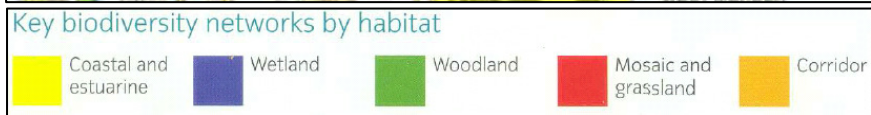
The Council is currently unable to measure changes in priority habitats and species. All emerging planning policy however seeks to protect sites of international, national, regional, sub-regional or local significance by directing development away from them. The Council also seeks to maintain a green infrastructure network across the Borough between the urban and rural hinterlands and along river corridors which will provide important wildlife refuges and adaptation routes for species whose habitats are at risk or adversely affected by climate change.

The key biodiversity sites in Colchester are shown in the map below.



- Colchester Biodiversity Sites**
- 58 – Tiptree Heath
  - 63 – Colne Valley
  - 66 – Stanway
  - 67 – Birch
  - 68 – Roman River
  - 69 – Abberton Reservoir
  - 70 – Colne Estuary
  - 78 – Hythe-Wivenhoe

Source: Extract from the Essex Living Landscapes Map. [Essex Biodiversity Project](#)



<b>6.5.3</b>	<b>Area of ancient woodland within the Borough</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV1</b>
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<b>Number of Sites</b>	<b>70 sites</b>
<b>Total area</b>	<b>568 Ha</b>

Ancient Woodlands\* are defined as woodlands that have existed in the Borough since the 1600's. Natural England maintain an inventory of Ancient Woodland. The Council's data on Ancient Woodland was updated in May 2012 and there are now 70 sites which are within or intersect the borough boundary. The latest GIS information shows that there is currently approximately 568ha of Ancient Woodland in Colchester Borough. By its nature Ancient Woodlands are a non replaceable asset requiring protection.

Ancient woodlands are potentially at risk from development pressures and agricultural intensification. Colchester Borough Council will seek to protect the Borough's Ancient Woodland resource by directing the majority of new development towards brownfield sites in urban areas as a priority thus reducing pressure for greenfield development and thereby reducing the potential for Ancient Woodlands to be affected by development.

\* Ancient woodland (based on woodland that intersects the borough boundary, not woodland that is entirely contained within the boundary). Ancient Woodlands also include Semi Ancient Natural Woodlands. This refers to woodlands where the original woodland footprint dating back to the 1600's remains intact but where the woodland species assemblages have been altered through more modern planting programmes.

<b>6.5.4</b>	<b>Number and area of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LoWs) within Colchester</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV1</b>
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Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) are areas of land which locally in the Borough have significant wildlife value. Together with statutory protected areas, Local Wildlife Sites represent	<b>Local Wildlife Sites (LoWs)</b>	<b>Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)*</b>
<b>Number of Sites</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>10</b>
Total Area	1957 Ha	175.39 Ha
Range	144.4 Ha	36.14 Ha
Mean	11.6054 Ha	17.50 Ha
Mode	0-1 Ha	2-3 Ha
Median	4.90 Ha	10.15 Ha

the minimum habitat needed to maintain the current levels of wildlife in Essex. Their nature conservation value lies in the role they play in protecting wildlife and habitats in the wider countryside. Local Wildlife Sites are protected within the local planning system as they are a 'material consideration' during the determination of planning applications. The first Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) report was produced for Colchester in 1991. Following extensive field surveys, 147 sites covering 1463.7 hectares of land were designated as SINC's. Since the initial report was produced the selection process for designating Local Wildlife Sites has changed. A new robust set of site selection criteria was developed by DEFRA in 2006. In addition knowledge and availability of data about biodiversity in the County has improved considerably during the last 20 years.

In 2008 Colchester Borough Council commissioned a review of the Borough's Local Wildlife Sites. As a result of this review a total of 168 Local Wildlife Sites covering 1957 hectares have now been identified across the Borough representing an overall increase of 21 new Local Wildlife Sites in the Borough, which is a net increase of 493.3 hectares. The Council will seek to safeguard these important Local Wildlife Sites from loss as a result of development in accordance with Policy ENV1 in the Core Strategy.

A new Essex Local Wildlife Sites partnership was established during 2012, Colchester Borough Council will be representing Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) as part of this partnership.

*\*Local Nature Reserves (based on LNRs that intersect the borough boundary, not LNRs entirely contained within the boundary).*

<b>6.5.5</b>	<b>To deliver the revised quantity standards for the different open space typologies across the Borough by 2011</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policy PR1</b>
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The Council originally worked to a universal standard of 2.83ha per 1000 people for open space provision. In 2006, the Council commissioned an Open Space, Sport and Recreation study in accordance with national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17, as part of the evidence

base for the LDF to test these standards in terms of meeting local existing and future population needs for open space and sports facilities.

An audit of existing open space/sport facilities provision was completed as part of the PPG17 study. This showed that for some types of open space the current 2.83ha standard was being met however for other types of open space this was not the case e.g. allotments.

In response to the outputs from the PPG17 study, which assessed open space needs across a range of different open space typologies, new accessibility, quality and quantity standards have been developed to ensure that the future of open space provision will meet existing and future population needs.

The revised quantity standards are set out below for the different typologies per 1,000 people in Colchester.

Parks and Gardens	1.76ha
Natural and semi natural open space urban	5.00ha
Amenity greenspace	1.10ha
Provision for children	0.05ha
Provision for teenagers	0.05ha
Allotments	0.2ha
Outdoor sports facilities	1.5ha

Open Space, Sport and Recreation provision is being incorporated into strategies such as the Open Space and Play Strategy and Allotment Strategy. These documents will provide a mechanism for ensuring that the Council provides adequate Open Space, Sport and Recreation facilities in the Borough. New areas of open space, sport and recreation facilities will be provided as part of new development in accordance with Core Strategic Policy PR1 and Development Policies DP4, DP15 and DP16. Planning contributions will be secured through the Council’s Development Team negotiations as part of the planning decision making process.

<b>6.5.6</b>	<b>Increase in areas of public open space</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy PR1</b>
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Colchester Borough Council commissioned Land Use Consultants in September 2010 to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Colchester Borough covering the period up to 2025. The purpose of the strategy was to improve knowledge about green infrastructure provision levels across the Borough and to provide evidence to support the LDF process. Whilst the Green Infrastructure Strategy covers the whole Borough, detailed consideration was given to the Growth Areas around and within Colchester town where most development will take place.

The Green Infrastructure Study found that Colchester Borough covers an area of 33,400 hectares of land, 2,028 hectares of which is accessible natural greenspace. The Borough is above the County average in terms of the provision of green space for all of Natural England’s Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt) categories. 19% of all households can access green space in all categories as opposed to a county average of 7% and only 1% of households in the Borough meet none of the ANGSt criteria.

Open Space provision is being incorporated into various strategies such as the Open Space and Play Strategy, Allotment Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy. All these documents will provide a mechanism for ensuring that the Council provides adequate open space in the

Borough. New areas of open space will be provided as part of new development in accordance with Core Strategic Policy PR1 and PR1 and Development Policies DP4, DP15 and DP16. Planning contributions will be secured through the Council's Development Team negotiations as part of the planning decision making process.

The following new areas of open space were provided in Colchester as part of recent development schemes (April 2011 – March 2012):

- Tile House Farm (Phase 2) 22,557m<sup>2</sup>

<b>6.5.7</b>	<b>Amount of development in designated areas (Local Wildlife Sites, SSSI, AONB)</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV1</b>
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During the monitoring period there were 122 planning applications in designated areas. 102 of these applications were granted planning permission. From the consideration of these applications it appears that none of the applications are likely to result in damage or loss.

<b>6.5.8</b>	<b>95 % of nationally and internationally important wildlife and geological sites in favourable condition (SSSI, SPA, SAC &amp; RAMSAR)</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV1</b>
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**Condition status of SSSI's in Colchester Borough** (with latest survey dates)

<b>Favourable condition</b>	<b>Unfavourable condition no change</b>	<b>Unfavourable condition &amp; recovering</b>	<b>Unfavourable condition &amp; declining</b>
Abberton Reservoir (2010)			
	Bullock Wood (2010)		
		Tiptree Heath (2010)	
Marks Tey Brickpit (2008)			
Roman River (2010)			
		Cattawade Marshes (2012)	
Upper Colne Marshes 1 unit (plus 1 unit in Tendring District) (2010)		Upper Colne Marshes 2 units (2010)	
Wivenhoe Gravel Pit (2008)			
Colne Estuary 8 units (2008-2010)		Colne Estuary 10 units (2010)	Colne Estuary 1 unit (2009)

There are ten Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) designated in Colchester. These are nationally important ecological/geological sites designated under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) with further protection provided through the Countryside and Rights of Ways Act 2000 (as amended).

Natural England is responsible for monitoring the condition of SSSI's and the most recent data are shown in the table above. The table shows that seven of the Borough's SSSI's are in favourable condition. Some of these sites cover a large area and for these sites different parts of the SSSI are in different condition. This is the case with the Colne Estuary and Upper Colne Marshes SSSIs.

Only one SSSI is in unfavourable condition and declining and this is one unit of the Colne Estuary SSSI. The SSSI unit condition summary states that this is due to coastal squeeze and the sea defence close to the East Mersea Youth Camp is referred to.

The condition of SSSI's can be affected positively and negatively by a variety of factors including changes in management, coastal squeeze, impact of diffuse pollution, development impacts and water extraction. The Council seeks to protect nature conservation sites of international, regional, national and local importance in accordance with Core Strategy policy ENV1 and Development Policies policy DP21.

<b>6.5.9</b>	<b>Number of visitors to Natura 2000 sites</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV1</b>
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Colchester Borough Council commissioned an appropriate assessment as part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy DPD, which is a requirement of the Habitat Regulations 2004 (as amended). The appropriate assessment identified increased recreational pressure as a potential significant impact on both the integrity of Natura 2000 sites and the features of interest for which the sites were designated. The appropriate assessment identified the need for Colchester Borough Council to implement a monitoring scheme to monitor visitor numbers to Natura 2000 sites. An appropriate assessment was completed for the Site Allocations DPD and this reiterated the need for visitor survey and monitoring work.

A visitor monitoring scheme will enable trends to be measured in terms of increases or decreases in visitor numbers and associated levels of disturbance (physical and non physical) at Natura 2000 sites. Where visitor increases are found to be increasing disturbance at a Natura 2000 site avoidance measures will be identified in partnership with Natural England.

Colchester Borough Council has prepared a methodology for visitor monitoring, which is supported by Natural England. In November 2010 the Council began surveying visitors to Natura 2000 sites in Colchester Borough and Tendring District. These surveys continued in June 2011 and November 2011.

In total 288 groups were interviewed during November 2011. This is almost the same number of groups interviewed during the whole of year one (306 groups in total) and twice the number of groups interviewed during last winters survey period (135 groups). Over half of the groups were interviewed at the weekend (162 groups).

Whilst the aim of this survey and monitoring programme is to establish whether increased levels of housing is increasing visitors to Natura 2000 sites and affecting site condition the amount of housing built in one year is not significant enough to explain the huge increase in visitors between last year and this year. The weather during November 2011 was a lot milder than November 2010 and so this may account in part for the increase in visitors. Another explanation for the significant increase in visitors may be due to the timing of surveys.

During November 2011 when undertaking a half day surveying most of the surveyors surveyed during the middle of the day (e.g. 10am-3pm), rather than surveying for either a

morning or afternoon. During the November 2010 survey period surveyors tended to survey either in the morning or afternoon. All three survey periods have shown that 11am-2pm is the busiest period. Therefore this difference in survey timings may be another explanation as to why there has been a significant increase in visitors this winter compared to last.

A number of rare visiting birds were recorded at coastal sites in Colchester Borough namely The Strood and Cudmore Grove and this also influenced visitor numbers particularly at the Strood. In November 2010 9 groups were surveyed at The Strood and these were predominantly local dog walkers. In the November 2011 a total of 16 groups were surveyed however 12 of the 16 groups surveyed stated that their only reason for visiting The Strood was to see the rare Red Breasted Goose. All said that their choice of sites is dictated by what birds are about.

There were a variety of activities that took place within the Natura 2000 sites surveyed and some survey respondents cited two reasons for visiting the sites. Dog walking was the most frequent purpose of visiting as was the case in previous survey periods. As before walking was the second main purpose of visiting. Bird watching was more popular during this survey period than in previous survey periods. Whilst surveying visitors to Strood Channel the surveyor encountered numerous groups that said they were visiting because a rare bird was present at the site. Bird watching was a popular reason for visiting The Walls and many groups said that they had visited to photograph birds and to feed the swans. A few of the groups surveyed said that they had come out for fresh air and two of the groups said that they were new to the area and were exploring.

225 of the groups were made up of 1 or 2 people; previous survey periods also found that the majority of groups were made up of 1 or 2 people. This ties in with the finding that the most frequent reason for visiting the Natura 2000 sites is to dog walk. During the weekend it was found that there were a greater number of larger groups than during the week. There were 45 groups of 3 people or more during the weekend compared to 15 groups of 3 or more during the week.

Many of the groups chose to visit the Natura 2000 sites for a number of reasons as highlighted in figure 70. The most frequent reason for visiting was because it is close to home, which was also found during the previous two survey periods.

Attractive scenery was the second most common reason for visiting, compared to like the area last winter. 46 groups said that they had chosen to visit because of the desire to be close to the coast.

As previously there were very few visitors to Kirby Quay and Old Hall Marshes (6 groups at each site); perhaps due to the fairly remote locations and in the case of Kirby Quay the lack of car parking.

The majority of groups travelled to the sites by car. Walking, as a percentage of total journeys, was less during this survey period than in previous survey periods. For the first time a small number of groups had travelled by bus and train.

Over two thirds of the groups said that they do visit alternative sites regularly. During year one it was found that the highest percentage of groups that did visit alternative sites was at Abberton Reservoir. During this survey period all of groups at Abberton Reservoir said that they do visit alternative sites regularly.

Some of the groups surveyed listed several alternative Natura 2000 sites that they regularly visit. Almost half of the groups that said they do visit alternative sites said that they visit Tendring coastal sites. This was also found during year one. Essex Wildlife Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds reserves was the second highest alternative, perhaps due to the high number of groups bird watching during this survey period.

45 groups said that they did not have good access to open space close to home. Due to the lack of data collected on groups home towns it has not been possible to identify where these groups live.

Small open spaces close to home was the most common answer given to the question 'which open spaces close to home do you visit regularly?' This was also found during year one. The beach was the second most popular open space that groups regularly visit, reflecting the likely high proportion of visitors from Tendring District.

Whilst there were significantly more visitors during this survey period than the previous winter the analysis shows that the reasons, frequency and time of year people visit is very similar.

<b>6.5.10</b>	<b>Amount of residential development on greenfield land</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies SD1, Hi, UR1</b>
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Between April 2011 and March 2012, 12% of residential development in Colchester Borough was on greenfield land.

This was a decrease from the previous year (April 2010 to March 2011) when 25% of residential development was on greenfield land.

<b>6.5.11</b>	<b>Applications involving Tree Preservation Order (TPO) trees</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policies ENV1</b>
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Between April 2011 and March 2012 151 Tree Preservation Order (TPO) applications were made. This is a decrease from 168 applications in the previous year but is still higher than the 107 applications recorded in April 2010 to March 2010.

Applications typically involved pruning in the form of crown raising, crown thinning and crown reductions. There were occasional incidences of trees being felled with replacement trees being conditioned where appropriate.

82 Conservation Area notifications were made for works to trees.

41 new TPOs were made between April 2011 and March 2012.

<b>6.5.12</b>	<b>No recorded loss of listed buildings (by demolition) and Buildings of Grade I and II+</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy UR2</b>
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There were no recorded applications for demolitions of listed buildings in the Borough between April 2011 and March 2012.

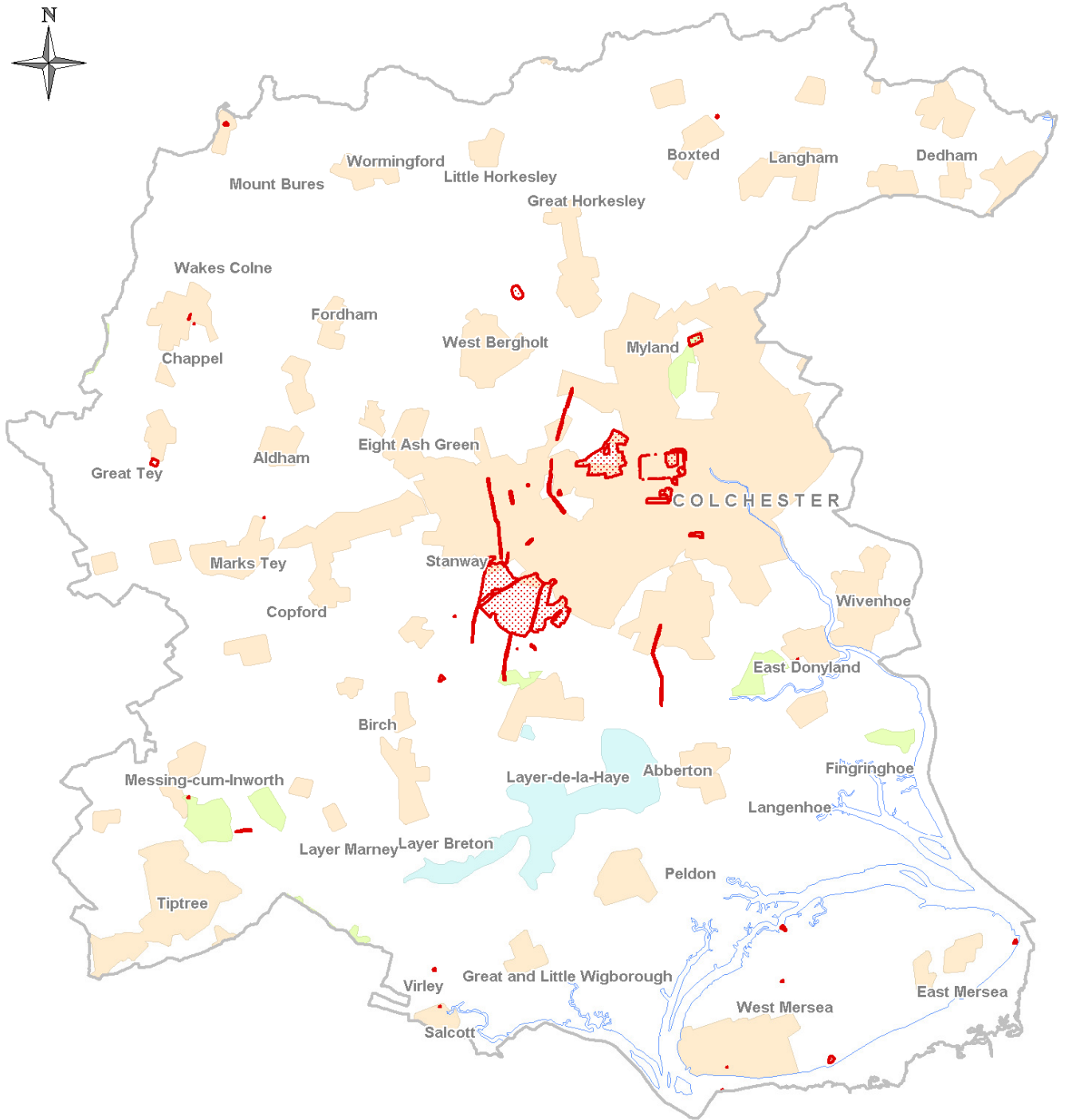


At the time of writing there had been no update to the ECC Heritage at Risk Register (HARR) for 2012. The last update to this was in October 2011 when it was stated that there were a total of 2,560 listed buildings in Colchester Borough and the Essex County Council Buildings at Risk Register records that 41 of these are at risk of demolition or destruction through neglect. In 2010 48 listed buildings in the Borough were on the register and in 2009 49 listed buildings were on the register. Work on the 2012 update was underway at the time of writing.

<b>6.5.13</b>	<b>No recorded loss or damage to Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological sites through development</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policy UR2</b>
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There are currently 52 Scheduled Monuments (SMs) in Colchester Borough and between April 2011 and March 2012 there was no recorded loss or damage to a SM or nationally important archaeological sites through development. Overleaf is a map showing the location of Colchester's SMs.

# Colchester's monuments and physical features 2012



## MAP LEGEND

- Scheduled Monument
- District Boundary

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<b>6.5.14</b>	<b>Contributions secured towards streetscape improvements</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies SD2, PR1 and PR2</b>
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There is currently no way to measure this indicator but several new developments have resulted in significant streetscape improvements, including Firstsite which opened in September 2011. Projects such as the Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document and the new bus station were also being progressed within the monitoring year. Contributions towards streetscape improvements have been secured from the Borough-wide Section 106 fund as well as funding from the Haven Gateway Partnership.

<b>6.5.15</b>	<b>Number of homes with provision of private/communal open space</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policy PR1</b>
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There is currently no way to measure this indicator using the Colchester Borough Council internal planning application monitoring system. However, information provided by the Development Management team indicates that 100% of all new homes have or will have access to either an area of public open space or a private or communal area of open space in accordance with Core Strategy policy PR1.

<b>6.5.16</b>	<b>Number of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements adopted as guidance</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ENV2</b>
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Between April 2011 and March 2012 four community plans were adopted as guidance. The Dedham Parish Plan and the West Bergholt Village Design Statement were adopted in December 2011. The Winstred Hundred Village Design Statement and Parish Plan was adopted in March 2012. The Myland Parish Plan was adopted in July 2012.

<b>6.5.17</b>	<b>Number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Colchester</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies ENV1, TA1 and UR2</b>
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Like most Boroughs/Districts in the region which do not have large industrial processes, the main source of local air pollution is from motor vehicles. These emit, amongst other things, oxides of nitrogen, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide and fine particular matter. Particular problems arise where traffic is slow moving through old, narrow streets near the historic centre of the town.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) have been in existence in Mersea Road and Brook Street for several years.

A new Air Quality Management Order came into effect on the 5 January 2012. This replaces the previous order and designates a total of four Air Quality Management Areas:

- Area 1 - Central Corridors (including High Street Colchester, Head Street, North Hill, Queen Street, St. Botolph's Street, St. Botolph's Circus, Osborne Street, Magdalen Street, Military Road, Mersea Road, Brook Street, and East Street).
- Area 2 - East Street and the adjoining lower end of Ipswich Road

- Area 3 - Harwich Road / St Andrew's Avenue junction
- Area 4 - Lucy Lane North, Stanway

A planning guidance note on air quality was adopted by the Council on 20 August 2012.

<b>6.5.18</b>	<b>Percentage of household waste recycled and composted</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ER1</b>
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In 2011/12 40.16% of all household waste collected was recycled, reused and composted. This exceeds the annual target of 40% and but lower than last years figure of 40.24%. During this time a total of 23,757.015 tonnes of waste within the Borough was recycled, reused and composted.

The average residual waste per household was 467.582kg in 2011/12, which is slightly lower than last years figure of 479.137kg. The reduction in average waste per household is thought to be a result of the economic climate forcing a reduction in food thrown away, increased waste awareness through education and a reduction in food packaging produced by the industry.

<b>6.5.19</b>	<b>Per capita consumption of water</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ER1</b>
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According to a report by WWF the national daily domestic water use (per capita consumption) is 150 litres. Nationally we are expected to reduce per capita consumption of water to an average of 130 litres per person per day by 2030 or possibly even 120 litres per person per day depending on new technological developments and innovation.

Part G of the October 2010 amendments to Building Regulations require per capita consumption of water to be limited to 125 litres. The Code for Sustainable Homes will help to improve water efficiency in new build and Colchester is committed to delivering more sustainable buildings in accordance with the Core Strategy and Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

### **6.5.20 Background**

In 2011/12 the total area of contaminated land brought back into beneficial use was 2.54 hectares. This appears to have been a particularly low year. The previous year figures being 14.08 hectares in 2010/2011 and 17.42 hectares in 2009/2010.

There are 22 conservation areas, and some 2,560 listed buildings in Colchester Borough. There are 4 parks within Colchester on the National Register of Special Historic Interest including Colchester Castle Park, Severalls Hospital, Layer Marney Tower gardens and Wivenhoe Park. As a Scheduled Monument (SM) Gosbecks Archaeological Park is a major asset to the area containing Roman remains. However, the primary archaeological monument is an Iron Age Dyke System around Colchester. Such remains are also uncovered on a regular basis during development particularly in the town centre. Many of the town's buildings are listed and date from 15<sup>th</sup> century. There are also many listed barns and agricultural buildings in the outlying villages.

In 2009 it was estimated that the annual average domestic consumption of gas in Colchester

was 14,932 kWh. This is slightly lower than the average domestic consumption of gas in the region and Great Britain, which is 15,434 kWh and 15,383 kWh respectively.

Under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) all water bodies (lakes, rivers and coastal waters) need to achieve 'good ecological potential or status'. Ecological potential/ status is made up of physico-chemical status (phosphorus/ ammonia/ dissolved oxygen and pH) and biological status (fish/ diatoms/ macrophytes/ macroinvertebrates).

At the time of the last monitoring report the Environment Agency confirmed that there were 18 WFD river water bodies within Colchester Borough covering 148.651 km. 16 of these are classified as being of moderate ecological status, 1 is classified as poor and 1 has yet to be assessed. The Roman River is of poor ecological classification and St Botolph's Brook has yet to be assessed.<sup>17</sup> At the present time updated information for the current monitoring year has not yet been received.

Whilst it may appear that the water quality in Colchester has deteriorated over the past few years (when compared with the status as reported under the General Quality Assessment), it is in fact the case that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) bar has been raised.

In June 2010, the Environment Agency assessed the bathing waters at West Mersea (South Colchester) to be of 'good' quality, meaning that it meets their mandatory standards.

In January 2010 the Colchester Local List project was launched covering Colchester's urban area. A group of historic buildings and architecture experts produced a set of criteria to help identify buildings suitable for inclusion on the Local List. Following site surveys approximately 600 buildings were identified for inclusion on the draft Local List. The draft Local List was issued for Public Consultation using the Colchester Historic Building Forum website<sup>18</sup>.

As a result of the public consultation a further 59 buildings were identified for inclusion on the draft Local List. The Colchester Local List was formally adopted by the Council at Local Development Framework Committee on the 12 December 2011. The Colchester Local List includes approximately 600 buildings or historic assets. The final list is available on the Colchester Historic Building Forum website.

Two more Local List projects have also commenced in Langham and Wivenhoe. This work is being undertaken by historic building enthusiasts in these villages who will use the same methodology and selection criteria as those used in the Colchester Local List study.

This work will provide useful information for use when determining planning applications affecting Locally Listed buildings.

## **Potential Issues**

Water quality is an important issue for the Borough. In order to achieve good water quality it is important for issues such as sewerage infrastructure to be considered as part of all developments to ensure that the Borough's watercourses are not adversely affected and if possible improved. The Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study (2009) has assessed both water quantity and water quality issues in the Borough. Anglian Water and Veolia Water East have also both published Business Plans for the period 2009-2014. These documents set out planned infrastructure spending identified across Colchester Borough for this period to ensure

<sup>17</sup> Contains Environment Agency information © Environment Agency and database right.

<sup>18</sup> [www.colchesterhistoricbuildingforum.org.uk](http://www.colchesterhistoricbuildingforum.org.uk)

that new development needs can be adequately met in terms of water supply and waste water treatment.

Another potential issue is impacts of a changing climate on biodiversity. Corporately the Council seeks to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. This is discussed in the Climate Change section of this report.

## 6.6 Key Theme: ACCESSIBLE SERVICES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

<b>LDF Core Strategy Policies</b>	
SD2	Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure – Will work with partners to ensure that infrastructure and community facilities are provided to support sustainable communities.
SD3	Community Facilities – Will work with partners to deliver key community facilities to support communities and provide facilities for local communities based on identified needs and all new development will be required to contribute towards the provision of such facilities.
PR1	Open Space – Will provide strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors and key green spaces, whilst protecting and enhancing the existing network of green links, open spaces and sports facilities and secure additional areas where deficiencies are identified.
PR2	People-friendly Streets – Will promote and secure attractive, safe and people-friendly streets which will encourage more walking, cycling, recreation and local shopping.
UR1	Regeneration Areas – Enhance Colchester as a prestigious regional centre, to regenerate rundown areas, deprived communities and key centres, with the purpose of building successful and sustainable communities.

<b>LDF Development Policies</b>	
DP4	Community Facilities - Supports the provision of new community facilities and the retention of existing facilities.
DP15	Retention of Open Space and Indoor Sports Facilities – Protects open space and sports facilities from change of use and ensures that a change of use will not be supported if it would result in deficiencies in public open space provision.
DP16	Private Amenity Space and Open Space Provision for New Residential Development – Sets out standards for private amenity space for different dwelling types. Also requires at least 10% of the site area to be provided as public open space.

### Overview

Accessible services and facilities are vital to the development and maintenance of communities. Community facilities should be located within or near centres and other accessible locations to maximise community access and build a sense of local community identity. The Council supports the retention and enhancement of existing community facilities that can provide a range of services and facilities to the community at one accessible location. In addition, the Council will work with local partners, such as Parish Councils or Community Associations, to plan and manage community facilities.

The Borough Council will safeguard existing facilities and will work with partners including the local community to bring together funding from a variety of public and private sources to deliver new community facilities. Development proposals will be required to review community needs (e.g. Health Impact Assessment) and provide community facilities to meet the needs of the new population and mitigate impacts on existing communities.

Colchester's Core Strategy identifies the following growth areas and potential new community facility projects to be delivered in partnership with local service providers.

<b>Growth Areas</b>	<b>Project</b>
<b>Town Centre</b>	Firstsite (Community arts facility) (open Sept. 2011) St Botolphs Quarter – Hotel to be developed by 2013 Creative Business Centre – Completion in 2013 Magistrates Court – Completion in 2013
<b>North Growth Area</b>	Community stadium and regional conference centre (open in 2008) Colchester General Hospital expansion 4 new primary Schools (Queen Boadicea School open) Early years and childcare facilities Either a new secondary school site (on a precautionary basis) and/or expansion of existing secondary school provision at nearby schools.
<b>East Growth Area</b>	University of Essex expansion
<b>General</b>	7 new health centres 6 forms of secondary school capacity 6 new primary schools New and improved community halls Extra pre-school, primary and secondary school provision (including new where appropriate)

<b>6.6.1</b>	<b>Proportion of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policy PR1</b>
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Areas of open space with the Green Flag Award are currently Castle Park in the centre of Colchester and High Woods County Park in the north of Colchester:

- Castle Park – basic award
- Castle Park – Green Flag heritage award
- High Woods Country Park

<b>6.6.2</b>	<b>Recorded loss of designated allotment sites</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator Policy PR1</b>
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There were no recorded losses of designated allotment sites between 2011 and 2012. No losses were required in the previous year either.

<b>6.6.3</b>	<b>Recorded losses of community facilities as a result of development</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy SD3</b>
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Core Strategy policies SD2 and SD3 and Development Policies policy DP4 are designed to deliver and protect community facilities within Colchester Borough.

Between 2011 and 2012 there were no recorded losses of a community facility due to development. The Council will continue to safeguard existing facilities as part of their commitment to creating sustainable communities.



In September 2009, the Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document on the 'Provision of Community Facilities' which was supported by an audit of community facilities produced. Both have been prepared to ensure the adequate provision of community facilities that satisfy the needs of local people in the Borough.

<b>6.6.4</b>	<b>100% of new permitted developments to comply with SPD's on Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Community Facilities</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies SD2, SD3 and PR1</b>
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Core Strategy Policy PR1 ensures the protection and enhancement of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Community Facilities.

All relevant developments are strictly subject to unilateral undertakings and Section 106 agreements are prepared in accordance with adopted Supplementary Planning Documents. Contributions are being collected, monitored and allocated to local projects for the benefit of the increasing residential numbers. In 2011-2012 £975,240 was received for Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and £127,691 was received for community facilities.

These are both considerably higher than the previous year, but the Open Space receipts do include one large item of £437,000.

Projects being delivered with the aid of developers' contributions in 2011/12 are set out below.

<b>Project location</b>	<b>Project description</b>
Wivenhoe	Refurbishment works to William Loveless Hall
Castle	Refurbishment works to Cardinal Bourne Hall
Castle	Refurbishment works to the April Centre
Castle	Garrison Clubhouse
Castle	St Botolphs Public realm
Copford	New play equipment Queensbury Ave
Dedham	New CCTV in Recreation Ground
Marks Tey	New play area fencing
Mile End	Improved access to sports ground
Mile End/Highwoods	New play area fencing
Mile End/Highwoods	Adventure play facilities at country park
Monkwick	Refurbishment works to St. Margaret's Church Hall
New Town	Refurbishment works to the Hythe Community Centre
Shrub End	Gladiator Way new play area
Shrub End	Barbour Gardens new play area
Stanway	New play area for Stanway PC
St Andrews	New play equipment Titania Close
St Andrews	New play equipment Hickory Ave
St Andrews	Magnolia Drive POS Zip wire
Wivenhoe	Tennis club pavilion improvements

6.6.5	Key infrastructure projects delivered (SD)	Core Strategy Indicator for Policies SD1, SD2, UR1, PR1, TA3, and TA4
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Table 6d (appendix 5) in the adopted Colchester Core Strategy identifies a number of key infrastructure projects which have been subdivided into the categories 'necessary' and 'local and wider benefit'. Many of the projects are tied to development programmed for later in the plan period, but the following progress is noted for projects currently underway:

- **East Transit Corridor** – Feasibility study undertaken to identify potential corridor
- **Northern Approaches and new A12 junction** – Funding secured, A12 junction opened autumn 2010
- **North Park and Ride** – Scheme now has planning application and is anticipated to be delivered by the end of 2013
- **Western Bypass** – Completion dependant on delivery of development
- **Hythe Rail Station** – Improvements completed Winter 2009
- **Historic Town Centre Improvements** – Impact and design work commenced and consultation undertaken October – November 2010
- **Magistrates Court** – Construction begun 2010, work is ongoing.
- **Green Links and Walking and Cycling improvements** – Cycle town projects have included new and improved cycle routes; cycle training for adults and children; and new cycle parking spaces installed at key locations including schools, railway stations, the town centre and University of Essex.

6.6.6	All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum Number of domestic burglaries per 1000 households	Core Strategy Indicator for Policy SD1
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The latest data available was from 1 Jul 2011 to 30 Sep 2011. Based on this period the number of crimes per 1000 residents in the Borough was 16.004.

When comparing the latest information for Colchester with the previous year to date (ie. the 1 April 2010 - 30 Sep 2010 with 1 Apr 2011 - 30 Sep 2011) the number of crimes was up by 95 (2%) to 5,557.

The number of domestic burglaries is currently recorded as a total number. When comparing the latest information for Colchester with the previous year to date (ie. the 1 April 2010 - 30 Sep 2010 with 1 Apr 2011 - 30 Sep 2011) the number of domestic burglaries was down by 42 (17%) to 199.

Colchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) has identified the following broad factors to consider when setting crime reduction priorities:

- **Crime** such as street robbery, business crime, assault & violent crime, car crime, burglary, domestic violence, criminal damage etc
- **Anti-Social Behaviour** such as noise, joyriding, vandalism, gangs, youth nuisance, damage to property, harassment etc
- **Environmental Crime** such as fly tipping, litter, fly posting, graffiti etc
- **Misuse of Drugs** such as dealing, discarded needles, crack houses, drug misuse

- **Alcohol** such as binge drinking, underage sales, behaviour caused by alcohol, cheap and multiple drink promotions

### **6.6.7 Background**

In June 2012 Sport England published the results of their Active People Survey 6 for the period April 2011 to April 2012. The statistics now record those who participate in at least 1 session a week (at least 4 sessions of at least moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes in the previous 28 days) rather than the 3 sessions a week recorded in surveys from previous years.

The findings for Colchester indicate that 38.5% of residents took part in at least 1 session a week of moderate intensity sport. There was a slight increase from 36.5% for the period October 2010 to October 2011, however, it is not a statistically significant change as set out in the Sport England report.

Colchester Borough Council runs 4 museums, all of which are registered under the Museums and Galleries Commission registration scheme.

### **Potential Issues**

For a number of reasons access to a variety of services and facilities can be an issue for Colchester residents. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation measure social inclusion by considering and scoring a whole range of issues, from access to certain facilities, to income and employment. The score provides an indication of how deprived an area is. On a national level Colchester Borough scores very low. Despite this there are areas in the Borough where deprivation exists. As Colchester is generally an affluent area, the places where deprivation exists are often exacerbated by the marked differences of neighbouring communities. It is therefore important to encourage social inclusion through the design and build of new communities and to ensure adequate community infrastructure and services are available.

As Colchester contains a number of rural communities, rural isolation can also be an issue. Rural areas often have limited facilities, and this coupled with poor public transport links can prevent those without access to a car accessing the facilities they need. Public consultation on the LDF has also highlighted the perceived need for villages/rural areas to retain a sense of community and to avoid becoming so-called 'commuter-villages.' To address this issue the Council is encouraging and assisting with the development of Parish Plans and Village Design Statements. In the future Neighbourhood Plans will also be a mechanism for rural communities to address certain issues within their area.

In promoting healthy lifestyles, access to recreation, leisure and open space is as important as access to formal health facilities like hospitals, doctor's surgeries and NHS dentists. An aging population will increase demands on health and social care, particularly the need for residential nursing care. However, it will also impact upon other sectors of the Borough such as the local economy, the increased housing demand and an increase on public transport and other key services. A general increase in population figures will also impact upon the current number of schools and nursery establishments. The need for new facilities such as schools and recreation facilities is already considered as part of new development. In 2010 the Council introduced a requirement for certain types of development to be subject to Health Impact Assessments. The purpose of a Health Impact Assessment is to identify the potential health consequences of a proposal on a given population, maximise the positive health benefits and minimise potential adverse effects on health and inequalities.

## 6.7 Key Theme: Climate Change

<b>Core Strategy Policies</b>	
SD1	Sustainable Development Locations – Will promote sustainable development and regeneration to deliver at least 14,200 jobs between 2001 and 2021 and 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023. Growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations.
ENV1	Environment – Will conserve and enhance Colchester’s natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The network of strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces and areas of accessible open space that contribute to the green infrastructure across the Borough will be protected and enhanced.
ER1	Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling – Will promote the efficient use of energy and resources, including the delivery of zero carbon homes and renewable energy projects, while working towards waste minimisation and increased recycling to reduce the Borough’s carbon footprint.

### **LDF Development Policies**

DP25 Renewable Energy – Will support proposals for renewable energy schemes and applicants will be encouraged to incorporate renewable energy technologies into new development where viable.

### **Overview**

Colchester Borough Council is committed to promoting efficient use of energy and resources and promoting the development of renewable energy generation alongside waste minimisation and recycling. Through the Core Strategy and Development Policies DPD the Council will encourage the delivery of renewable energy projects, including micro-generation, in the Borough to reduce Colchester’s carbon footprint. New development will be expected to demonstrate that over 15% of energy demand will be produced by local renewable or low carbon technology. In addition, new dwellings will be required to reduce carbon emissions by 25% from 2010, 44% from 2013 and 100% from 2016 from a 2006 baseline in line with revised national building regulations for all homes to be zero carbon from 2016.

In order to lead by example, Colchester Borough Council has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration and the Local Authority Carbon Management (LACM) scheme. Additionally, Colchester Borough Council also seeks to increase its current recycling rate from 31% to 60% recycling of household waste by 2021.

The Council has taken part in a One to One Support Programme with the Energy Saving Trust. As part of this programme an Action Plan was developed by the Council’s Sustainability Action Group and has undergone consultation with Senior Management Team under the Leadership of Place programme. The Action Plan is split into the three areas of strategy, services and community leadership. A number of recommendations are included and each of these has a number of actions needed to fulfil the recommendation. Each action is supplemented with information on who will carry it out, when and how. This programme came to an end in 2010 but the Action Plan is continuing to be implemented and monitored.

The Council and Colchester Borough Homes have been working together to develop a business case to consider renewable electricity generation as an investment through the Feed in Tariff. The Feed in Tariff is a new government incentive scheme, which makes renewable energy a good financial investment. Energy companies are obliged to pay a feed in payment per unit of energy produced, which is index linked and guaranteed for 25 years.

<b>6.7.1</b>	<b>Carbon emissions and Climate Change</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policy SD1</b>
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Colchester Borough Council is committed to reducing Climate Change both within the Borough and through its in-house operations. The Council signed up to the Local Authority Carbon Management Scheme (LACM) in 2007 and with guidance from the Carbon Trust have substantial energy savings in our day-to-day operations. Between April 2011 and March 2012 there was a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Council operations and buildings of 6%, which is just under 540 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have reduced by a total of 16.17% between the baseline of 2005 and 2010. Per capita emissions for Colchester residents are now 5.7 tonnes having fallen from a baseline of 6.8 tonnes per capita.

<b>6.7.2</b>	<b>Climate Change Adaptation</b>	<b>Supporting Indicator for Policies SD1, ENV1 and ER1</b>
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Under NI188 the Council progressed work on climate change adaptation. NI188 was a process based indicator that measured the Council's actions towards adapting to the inevitable effects of climate change. The Council achieved level 1 – 'public commitment and prioritised risk based assessment' in 2008/9 and level 2 – 'comprehensive risk assessment' in 2009/10.

During 2010/11 the Council developed an Adaptation Action Plan based on the findings of the Borough specific climate risk assessment, which was undertaken in 2009/10. The Adaptation Action Plan identifies a number of measures that the Council can take both individually and with its partners to adapt to the effects of climate change.

<b>6.7.3</b>	<b>Number of zero-carbon homes completed</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policies SD1, H1 and ER1</b>
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Building regulations on zero-carbon homes does not become compulsory until 2016 and there is currently no data available on planning applications for zero-carbon development.

From 1 October 2010 improvements to Part L of the building regulations has resulted in a reduction in carbon emissions from new dwellings. The dwelling emission rate, which measures the maximum CO<sub>2</sub> emissions rate (in kg per m<sup>2</sup> per annum) arising from energy use for heating, hot water and lighting for the actual dwelling, has reduced by 25% from 2006 building regulations requirements.

The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD sets out the Council's expectation that all new dwellings are constructed to a minimum of level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Council currently has no way of monitoring how many new dwellings meet level 3 or above of the Code for Sustainable Homes, however this will be looked at as part of future AMRs.

<b>6.7.4</b>	<b>Renewable energy installed by type</b>	<b>Core Strategy Indicator for Policy ER1</b>
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Between April 2011 and March 2012, there were 22 applications for solar photovoltaics and 3 applications for wind renewable energy development. There were no recorded applications for ground source or biomass technologies.

The amount of renewable energy installed in the current year has increased considerably over that in previous years, particularly for solar photovoltaics.

Part 40 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2008 gives permitted development rights to the installation of domestic microgeneration equipment. Planning permission is only required for a limited number of renewable energy technologies. The amount of renewable energy installed in the Borough may therefore be higher than this indicator suggests.

### **Potential Issues**

Climate change is a major issue that the whole Council will need to consider. It is predicted that through climate change the summers in England will become, longer, drier and hotter, whilst the winters will be stormier and wetter. This could have adverse impacts not only on the environment, but also on economic and social aspects of life in Colchester.

Colchester's Core Strategy, Development Policies and Supplementary Planning Documents have an important role to play in dealing with Climate Change. Planning can encourage the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, address the increased incidents of flooding by promoting Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) and help deal with increased droughts in the summer by promoting water efficiency techniques. Developers, local businesses and local communities will be encouraged to provide and use renewable energy sources.

Connected to Climate Change are a whole collection of other related issues that could compound the effects. For example water usage is increasing both through ongoing development and increased demand, and this coupled with drier summers could lead to sustained periods of restrictions on water supply. The inevitable increased rate of development will put further pressure on the water resources available in the Borough. Similarly the amount of waste produced in Colchester is increasing, and at the same time the land available to dispose of this waste (landfill sites) is reducing. Further, fuel poverty is an issue already facing some residents of the Borough and the number of residents affected is likely to increase as a result of projected rises in fuel prices.

## 7. Analysis of Policies

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Collection of monitoring information provides a basis for evaluating the success of planning policies. The following section accordingly analyses whether there are any areas of concern and the steps that the authority is taking to ensure that a policy is implemented, amended or replaced.

The National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012 signals a change from the Local Development Framework back to a Local Plan system. Accordingly, the forthcoming review of Colchester's planning policies will result in the development of a Local Plan for the area. In the interim, the adopted Local Development Framework documents are considered to remain in general compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework and can serve as a robust basis for policy direction and decisions on planning applications. LDF documents are reasonably up-to-date, with the Core Strategy adopted in December 2008 and the Development Policies DPD adopted in October 2010. The following issues will need to be monitored moving forward to inform this review and to ensure that the Council's planning policies remain effective.

- House building has showed a recovery from the recession this year, with a return to delivery figures that exceed the average target of 830 dwellings per year. Over the 15 year period to 2027 the Council is on course to achieve the above target. Colchester has already delivered 10,838 new homes between 2001/02 and 2011/12 at an average rate of 943 dwellings per year.
- The housing trajectory included in this report shows that a net of 1036 homes were built between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012. This is an increase on the previous year's total of 673. This is a very encouraging result in the context of a continuing national downturn. This positive result reflects the Council's willingness to work with developers to bring schemes forward, including a flexible approach to scheme cost appraisals. The Core Strategy review in 2012 will provide an opportunity to consider the appropriateness of housing delivery rates and phasing.
- 366 units of affordable housing were completed between April 2011 and March 2012, or 36% of all units. This is a very positive trend especially in light of the current economic climate. It reflects the Council's success in bringing affordable housing projects on, including seeking grant funding where larger sites have stalled.
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- Approximately 88% of new and converted dwellings were on previously developed land which reflects the preference in planning policy for brownfield sites and the continuing availability of such sites in the Borough
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- Colchester's Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs both include policies on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation. Site Allocations Policy H2 allocates 30 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation which meets the level of provision required in the now revoked East of England Plan. The policy also identifies the Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) as providing important evidence to inform any future review of the Site Allocations document. The evidence in the Essex GTAA currently shows

the need for further pitches in Colchester to be low. Core Strategy Policy H5 provides criteria to assist in the determination of planning applications.

- Employment land is being provided in suitable locations within the Borough to meet Core Strategy targets. It is recognised however, that both the delivery of additional employment and retail development are dependent on external factors unrelated to planning such as market interest and the overall state of the economy. The net balance of new employment floorspace shows a low level of increase for 2010-11 which reflects the current economic climate. The total of 2,051 sqm was down on last year's level of 5,294 sqm. The lack of new Town Centre commercial completions is discouraging, but the commercial property market for existing Town Centre property is buoyant and vacancy rates continue to be below national averages of approximately 12-13%.
- The challenging issue of transportation is being tackled through a number of approaches including new transport infrastructure (i.e. the new A12 junction under construction and improved cycle routes) as well as behavioural change measures such as travel plans, which support shifts away from car based means of transport. A high percentage of new developments are continuing to be built within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.
- With regard to biodiversity, it appears that the policies, which seek to protect areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value and priority habitats and species are generally working. However, there is a need to continue to protect habitats and species from development that causes harm or damage.
- The Council has successfully taken initial steps to reduce its own carbon footprint. We are now committed to aiding local communities to follow our example and are endeavouring to mitigate the potential impacts of climate change through planning policies.
- The policies have also been successful in ensuring that there has been no loss/damage to listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Wildlife Sites, key community facilities or loss of designated allotment sites.



## 8. Sustainability Appraisal

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### Introduction

It is a requirement of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and part of Sustainability Appraisals that the significant effects of implementing a plan must be monitored to identify unforeseen effects and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action. The Sustainability Appraisals of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Policies Development Plan Documents have been closely prepared alongside these documents. A monitoring framework is set out in the Core Strategy, which includes key indicators and targets for each Core Strategy objective. These are very closely linked to the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and assessment criteria.

Sustainability Appraisal monitoring is a continuous process; in addition to monitoring as part of the AMR, each time a Sustainability Appraisal is carried out for a DPD a scoping report will be prepared, which will update the baseline data, sustainability issues facing the Borough and likely evolution without implementation of the plan based on past trends.

Whilst this section will repeat information already presented in the AMR it presents data of relevance to each of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and is an important part of the Sustainability Appraisal process and a requirement of the SEA Directive.

### Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

This section provides an outline of the progress against each Sustainability Appraisal objective.

1. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home:

The amount of dwellings completed in 2011/12 represents a return to levels above the target of 830 dwellings per year. The amount of affordable dwellings completed is also higher than the previous year and has seen the Council exceed the 35% affordable housing target for the first time. No zero carbon dwellings were completed and whilst some consents included conditions that dwellings be built to a minimum of Code for Sustainable level 3 there is currently no way of monitoring how many completed dwellings were built to this standard.

2. To ensure that development is located sustainably and makes efficient use of land:

No planning applications were approved contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency in regards to flood risk. The percentage of dwellings built on previously developed land was 88%, which is higher than last years figure of 75%. All new development in the Borough in 2010/11 is considered to be within 30 minutes of community facilities.

3. To achieve a prosperous and sustainable economy and improve the vitality of town centres:

For the second year in a row there was a zero net increase of retail, office and leisure space within the town centre. Retail uses elsewhere in the Borough showed a net gain of 1188 sqm, although this is less than last year's net gain. Four Village Design Statement/ Parish Plan

were adopted, which is an increase from previous years. This demonstrates that local communities are getting involved in the planning system in line with the localism agenda.

4. To achieve more sustainable travel behaviour and reduce the need to travel:

All new development in the Borough in 2011/12 was considered to be within 30 minutes of community facilities.

5. To improve the education, skills and health of the Borough's population:

£249,860 was secured through Section 106 agreements towards open space and £11,726 was secured towards community facilities.

6. To create safe and attractive public spaces and reduce crime:

100% of development complied with the standards set out in the Open Space SPD. Data on crime was difficult to obtain and is different to the previous year's indicator, meaning that crime rates cannot be compared.

7. To conserve and enhance the townscape character, historic and cultural assets of the Borough:

There were no recorded applications for the demolition of listed buildings. 72 planning applications were approved in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and none of these applications are likely to result in adverse effects on landscape character.

8. To conserve and enhance the natural environment, natural resources and biodiversity of the Borough:

The condition of the ten Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the Borough has not changed since last year. Seven SSSIs are in favourable condition, one is unfavourable no change, five are in unfavourable condition but recovering and one SSSI continues to be in unfavourable condition and declining (the Colne Estuary). The Water Framework Directive requires all rivers to achieve good ecological status by 2015. Within the Borough sixteen water bodies are moderate ecological status, one is poor and one has yet to be assessed. The two air quality management areas have not altered. 14.08 hectares of contaminated land was brought back into beneficial use.

9. To make efficient use of energy and resources and reduce waste and our contribution to climate change:

Two planning applications were approved for renewable energy technologies. The amount of domestic waste recycled, reused and composted has increased to 40.24%, which is an increase from last year's figure of 39.28%.

#### Adverse effects and mitigation measures

As explained in the housing section of the AMR the Council can ensure there is an adequate supply of land available for housing but there can be no guarantee in the current economic climate that units will be delivered each year. There has been an over supply to date (using the RSS residual method) and there is an expectation that the market will improve over time; thereby meeting the overall target to address housing need in Colchester. Since 2001 10,838

new dwellings have been built in the Borough set against a target of 9130, providing an over supply of 1047 units. Over the longer term it is still anticipated that overall targets can be met given the high rates of delivery early in the plan period and this year's encouraging return to a higher delivery figure.

There was no development of retail, office and leisure floorspace within the Town Centre for the 2011-12 period. This, however, is partially offset by more positive indicators of Town Centre health such as vacancy levels which are below national averages. As set out in policy CE2a of the Core Strategy the Council will seek to deliver over 67,000sqm of net retail floorspace and 40,000 sqm of gross office floorspace in the town centre, urban gateways and town centre fringe between 2006 and 2021. The Better Town Centre Project should be a catalyst for investment and regeneration in the Town Centre.

Not all of the ten SSSIs in the Borough are in favourable condition. This can be due to a number of different conditions and the Core Strategy, through policy ENV1, seeks to protect and enhance nature conservation interests. The visitor monitoring programme that the Council has commenced as part of the Habitat Regulations Assessment will provide some useful evidence on visitor trends to the Natura 2000 sites in the Borough, which are all also notified as SSSIs.

The amount of planning applications for renewable energy installations is low. However, in the majority of cases householders are able to install renewable energy technologies under permitted development rights.

No zero carbon homes were completed. Research published by national government has shown that this is very expensive to achieve and so it is unlikely that zero carbon homes will be completed within the Borough within the next few years.

#### Gaps in information

Only one indicator was available under the objective: 'To achieve more sustainable travel behaviour and reduce the need to travel'. This makes it very difficult to assess the effects of the Borough's DPDs on sustainable travel behaviour.

This year data on crime levels was very difficult to obtain and the data obtained only covers the three month period of March – May 2011, of which two months is outside of the monitoring period in any case. Having total crime over a three month period does not enable a comparison to be made as last years data was total crime per 1000 of the population.

## 9. Future AMRs

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This is Colchester Borough Council's seventh AMR and many improvements have been made since our first publication in 2004/05. Its official status has changed in light of the removal of national requirements for AMR content and submission, but the need to monitor local progress remains. The format developed in previous years is considered to remain largely relevant, but the evolution of the AMR will continue since it is a live document that will change year on year as new documents and policies arise and need monitoring. This year, we have worked on the on-line publication of the report to provide that it can be accessed via topics and includes 'hot-links' to the policies being monitored. In future we will work towards a more corporate approach to providing on-line monitoring information on a wide range of Council policies and activities.

Colchester's Local Development Framework documents includes a number of indicators intended to measure the effect of planning policies which have been agreed through the examination process. These can be found in Appendix Four.

Our monitoring of Sustainability Appraisals will be a continuous process. In addition to monitoring as part of the AMR, each time a Sustainability Appraisal is carried out for a Local Development Document a scoping report will be prepared, which will update the baseline data, sustainability issues facing the Borough and likely evolution without implementation of the plan based on past trends.

## Appendix 1 – Data Sources

AMR Section	Data item	Source	Date
<b>Housing Indicators</b>			
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>			
<b>6.2.1</b>	<b>Housing trajectory</b> - Originates from the results of the annual development monitoring survey carried out by ECC and agreed with CBC - from data off LABC and NHBC monthly returns, together with planning data off Flare.		
i)	The number of net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, whichever is the longer (net additional dwellings)	CBC analysis of planning permissions	2012
ii)	The number of net additional dwellings for the current year (net additional dwellings - current year)	CBC analysis of planning permissions	
iii)	The projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or over a ten year period from its adoption, whichever is the longer	CBC analysis of planning permissions	
iv)	The annual net additional dwelling requirement (requirements)	CBC analysis of planning permissions	
v)	The annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirement, having regard to previous years' performances (annualised strategic housing figure)	CBC analysis of planning permissions	
<b>6.2.2</b>	Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land	CBC analysis of planning permissions	
<b>6.2.3</b>	Affordable housing completions	English Local Authority Statistics on Housing (ELASH) published by CLG	2012
<b>Local Output Indicators</b>			
<b>6.2.4</b>	Percentage of affordable housing in rural areas	Occupied affordable housing by quarter - data available by UPRN or first line of address so that it can be mapped on GIS against rural areas.	2010-11
<b>6.2.5</b>	Number of new homes and employment development completed at ward level within Growth/Regeneration Areas	A regeneration layer exists on MapInfo. DC can only do permissions rather than completed. Divide between residential and non-residential development.	2010-11
<b>6.2.6</b>	Percentage of residential completions that are two or three bedroom properties	CBC analysis of planning permissions	2010-11
<b>6.2.7</b>	Gypsy and Traveller Issues	Colchester Borough Council Planning Policy and Development Management	2011-12
<b>6.2.8 Contextual Indicators</b>			

Number of dwellings and number of privately owned dwellings	Council tax figures and English Local Authority Statistics on Housing (ELASH) published by CLG	2012
Average household size	Census 2011, ONS	2011
Mean house price	Land Registry of England and Wales, Crown Copyright. The data is from hometrack but the source is the Land registry and its specifically prices based on sales only (Hometrack also supply the figures based on sales and valuations)	2011
Vacant dwellings	English Local Authority Statistics on Housing (ELASH) published by CLG	2012
Decent homes (NI 158)	English Local Authority Statistics on Housing (ELASH) published by CLG	2012
Number of homeless people - Number of households accepted as full homeless.	CLG Homelessness Statistics (P1E form)	2011-12
Number of people on the housing register	English Local Authority Statistics on Housing (ELASH) published by CLG	2012
Number of people in temporary accommodation (NI 156)	CLG Homelessness Statistics (P1E form)	2011-12

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## Economy Indicators

Section	Data Item	Source	Date
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>			
6.3.1	Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type.	Development Monitoring Service (DMS)/ECC	2009-10
6.3.2	Amount of floorspace for employment type which is on previously developed land.	Development Monitoring Service (DMS)/ECC	2009-10
6.3.3	Employment land available by type	Development Monitoring Service (DMS)/ECC	2009-10
6.3.4	Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses'	Development Monitoring Service (DMS)/ECC	2009-10
(i)	Town Centre Areas	Development Monitoring Service (DMS)/ECC	2009-10
(ii)	Local Authority Areas	Development Monitoring Service (DMS)/ECC	2009-10
6.3.5	Jobs in Rural Areas	Annual Business Inquiry, ONS	2009
<b>6.3.6 Background Information</b>			
	Number and % of economically active people	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Economically active and in employment	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12

	Those classed as employees	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Those self-employed	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	Not mentioned in report
	Economically active and unemployed	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Increase in economically active people of working age	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	JSA Claimants (total & by gender)	ONS claimant count with rates and proportions, Nomis	Aug-12
	Number and % economically inactive	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Economically inactive gender split	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Those wanting a job	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Those not wanting a job	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Number and % of those claiming worklessness benefits (pie chart of benefits)	DWP benefit claimants, Nomis.	Feb-12
	Employment by Occupation	BRES Data, Nomis	2010
	Industry	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011-12
	Value of tourism and visitor trips	The Cambridge Model - Volume and Value of Tourism in Colchester, CBC internal data.	2012
	No. of jobs and job density.	Nomis Local Profile	2009
	No. of VAT registered businesses.	Nomis Local Profile	2011
	Qualifications	Annual Population Survey, Nomis.	2011
	% of Colchester's Population living in seriously deprived small areas.	Index of Multiple Deprivation, Audit Commission Area Profiles.	2010

## Transportation Indicators

Section	Data Item	Source	Date
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>			
6.4.1	Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre	CBC analysis of planning permission	2011-12
<b>Local Output Indicators</b>			
6.4.2	To obtain an agreed Travel Plan for all major commercial/community developments	Transportation Team - Colchester Borough Council	2012

<b>6.4.3</b>	Comparison of long and short stay car parking demand and duration in public car parks in Town Centre (with a view to reducing long stay)	CBC Parking Services Team	
<b>6.4.4</b>	Annualised indicator of Cycling Trips (increased to reflect Colchester's cycle town status)	Collected November 2010 at 13 sites in accordance with Cycling England and Sustrans Requirements through the Cycling Town initiative.	2010
<b>6.4.5</b>	Motor vehicles entering Colchester on the main radial corridors	ECC LTP Indicator 126	2010
<b>6.4.8 Background Information</b>			
	Number of residents who travel to work by private motor vehicle.	ONS via the Audit Commission's Area Profiles.	2001
	Car Ownership	Census 2001, ONS	2001
	Distance Travelled to Work	Census 2001, ONS	2001
	Travel within the Borough	Census 2001, ONS	2001
	Additional traffic congestion information	Colchester Local Investment Plan Evidence Base	2010

## Environment & Heritage Indicators

Section	Data Item	Source	Data
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>			
<b>6.5.1</b>	Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality	CBC Environmental & Protective Services	2011-12
<b>6.5.2</b>	Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance including	Data unavailable	
<b>6.5.3</b>	Area of ancient woodland within the Borough	CBC Geo Spatial Team	2011-12
<b>6.5.4</b>	Number and area of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LoWs) within Colchester	CBC Spatial Policy Team	2011-12
<b>6.5.6</b>	Increase in areas of public open space	CBC Parks & Recreation Team	2011-12
<b>6.5.7</b>	Amount of development in designated areas (Local Sites, SSSI, ANOB)	CBC Environmental & Protective Services	2011-12
<b>6.5.8</b>	No sites of national importance for nature, or AONB, SSSIs or Local Site, to be lost or damaged by development and/or amount of development in designated areas (Local Sites, SSSI, ANOB) (2 indicators combined).	Nature on the map	2008-2012
<b>6.5.8</b>	95 % of nationally and internationally important wildlife and geological sites in favourable condition (SSSI, SPA, SAC & RAMSAR)	Provided by Natural England every 3 years.	
<b>6.5.9</b>	Number of visitors to Natura 2000 sites	CBC Spatial Policy Team	2011-12
<b>6.5.10</b>	Amount of residential development on greenfield land.	CBC Spatial Policy Team	2011-12



<b>6.5.11</b>	Number of TPO applications made No. of TPO applications granted, refused and withdrawn CA notices made and agreed Number of new TPOs made	CBC Environmental & Protective Services / CBC Planning Register (Civica)	2011-12
<b>6.5.12</b>	No loss of listed buildings (by demolition) and (2) Buildings of Grade I and II+	(1) CBC Planning Register and (2) Provided by English Heritage via the ECC website, 2009. At risk register update unavailable	2011-12
<b>6.5.14</b>	Contributions secured towards streetscape improvements	CBC Regeneration Team	2012
<b>6.5.16</b>	Number of Village Design Statements/ Parish Plans adopted as guidance	CBC Spatial Policy Team	2012
<b>6.5.17</b>	Number of Air Quality Management Districts (AQMD)	CBC Environmental & Protective Services	2012
<b>6.5.18</b>	NI 191 - Residual household waste per household	Performance Dashboard - Organisational Quadrant Results, Colchester Borough Council.	2012
<b>6.5.18</b>	NI 192 - Household waste reused, recycled and composted	Performance Dashboard - Organisational Quadrant Results, Colchester Borough Council.	2012
<b>6.5.19</b>	Per capita consumption of water	Defra	2004
<b>Supporting Indicators</b>			
<b>6.5.5</b>	To deliver the revised quantity standards for the different open space typologies across the Borough by 2011.	CBC Spatial Policy Team	2012
<b>6.5.13</b>	No loss or damage to SM or nationally important archaeological sites through development.	CBC Planning Register (Civica)	2012
<b>6.5.15</b>	Number of homes with provision of private/communal open space	Data unavailable	-
<b>Background</b>			
	Contaminated Land	CBC Environmental & Protective Services	2012
	Assets of the Built Environment	CBC GeoSpatial Team	2012
	Domestic consumption of gas and electricity.	<a href="#">Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)</a>	2007 & 2008
	Quality of rivers	Environment Agency	2006- 2007

## Accessible Service & Community Facilities Indicators

Section	Data Item	Source	Date
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>			
6.6.3	Recorded losses of key community facilities lost in any part of the borough as a result of development.	CBC Development Control Team	2012
6.6.4	100% of new permitted developments to comply with SPD on Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Community Facilities.	CBC Parks and Recreation / Community	2012
6.6.5	Key Infrastructure projects delivered (SD)	CBC Planning Policy Team	2012
6.6.6	All crime - number of crimes per 1,000 residents per annum	Home Office-iQuanta is intended to provide performance management information. In order to do this effectively, timeliness is considered more important than complete accuracy. Performance data based on returns from forces is therefore not subject to full checks which would delay its inclusion on iQuanta. Usage information provided to user administrators is likewise not subject to full checks. For these reasons, the accuracy of data from iQuanta or about iQuanta usage cannot be guaranteed. Such data should not be used explicitly or implicitly in circumstances in which complete accuracy and certainty are required.	2012
<b>Supporting Indicators</b>			
6.6.1	Proportion of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard.	CBC Parks & Recreation Team	2012
6.6.2	Recorded loss of designated allotment sites.	CBC Parks & Recreation Team	2012
<b>6.6.9 Background</b>			
	Results from the Sport England Active People Survey of those aged over 16 years.	Activity Profile: Colchester. Sports England	2008-09
	Museums	BVPI (2006-2007)	2007-2008

## Climate Change Indicators

Section	Data Item	Source	Data
<b>Core Output Indicators</b>			
6.7.3	Number of zero carbon homes completed	CBC Environmental & Protective Services	2012

6.7.4	Renewable energy installed by type	CBC Environmental & Protective Services	2012
<b>Supporting Indicators</b>			
6.7.1	Carbon emissions and climate change	CBC Street Services	2012
6.7.2	Climate Change Adaptation	CBC Street Services	2012

## Appendix 2 - Glossary

### Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

A report by a local planning authority assessing plan production progress and policy effectiveness.

### Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with National Parks, they represent the finest landscapes.

### Biodiversity

The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

### Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving biological diversity.

### Conservation Area

Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

### Core Indicator

An indicator that measures the direct output of the plan or programme. These indicators measure progress in achieving plan or programme objectives, targets and policies.

### Core Strategy

A Local Development Document which sets out the strategic policies guiding development of the Borough. Colchester's Core Strategy was adopted in 2008. A review of the Core Strategy is commencing which will see it eventually incorporated into a Local Plan, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Contextual Indicators

An indicator used in monitoring that measures changes in the context within which a plan or programme is being implemented.

### Development Plan

A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the

development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. It includes Development Plan Documents prepared under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004, which for Colchester now include the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Policies documents.

### Development Plan Document

DPDs are Local Development Documents that have development plan status. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The DPDs which local planning authorities must prepare, include the core strategy, site-specific allocations of land and, where needed, area action plans. There will also be a proposals map, which illustrates the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all DPDs. All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report.

### Evidence base

The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the "soundness" of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

### Habitat

An area of nature conservation interest.

### Listed Building

A building of special architectural or historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II\* or II.

### Local Development Documents

These include Development Plan Documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and Supplementary Planning Documents, which do not form part of the statutory development plan. LDDs collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area, and they may be prepared jointly between local planning authorities.

### **Local Development Framework**

The local development framework is a non-statutory term used to describe a folder of documents, which includes all the local planning authority's local development documents (comprised of development plan documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and supplementary planning documents). The local development framework will also comprise the statement of community involvement, the local development scheme and the annual monitoring report.

### **Local Development Scheme**

The local planning authority's time-scaled programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents that must be agreed with Government and reviewed every year.

### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

Regional Spatial Strategies have now been abolished, but formerly they provided a strategy for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time and possibly longer. Their function has now been taken over by local authorities and wider area based groupings known as Local Economic Partnerships.

### **Significant Effects Indicators**

An indicator that measures the significant effects of a plan or programme.

### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

Nationally important monuments that enjoy greater protection against inappropriate development through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

### **Local Wildlife Sites**

Locally important sites of nature conservation adopted by local authorities for planning purposes.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**

A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as incorporated in

the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

### **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The SCI sets out standards to be achieved by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and development control decisions.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

An environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use, which complies with the EU Directive 2001/42/EC. The environmental assessment involves the:

- preparation of an environmental report;
  - carrying out of consultations;
  - taking into account of the environmental report and the results of the consultations in decision making;
  - provision of information when the plan or programme is adopted; and
- showing that the results of the environment assessment have been taken into account.

### **Supplementary Planning Document**

An SPD is a Local Development Document that may cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific, and provides further detail of policies and proposals in a 'parent' DPD.

### **Sustainability Appraisal (including Environmental Appraisal)**

The process of weighing and assessing all the policies in a development plan, Local Development Document, or Regional Spatial Strategy, for their global, national and local implications. (See also Strategic Environmental Assessment).

## Appendix 3 Local Development Framework Monitoring Indicators Core Strategy

CS Objectives	Targets	Key Indicators	AMR Reference
<p>Sustainable Development Policies</p> <p>Focus new development at sustainable locations to support existing communities, local businesses, provide sustainable transport and promote urban regeneration to protect greenfield land.</p> <p>Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.</p> <p>Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.</p> <p>Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture.</p> <p>Reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and respond to the effects of climate change.</p>	<p>National target 60% of new development on Previously Developed Land (<i>Policies SD1, CE1, H1 and UR1</i>)</p>	<p>-Number of new homes completed on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>- Amount of new employment development on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)</p>	<p>See Para 6.2.2</p> <p>See Para 6.3.2</p>
	<p>100% of new permitted developments to comply with SPD on Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Community Facilities (<i>Policies SD2 and PR1</i>)</p>	<p>Indicator based on Community Facilities Audit and regular updates.</p>	<p>See Para 6.6.6</p>
	<p>100% of major new development to be accessible to health, education and employment facilities (<i>Policies SD1 and SD2</i>)</p>	<p>% of new development within 30 minutes public transport travel time of health, education and employment facilities (AMR Core Indicator)</p>	<p>See Para 6.4.1</p>
	<p>0% of applications to result in the overall loss of community facilities (<i>Policy SD2</i>)</p>	<p>Number of applications resulting in the loss of community facilities (AMR Local Indicator)</p>	<p>See Para 6.6.5</p>
	<p>Delivery of infrastructure schemes identified in the LDF (<i>Policy SD2, Table UR1, Table PR1, Table TA3, Table TA4, Table 6d</i>)</p>	<p>Key infrastructure projects delivered (AMR Infrastructure Trajectory)</p>	<p>See Para 6.6.7</p>
	<p>General contribution of new development to national targets on educational attainment by improving job opportunities and life chances (<i>Policy SD1</i>)</p>	<p>Percentage of population of working age qualified to NVQ level 3 or equivalent (AMR Significant Effects Indicators)</p>	<p>See Para 6.3.7</p>
	<p>100% of relevant proposals address the health implications of the development</p>	<p>Percentage of adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills (AMR Significant Effects Indicators)</p>	<p>See Para 6.3.7</p>
	<p>Funding for necessary local and sub-regional infrastructure secured through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</p>	<p>% of relevant applications complying with policy</p>	<p>Indicator under development</p>
		<p>Development and approval of a charging schedule. Amount of CIL raised</p>	<p>Charging schedule under development. Indicator will be included in AMRs following adoption</p>

Centres and Employment Policies	<p>Create a significant regional centre and a vibrant network of district and local centres that stimulate economic activity and provide residents' needs at accessible locations.</p> <p>Provide for a balance of new homes and jobs to support economic prosperity of our growing community and reduce the need to travel outside the Borough for employment.</p>	<p>Contribute to East of England Plan Haven Gateway target of 20,000 jobs to 2021 (<i>Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3</i>)</p> <p>85% A1 Retail street frontage in the Inner Core. 50% A1 Retail street frontage in the Outer Core.</p>	<p>Amount of floorspace development for employment and leisure by type (AMR Core Indicator)-Number of jobs (AMR Contextual Indicator)</p> <p>Amount of employment development delivered in Growth or Regeneration areas (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Number of new businesses setting up in the Borough- VAT registrations (AMR Significant Effects Indicator)</p> <p>Indicator on retail frontage percentages</p>	<p>See paras 6.3.1, 6.3.3, 6.3.4 and 6.35</p> <p>See Para 6.2.5</p> <p>See Para 6.3.7</p> <p>See Para Para 6.3.5</p>
Housing Policies	<p>Provide high quality and affordable housing at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community</p> <p>Provide a range of housing options to meet the diverse needs of the whole community.</p>	<p>Contribute to East of England Plan target for Colchester of 17,100 houses to 2021 (<i>Policies H1 and SD1</i>)</p> <p>Homelessness - Monitored by Strategic Housing Team – precise target inappropriate for this cross-cutting issue (<i>Policies H1, H3, H4 and SD1</i>)</p> <p>East of England Plan and Core Strategy target of 35% of new dwellings to be affordable (<i>Policy H4</i>)</p> <p>Ensure that new residential development makes efficient use of land (<i>Policies H2, H1, UR1, and SD1</i>)</p> <p>100% of flat conversions to comply with the criteria of Policy DP11</p> <p>All residential development to have a high standard of design, construction and layout</p>	<p>Housing completions per annum (net) - Housing Trajectory (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Number of new and converted dwellings completed on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)</p> <p>Number of households accepted as full homeless (AMR Contextual Indicator)</p> <p>Affordable housing completions (AMR Core Indicator).</p> <p>Percentages of new dwellings completed at the following density bands – less than 30 dwelling per hectare, between 30-50 dph and above 50 dph</p> <p>Number of flat conversions permitted as departures from Policy DP11</p> <p>Satisfaction with residential development will be monitored through LDF consultations</p>	<p>See 6.2.1, 6.2.2</p> <p>See 6.2.8</p> <p>See 6.2.3</p> <p>Monitored through the planning application process – specific density indicators no longer appropriate in the context of their removal from PPS3.</p> <p>Indicator under development</p> <p>Indicator under development</p>

<p>Urban Renaissance Policies</p>	<p>Revitalise rundown areas and create inclusive and sustainable new communities.</p> <p>Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology</p>	<p>Meet Core Strategy housing and employment targets for Growth/Regeneration areas to contribute to East of England Plan target for Colchester of 17,100 houses and 20,000 new jobs to be created in the Haven Gateway to 2021 (<i>Policy UR1</i>)</p> <p>0% of new developments to result in loss of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk. Year on year reduction in number of buildings on Buildings at Risk register. Monitored through the planning applications process (<i>Policy UR2</i>)</p>	<p>Number of new homes and employment development completed at ward level within Growth/Regeneration Areas</p>	<p>See Para 6.2.5</p>
<p>Public Realm Policies</p>	<p>Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.</p>	<p>New development to contribute to open space, green links and streetscape improvements (<i>Policies PR1, PR2, and SD2</i>)</p> <p>100% of all new permitted developments to deliver adequate areas of private/communal space in accordance with the standards set out in the Essex Design Guide and Urban Place Supplement. (<i>Policy PR1</i>)</p> <p>Reduce crime rates across the Borough. Delivered in partnership with Essex Police. These targets will be monitored through the Colchester Community Safety Crime and Disorder Reduction (<i>Policies PR2 and UR2</i>)</p>	<p>Increase in areas of public open space</p> <p>Contributions secured towards streetscape improvements</p> <p>Number of homes with provision of private/communal open space.</p>	<p>See Para 6.5.7</p> <p>See Para 6.5.14</p> <p>See Para 6.5.15</p>
<p>Transport and</p>	<p>Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the</p>	<p>Cycling – increase by 75% in urban area by 2010/11 (<i>Policies TA2, TA1 and PR2</i>)</p>	<p>All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum</p> <p>Number of Domestic Burglaries per 1000 Households</p> <p>Annualised Indicator of Cycling Trips linked to LTP* Performance Indicator 10 – Increased to reflect Colchester's cycle town status</p>	<p>See Para 6.6.9</p> <p>See Para 6.4.4</p>



	<p>need to travel.</p> <p>Provide excellent public transportation, walking and cycling connections between centres, communities and their needs.</p> <p>Develop Colchester as a Regional Transport Node, improving transport connections and gateways within the Borough and to the wider region.</p> <p>Improve the strategic road network and manage traffic and parking demand.</p>	<p>Motor Vehicles – to control peak period traffic entering the Colchester urban area to 33,400 vehicles by 2010/11 (Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and TA5)</p> <p>To reduce the percentage of pupils aged 5-16 travelling by car (Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and PR2)</p> <p>Increase use of public transport on selected routes in Colchester (Policies TA3 and TA1)</p> <p>To obtain an agreed travel plan for all major commercial/community developments (Policy TA1)</p> <p>Reduce the proportion of long stay in comparison with short stay parking (Policy TA5)</p> <p>Percentage of completed non-residential development (within Use Class Orders A, B and D) complying with parking standards as set out in the LDF (Policies TA5 and TA1)</p> <p>40% or less new houses to be built on greenfield land (AMR Core Indicator) (Policies ENV1, ENV2, SD1, CE1, H1, and UR1)</p> <p>Minimise impact of new development in areas designated due to their environmental importance (Policy ENV7)</p> <p>95% of nationally designated SSSI's are to be in favourable condition or recovering by 2010. (Policy ENV7)</p> <p>Manage visitor numbers at European Sites at levels that do not cause damage or affect site integrity. (Policy ENV7)</p>	<p>Motor Vehicles entering Colchester on the main radial corridors – LTP* Performance Indicator 12a</p> <p>Mode Share of Journeys to School linked to LTP* Performance indicator 13</p> <p>Number of bus passenger journeys on selected routes linked to LTP* Performance indicator 17</p> <p>Encourage modal shift through Travel Plan and planning application processes</p> <p>Comparison of long and short stay car parking demand and duration in public car parks in the Town Centre</p> <p>Percentage of completed non-residential development (within Use Class Orders A, B and D) complying with parking standards as set out in the LDF</p> <p>*LTP indicators are only set to 2010/11, but since the indicators have not yet been replaced, they are still in use as the best option.</p> <p>Number of homes completed on greenfield land</p> <p>Amount of development in designated areas.</p> <p>Condition of internationally and nationally important wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC &amp; RAMSAR)</p> <p>Number of visitors to Natura 2000 sites</p>	<p>See Para 6.4.5</p> <p>See Para 6.4.6</p> <p>See Para 6.4.7</p> <p>See Para 6.4.2</p> <p>See Para 6.4.3</p> <p>Indicator under development</p> <p>See Para 6.5.11</p> <p>See Para 6.5.8</p> <p>See Para 6.5.9</p> <p>See Para 6.5.10</p>
<p>Environment and Rural Communities Policies</p>				

		<p>No increase in number of Air Quality Management Districts (AQMDs) (<i>Policies ENV1, TA1, UR2</i>)</p> <p>All developments to incorporate water management schemes including Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) (<i>Policies ENV1 and ER1</i>)</p> <p>0% net loss of Local Sites (formerly Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) &amp; Local Nature Reserves (LNR) (<i>Policy ENV1</i>)</p> <p>0% loss of ancient woodland (<i>Policy ENV1</i>)</p> <p>0% net loss of priority habitats and species (<i>Policy ENV1</i>)</p> <p>0 applications to be approved contrary to EA advice (<i>Policies ENV1 and SD1</i>)</p> <p>Assist villages in the preparation of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements and achieve 100% adoption rate. (<i>Policy ENV2</i>)</p> <p>Provide 35% of all housing in rural areas as affordable housing (<i>Policies ENV2 and H4</i>)</p> <p>Ensure rural areas contribute their proportionate share to the overall jobs target (<i>Policy ENV2</i>)</p> <p>Contribute to national target of 100% zero carbon by 2016. Data for this will be more readily available from 2010 onwards in line with interim targets for a 25% carbon reduction by 2010, 44% by 2013 &amp; zero carbon by 2016 as defined in Building Regulations (Part L). (<i>Policy ER1</i>)</p> <p>Contribute to Regional targets in the East of England Plan set out below to increase energy production from renewables sources : 10% by 2010, 17% by 2020 -excluding offshore wind</p>	<p>Number of AQMDs</p> <p>Number of schemes incorporating water management schemes</p> <p>Number and area of SINC's and LNR's within the Borough</p> <p>Area of ancient woodland within the Borough (New AMR indicator)</p> <p>Change in priority habitats and species</p> <p>Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA on flood risk/flood defence grounds</p> <p>Number of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements adopted as guidance.</p> <p>Percentage of affordable housing units provided in rural wards</p> <p>Number of jobs in rural areas</p> <p>Number of zero-carbon homes completed (National target). AMR Indicator to be developed in line with evolving national targets and policies</p> <p>Renewable energy capacity installed by type</p>	<p>See Para 6.5.17</p> <p>See Para 6.5.17</p> <p>See Para 6.5.5</p> <p>See Para 6.5.4</p> <p>See Para 6.5.3</p> <p>See Para 6.5.2</p> <p>See Para 6.5.18</p> <p>See Para 6.2.4</p> <p>See Para 6.3.6</p> <p>See Para 6.4</p> <p>6.6.5</p>
<p>Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling Policies</p> <p>Encouraging renewable energy and the efficient use of scarce resources.</p> <p>Reduce, reuse and recycle waste.</p>				

		energy, 14% by 2010, 44% by 2020 – including offshore wind energy <i>(Policy ER1)</i>		
		Contribute to Colchester Borough Council's Local Area Agreement domestic waste recycling targets set out below: 21% by 2008/09, 22% by 2009/10 & 26% recycled by 2010/11 <i>(Policy ER1)</i>	Percentage of domestic waste recycled	See Para 6.5.18
		Contribute to Colchester Borough Council's Local Area Agreement domestic waste composting targets as set out below: 13% by 2008/09, 13% by 2009/10 & 14 % recycled by 2010/11. <i>(Policy ER1)</i>	Percentage of domestic waste composted	See Para 6.5.18
		Contribute to national targets for reduced water consumption/person between 120 litres/person (level 1) and 80 litres/person (level 6) as defined in The Code for Sustainable Homes <i>(Policy ER1)</i>	Per capita consumption of water	See Para 6.5.19

## Appendix 4 – Key Facilities and Infrastructure (Table 6d from adopted Core Strategy)

Development Linkage	"Necessary" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
East Growth Area	East Transit Corridor	To be secured	ECC
	Medical Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
North Growth Area	4 new primary schools	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	Developer/ CBC
	A12 junction improvements – Cuckoo Farm (Junction 28)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	Expand secondary school capacity	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	Developer/ECC
	North Transit Corridor	To be secured through the release of the Severalls Hospital Development	Developer
	North/South Capacity Improvements (A133/A134)	To be secured	ECC
	Northern Approaches (phase 3) and new A12 Junction (junction 28)	Secured through Section 106 Agreement Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2) bid submitted	Developer / Highways Agency

Development Linkage	"Necessary" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	North Park and Ride (permanent) <sup>1</sup>	Project identified in Regional Funding Allocation as a Priority 1b scheme	ECC
South Growth Area	Medical Centre	Secured	PCT
	New Primary School	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	ECC
Stanway Growth Area	New Primary School	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	ECC
	Western Bypass - Northern and Southern sections	Secured through Section 106 agreement	Developer
	Stanway Road Improvements Warren Lane	To be secured	Developer
Town Centre Growth Area	A133 Central Corridor Improvements (Stage 1 short term measures) <sup>2</sup>	Essex County Council (ECC) Local Transport Plan (LTP) funds allocated, Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2) bid submitted	ECC
Supports all growth areas	A12 junction improvements - Crown Interchange (Junction 29)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	A12 junction improvements - Eight Ash Green (Junction 26)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	A12 junction improvements - Marks Tey (junction 25)	To be secured	Developer / Highways Agency

Development Linkage	"Necessary" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	A133 Central Corridor (Stage 2 long term measures)	To be secured	ECC



Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	Sport, recreation and youth facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
South Growth Area	Gym Facilities Garrison	Secured	Developer/ CBC
	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
218	Expand secondary school	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	ECC
Stanway Growth Area	Improved Bus Links	To be secured	ECC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Village Hall improvements	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Youth recreation facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
Town Centre Growth Area	Cultural Quarter (Public Realm)	Development team selected, Growth Point Funding Secured	CBC/ Developer



Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
219	Firstsite New site (Community Arts Facility)	Secured	CBC
	Historic Town Centre Improvements	Growth Area Funding (GAF) allocated	ECC/CBC
	Magistrates' court	Dept for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) PFI funding decision imminent	DCA
	New Bus Station	To be secured through development	Developer
	Colchester North Rail Station Improvements <sup>3</sup>	To be secured	Network Rail/ECC/CBC
	Colchester Town Rail Station Improvements <sup>4</sup>	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Network Rail/ ECC
	Southway Pedestrian/cycle bridge <sup>5</sup>	To be secured through development	Developer
	Expand primary school	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	ECC
	Sports pitches and allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Tiptree Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board

Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
West Mersea	West Mersea Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
Wivenhoe	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community Hall improvements	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Wivenhoe Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
220	Youth facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
Supports all growth areas	A120 Braintree to A12	Partial allocation in Regional Funding Allocation	HA
	Cemetery expansion - Berechurch	To be secured	CBC
	Colchester-Clacton branch line re-signalling	Secured	Network Rail
	Essex Police facilities	To be secured	Essex Police
	Facilities to support 2012 Olympics	To be secured	Developer/ CBC

Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	Green Links and Walking and Cycling improvements	Funding secured	ECC/CBC
	New public open space - St John's	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Quality Bus Partnerships and Public Transport Improvements	Secured through LTP allocation	ECC
	Village Hall improvements - Rowhedge	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
<p>1 Transport project also supporting development in the Town Centre Growth Area</p> <p>2 Transport project also supporting development in the North Growth Area</p> <p>3 Transport project also supporting development in the North Growth Area</p> <p>4 Transport project also supporting development in the South Growth Area</p> <p>5 Transport project also supporting development in the South Growth Area</p>			





## Local Plan Committee

Item

11

17<sup>th</sup> December 2012

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Laura Chase</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>		<b>01206 282473</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	All		

### The Local Plan Committee is asked to approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement for consultation

#### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement for publication for a six-week consultation period.

#### 2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 All local authorities are required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how they will ensure effective community participation in the planning process.

#### 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 There are no alternatives as the Borough needs to have an up-to-date process for consultation which has been consulted on and made readily available.

#### 4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Council will involve communities and stakeholders in the planning process. This includes both preparing Local Plan documents and applications for planning permission. The SCI sets out to achieve the following objectives:
- Show how the Council aims to strengthen community involvement in the planning process;
  - Make sure that the local community and stakeholders know when and how they can get involved in the production of planning policy documents and major planning applications;
  - Improve the quality of community involvement and consultation initiatives in cost-effective ways, maximising the potential of both traditional information sources and new social media
  - Involving as many sectors of the local community as possible while recognising their different consultation needs;
  - Show how community involvement in planning will, where possible, be joined up with other community involvement initiatives; and

- Explain the consultation process of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and how it will be monitored and reviewed in the future.
- 4.2 The SCI explains how people can be involved at each stage of the plan making and planning application process and provides a list of those who the Council will consult for various planning matters.
- 4.3 Colchester's SCI was initially produced in 2005 and addenda were produced to accompany new regulations in 2008 and then again in 2011. It is now considered appropriate to produce a shorter, consolidated version of the SCI which takes into account the latest changes in the national planning system brought by the National Planning Policy Framework. These include the change from the Local Development Framework to Local Plans and consequent changes to regulations, as well as the introduction of Neighbourhood Plans and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 4.4 Public consultation continues to be a requirement for Local Plan documents under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and while Statements of Community Involvement are not specifically mentioned, it is considered good practice to ensure accountability through a 6-week consultation period. Other relevant Council officers have reviewed the document to ensure it is compatible with other Council documents and policies concerning consultation.

## **5. Proposals**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Committee agree to approve the draft SCI for public consultation for a 6-week period from 7 January to 11 February 2013.

## **6. Strategic Plan References**

- 6.1 Effective consultation on planning matters supports the Strategic Plan Vision for Colchester as a place to live, learn, work and visit, and in particular informs the priorities of leading for the future and listening and responding.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 It is proposed the public consultation will commence on Monday 7 January 2012 and run for a period of six weeks to Monday 11 February 2013. The consultation will be publicised by way of a press release and by sending notification to appropriate bodies on the Council's Local Plan consultation database.
- 7.2 Copies of the consultation document and supporting information will be made available on the Council's website, Colchester Library and in the Customer Service Centre.

7.3 Representations will be accepted electronically through the website or in hard copy.

7.4 Any representations received will be taken into account and the SCI revised where appropriate. The final version, along with copies of representations submitted, will then be reported to the Local Plan Committee for adoption.

## **8. Publicity Considerations**

8.1 Consultation on a revised SCI should raise the profile of the document and provide an opportunity for residents, businesses, and others with an interest in the area to comment. It is proposed the consultation be advertised by press release. It is not expected that the consultation would generate additional local publicity.

## **9. Financial Implications**

9.1 There are no direct financial implications. The public consultation and the production of the revised document can be carried out in-house using existing resources.

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

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view by clicking on this link:-

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/4962/Strategic-Policy-and-Regeneration>

or go to the Colchester Borough Council website

[www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk) and follow the pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Strategic Policy and Regeneration and select Local Development Framework from the Strategic Planning and Research section.

## **11. Community Safety Implications**

11.1 None

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

12.1 None

## **13. Risk Management Implications**

13.1 A decision to release a revised SCI for public consultation will help the Council listen and respond as well as ensuring the SCI remains an up-to-date and useful document.

## **Background Papers**

None



Local Plan

# **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

Consultation Draft



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## 1. Introduction

### The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

- 1.1 Colchester's planning system seeks to strengthen community and stakeholder involvement and encourage people to participate in the development of their local community. To help achieve this we are required to prepare and consult on a Statement of Community Involvement. The Council has frequently updated its SCI to reflect changes in the planning system, with the last update occurring in 2011. Since then, further changes in legislation have occurred, so the SCI has been edited to include those and additionally has been simplified to ensure clarity and promote public involvement.
- 1.2 We understand that in order to try to reach agreement within communities, people need to be involved from the early stages of the planning process. The Statement of Community Involvement is therefore a public statement that lets communities and stakeholders know when and how they can be involved. This includes both preparing planning policy documents and when considering applications for planning permission.
- 1.3 The objectives of this Statement of Community Involvement are to:
  - (a) Show how the Council aims to strengthen community involvement in the planning process;
  - (b) Make sure that the local community and stakeholders know when and how they can get involved in the production of planning policy documents and major planning applications;
  - (c) Improve the quality of our community involvement and consultation initiatives in cost-effective ways, maximising the potential of both traditional information sources and new social media
  - (d) Involving as many sectors of the local community as possible while recognising their different consultation needs;
  - (e) Show how community involvement in planning will, where possible, be joined up with other community involvement initiatives; and
  - (f) Explain the consultation process of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and how it will be monitored and reviewed in the future.

### Your Involvement in the process

- 1.4 Throughout the planning process we welcome all your comments and suggestions. You can do this through the formal consultation processes which are the subject of this guide. You may also wish to raise matters or discuss ideas with your local ward councillor at any time. They can raise matters directly with the Council or other organisations on your behalf. Local town and parish councils are a further source of advice and assistance. Details of all the Colchester Borough Council members along with town and parish councils can be found at [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk).
- 1.5 However, it is important to note that because of the range of people and interests that changes to the local environment can affect, it will be difficult to find solutions that satisfy everyone. We will also have to take into account available resources and government policies which are applied across the country. Getting involved in the process will not therefore guarantee that your views will be successful, but we do promise to listen and seriously consider all comments and suggestions that are put forward. The Council also encourages other organisations operating across the Borough to undertake effective and

transparent community involvement activities to promote awareness of issues and opportunities for involvement and conflict resolution. Those proposing development need to work with the Council to ensure early involvement where appropriate with all concerned parties including ward members and Parish/Town Councils.

## 2 Community Involvement in the Planning Process

### How you can influence the Local Plan

- 2.1 Throughout the preparation and production of planning documents there will be various stages during which you will be able to comment and influence their content. All comments made on a particular document will be seriously considered and, where appropriate, will be taken forward and fed into the production of that document before the council adopts it. These stages are illustrated in section 4.
- 2.2 The type and coverage of plans has evolved over the years and has most recently been affected by the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012 which entails the replacement of 'Local Development Frameworks' with 'Local Plans'. The overall requirement to ensure wide consultation remains, but the NPPF and the associated Localism Act have introduced some new plans, such as Neighbourhood Plans, and provided greater flexibility in the requirements for plan preparation. The continuing source of information on all the Council's planning policy documents continues to be the Local Development Scheme available on the Council's website ([www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/ldf))
- 2.3 The Local Plan Committee has been established as a sub-committee of Full Council and is open to the public in the same way as other formal council committees. The Committee has responsibility for guiding the Local Plan process and takes decisions on the various documents to be produced. As part of this process they will take account of all consultations.
- 2.4 We will, where appropriate, encourage and advise the community to contact groups and organisations that may be able to offer independent planning advice or further information during the plan preparation process. A representative list of relevant groups can be found in appendix 4.

### Ensuring Effective Consultation

- 2.5 At every stage of the process it will be important to plan consultation exercises thoroughly before they begin so that we are aware of whom we are consulting and why we are consulting them. We will refer to our 'Consultation Guidelines', which can be found in appendix 5.
- 2.6 So that our consultations may be as effective as possible we will ensure that all methods are appropriate to each document being consulted on, each stage of consultation and to each group being consulted. This will ensure that all the consultations and community involvement activities we carry out are fit for the purpose they are intended for.
- 2.7 We will also encourage the involvement of the community groups, associations and organisations that we already have good links with, and will aim to seek out and involve others.

### Consulting Hard to Reach Groups

- 2.8 In order to encourage participation from all parts of the community, it is important to realise the diversity within the borough and the need to treat everybody as an individual. We recognise that some parts of the community often have less chance than others to get

involved and are therefore under represented in the planning process. Examples of these hard to reach groups may include, younger people, older people, people who are homeless, temporary residents, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. It is our aim to give these groups and individuals every opportunity to be involved and to encourage their participation in planning policy documents.

2.9 When deciding on the nature of our consultations in the project plan, we will seriously consider the issues that our target groups and individuals may face in terms of methods, venues, language, access, childcare etc., and the approaches we might take to overcome or minimise these barriers. The table below illustrates some of these issues and their possible solutions. (Please note, that this list is not exhaustive). The Council’s Diversity Steering Group has contributed to the preparation of this document and is happy with the methods identified for involving ‘hard to reach’ groups. Each document produced and every planning application considered will be assessed to ascertain which ‘hard to reach’ groups should be consulted with and the methods for doing so.

<b>Potential Barriers to Consultation</b>	<b>Possible Solution</b>
<p><b>Difficulties with written information.</b> (Literacy problems, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and English as a second language.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone questionnaires.</li> <li>• Face to face surveys.</li> <li>• Focus Groups.</li> <li>• Provide accessible written information including large font, good colour contrast and avoiding abbreviations.</li> <li>• Browse Aloud on the Council’s website which “reads” content out loud to the customer.</li> <li>• Sign language translator.</li> <li>• Translated into a customer’s first language by use of the translation facility on the Council’s website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Intimidated or alienated by approach.</b> (Communication/literacy problems, attitude to staff, put off by ‘officialdom’ of process, long-standing hostility to the council, lack of confidence or self-esteem.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone questionnaires.</li> <li>• Face to face surveys.</li> <li>• Consider engaging a specialist consultant, voluntary or community group to carry out consultation on the council’s behalf.</li> <li>• Consider using representatives who are already known and trusted by the target group.</li> <li>• Contact community representatives such as health workers or teachers.</li> <li>• Choose language carefully and explain clearly that individual views do matter and that there are no wrong or right answers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Can’t access meeting venue.</b> (No transport available, lack of adequate child care, cannot physically access the venue, fear of going out after dark or alone, timing makes attendance difficult or impossible.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan meetings in accessible locations.</li> <li>• Choose a location where public transport and parking are easily accessible.</li> <li>• Consider covering people’s expenses / providing transport / providing childcare.</li> <li>• Check that the venue meets Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.</li> <li>• Plan the event around the needs of the group.</li> <li>• Check that events do not coincide with religious or non-religious festivals.</li> <li>• Consider holding more than one event to offer a choice of time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of time or</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to respondents directly, for example, parent and</li> </ul>

<p><b>resources.</b> (Busy working families/lone parents, poorly funded community / voluntary groups.)</p>	<p>toddler groups or outside school gates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to reduce the time it takes to participate in the consultation, as many respondents may be volunteers with little time to spare.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Rarely reached by publicity material.</b> (Those living in isolated rural communities, publicity material is in an inappropriate format, no access to the internet.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish newsletters and village notice boards can help reach rural areas.</li> <li>• Make sure material is clearly presented and follows good practice guidelines for written information.</li> <li>• Identify local events that we can join up with.</li> <li>• Use community notice boards in local shops, supermarkets and sports centres.</li> <li>• Internet consultation should only be used along with other methods.</li> </ul>

2.10 As a part of our good customer service we will also make every effort to meet all reasonable requests to make consultation exercises and documents more accessible for everyone.

2.11 We will encourage villages and neighbourhoods to develop their own community-led plans early on in the development planning process. Any plans that are produced may be used by the council to help put together its own plans for the borough or specific area. Community-led plans may include:

- Village Design Statements;
- Parish Plans; and
- Neighbourhood Plans.

2.12 We will work with organisations such as the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) and Planning Aid in order to promote these important initiatives (see contact details in the Further Information section at the end of this document.)

### Equality and Consultation

2.13 Throughout all planning consultations and engagement we will comply with the commitments set out below so that everybody has an opportunity to be involved in the development of planning documents and planning applications.

- We will provide services that are appropriate, sensitive and available to everyone.
- We will not discriminate on any unjustifiable grounds.
- We are committed to working with partners and communities across the community.
- We will maintain as far as possible our commitment to equality whilst not compromising on our service.

This will also ensure that the current legal requirements set out in equality legislation are met.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Equality Act 2010, Disability Discrimination Act 1995

### 3. Standards for Consultation

3.1 The following standards will apply to consultation and access to information and will be adopted, where possible, when preparing planning policy documents:

- Copies of the draft, final and adopted planning policy documents will be made available at Colchester Central Library and at the Council's Customer Service Centre;
- Documents will be published in both paper and electronic formats. Copies of adopted planning policy documents will be sent out within five days of the request. There may be a cost for some documents to cover printing costs. However, all consultation material will be available on the Colchester Borough Council website at [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk);
- All documents will be made available on request in large print or alternative format;
- Details of people submitting comments or requesting information will be kept on a database (subject to data protection requirements), and respondents will be notified of progress on key stages for planning policy documents when they request it;
- Consultees will be notified of the council's decision-making process and how their representation will be addressed. Where appropriate, consultees will be informed of the Inspector's decision on their representation, where they have requested to be informed;
- The council has a complaints procedure, and this is available on request if the matter cannot be resolved within the Spatial Policy section.

## 4 Stages of Community Involvement in Planning Policy Documents

### Consultation Process for main Local Plan Documents

#### Stage 1 – Preparation

4.1 National legislation requires that local authorities invite representations on any planning policy document it prepares, but the precise nature and number of consultations is up to the local authority. Where possible and appropriate, the Council will go beyond minimum requirements to promote greater community participation and to meet the needs of different communities. Depending on the type and nature of the document being prepared, engagement with stakeholders and the community will encourage participation on:

##### a) Scoping and evidence gathering

At the beginning of the Local Plan document's preparation we will gather evidence from a variety of sources and stakeholders to ensure that we have an understanding of the main issues that need to be addressed in the document. Reports produced as part of this process will be made available on the Council's website.

##### b) Development of policy options

The community and stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in the ongoing policy development process and a range of consultation/engagement methods will be used to help them. In the majority of cases a two-phase approach will be used, even though it isn't statutorily required, beginning with consultation on issues and reasonable policy alternatives and secondly, consultation on the Council's preferred options for the policy document. The Council's Local Plan Committee oversees the process of plan preparation, and approves planning policy documents prior to their consultation. All reports and documents considered by the Committee are available on the Council's website and opportunities for public comment are provided at each meeting. For each consultation we will aim to provide:

- i. Information about the planning policy document on our website ([www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)), through the media, at Colchester library and directly via email or letter if you are a statutory stakeholder or registered on our consultation database.
- ii. An opportunity to comment on the planning document via the website and electronic surveys. Paper surveys/reply slips will be available from our Council offices and the library.
- iii. An opportunity to discuss the Local Plan document at focus groups or statutory meetings and to make links with existing community activities.
- iv. An opportunity for those people who traditionally are less involved to have their say.

#### Stage 2 – Publication of the proposed submission Local Plan document

4.2 Following the engagement and preparation of the plan during initial stages



(Regulation 18), the Council will publish our proposed submission plan (Regulation 19) and invite comments on it for six weeks before we submit the document to the Secretary of State for examination (Regulation 22). Comments will also be invited on the Sustainability Appraisal that accompanies the plan.

At this formal stage of consultation we will:

- Make a copy of each of the proposed submission documents (and a statement of the representations procedure) available during normal office hours at:
  - The principal council offices;
  - Other places within the council area considered appropriate;
- Publish on our website:
  - The proposed submission documents;
  - A statement of the representations procedure;
  - A statement advertising the documents availability and setting out where and when the proposed submission documents are available for inspection;
- Send each of the specific consultation bodies invited to make representations on the plan:
  - A copy of each of the proposed submission documents;
  - A statement of the representations procedure;
- Send each of the general consultation bodies invited to make representations on the plan:
  - A statement of the representations procedure;
  - A statement advertising the documents availability and setting out where and when the proposed submission documents are available for inspection;
- Where appropriate to ensure widespread awareness, set out in a local paper:
  - A statement of the representations procedure;
  - A statement advertising the documents availability and setting out where and when the proposed submission documents are available for inspection.

At this time we will publish:

- The plan (as proposed to be submitted);
- The changes to the proposals map (if the adoption of the plan would result in changes to the map);
- The sustainability appraisal report;
- A statement setting out:
  - Who was invited to be involved in the plan preparation;
  - How they were invited to be involved in the plan preparation;
  - A summary of the main issues raised and how they have been addressed; and
- Any other supporting documents relevant to the preparation of the plan.

Regulations provide that anyone wishing to make a representation on the proposed submission plan must do so within these six weeks. A standard form will be used at this stage for responses.

The Council will consider any points raised by the consultation and produce a consultation statement. If significant changes are required, we may withdraw the document and re-consult on a revised version.

### **Stage 3 - Submission of the document for independent examination**

- 4.3 The proposed plan, the sustainability appraisal, the representations made and any other supporting documents to the Secretary of State following the consultation period. An examination of the plan will be carried out by an independent Planning Inspector to test its soundness, taking into account the representations that have been received. Those who make representations may be invited by the inspector to attend and take part in the relevant parts of the examination held in public. The Localism Act provides that the Council may ask the Inspector to consider modifications to the plan as part of the examination process.

### **Stage 4 – Consultation on Modifications**

- 4.4 The Council will publish all main modifications which have been put forward during the Examination process for a six-week consultation period in line with the processes noted above for consultation. It will also provide notification of any minor non-material changes it wishes to make to the plan if adopted. The Council will forward all responses received to the consultation on the Inspector who will have regard to them in forming final views on the soundness of the plan.

### **Stage 5 – Inspector’s Report**

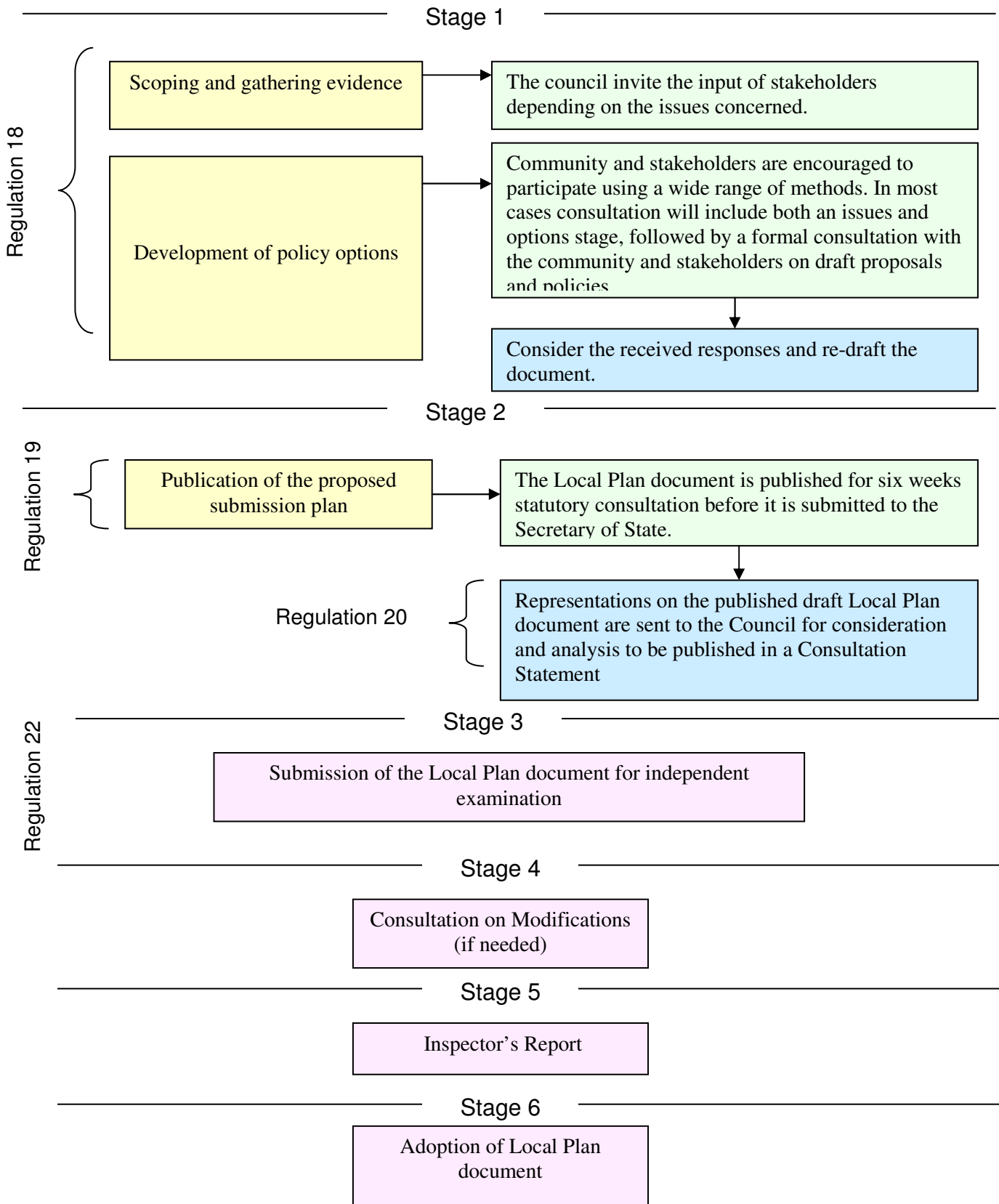
- 4.5 The Inspector will report back to the Council and will recommend main modifications if the Council has requested this.

### **Adoption of Local Plan document**

- 4.6 Provided that the Local Plan Document receives a ‘sound’ rating from the Inspector’s Report, the Council can then accept the Inspector’s modifications and submit the plan to full Council for adoption. The Council can make minor non-material changes themselves. Alternatively, the Council can decide to re-consult and re-submit on a new plan. If adopted, we will notify our stakeholders and previous respondents directly (if requested) and publicise the adoption on our website and as appropriate in local media.
- 4.7 The planning system now makes more specific requirements for councils and other public bodies to work together on strategic and cross-boundary planning issues. This ‘duty to co-operate’ may result in a development plan document being prepared jointly with other local planning authorities. Subsequent consultation on these would follow the processes described above to ensure all communities are involved appropriately.
- 4.8 The process outlined above is also relevant to the process of developing and approving a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule. The CIL is a charge which will allow the Council to raise funds from new development. The money collected will be used to support locally agreed infrastructure projects such as transport improvements, schools, leisure facilities, green links, and/or flood defences. The Council is required to consult on an evidence-based charging schedule and amend the schedule as needed based on the

comments received. Upon approval by the Local Plan Committee, the draft charging schedule is submitted for independent examination into its 'soundness'.

## Local Plan document consultation process



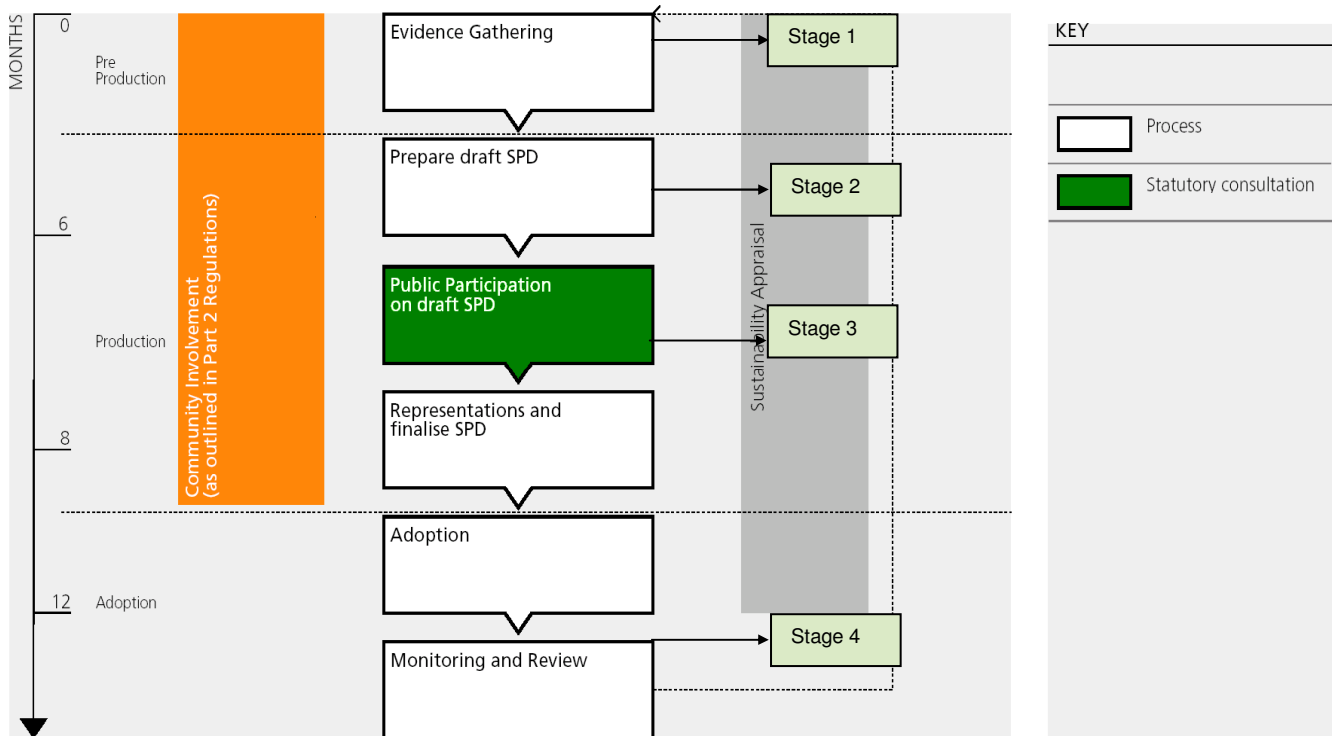
## Local Plan Documents

	Pre-production / Production	Production	Production	Public Examination
	<b>Stage 1 Scoping and Evidence Gathering, Preferred Options</b>  We will involve relevant groups in the preparation of the evidence base. We will begin the frontloading process by promoting planning issues and providing an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to influence the process at an early stage.  We will involve the community & stakeholders in the preparation of the Preferred Options. There will also be ongoing engagement regarding the Sustainability Appraisal. (Reg 25)	<b>Stage 2 Publication of Proposed Submission DPD</b>  After considering the representations received and amending the DPD, where appropriate, we will publish the proposed submission document, the Sustainability Appraisal Report and ask for comments within 6 weeks. (Reg 27)	<b>Stage 3 Submission of DPD</b>  We will publish a notice stating that the DPD has been submitted for Independent Examination along with representations made at the regulation 27/28 stage. If focused changes are needed to the DPD we will seek to involve the community and stakeholders during a further 6 week consultation. (Reg 30)	<b>Stages 4 – 6 EIP &amp; Adoption</b>  An Independent Examination (EIP) will consider all representations made. After considering all representations the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State will produce a report. We will then amend the DPD following this report and inform consultees that the final SCI has been adopted. (Reg 36)
<b>Consultees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Media &amp; Publicity</li> <li>➤ Exhibitions</li> <li>➤ Leaflet</li> <li>➤ Surveys (written &amp; electronic)</li> <li>➤ Interactive Website</li> <li>➤ Workshops / discussion groups</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Media &amp; Publicity</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip</li> <li>➤ Interactive Website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Media &amp; Publicity</li> <li>➤ Emails/Letters to respondents</li> <li>➤ Focused changes document (if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Media &amp; Publicity</li> <li>➤ Emails/Letters to respondents</li> </ul>
<b>General Public</b> (including 'hard to reach groups') (General or Other Consultees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Leaflet</li> <li>➤ Surveys (written &amp; electronic)</li> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Workshops / discussion groups</li> <li>➤ Presentation and Q&amp;A session</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Focused changes document (if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/ Letters</li> </ul>
<b>Community / Voluntary / Special Interest Groups</b> (General or Other Consultees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Reply slip / leaflet</li> <li>➤ Surveys (written &amp; electronic)</li> <li>➤ Workshops / discussion groups</li> <li>➤ Presentation and Q&amp;A session</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Focused changes document (if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> </ul>
<b>Borough / Town / Parish Councillors</b> (General or Other Consultees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip / Leaflet</li> <li>➤ Surveys (written &amp; electronic)</li> <li>➤ Workshops/discussion groups</li> <li>➤ Presentation and Q&amp;A session</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Focused changes document (if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> </ul>
<b>Businesses / Developers and Agents</b> (General or Other Consultees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip / Leaflet</li> <li>➤ Surveys (written &amp; electronic)</li> <li>➤ Workshop/discussion groups</li> <li>➤ Presentation and Q&amp;A session</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Focused changes document (if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> </ul>
<b>Specific Consultees and Government Departments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip / Leaflet</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Consultation Document</li> <li>➤ Reply Slip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> <li>➤ Focused changes document (if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Emails/Letters</li> </ul>

### Consultation Process for Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

4.9 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are intended to explain or provide further detail to policies or site allocations in a Local Plan document. They could take the form of design guides, area development briefs, master plans or issue based documents. They will be used in deciding planning applications and will help the council defend its decisions at appeals.

4.10 The diagram below sets out the process that the council is required to undertake when preparing Supplementary Planning Documents. Sustainability Appraisal is no longer a requirement for all Supplementary Planning Documents and will only be carried out when appropriate. The evidence gathering and preparation stages should include frontloaded engagement with the community where this would be possible and beneficial.



4.11 Although Supplementary Planning Documents will not require an independent examination and will not form part of the statutory development plan, they will be subject to thorough procedures of community involvement. Stages 1 to 4 show the times at which you can get involved. A full description of the various community involvement methods that we may use can be found in appendix 2.

### **Consultation Process for the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

- 4.12 The Statement of Community Involvement is a Local Development Document and does not need to be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal, nor is an examination in public required.
- 4.13 The consultation process on the Statement of Community Involvement will therefore operate in a similar way to consultations on Supplementary Planning Documents where there will be a formal period of consultation, after which the Council will consider any representations made before the Local Plan Committee adopts the document.

### **Consultation Process for Neighbourhood Plans**

- 4.14 Neighbourhood Plans, which were introduced by the Localism Act 2011, allow designated groups of local people to prepare statutory developments plans against which planning applications will be assessed. If a community wishes to simplify the process for allowing development, it can also produce a Neighbourhood Development Order (areas where specified development is permitted without the need to apply for planning permission) or a Community Right to Build Order (permission for small scale community led-schemes). These can be instead of, or in conjunction with, a neighbourhood plan and would result in effectively granting planning permission for certain types of development in specified areas. These orders, however, can't remove the need for other permissions such as Listed Building or Conservation Area consent.
- 4.15 Since Neighbourhood Plans and Orders aren't prepared by the Council, this SCI can't prescribe what methods of community consultation they should follow. The Council will, however, expect these documents to meet the requirements set out in legislation and to follow wherever possible the general principles and techniques set out in this SCI. The Council will also provide technical guidance and support as required by legislation and will offer additional advice where feasible.

## 5. Community Involvement and Planning Applications

### Introduction

5.1 Involvement of the community and stakeholders beginning at an early stage of the planning application process is of great benefit to the public, individuals, organisations, authorities and the applicant themselves. The following section explains how the Council will seek to encourage awareness and involvement in the planning application decision-making process, starting with pre-application discussions and continuing through to the planning application stage, and in some cases, the planning appeal stage.

### Pre-application discussions

- 5.2 The Council encourages developers to consult the community prior to submitting planning applications for larger-scale or potentially contentious development proposals, in line with guidance on decision-taking in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Localism Act. We will engage in pre-application discussions with the developer that are often undertaken in confidence because of the various sensitivities of some early ideas, but discussions are always recorded and are always without prejudice to the later application, consultation requirements and the decision making process. At this stage, we will be in a position to advise developers and help clarify the format, type and level of consultation to be undertaken. The Council has a schedule of charges for preliminary enquiries and pre-application advice. As part of this process we will also seek to engage elected members through our “Early Member Engagement Protocol” wherever this is applicable. This Protocol forms part of the Council’s Constitution and can be read online.
- 5.3 In the case of larger applications the Council operates a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) approach. Details of the applicable charges are available on the Council’s website. A PPA is an agreement between the Council and applicants to provide a project management framework for major applications that are meant to exceed the 13-week period normally expected to be the period required to determine major applications. The PPA sets out the targets agreed by both parties for the levels and types of consultation required, information gathering process, consideration of options and agreement on design issues.
- 5.4 The Council expects applicants in most cases to carry out their own pre-application consultation. This should be effective in bringing draft proposals to the attention of the public, the local Town or Parish Council and other affected parties and provide opportunities to make comments. The purpose of early discussions between the community and the developers is to encourage agreement within the community early on in the process and provide a better chance for schemes to be positively received. This process will help benefit both parties. For developers it will ensure that key issues are addressed prior to planning applications being submitted and for the local community it will enable them to have an influence before proposals reach an advanced stage.
- 5.5 It is essential that any community involvement conducted by the developers be tailored to the nature and scale of the proposal. A broad list of consultation and community involvement methods is provided in appendix 2, along with details of when they are most suitable, their advantages and disadvantages, and resource implications. Chapter 2 outlines the necessary steps that we will take to ensure equal and effective consultation.



- 5.6 The Council will expect the applicant to submit details of pre-application consultation as well as an explanation on how responses have been taken into account, alongside their planning application, and this information will be used in the decision-making process. In some cases it can also be a validation consideration, whereby applications will not be processed unless the Council is satisfied that adequate consultation has been undertaken by the developers.

### **Submission of a planning application**

- 5.7 The process of deciding planning applications is often of great public and local interest, and comments on proposals are welcomed.
- 5.8 When deciding which applications are classed as major applications and therefore subject to wider community consultation, the Government sets out the following criteria:
- Residential developments comprising 10 or more homes;
  - A site area of 0.5 hectares or more where the number of homes is unknown;
  - Commercial proposals creating more than 1,000 square metres of floor space or on sites of 1 hectare or more; or
  - A change of use application involving the above.
- 5.9 The Government sets targets for the time taken to determine planning applications. These are currently 13 weeks for major applications and 8 weeks for all others. If an Environmental Impact Assessment is required by the scale of development then this period will extend to 16 weeks, but this is not common. Before a decision is made, the case officer will prepare a report with a recommendation.
- 5.10 The recommendation will take into account the adopted Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework as well as any comments made. However, the Council can only take into account comments relating to material considerations, which excludes such non-planning considerations as property values, loss of a private view over land, moral objections to development and commercial considerations.

### **Major applications**

- 5.11 The level of consultation carried out for all major planning applications, will be determined by the council to ensure that it is appropriate. Statutory advertisements will be used as a means of consultation if required and as laid out in legislation, which means that in the majority of cases it will be necessary to publish an advertisement in the newspaper and on a site notice to be displayed at the application site. We also recognise that any involvement will need to encourage participation and social inclusion to ensure that the local community is given every opportunity to influence the process.
- 5.12 A weekly list of all applications received appears on the council's website. Individual letters/emails will be sent in respect of every planning application where neighbouring properties/businesses can be identified. Parish and town councils will be consulted on every application within their parish boundaries. Similarly, the elected ward members will be consulted on applications that fall within their wards.
- 5.13 It is important to note that the types of methods used and the length of consultation will need to suit the type of application and therefore the methods listed above are provided as a guideline of how we may consult, but is in no means intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive. The Development Services Manager, Planning Manager, Planning Projects

Manager or a Principal Planning Officer will make this decision.

## **Other applications**

5.14 With regard to all other types of applications, the Development Services Manager, Planning Manager, Planning Projects Manager or a Principal Planning Officer will determine the appropriate level of consultation. Individual letters/emails will be sent to neighbouring properties/businesses and/or site notices used. Parish and town councils will be consulted on every application in their parish. Similarly, the elected ward members will be consulted on applications that fall within their wards. All the planning applications appear on the website which is updated weekly.

## **Sources of information on planning applications**

5.15 Information on planning applications can be found in the following places:

### **5.15.1 The Planning Register**

Applications for planning permission must by law, be entered on a register within 14 days of receipt. Maintaining a planning register is a statutory obligation imposed on the council by the Town and Country Planning Acts and the information is available for inspection by arrangement during office hours. In Colchester the register consists of three parts:

- A register containing details of all current applications for planning permission, including plans and drawings;
- A register that contains a permanent record of all applications and decisions since 1 July 1948 (including any order made, appeals and their outcome); and
- An index is provided in plotting sheets.

Current planning applications including plans and drawings and those dating back to the year 2000 can be viewed online using the Colchester Planning website. For those who do not have access to a computer the Council provides appropriate terminals at its Customer Service centre for public use.

### **5.15.2 The Weekly List**

The statutory register does have limitations for general use and accordingly we also produce a weekly list. As the name suggests, this is a list of all new applications registered and decisions made the previous week.

### **5.15.3 Advertising**

Regulations set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010, the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Regulations and the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, state that all planning applications need to be publicised, either by site notice or individual neighbour notification. A press notice and site notice is also required for the following types of application:

- Erection of 10 or more dwellings or site area of 0.5 hectares or more;
- Erection of 1000 square metres of floor space, or site area of 1 hectare or more;
- An application subject of an environmental assessment;
- An application that would affect a right of way, under Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act;

- Development affecting listed buildings;
- Development affecting the character or appearance of a conservation area; and
- Departures from the Development Plan.

These requirements are subject to change and a press notice will only be used where required by legislation.

#### 5.15.4 Individual Letters

We are aware of the need to provide an effective and efficient service, and to ensure that budgets are closely controlled. It is sometimes difficult to bring together these objectives with widespread public consultation on planning applications. The actual extent of consultation in each case will be determined having regard to the type of development involved.

Letters will be sent only usually be sent to those properties directly affected by a proposal, which according to the Development Management Procedure Order 2010 is any adjoining owner or occupier. "Adjoining owner or occupier" means any owner or occupier of any land adjoining the land to which the application relates. For example, the minimum consultation for extensions to buildings would be properties sharing a common boundary with the application site. In the case of rear extensions those to the rear will be consulted whilst those on the opposite side of the road may not be. Any further consultation will be at the discretion of the case officer.

#### 5.15.5 Parish and Town Councils

The Council is committed to close working with local representative bodies, as provided within part 8 of the Constitution. We have set up a forum for parish and town council clerks, which is held every two months. Although this is a corporate initiative there is opportunity to report on planning matters on a regular basis.

It is also intended to develop and extend regular planning liaison meetings with all of the town and parish councils (we already have regular sessions with Dedham, East Mersea, Myland, Stanway, Tiptree and West Mersea) and continue to provide a regular programme of planning workshops for rural councils on an twice-annual basis.

Planning workshops for Town and Parish Councillors include workshops on subjects including, material considerations, influencing the planning process, enforcement, appeals, planning law, design, legal obligations etc.

#### 5.15.6 Website

Our website is increasingly being used as a tool for consultation. The website includes weekly lists of applications received and decisions made. These can be viewed by application number or by ward and comments can be sent direct. Committee agendas, reports, S106 agreements, planning enforcement activity and associated Notices and a list of current appeals and appeal decisions can also be viewed. The Colchester Planning Online website now allows copies of the application forms, plans and drawings, and consultation comments to be viewed online.

## **Procedure for Dealing with Written Representations to Applications**

- 5.16 We currently notify neighbours within a week of registering a planning application and they are given at least 21 days to reply. All those wishing to comment on an application are encouraged to do so electronically using the Council's 'on-line planning' web site. Whilst we will accept written letters, faxes and e-mails we will not acknowledge their receipt. Any representation received is however scanned and placed on the Council's 'on-line planning' web-site and is available for viewing by the public. This also allows those people sending such representations to check safe receipt by the Council for themselves.
- 5.17 The Planning Service does not respond in writing to comments about a planning application unless specifically requested, but is happy to give advice over the telephone. All comments received are considered by the case officer, which may result in the application being revised. If the scheme is significantly changed we will try to repeat the consultation allowing, where possible, an extra 14 days or less in certain circumstances, for further comments (at the discretion of the case officer). Sometimes time constraints mean a shorter period is given for comments on revised plans and sometimes it is not possible to reconsult at all. Where the subject of an objection has, in the opinion of the Planning Service, been addressed in amended plans, re-consultation has occurred and no further comment made, the previous objection will be considered withdrawn.

## **Determination of a planning application**

- 5.18 The Localism Act clarifies the ways in which councillors can be involved in the planning process and play an active part in local discussions.
- 5.19 The receipt of one or more letters of objection will normally result in a major application being determined by committee if it is being recommended for approval or if it is subject to a S106 Agreement.
- 5.20 In the case of all other applications a decision will be made under delegated powers by the Planning Service unless that application has been subject to a 'call-in' by a Councillor. A 'call-in' is subject to a formal process and for it to be triggered automatically a councillor must make a valid request within 25 days of being notified of the application. Anyone can approach their councillor to have an application 'called-in' and thereby determined by the Planning Committee after public debate. A councillor is not duty bound to request a 'call-in' if asked. Where an application is being reported to Committee all comments received are summarised in the Committee report. Letters will not be accepted after 5pm on the day before Committee. Once the agenda has been prepared, anything received before 5pm will be reported on an amendment sheet, or verbally.
- 5.21 If an application is to be reported to committee this will be stated on the Council's online planning website. The full committee report is available 5 days before the meeting on the website and in all council offices. Where an application has been subject to a valid 'call-in' the applicant and any person making an electronic submission via the Council's on-line planning web-site will be notified via e-mail of the relevant Committee date, 5 days prior to the meeting.
- 5.22 At committee one representative from the objectors is able to speak to committee for up to 3 minutes. Objectors are invited to view the application on-line to obtain a full list of objectors to enable them to get together. Ward Members may also speak on behalf of their electorate and will be allowed up to 5 minutes.
- 5.23 When a decision is reached, respondents who have sent their comments in via the Councils 'on-line planning' web site using an e-mail address will be advised of the decision

within 10 days. The update will state whether the application has been approved or refused and where the decision can be viewed in full, i.e. the statutory register or in summary form on the website.

- 5.24 Further details on how to comment on planning applications at the Planning Committee can be found in our document 'Have your Say on Planning Applications' which is available on the website. Other relevant information includes "Planning Procedures Code of Practice" which is in Part 5 of The Constitution and is on the Council's website. It sets out general guidelines for borough councillors and council officers who are involved in planning applications and the Planning Committee. The information it contains may help provide background information to applicants and those commenting on the planning process.

## **Appeals**

- 5.25 When an appeal is made against the decision of the council all previous correspondence is forwarded on to the Planning Inspectorate. Letters/emails are also sent to all those people who had previously been consulted/commented on the application, advising them of the appeal. Further representation can be made direct to the Planning Inspectorate. These procedures comply with the statutory procedures set out in S78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning Inspectorate's Procedural Guidance 'Planning appeals and called-in planning applications' (PINS 01/2009).

## **6 Involving representative organisations and individuals**

- 6.1 Appendix 1 provides a comprehensive list of the types of consultees that we will inform and involve throughout the plan development process. The organisations and groups listed there are representative organisations and individuals of all types and ranges of interest that we feel will have an important part to play in the planning process. They will all be consulted as part of the local plan process and will be consulted as appropriate on planning applications.
- 6.2 A full list of all types of consultees will be stored on a database along with their details. This information is not listed here as it is constantly being updated due to the fact that new groups frequently emerge or disband or their details change and individuals request to be added or removed from the database. However, the database is available to view upon request so that anybody may suggest additional bodies and groups to be added or so that they may find a group to represent their views in the new planning process.
- 6.3 If you would like to join the Local Plan consultation database and be kept up-to-date on development plans for Colchester please contact the Planning Policy team using the contact details at the end of this document.

## **7. Monitoring and review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

- 7.1 The SCI provides flexibility to allow for appropriate changes in our approach to community involvement. Comments received on the quality or effectiveness of our consultation will be considered and used to inform future practice. If significant changes are required to meet new circumstances or legislation, a review of the Statement of Community Involvement will be undertaken.
- 7.2 Consultation exercises include opportunities for consultees to complete equality monitoring data forms. If completed, this helps us monitor the effectiveness of our policies surrounding equality and diversity and to make changes where required.

## Consultation organisations

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the consultation bodies who must be consulted in the preparation of Local Plans. The regulations also specify the bodies that are covered by the Duty to Co-operate.

### Duty to Co-operate

There is a duty to co-operate on any strategic matter relating to a Development Plan Document or Local Development Document. A strategic matter is defined as an issue that would have significant impact on at least two planning areas or a county matter in a two tier area. Colchester Borough Council is required to co-operate with every other person who is within listed in maximising the effectiveness of activities related to the preparation of the plan.

The duty to co-operate applies to:

- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Natural England
- Mayor of London
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Primary Care Trust
- Office of Rail Regulation
- Transport for London
- Integrated Transport Authority
- Highway Authority
- Highways Agency
- Marine Management Organisation
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Essex County Council

The duty to co-operate is most likely to apply to authorities that adjoin Colchester Borough, although there may be some strategic matters where co-operation with authorities in the wider area may also be necessary. Adjoining authorities are:

- Suffolk County Council
- Tendring District Council
- Babergh District Council
- Braintree District Council
- Maldon District Council

### Sustainability Appraisal Consultation Organisations

The following organisations should be consulted for a sustainability appraisal under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004:

- Natural England
- The Environment Agency
- English Heritage

### Specific consultation bodies

When preparing plans the Council is required to consult such of the specific consultation bodies as it considers may have an interest in the subject of the proposed local plan. The specific consultation bodies are set out in the regulations as:

Environment Agency  
English Heritage  
Marine Management Organisation  
Natural England  
Network Rail  
Highways Agency  
Telecommunications operators  
Primary Care Trust  
Electricity and gas companies  
Sewerage and water companies  
The Homes and Community Agency  
The Coal Authority

#### *Parish Councils*

Abberton & Langenhoe Parish Council  
Birch Parish Council  
Boxted Parish Council  
Chappel Parish Council  
Little Horkesley Parish Council  
Copford with Easthorpe Parish Council  
East Donyland Parish Council  
East Mersea Parish Council  
Eight Ash Green Parish Council  
Fingringhoe Parish Council  
Fordham Parish Council  
Great Horkesley Parish Council  
Great Tey Parish Council  
Langham Parish Council  
Layer de la Haye Parish Council  
Layer Marney Parish Meeting  
Marks Tey Parish Council  
Messing cum Inworth Parish Council  
Myland Parish Council  
Stanway Parish Council  
Tiptree Parish Council  
Wakes Colne Parish Council  
West Bergholt Parish Council  
West Mersea Town Council  
Winstred Hundred Parish Council  
Wivenhoe Town Council  
Wormingford Parish Council  
Mount Bures Parish Council  
Aldham Parish Council  
Dedham Parish Council  
Layer Breton Parish Council

#### *Adjoining Parish Councils*

Alresford Parish Council  
Ardleigh Parish Council  
Brightlingsea Town Council  
Bures St Mary Parish Council  
Feering Parish Council  
Great Braxted Parish Council  
Kelvedon Parish Council  
Nayland with Wissington Parish Council  
Stoke By Nayland Parish Council  
Stratford St Mary Parish Council  
Tollesbury Parish Council  
Tolleshunt D'Arcy Parish Council  
Tolleshunt Major Parish Council  
Tolleshunt Nights Parish Council

#### *County Council and adjoining*

Essex County Council  
Suffolk County Council

Policing body and adjoining policing body



### General consultation bodies

When preparing plans the Council is required to consult such of the general consultation bodies as it considers appropriate. The general consultation bodies are set out in the regulations as:

- voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority's area,
- bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area,
- bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area,
- bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area,
- bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area;

The Council maintains a consultation database that includes all of these types of general consultation body.

The database also includes landowners, developers, businesses, residents, and any other organisations or individuals who have requested to be kept informed of planning policy matters.

### Neighbourhood Plans

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 set out the consultation bodies for Neighbourhood development plans. This is listed separately in the regulations but includes the same specific and general consultation bodies as those which are required to be consulted in the preparation of local plans.

In the case of neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders the consultation bodies depend on the type of development proposed. Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations provides more information.


  
 Informing  
 Consultation  
 Involving

The higher up the table a consultation method is, the closer it is to informing rather than involving the community.

## Methods of Community Engagement

### APPENDIX 2

Consultation Method	When is it most suitable	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resource Implications
<b>Consultation Document (paper or electronic)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inform / promote</b></li> <li>• Useful for consulting on technical policies and plans and inviting comment on them.</li> <li>• Would be most useful towards the end of the policy process.</li> <li>• Can be produced in a variety of formats e.g., on paper, website.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing detailed information in this way enables consultees to make an informed response, which will ultimately be more meaningful to the process.</li> <li>• It is therefore important to make responding as easy as possible by accompanying the paper with reply slips, email addresses etc.</li> <li>• They can also be made available in a number of places i.e., libraries, schools, local offices etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actual two-way participation with respondents is inhibited and this can be a missed opportunity to encourage responses and/or explain policies and processes, thereby avoiding possible mis-interpretations.</li> <li>• Particularly long and complex consultation papers can be daunting and off-putting to read. It is therefore important to recognise that many sectors of the community will not or cannot read them.</li> <li>• If documents are sent by post it is difficult to judge if they have been read or considered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The usual costs of printing and distribution will apply.</li> <li>• Cost of producing the document in alternative formats to make it accessible to all sectors of the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Letters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inform / promote</b></li> <li>• To provide information to all relevant stakeholders at the beginning of a consultation.</li> <li>• To provide feedback to stakeholders concerning the outcomes of a consultation.</li> <li>• <b>Strengthen evidence base / gather opinion / promote / inform</b></li> <li>• Can be useful for providing basic or summary information or for drawing attention to forthcoming consultation events and initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quick and easy way to provide feedback on the results of a particular consultation.</li> <li>• Reply slips requesting information can be with the letter to gain factual information and / or views and opinions.</li> <li>• Can also include consultation papers and any other supporting documents.</li> <li>• Can be targeted more specifically and personally than posters.</li> <li>• Can also provide an opportunity for the public to feedback i.e., through tear off reply slips.</li> <li>• Feedback forms with the respondents contact details can be fed into a mailing list, through which future information can be disseminated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This can be a very labour intensive method if administration support is limited.</li> <li>• Mailing lists must be updated regularly to ensure that addresses are correct etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs depend on the number produced and distributed.</li> <li>• Officer time and stationary costs also need to be taken into account.</li> </ul>
<b>Reply slip / Leaflet (Quantitative)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengthen evidence base / gather opinion / promote / inform</b></li> <li>• Can be useful for providing basic or summary information or for drawing attention to forthcoming consultation events and initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of information that can be provided is often limited due to size of document.</li> <li>• Variations are often needed to target specific audiences, for example, older people, children, ethnic minorities.</li> <li>• Thought needs to be put into how they will be disseminated so that a wide range of people and groups are covered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of information that can be provided is often limited due to size of document.</li> <li>• Variations are often needed to target specific audiences, for example, older people, children, ethnic minorities.</li> <li>• Thought needs to be put into how they will be disseminated so that a wide range of people and groups are covered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs depend on the number of leaflets printed and methods of dissemination.</li> <li>• May also need to pay for a designer.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Media and Publicity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inform / promote</b></li> <li>• Press releases, newspaper articles and advertisements and briefings for local radio / TV and press.</li> <li>• This will be suitable at varying stages of the process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can reach a large number of people in a short space of time.</li> <li>• Can help advertise events.</li> <li>• Can use as a method of feedback to the public.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to be aware that it is unlikely that you will have editorial control with local papers. It is always possible that a different slant may be put on a story.</li> <li>• You cannot be certain how many people have read and understood the information provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspaper supplements can cost if you want editorial control as can radio adverts.</li> <li>• However, a cheaper method in comparison to others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public Meetings (Qualitative)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Inform / promote debate</b></li> <li>• For addressing specific concerns that may have been raised by the public.</li> <li>• They should not be used for geographically dispersed issues or for getting representative feedback about particular issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If chaired properly it can be a good way of hearing different / opposing points of view.</li> <li>• It is possible to break meetings up into smaller groups when you can encourage brainstorming and action planning. This is also an opportunity to give voice to those individuals who may not wish to speak in front of large audiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be difficult, as people tend not to turn up in significant numbers unless the issue is of particular concern or very contentious, in which case they can easily become confrontational.</li> <li>• If the meetings are too large, some attendees may be inhibited from speaking. More vocal members of the public can sometimes dominate the discussion, disrupting the timetable and preventing other issues and opinions from coming through. This can also be a problem for anyone with language problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs tend to be low but need to consider venue hire, staff time, and advertising and publicity materials.</li> <li>• It is important to have a suitable venue and times to suit the target audience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exhibitions (Qualitative)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote / inform / strengthen evidence base / gather opinion.</b></li> <li>• As a supplement to other forms of participation. This type of activity should not be used as a sole means of consultation for major schemes and projects.</li> <li>• Information and comments are usually collected on the day through self-completion questionnaires, comment cards, voting boxes, informal discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roadshow exhibitions can be useful to ensure that opportunity to take part and feedback is open to all members of the public. Can target specific areas, i.e., the rural communities.</li> <li>• Allow you to make use of visual aids, including 3D models, maps, videos, written material and illustrations.</li> <li>• Allows the public to visit at a time that is suitable to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event may be seen as information giving rather than full consultation. Therefore need to ensure that staff are fully briefed and can respond to queries. Be seen to be listening.</li> <li>• People who attend are unlikely to represent the community as a whole.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising and publicity.</li> <li>• Hiring the venue/s and staff costs.</li> <li>• The total costs will depend on the length of the exhibition or open day and the use of displays, especially the commissioning of new ones.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Surveys (Quantitative)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengthen evidence base / gather information.</b></li> <li>• Can be a good introduction to a consultation.</li> <li>• Useful for discovering factual information, views, attitudes and opinions.</li> <li>• Where views are needed across a wide geographical area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can cover a range of issues.</li> <li>• Can involve a large number of people.</li> <li>• Can be easy to communicate findings.</li> <li>• Makes decision-making easier if there is a clear evidence base.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex or technical issues can be hard to explain.</li> <li>• Care needs to be taken with wording, especially with open-ended questions, to avoid confusion and leading questions.</li> <li>• Can be difficult to determine reasons behind responses and explore attitudes.</li> <li>• Postal questionnaires often have low response rates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial costs vary depending on how the survey is done and how large the sample is.</li> <li>• Usual costs of printing and postage, however, can be quite cheap in comparison to other techniques.</li> <li>• Joining up with other departments and sharing findings can reduce costs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interactive Website (Quantitative with surveys but qualitative with on-line forums)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengthen evidence base / gather information / inform / promotion / promote debate.</b></li> <li>• Should be used to provide information and as a method of feedback.</li> <li>• Is useful at all stages of the process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It allows communication with a wide range of people, across geographically broad areas.</li> <li>• It can help attract those in the community who may not normally wish to comments via conventional means i.e. those who are unable to, or afraid of leaving the house. Can also attract those who may experience difficulty attending meetings or exhibitions due to physical, work or childcare constraints.</li> <li>• Analysis of responses can be quicker and easier and involve less paper work and travel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It must be clearly recognised that even though the technology is growing, a large number of people, still do not have access to the Internet. For this reason, all information posted on the website should also be available in other formats.</li> <li>• The inability to use body language to build up a rapport as in face to face interviews, can be a serious disadvantage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost of software and programming assistance needs to be assessed depending on the work you need done.</li> <li>• This is a very cost effective method of consultation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Workshop / discussion group (Qualitative) – Small groups of people invited to attend informal discussion sessions on a particular topic. Often semi structured and consultation papers may be provided.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote debate / build consensus / strengthen evidence base / gather opinion.</b></li> <li>• Used to gain deeper insights into behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions and why such things are present.</li> <li>• Can also help generate ideas and suggestions for improvement.</li> <li>• Can be a useful forum for communicating the results of previous consultation activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to consult a number of different groups in the community.</li> <li>• Allows the organisers an opportunity to explain the context so that respondents can give informed opinions.</li> <li>• Interactive and visual aids can be used to help encourage involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Samples are usually small and responses therefore do not represent the views of a whole community.</li> <li>• Can be difficult to collate and analyse the data.</li> <li>• Issues of bias and interpretation can occur if officers are recording views and opinions themselves. Outside agencies employed to do this may overcome this problem but may also have difficulties if their knowledge of the issues are limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively inexpensive to organise, depending on the number of sessions to be facilitated. Should consider the cost of outside facilitators.</li> <li>• It can be difficult to join up with other services in the council and discuss a range of issues in these groups. However, the information received should be shared, especially where it can link up with the Local Strategic Partnership or Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participatory Appraisals (including planning for real style exercises) (Qualitative)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promote debate / build consensus / gather opinion.</b></li> <li>• Allows a person to put forward and prioritise ideas on how their area can be improved.</li> <li>• It is a highly visible and hands-on tool.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can use it.</li> <li>• Using models and can generate interest and create an initial vision of an area.</li> <li>• Allows a practical, non-threatening way of communication and participation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for Real is a registered trademark of the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation and it is therefore necessary for facilitators to be trained by the foundation, which can significantly expand financial budgets.</li> <li>• Involves a large amount of planning and publicity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of training and model kits.</li> <li>• Officer time.</li> <li>• Venue hire.</li> <li>• Media / publicity.</li> </ul>

# Glossary

For a full glossary of planning terms please visit the Planning Portal at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/glossaryandlinks/glossary>

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** - The CIL is a charge set at a standard rate which will allow the Council to raise funds from new development. The money collected will be used to support locally agreed infrastructure projects such as transport improvements, schools, leisure facilities, green links, and/or flood defences.

## **Development Briefs**

Inform developers and other interested parties of the constraints and opportunities presented by a site, and the type of development expected or encouraged by local planning policies.

## **Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, defines a disabled person as an individual with a physical (including sensory) impairment or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **Evidence Base**

An up-to-date information base on key aspects of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area, to enable the preparation of a sound spatial plan that meets the objectives of sustainable development.

## **Guidance Notes**

From time to time we will publish guidance notes on a range of planning topics. These will be similar to Supplementary Planning Documents but will be much more informal. They will be used to provide information and advice rather than set out policies. We intend that they will be a practical part of the policy's framework.

## **Independent Examination**

The council must arrange for an independent examination of the submitted Local Plan Document, the purpose of which is to consider

the "soundness of the plan". An independent inspector will be appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the examination and it is his/her role to consider the Development Plan Document as a whole and to determine its soundness. In assessing this, the inspector will consider all representations made on the submitted Development Plan Document and the changes that have been suggested by those making representations.

## **Local Development Framework (LDF) (now Local Plan)**

This was the term given to the portfolio of planning policy documents which as a group provided the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area during the period 2004-2012. The publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in April 2012 means that the term has been superseded by 'Local Plan'.

## **Local Plan (previously Local Development Framework)**

The adopted planning policies setting out the strategic policy, detailed development management policies and site allocations for a local authority area.

**National Planning Policy Framework** – The NPPF sets out the Government's national planning requirements, policies and objectives. It replaces much of the national advice previously contained within Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance and Circulars. It is a material consideration in the preparation of Local Plan documents and when considering planning applications.

**Neighbourhood Plan** – A plan for a small neighbourhood area which is prepared by an authorised local group. The plan must be in general agreement with the overall plan for the local authority and can include general planning policies and allocations of land for new development.

**Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)** – An agreement between an local planning authority and an applicant to provide a project management framework for a major planning application.

### **Proposals Map**

The adopted proposals map illustrates on an Ordinance Survey base map, all the relevant policies from Local Plan Documents. It must be revised as new Local Plan Documents are adopted, and it should always reflect the up-to-date planning strategy for the area. Proposals for changes to the adopted proposals map will accompany submitted Development Plan Documents in the form of a submission proposals map.

### **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

This will set out the standards that the council intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the local planning authority intends to achieve those standards. A consultation statement showing how the council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Plan Documents.

### **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

These documents contain policy guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents (see above). They will not form part of the development plan or be subject to independent examination.

### **Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)**

An appraisal of the economic, social and environmental effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, so that decisions can be made that accord with sustainable development. The sustainability appraisal process incorporates requirements of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

## Further Information

For further information and advice on planning issues, please refer to the following list.

<b>Planning Aid</b>	A charity that provides free, independent and professional advice and support on planning issues to people and communities who cannot afford to hire a planning consultant. Website: <a href="http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid">www.rtpi.org.uk/planningaid</a> E-mail - <a href="mailto:advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk">advice@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk</a>
<b>Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)</b>	The professional body for town planners. Its website contains a wealth of planning related information. <a href="http://www.rtpi.org.uk">www.rtpi.org.uk</a> On-line directory of planning consultants <a href="http://www.rtpiconsultants.co.uk">www.rtpiconsultants.co.uk</a>
<b>The Planning Portal</b>	The Government's one-stop shop for planning information, with information on the planning system, planning application submission assistance, information on local developments and appeals as well as government research. Website: <a href="http://www.planningportal.gov.uk">www.planningportal.gov.uk</a> E-mail: <a href="mailto:support@planningportal.gsi.gov.uk">support@planningportal.gsi.gov.uk</a>
<b>Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE)</b>	An organisation that works to empower local communities, and promote community-led regeneration initiatives. <a href="http://www.essexrcc.org.uk">www.essexrcc.org.uk</a>
<b>Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)</b>	The professional body for architects. Its website contains useful information relating to architecture. <a href="http://www.riba.org.uk">www.riba.org.uk</a>
<b>Essex County Council (ECC)</b>	The County Council for Essex which deals with minerals and waste issues. <a href="http://www.essexcc.gov.uk">www.essexcc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)</b>	Website contains access to national planning guidance and policies. Website: <a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk">www.communities.gov.uk</a> E-mail: <a href="mailto:contactus@communities.gov.uk">contactus@communities.gov.uk</a>

## **Effective Consultation**

### **Consultation Guidelines**

- ☞ It is important to plan effectively before beginning any type of consultation - be clear on your aims, objectives and time scale. Involve local community groups and/or the Parish Council where possible.
- ☞ Be clear about who is being consulted and why.
- ☞ Try to use more than one method of consultation in order to get more valid and reliable data.
- ☞ Be flexible and prepared to modify or change your consultation at the last minute.
- ☞ Present information in a clear and concise way and avoid jargon.
- ☞ Be open and honest with your consultees.
- ☞ Be sensitive to the needs of those you are consulting with. Respect local knowledge and cultural differences.
- ☞ Embrace all sections of the community and aim to include hard to reach groups such as young people and those in ethnic minority groups.
- ☞ Be sure to give consultees enough time to respond to the consultation.
- ☞ Conduct objective analysis once all the responses have been collated.
- ☞ A thorough and objective evaluation should be carried out at the end of the consultation to identify strengths and weaknesses for future exercises.
- ☞ Try using new technology to introduce new and more interactive methods of consultation and which can also aid analysis and feedback.
- ☞ Have fun! – Consultation is a great opportunity to meet new people and have fun. Use visual displays and interactive methods wherever possible to encourage participation.

### **Factors to consider**

- ☞ Why am I consulting?
- ☞ Who do I want to consult with?
- ☞ Has research on this topic already been conducted?
- ☞ What methods will I use to consult?
- ☞ How will I make sure that a representative sample of the borough's population are consulted?
- ☞ Are there any equality issues or impacts to consider, and if so, what action will you take to address this?
- ☞ How do you intend to use equality monitoring information?
- ☞ Where will I consult?
- ☞ What equipment/facilities will be needed? What will be my costs?
- ☞ What media (if any) will I use to promote this consultation?
- ☞ Are there any potential limitations? How will I overcome these?
- ☞ How will I inform consultees of the outcomes and any progress?



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**If you need help reading or understanding this document, please take it to our Customer Service Centre, High Street, Colchester. Or phone 01206 282222. Text phone users should dial 18001 followed by the full number. We will try to provide a reading service, a translation, or any other format you need.**

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