

Local Plan Committee Meeting

**Moot Hall, Town Hall, High Street,
Colchester, CO1 1PJ**

Monday, 06 November 2017 at 18:00

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

Information for Members of the Public

Access to information and meetings

You have the right to attend all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Cabinet. You also have the right to see the agenda (the list of items to be discussed at a meeting), which is usually published five working days before the meeting, and minutes once they are published. Dates of the meetings are available here:

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COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL
Local Plan Committee
Monday, 06 November 2017 at 18:00

The Local Plan Committee Members are:

Councillor Martin Goss	Chairman
Councillor Nick Barlow	Deputy Chairman
Councillor Lewis Barber	
Councillor Nigel Chapman	
Councillor Andrew Ellis	
Councillor Adam Fox	
Councillor Dominic Graham	
Councillor John Jowers	
Councillor Gerard Oxford	
Councillor Martyn Warnes	

The Local Plan Committee Substitute Members are:

All members of the Council who are not members of the Cabinet, the Planning Committee or this Panel.

AGENDA
THE LIST OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING
(Part A - open to the public)

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

1 Welcome and Announcements

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

2 Substitutions

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

3 Urgent Items

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

4 Declarations of Interest

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

5 Have Your Say!

The Chairman will invite members of the public to indicate if they wish to speak or present a petition on any item included on the agenda or any other matter relating to the terms of reference of the meeting. Please indicate your wish to speak at this point if your name has not been noted by Council staff.

Have Your Say! Speaking Arrangements for 6 November 2017 7 - 8

6 Minutes of 2 October 2017 9 - 18

The Councillors will be invited to confirm that the minutes are a correct record of the meeting held on 2 October 2017.

7 Local Development Scheme 19 - 48

A report by the Assistant Director Policy and Corporate giving details of proposed changes to the Local Development Scheme which required updating to reflect consultation and timetable variations for the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document, minor adjustments to the Local Plan timetable and the addition of Great Tey to the list of Neighbourhood Plans under preparation.

8 Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community // Issues and Options Consultation 49 - 212

A report by the Assistant Director Policy and Corporate seeking agreement to the publication of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Issues and Options consultation document and the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for an eight week period of consultation.

9 Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community // Issues and Options Consultation 213 - 370

A report by the Assistant Director Policy and Corporate seeking agreement to the publication of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Issues and Options consultation document and the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for an eight week period of consultation.

10 Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places // Consultation Proposals 371 - 390

A report by the Assistant Director Policy and Corporate giving details of the consultation document published by the Department of Communities and Local Government which set out a number of

proposals to reform the planning system to increase the supply of new homes and 'increase local authority capacity to manage growth' and asking the Committee to provide comments for consideration by the Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture to inform the Council's response to the consultation.

11 Exclusion of the Public (not Scrutiny or Executive)

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

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

LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING MOOT HALL, 6 November 2017

The Local Plan Committee Chairman has agreed to change the arrangements for the public to make representations (called Have Your Say!) for the meeting on 6 November 2017. The changed arrangements for general Have Your Say! and the two Garden Community agenda items are:

6. General Have Your Say!

- up to **five speakers** to address the Committee for up to a maximum of **three minutes** each.

7. Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community // Issues and Options Consultation

- up to **three speakers** to address the Committee for up to a maximum of **three minutes** each **in opposition** to the item and
- up to **three speakers** to address the Committee for up to a maximum **three minutes** each **in support** of the item.

8. Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community // Issues and Options Consultation

- up to **three speakers** to address the Committee for up to a maximum of **three minutes** each **in opposition** to the item and
- up to **three speakers** to address the Committee for up to a maximum **three minutes** each **in support** of the item.

If necessary, where there are a number of speakers for particular issues/ places, the Chairman may need to consider giving priority to speakers who represent organisations or those who represent a significant body of the population, for example Parish Councils and organised groups and societies. **Each individual speaker will only be permitted to speak once.**

In addition to the above, **Councillors** who are not members of the Committee, will be entitled to speak for up to **five minutes in total**.

Speakers will be timed and a bell will be rung when there is one minute remaining and again at the end of the allotted time.

Names of speakers will be **registered prior to the start of the meeting**. If you wish to register to speak to the Committee please **tell a member of staff when you arrive at the meeting room**. The meeting will **commence at 6pm** but members of the public are encouraged to arrive in good time and it is likely that **access** to the room will be available **from 5.00pm**.

For general advice on speaking at meetings, please read the guidance on the Councillors and Meetings pages of the website from the link entitled Have Your Say [here](#). Please be aware that you will not be able to engage in a dialogue with the committee, but any questions you pose in your speech may be noted by the officers and addressed in their response to speakers. For further information about these arrangements contact:

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Local Plan Committee

Monday, 02 October 2017

Attendees: Councillor Lewis Barber, Councillor Nick Barlow, Councillor Nigel Chapman, Councillor Andrew Ellis, Councillor Adam Fox, Councillor Martin Goss, Councillor Dominic Graham, Councillor John Jowers, Councillor Gerard Oxford, Councillor Martyn Warnes

Substitutes: No substitutes were recorded at the meeting

Also Present:

118 Have Your Say!

Richard Beauchamp addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to the request from Basildon District Council for assistance from other local authorities to meet its unmet housing need. He was concerned generally about the increase in population on a local and national level and that it was unsustainable in terms of food and water security. He was concerned about the ability of society to manage the increases and for the wellbeing of future generations.

Victoria Weaver addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). She thanked the Chairman for responding to her recent correspondence but remained of the view that people felt that they weren't being listened to. She had sought further information about improvements to traffic flows around North Station following work undertaken by Essex County Councillor Kevin Bentley but considered that insufficient details had been made public.

The Chairman referred to increases in housing due to be delivered in Mile End as a consequence of already approved planning applications and the associated highway improvements to be delivered in association with these developments. He was aware of plans to reduce the size of the roundabouts at North Station in order to increase the road space and had assisted in gathering public support for the delivery of this initiative to be brought forward. He confirmed that County Councillor Bentley had been involved in positive discussions but that plans and applications were awaited. He anticipated that additional information would be forthcoming in the next weeks and months.

Rosie Pearson addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). She referred to the considerable efforts made by the Campaign Against Urban Sprawl in Essex (CAUSE) to engage with the Council in relation to the Local Plan process but she considered they had been ignored again and again. She questioned the proposals in relation to infrastructure, jobs and money and

considered that the Garden Communities proposals were in direct contradiction of the evidence base. She was concerned about the creation of a Development Company to deliver the Garden Communities and was of the view that the plan should not be submitted to the Inspector in its current form.

The Chairman explained that Ian Vipond, the Council's Strategic Director of Policy and Place, had confirmed that a response was due to be issued to CAUSE in relation to recent correspondence.

119 Minutes of 30 August 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 August 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

120 Draft Publication Local Plan Consultation Responses

Councillor Jowers (in respect of his Vice-Chairmanship of Essex County Council) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Warnes (in respect of his spouse's ownership of property at Mersea Road, Langenhoe) declared a pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

Councillor Warnes (in respect of his spouse's relatives' ownership of property in the vicinity of the site south of Berechurch Hall Road) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7(5).

The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Director Policy and Corporate giving details of the responses received following the consultation on the Publication Draft Local Plan.

Laura Chase, Planning Policy Manager, presented the report and, together with Karen Syrett, Place Strategy Manager, responded to members questions. It was explained that the Local Plan had now progressed to Publication Draft stage and the committee had agreed to carry out public consultation for an eight week period between 16 June and the 11 August 2017. The consultation process had involved publishing the document and supporting information on the website, notification of the consultation to the Council's extensive list of interested organisations and individuals and a series of public drop-in sessions which were advertised through social media, press coverage, and posters circulated to parish councils. The drop-in sessions, which were attended by approximately 600 people, provided background information on the Local Plan process,

copies of the consultation document, opportunities to ask questions of the officers in attendance and information on how to respond formally to the consultation, including advice on using the consultation portal.

The recording of responses by online consultation, email and letter had been completed which had confirmed that a total of 1,356 representations had been made by 668 individuals and organisations. A further 3,781 people responded through petitions and joint representations, bringing the overall total to 5,137. No representations had been rejected meaning that all representations received within the eight week consultation period would be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. It would therefore be for the Inspector to decide how to deal with those representations which did not address all points, particularly in relation to soundness and legal compliance.

Surrounding local authorities including Braintree, Tendring and Chelmsford had provided positive responses to the plan. A Duty to Cooperate meeting had been held with Maldon District Council which did not result in the identification of any significant issues. Essex County Council had expressed broad support for the plan whilst suggesting a number of minor changes for clarification. Issues with South Essex local authorities being able to meet their housing requirements in full due to Green Belt and environmental constraints had been identified by Basildon District Council with a request that other Essex authorities, including those in the Colchester / Braintree / Chelmsford / Tendring Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA), consider addressing this need in their targets.

The Council would be working with objectors to develop Statements of Common Ground where appropriate, to assist the Inspector in clarifying agreed approaches to the resolution of issues raised through the plan-making process. As part of this process Braintree, Colchester and Tendring Councils were working with Basildon District Council to agree a Statement of Common Ground to address concerns around unmet need for housing in general and gypsy and Traveller accommodation in particular.

It was intended to submit the plan to Government by 9 October 2017 once all submission materials had been completed by all three authorities submitting their linked Local Plans. The Planning Inspectorate would then confirm who had been appointed to examine the plan and when the examinations would take place. The first examination would consider the strategic and cross-boundary policies and allocations covered by Section 1 and was expected to take place in mid-January 2018, while the examination for Section 2 was expected to be in mid-2018.

The Planning Policy Manager also confirmed that the Government had announced a consultation on a new methodology for arriving at Local Plan housing targets which would apply to all plans submitted after March 2018. A detailed report setting out the Council's response to the consultation was due to be considered by Cabinet on 11 October 2017 which indicated that the new methodology would provide higher housing targets for most South East England authorities as it involved making upward

adjustments for authorities where affordability was a problem. The report indicated that the new methodology would increase Colchester's housing target from 920 houses per year to 1,095 per year.

John Akker addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He explained that he and a considerable number of residents continued to have very grave concerns for Mersea and were of the view that the Plan was unsound. He hoped the committee members would reflect on these views. The Stop 350 action group had accumulated around 1,200 supporters with many more objecting after the closing date of the consultation. The overall view was that the Mersea residents were overwhelmingly against the Plan. He also referred to a commitment made at the previous meeting of the committee for the policy on caravan parks to be looked at again by officers and asked whether any progress had been made with this.

The Place Strategy Manager, explained that it was not the role of the committee members to review the responses received to the consultation, rather this was a matter for the Planning Inspector. She explained that officers were compiling a table including number of minor amendments and other modifications which she hoped would be accepted for submission with the draft Local Plan. This was work in progress and would depend on what would be acceptable in terms of minor modifications and, as such, could not confirm, at this stage, whether this would incorporate changes to the caravan park policy.

David Cooper addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to the responses to section 2 of the plan and the absence of relevant policy numbers to a number of the representations, seeking assurances that these would be included where relevant. He further wished to clarify the response summary on page 55, explaining that there were two separate issues – one in relation to housing numbers and a second in relation to year round residency in caravans.

The Place Strategy Manager confirmed that the responses to the consultation would be submitted in two forms, by representor and by policy number. She also confirmed that the summary on page 55 would be clarified in respect of housing numbers and caravan residency.

William Sunnocks addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He referred to the Government's proposals in relation to the impact on housing targets for Colchester. He was concerned about the potential for the housing target to increase to 1,095 given that Colchester was already the biggest housebuilder in the East of England. He considered, in the light of these potential increased targets, that Colchester's compliance with Local Plan processes in the past had not been rewarded. He considered the Council needed to more than simply politely object to the Government's proposals. He was of the view that the Council should take a

stand. It should determine not to submit its draft Local Plan and it should remove all of the unsustainable sites in the Plan, including West Tey and West Mersea. He was concerned, if this was not done, that the delivery of the proposals for the Garden Communities would be transferred from the Council to a Development Company and the Local Plan would become a liability to the Borough and its residents.

The Chairman was of the view that a decision not to proceed with submission of the draft Local Plan would mean that housing numbers would be forced on the Council by the Government. He cited Chelmsford as an authority which had previously under delivered in respect of its housing numbers and which was now required to make up previous under delivery to the extent that its Local Plan target was in the order of 20,000 homes.

Sir Bob Russell addressed the Committee pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(3). He was concerned that references to the development of Statements of Common Ground would provide a mechanism for responses to the consultation to be overlooked, he questioned whether the West Tey Garden Community proposal was supported by Braintree District Council, he questioned an erroneous reference to Middlewick Ranges as low quality agricultural land and a typing error referring to Salary Brook County Park. He wholeheartedly supported the reference to a 1.5 km buffer between Greenstead/Longridge and a new settlement and asked why this detail hadn't been included in the Plan itself, given the considerable support expressed for this by local residents. He referred to comments made by the Essex Wildlife Trust in relation to Middlewick Ranges and considered no development should take place on this site. He also queried the status of a site in St John's Road, Colchester.

The Chairman confirmed that a site in St John's Road, Colchester which had recently received publicity in the local media was not included in the Local Plan and this would be borne in mind should any planning application be submitted in the future. He confirmed that all comments made to the consultation would be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the evidence base and also that he was of the view that the views of the Committee in relation to Salary Brook had been made very clear to David Lock and that they would be reflected in the proposals for the East Colchester Garden Community.

Councillor T. Young, in his capacity as Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture (and Deputy Leader of the Council), attended and, with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Committee. He referred to the recent Government consultation on new methodology for housing numbers as being very unhelpful and very unwelcome and was hopeful that the Cabinet would make a robust response to the document. He was also of the view that this consultation would mean that if Colchester sought to reduce its housing target below the currently agreed total of 920, this would inevitably mean that the Government would impose a Plan upon the Council. He welcomed the support given to the Plan by Essex County Council and praised the joint working with Essex, Braintree and Tendring. He was hopeful that discussions regarding issues raised by Basildon

would be sympathetic but not to the point of being able to accommodate any additional capacity. He thanked all those who had responded to the consultation and hoped that the draft Local Plan would be found to be sound by the Inspector. He fully supported the sentiments of Sir Bob Russell in relation to Salary Brook and the Middlewick Ranges and was of the opinion that these views also had considerable support from residents. He was of the view that the Council's procedures in relation to the Local Plan had been robust and, whilst it was not for the Committee members to comment on the views expressed, he welcomed the opportunity provided for the summary of responses to be noted by the Committee members.

The Committee members gave full and detailed consideration to the report and the comments made by the speakers. In particular, the following comments were made: Councillor Jowers:

- He considered committee members should be entitled to draw their own conclusions from the submissions made by residents, such as in relation to the West Tey proposals;
- He acknowledged concerns expressed regarding the year round occupation of caravans at East Mersea;
- He made reference to support demonstrated for the Garden Community proposals by Essex County Councillors representing areas in the South of the County;
- He considered the issues raised by Basildon District Council to be of concern for all authorities close to London which were in danger of becoming extensions of London;
- He was concerned that community values were being sacrificed for housing numbers;
- He acknowledged that the draft Plan would need to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before March 2018 otherwise the consequences would not be good;
- He acknowledged the need to speak up for things which were important and considered that, although there were some NIMBY comments, many residents had expressed genuine concerns which should be taken on board.

Councillor Barber:

- He acknowledged the dire consequences if the draft Plan was not submitted to the Planning Inspectorate given the potential for housing totals to be increased in the future;
- He would be interested in hearing more should there be a robust legal argument against the submission of the Plan;
- He was concerned about the delivery of adequate infrastructure and other well documented deficiencies within the Garden Community proposals;
- The strong feelings from considerable numbers of residents despite the proposals' continued progression through the Local Plan process were of concern to him.

The Chairman agreed that the delivery of infrastructure was key to the success of the Local Plan. Essex County Council had already indicated that the A120 improvements would be started in 2023 for completion in 2026. He explained that the draft Local Plan

had not been driven as a consequence of under delivery by Tendring District Council but was a consequence of a lack of housing land for future development. If this situation had been allowed to continue then speculative housing developers such as Gladmans would be in a position to argue that the Council no longer had a viable supply of land. As such, it made sense for Colchester to work towards a joint approach with Braintree and Tendring although Colchester would need to proceed with a new Plan regardless of the partnership arrangement with its neighbours. He referred to the current housing target of 920 per year and the potential within certain evidence models for this number to have been around 1,100. He explained that Colchester had not over developed in terms of housing delivery over previous years, currently the Borough was virtually on plan in terms of numbers delivered.

The Place Strategy Manager confirmed that the Garden Community Development Plans would be presented to the Committee at its meeting in November 2017. She confirmed that there was potential for concern regarding the impact of projected housing need in London. Currently it had been accepted that there was scope to provide 42,000 new homes in London, this currently represented a shortfall of 7,000 in terms of need for new homes whilst the proposed new methodology indicated a need for 72,000 new homes. The shortfall in new housing provision for Chelmsford was based on housing totals which had been agreed in 2007/08 based on the East of England Plan.

Councillor Ellis:

- He supported the view expressed by Councillor Jowers that community values were being sacrificed for housing numbers;
- He regretted the lack of assurance in relation to amendments to the caravan policy wording as he was aware that, due to a loophole, caravans were being occupied for 12 months of the year on Mersea Island. These residents were not counted in terms of residencies but were having an impact on local facilities such as dentists and GP surgeries which were already full. He therefore asked the Place Strategy Manager to look again at the policy wording in order to ensure there was no absolute presumption to allow development of caravan parks. He considered this to be a significant issue which needed to be addressed otherwise it had the potential to be detrimental to the Island and with catastrophic consequences. He asked that the concerns expressed about the caravans be addressed given the occupants were not living in Mersea as tourists but as residents.

The Place Strategy Manager confirmed that officers were looking into the wording of the caravan park policy as well as a number of other policies but she was unable to confirm exactly what changes would be proposed in relation to the caravan policy in particular. She also confirmed that permanent 12 month occupancy had not been permitted in terms of planning permission requirements. There were also caravan park licensing requirements in terms of occupancy which needed to be complied with and the sites were being monitored by the Council's Enforcement Officers. She was aware that evidence so far from local doctors, schools and council tax records had not indicated

there were significant breaches in occupancy requirements but she encouraged anyone with relevant evidence to report it for further investigation.

Councillor G. Oxford:

- He had been informed by Will Quince MP that information in relation to the Southern Relief Road issue was being considered by the Ministry of Defence;
- He referred to the Government's consultation on housing numbers methodology which was likely to lead to an increase in housing totals for Colchester and, as such, the submission of the draft Plan in its current form could not be delayed;
- In terms of comments regarding too much housing in Colchester, he was aware, from statistics in 2015, that there were 34,354 0 to 15 year olds in the Borough who, by the end of the next Plan period, would require accommodation. He was concerned about the implications for these young people if adequate provision was not made for them in the Borough.

Councillor Chapman:

- He referred to the problem of people not regularly involved with the Local Plan having difficulty understanding the Local Plan process as set out in legislation and, as a consequence, people were becoming desperately worried about the town's ability to deal with the increase in population. It was very difficult to explain to people how so many houses could be built and how the infrastructure would be provided to go with it;
- He was aware from previous experience that, however many houses were built, many people would still present as homeless;
- He sought clarification in relation to comments from Natural England, Sport England and others regarding the contents of the Council's strategies.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that a number of meetings would be taking place with various stakeholders in relation to these issues. She acknowledged the comments made but was aware that there was no fundamental differences of opinion and these would be addressed by means of Statements of Common Ground.

Councillor Graham:

- He considered it unhelpful to the discussion for references to be made about the town being destroyed. He accepted that there were challenges and that we needed to deal with them in as positive a way as possible;
- He acknowledged residents' concerns about the provision of NHS and health services but he was of the view that, although the Council had influence over these service providers, it was wrong to seek assurances from this committee in relation to solutions. He was aware that meetings were taking place with the Ambulance Trust, the NHS and the Clinical Commissioning Group and asked about future investment plans from Central Government and sought assurances as to whether any meetings had taken place with the Secretary of State about future funding.

The Chairman explained that health issues were discussed at the Committee's previous meeting and was aware that the Place Strategy Manager had participated in a recent

meeting with a number of relevant stakeholders about health related issues. He was aware that the NHS had confirmed that the way services were delivered in the future would change with greater use of broadband and 4G technology and more provision being delivered at home.

The Place Strategy Manager confirmed that a meeting had taken place on 4 September 2017 which had been very productive, involving representatives from all different sectors from the health service and included Colchester and Tendring Councils, North Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, East of England Ambulance Service, Colchester Hospital Trust, the Community Health Partnership as well as a representative from the Department of Health. The input from the Department of Health had been particularly useful in terms of the national perspective as to how services were likely to change over the Plan period in terms of different methods of care. A Working Group had been established which would meet in November 2017 and would act as the group to submit comments to the Council in the future regarding the Local Plan. Three key issues emerged from the meeting in relation to Estates and Facilities, Workforce and Digital Infrastructure.

Councillor Jowers:

- He wished to thank the Place Strategy Manager and her team for the work they were doing in relation to the Local Plan and also, in particular, in relation to an issue pertinent to Mersea and the protection of the historic seafront.

RESOLVED that the summary of issues raised during the consultation on the Draft Publication Local Plan be noted.

Report of	Assistant Director Policy and Corporate	Author	Karen Syrett ☎ 01206 506477
Title	Local Development Scheme		
Wards affected	NA		

The Local Plan Committee is asked to agree changes to the Local Development Scheme

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree changes to the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The plan making process is regulated by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (part 6, Planning, section 111 Local Development Schemes) which governs the production of development plan documents including the LDS through the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 The LDS is an essential tool used to keep the Local Plan up to date and provide details of consultation periods, public examinations and expected dates of adoption and publication for each document. The Council previously reviewed the LDS in August 2016 and February 2017 to update and adjust the timings of Local Plan and Community Infrastructure Levy preparation stages to reflect the latest timetable for joint work with neighbouring authorities on the Local Plan. The scheme was also updated with several changes to Neighbourhood Plan preparation.
- 2.3 The LDS now requires updating to reflect further consultation and timetable variations for the Strategic Development DPD; minor adjustments to the Local Plan timetable; and the addition of Great Tey to the list of Neighbourhood Plans under preparation.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Committee could decide not to update the Local Development Scheme or to make amendments to it. The Council however is required under the Localism Act 2011 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to publish up to date information for the public on the preparation and revision of development plan documents through the LDS.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 A local development scheme is required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Planning Act 2008, the Localism Act 2011 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016). This must specify (among other matters) the local development documents which are to be development plan documents, the subject matter and geographical area to which each development plan document is to relate, and the timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents. It must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and

interested parties can keep track of progress. Local planning authorities should publish their local development scheme on their website.

- 4.2 Colchester Borough Council first adopted a LDS in May 2005, with various revisions published at regular intervals to reflect changes in governing regulations and work programmes. The current LDS project chart which covers the period 2016-2019 was last reviewed by Local Plan Committee in February 2017.
- 4.3 A new LDS is now required to reflect the latest developments in Colchester's plan-making as follows:
1. For the full Local Plan, the new timetable retains the same adoption date of September 2018 as the previous LDS, but minor adjustments have been made for the submission and examination dates of one month which reflects the actual position. Additionally the adoption date for Section 1 has been moved to align with Section 2 to reflect that all parts of the plan will need to be found sound before the plan as a whole is adopted. The dates programmed for plan examination reflect the Planning Inspectorate's current rate of delivery on plan examinations.
 2. For the Joint Strategic Growth DPDs being prepared jointly with Braintree and Tendring, the authorities have agreed that consultation on these DPDs will include two consultation periods prior to the pre-publication consultation instead of just one. Those authorities are also revising their LDS to reflect the new aligned schedules.
 3. Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan has been added to the list of Neighbourhood Plans under preparation, reflecting the fact that the Plan Area was approved in June 2017.
- 4.4 The LDS sets out which documents will form part of the Colchester Local Plan along with the timetable for the preparation and review of each document. The LDS is also reviewed annually as part of the Council's Authority Monitoring Report.
- 4.5 The LDS sets out which documents will be prepared and in what time frame. The revised LDS (which can be found in Appendix A) provides the scope and further details with regards to each document and includes the Project Chart which outlines the timescales proposed and shows how each document will be progressed over the next 3 years. Below is a summary of the key dates for planning documents which are further explained within the LDS itself:
- Local Plan
 - Submission – October 2017
 - Examination of Section 1 - January 2018
 - Examination Section 2 – April 2018
 - Adoption of full plan – September 2018
 - Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and Planning Obligations DPD, to be prepared in tandem with the Local Plan (Part 2)
 - Joint Development Plan Documents for Garden Communities;
 - Issues and Options consultation – Nov 2017- Jan 2018
 - Preferred Options consultation- June/July 2018
 - Submission version consultation – Jan/Feb 2019
 - Submission – April 2019
 - Examination –June 2019
 - Adoption - November 2019
 - Neighbourhood Planning;
 - Boxted – NP Adopted December 2016
 - Myland – NP Adopted December 2016
 - West Bergholt – Plan Area adopted in July 2013
 - Wivenhoe – Plan Area adopted in July 2013

- Stanway – Plan Area adopted in June 2014
 - Tiptree – Plan Area adopted in February 2015
 - Eight Ash Green – Plan Area adopted in June 2015
 - Marks Tey – Plan Area adopted in September 2015
 - West Mersea – Plan Area adopted in November 2016
 - Great Tey – Plan Area adopted June 2017
 - Evidence base documents and updates which will be necessary to support the Local Plan Review
 - Changes to the text of the LDS to reflect the range of documents outlined above.
- 4.6 In earlier versions of the LDS, the Council was required to specify details of each Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) intended to be produced. Changes to the Regulations no longer require Supplementary Planning Documents to be included on the LDS. Currently, the only SPD programmed for the next three year period is one on Planning Obligations. This has been shown to demonstrate the links between all the documents which contribute to the Colchester Local Plan. Future additional SPDs as well as further guidance notes and development brief documents may however be produced by the Spatial Policy Team without formal modification of the LDS because of their non-statutory status in the decision making process.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The Local Plan Committee is asked to agree changes to the Local Development Scheme.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 Effective strategic planning supports the Strategic Plan Action Plan which includes a commitment to make Colchester a vibrant, prosperous, thriving and welcoming place.

7. Consultation and Publicity

- 7.1 Public consultation on the LDS is not specifically required by the Regulations. Each document highlighted in the LDS will be subject to specific public consultation in line with the statutory regulations at the appropriate time. Attention could well be focused on plans listed in the LDS resulting in publicity for the Council.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 None.

9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan 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 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.

- 9.2 There are no particular Human Rights implications.

10. Community Safety Implications

10.1 None

11. Health and Safety Implications

11.1 None

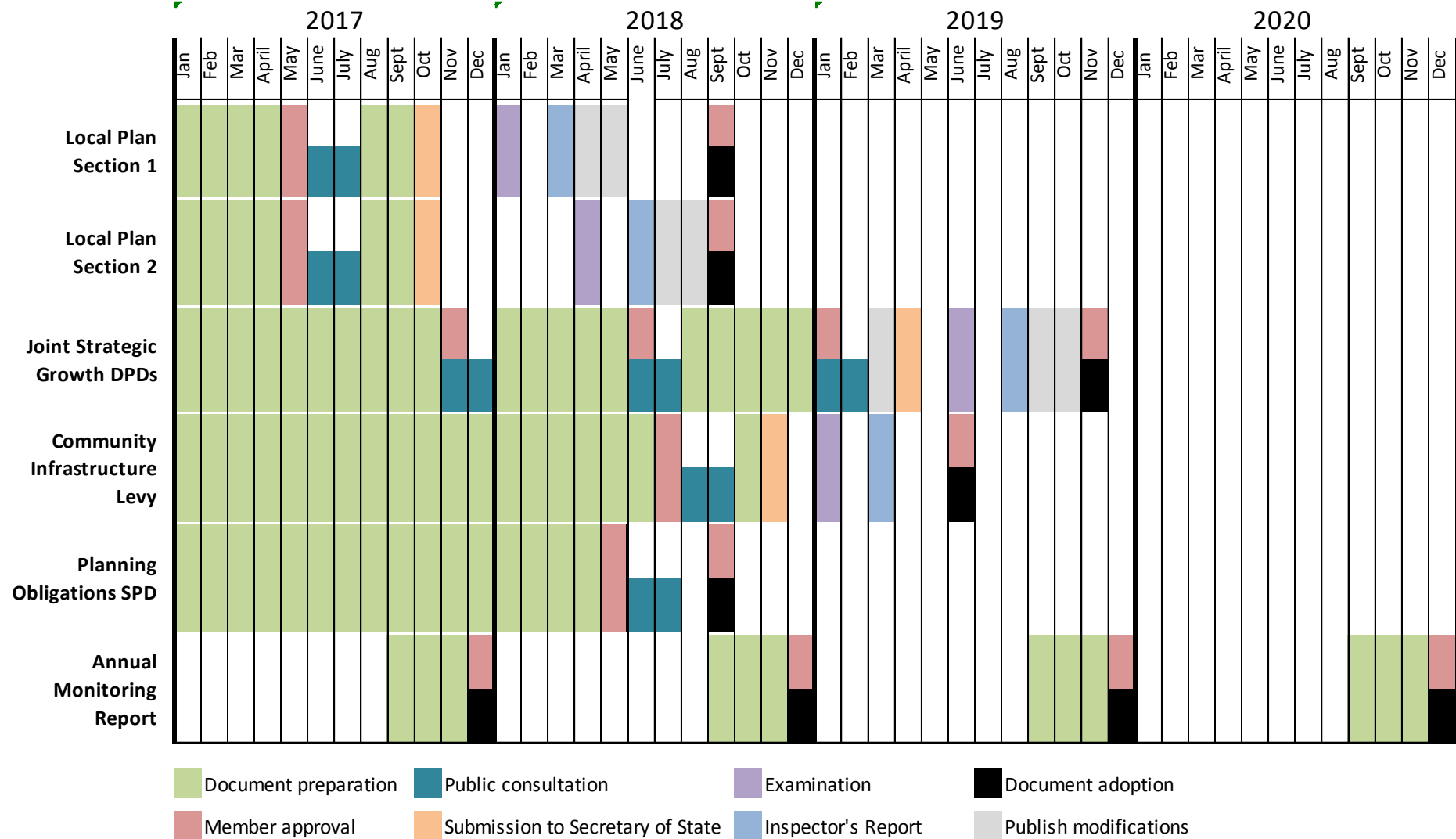
12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 None.

13. Disclaimer

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

Local Development Scheme 2017 - 2020





Local Development Scheme

Colchester Borough Council's Local Development
Scheme 2017-2020

**February
2017**

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Introduction

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the Council's timetable for adopting new planning documents which will help guide development in the Borough. This LDS covers the period 2016 to 2019.

Colchester Borough Council first adopted a Local Development Scheme (LDS) in May 2005 with various revisions published since then. The latest revision was in February 2017 which this current version November 2017) now supersedes. Earlier versions of the Colchester LDS were prepared under the requirements of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.

Since 2011 the production of an LDS has been guided by the requirements of s.111 of the Localism Act 2011 which amended s. 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and is further supported by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The LDS will:

- Provide a brief description of all the Local Plan documents and Neighbourhood Plans to be prepared and the content and geographical area to which they relate.
- Explain how the different documents relate to each other and especially how they relate to the adopted and forthcoming Local Plan.
- Set out the timetable for producing Local Plan documents, giving the timings for the achievement of the following milestones:
 - consulting statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal
 - publication of the document
 - submission of the document
 - adoption of the document
- Provide information on related planning documents outside the formal Local Plan, including the Statement of Community Involvement, Authority Monitoring Report and adopted guidance.

Progress of the scheme is reviewed at least annually as part of the Colchester Borough Council Authority Monitoring Report (usually published every December).

Planning context

The Council has a good record in meeting the milestones set out in the earlier versions of the LDS and our past delivery rates inform the future programme for the preparation of Local Plan documents up to the end of 2020.

Earlier plans were completed further to the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and were known as Local Development Framework documents. Under the 2004 Act, Colchester adopted a full suite of Local Development Framework documents including a Core Strategy (adopted in 2008), Development Policies (adopted in 2010) and Site Allocations (adopted in 2010).

Following a change of government in 2010, a new set of Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations came into force in April 2012 (and amended in November 2012) and these revert to the former terminology of a 'Local Plan'. The purpose of the documents, however, remains the same whether they are referred to as a Local Development Framework or a Local Plan.

Local Plans need to be in conformity with national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with further guidance in the regularly updated Planning Practice Guidance available online: <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>.

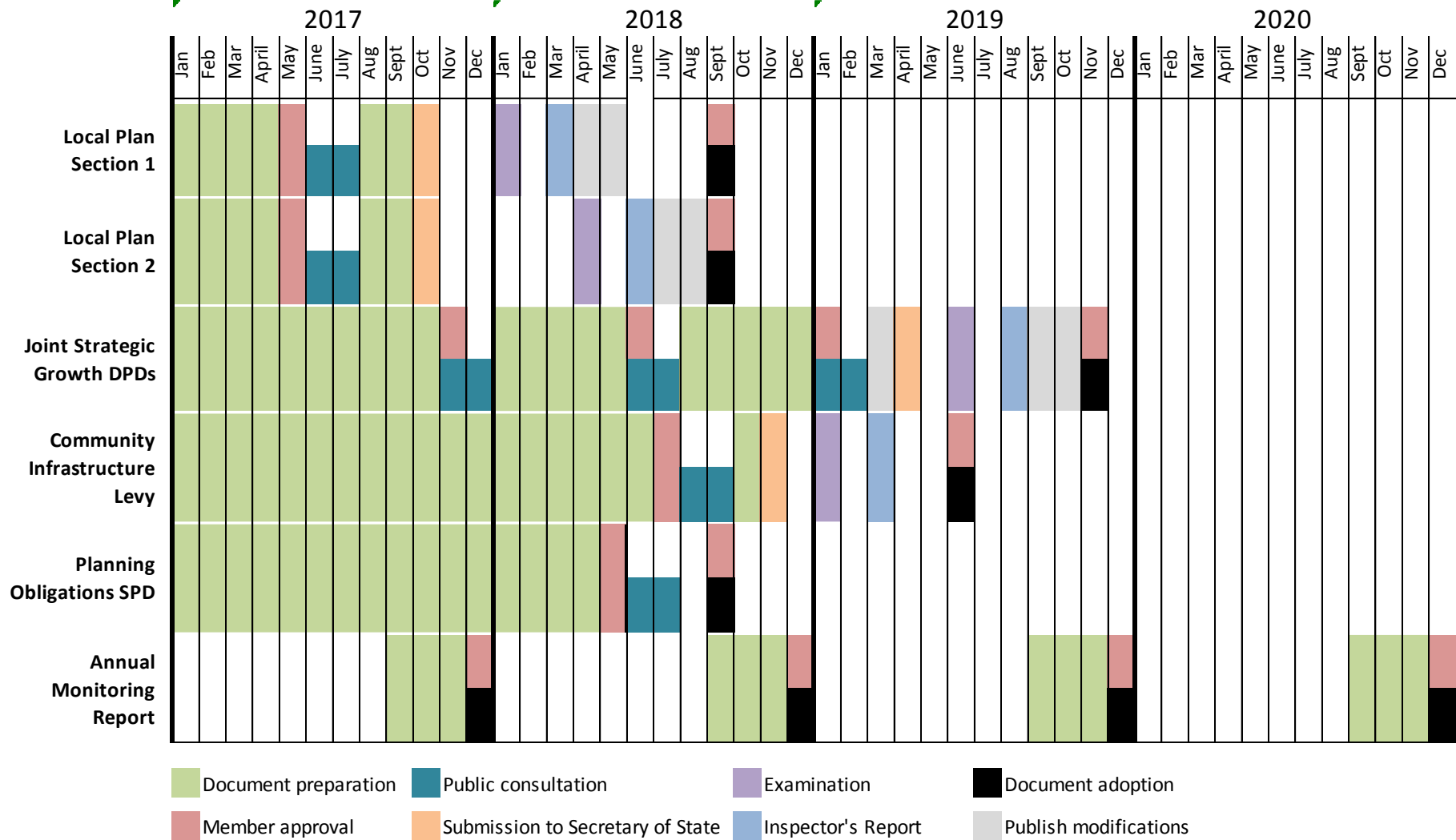
The Council completed a Focused Review of its Local Plan documents in July 2014 to bring selected policies into conformity with the NPPF.

For minerals and waste matters, Essex County Council are the authority responsible for production of the Waste and Minerals Local Plans, which forms part of the Colchester development plan. At present the adopted plans for are Essex is:

- Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
- Essex Waste Local Plan (2001) (pre-submission consultation for Revised Waste Plan programmed 2016)

More details on the waste and minerals development document can be found on the Essex County Council website (www.essex.gov.uk) following the links from planning to minerals and waste policy.

Local Development Scheme 2017 - 2020



Phasing of work for Local Plan documents

The overview above demonstrates the main milestones as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for the production of each of the documents we intend to prepare over the next three years. The tables later in the document set out each stage of plan preparation and the amount of time the Council expects each stage to be completed. The LDS is kept under review to reflect any changes in local circumstances and/or government policy.

The new Local Plan 2017-2033

The Council is undertaking a thorough review of its adopted policies and allocations which will result in a new Local Plan to guide development until 2033 and beyond. An Issues and Options consultation was carried out in January/February 2015, with Preferred Options consultation in summer 2016, consultation on the Publication Draft in summer 2017 and submission of the document to the Secretary of State in October 2017.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Colchester Borough Council expects to progress adoption of a CIL Charging Schedule in tandem with the Local Plan. Adoption of a Charging Schedule will allow the Council to charge a standard levy on some developments to fund additional infrastructure.

Neighbourhood Planning

The Localism Act 2011 and the publication of the NPPF in March 2012 placed greater emphasis on developing plans at the community level through a concept of neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans are produced by local communities and once completed (subject to examination and local referendum) they become part of the local authorities' development plan and have a significant influence on the future growth and development of the respective area.

The first stage of developing a neighbourhood plan is to designate a neighbourhood area. A number of parishes in Colchester have now achieved this stage, as shown below. Once a neighbourhood area has been agreed, preparation of a neighbourhood plan can be carried out by a parish or town council, or in the case of unparished areas, a neighbourhood forum. Further neighbourhood plans will be added as required when they are brought forward by local communities when the LDS is revised in future.

Area	Date NP Area agreed	Current stage
Boxted	October 2012	Adoption 8.12.16
Myland and Braiswick	January 2013	Adoption 8.12.16
West Bergholt	July 2013	Preparation of draft plan
Wivenhoe	July 2013	Pre-submission plan published
Tiptree	February 2015	Preparation of draft plan
Stanway	June 2014	Preparation of draft plan
Eight Ash Green	June 2015	Preparation of draft plan
Marks Tey	September 2015	Preparation of draft plan
West Mersea	November 2016	Preparation of draft plan

Great Tey	June 2017	Preparation of draft plan
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Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Supplementary Planning Documents complement policy contained in the Local Plan. They cannot set new policy but are treated as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications across the Borough. Although SPDs are not subject to examination, they are produced in consultation with the community and other interested parties and are still subject to regulations regarding their consultations. In earlier versions of the LDS, the Council was required to specify details of each SPD intended to be produced. Changes to the Regulations no longer require SPDs to be included in the LDS. Currently the only SPD programmed for the next three year period is the Planning Obligations SPD. Future additional SPDs may however be produced by the Council if approved by the Local Plan Committee without formal modification of the LDS because they do not form part of the development plan. Appendix 1 lists details of existing SPD documents and the proposed Planning Obligations SPD.

Phasing of work for other Local Development Documents

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Statement of Community Involvement provides a first step in plan making as it outlines the processes for consultation and engagement during the production of future documents of all types. The SCI was originally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2005 and adopted by the Council in June 2006. It was subject to minor amendments in 2008 following changes to the Regulations and was also revised further early in 2011. In January 2013 a further revised SCI was published for consultation which focused primarily on consultation procedures for planning applications. The latest SCI revision was adopted in March 2013 following consideration of the consultation responses.

The production of an SCI is in part governed and directed by guidance and requirements at the national level. Should the regulations change or new examples of best practice be introduced the Council will update the SCI accordingly. At this time the Council is not aware of any need to update the SCI during the next three year period.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

The Authority Monitoring Report, previously referred to as the Annual Monitoring Report, is published each December to demonstrate the progress of the objectives of the adopted Local Plan.

Adopted Guidance Notes

Guidance notes and other documents are produced as required by the Council to assist in explaining specific protocols and other technical matters. They are non-statutory documents that are essentially informative and may be used to assist the determination of planning applications or in other areas where planning decisions are required. These include guidance on topics such as air quality, contaminated land and archaeology but they may also contain spatially specific guidance in the form of site design briefs. The current guidance notes are listed in Appendix 1 and information on additional guidance will be added to the Council's Adopted Guidance area of the website as and when it is completed.

Local Plan Documents to be prepared during 2017 to 2020- detailed profiles

Details of the documents we intend to produce in the next three years follow in the tables below. The timetable for the production of documents reflects previous experience. The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) are also consulted about the production timetable specifically with regards to documents which require submission of the document to the Secretary of State and a formal examination in public.

Local Plan

Subject and Scope	This document will develop the overall strategic objectives and areas for growth in the Borough. The Local Plan will combine the policies and allocations currently found within the Core Strategy, Development Policies and Site Allocations documents. The Local plan is split into Section 1 (joint strategic plan with Braintree DC and Tendring DC) and Section 2 (specific to Colchester)
Geographical area	All Colchester Borough and cross border work with Tendring and Braintree
Status	Local Plan document
Chain of conformity	Must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework.
Timetable for production	
Initial document preparation	January 2014 – June 2016
Member approval – Preferred Options	July 2016
Consultation on Preferred Options and Sustainability Appraisal	July - September 2016
Member approval – Submission Draft	May 2017
Publication Draft of Local Plan document and Sustainability Appraisal for consultation	June/August 2017
Submission of DPD and summary of comments received to Secretary of State	October 2017
Independent examination of Part 1	January 2018
Publication of Interim Report	March 2018
Independent examination of Part 2	April 2018
Inspector's report	June 2018
Consultation on modifications	July/August 2018
Adoption	September 2018
Production arrangements	Led by Spatial Policy group; input from all internal CBC service groups and Essex County Council as appropriate. The SCI outlines how external parties and members of the public will be involved.
Timetable for review	The Local Plan Full review will set the overall spatial strategy for the Borough and will be reviewed within 5 – 10 years of adoption.

Strategic Growth Development Plan Document(s)

Subject and Scope	This document(s) will include policies and allocations to support strategic allocations for new development. These are likely to be Joint Plans produced with Tendring DC and/or Braintree DC.
Geographical area	As specified in the Local Plan. Preferred Options show broad locations to the east and west of Colchester.
Status	Local Development Plan Document
Chain of conformity	Must conform with the broad allocations in the Colchester Local Plan and the relevant Local Plan of adjacent local authorities if appropriate. The plan will update the allocations for the relevant area of the Borough.
Timetable for production	
Document preparation	January 2017 – October 2017. Some community engagement in this period.
Member Approval – Issues and Options	November 2017
Publication and 6 week consultation	November/December 2017
Member Approval –Preferred Options document for consultation	June 2018
Preferred Options consultation	June/July 2018
Member approval – Publication Draft document for consultation	January 2019
Publication Draft consultation	January/February 2019
Submission of DPD and summary of comments received to Secretary of State	April 2019
Independent examination	June 2019
Inspector's report	August 2019
Consultation on modifications	September/October 2019
Adoption	November 2019
Production arrangements	North East Garden Communities and Spatial Policy group in CBC will lead with input from internal CBC service groups, adjacent local authorities and Essex County Council as appropriate. The SCI has determined how external parties and members of the public will be involved.
Timetable for review	The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) will assess the effectiveness of the policies and allocations.

Community Infrastructure Levy

Subject and Scope	Community Infrastructure Levy
Geographical area	Colchester Borough
Status	CIL charging schedule, governance arrangements, implementation plan, installment policy and other associated documents.
Chain of conformity	Must conform with Local Plan as well as the NPPF.
Timetable for production	
Previous consultation on draft documents	July – September 2011 and November – December 2011
Member Approval of draft Schedule	July 2018
Publication and 6 week consultation	August/September 2018
Submission of Charging Schedule and summary of comments received to Secretary of State	November 2018
Independent examination	January 2019
Inspector's report	March 2019
Adoption	June 2019
Production arrangements	Spatial Policy group. Input from internal CBC service groups and Essex County Council as required.
Timetable for review	It is anticipated that the regulation 123 list (infrastructure items) will be reviewed and updated as required on an annual basis. The charging schedule and other CIL documents will be reviewed as required. The Authority Monitoring Report will assess the effectiveness of CIL charges.

Authority Monitoring Report

Subject and Scope	This document provides an analysis of how the Colchester planning policies are performing against a range of established indicators.
Geographical area	Colchester Borough
Status	Annual production, non-statutory but meets need to show evaluation of policies.
Chain of conformity	None
Timetable for production – same process followed each year	
Project work	September – November
Member Approval	December
Publication	December
Production arrangements	Spatial Policy group. Input from internal CBC service groups and Essex County Council as required.
Timetable for review	The Authority Monitoring Report is produced in the autumn of each year and is presented to the last Local Plan Committee meeting in the calendar year.

Planning Obligations SPD

Title	Planning Obligations SPD
Role and content	To provide further details on the collection of the planning obligations received by the Council as a result of planned developments across the Borough.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Chain of conformity	The SPD will support the policies within the Local Plan and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
Geographic coverage	Colchester Borough
Timetable and milestones in months:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member approval for consultation – May 2018 • Public consultation – June/July 2018 • Adoption – September 2018
Arrangements for production	Colchester Borough Council (CBC) to lead with significant input from Essex County Council. Public consultation to include a press release, advertisement and letters/emails.
Post production - Monitoring and review mechanisms	CBC to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications.

Evidence Base

The evidence base is a key feature of Colchester's Local Plan and associated planning documents and guidance. It seeks to guarantee that the development plan's proposals and policies are soundly based. To ensure this a number of specialist studies and other research projects are, or will be undertaken. These will also be important in monitoring and review, as required by the AMR.

Some documents will also be published that are not specifically for planning purposes but are important in informing the process (eg. the Colchester Borough Council's Strategic Plan and other service strategies).

Each document will be made publically available at the appropriate time in the process, on the Council's website (www.colchester.gov.uk). All documents will be made available at the relevant examination. These documents will be reviewed in the AMR to see if they need to be reviewed or withdrawn. Other documents may also be produced as needed during the process.

The table on the following pages identifies the reports and studies that will be used to provide a robust and credible evidence base for the Local Plan. This list will be added to if additional work is required.

Integration with other Strategies

The Local Plan has a key role in providing a spatial dimension for many other strategies and helping their co-ordination and delivery. The Council works closely with other public bodies and stakeholders to satisfy the duty to co-operate on strategic matters and the evidence base reflects collaborative working with other authorities and stakeholders.

Documents to be produced as part of the Evidence Base for Local Plan documents

Title	Purpose and Scope	Timescale and review
Strategic Environmental Assessment & Sustainability Appraisal	To provide sound evidence base for all documents (except some guidance notes).	Sustainability Appraisal work will be undertaken alongside the formulation of policy documents.
Townscape Character Study	To provide a sound basis for the SHLAA and built environment policies.	Completed June 2006.
Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA)	To provide evidence for housing land availability and distribution in relation to Local Plan requirements.	Completed July 2016.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	Joint study with Braintree, Tendring and Chelmsford Councils. This updates the SHMA for Colchester undertaken in 2008. It assesses local housing markets and provides evidence on Objectively Assessed Housing Need. Ongoing work as required.	Completed July 2015. Further work on Affordable Housing need completed Dec. 2015. Objectively Assessed Need update published November 2016.
Employment Land Needs Assessment	The study looks at existing sites and future needs to at least 2032. Further detailed work to be undertaken to inform Local plan production	Completed January 2015. Update and Trajectory completed February 2017.
Retail study	The study analyses retail catchment areas and capacity to assess shopping patterns and assess the future capacity for retail floorspace in the Borough. Further work required to inform the Local Plan and ensure most up to date information is used.	Report completed March 2013, Update completed December 2016.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	To assess capacity and requirements for infrastructure to support growth to 2032	Infrastructure Delivery Plan Study completed June 2017
Garden Communities Concept Framework	To provide assessment of options for Garden Community developments	Study completed June 2016
North Essex Garden Communities Employment and Demographic Study	To provide assessment of demographic factors and employment deliverability in Garden Communities	April 2017
North Essex Garden Communities Viability Report	To provide assessment of potential viability of Garden Communities	April 2017
Landscape Character Assessment	To provide evidence for countryside strategies and housing allocations. East Colchester Environmental Audit to inform consideration of East Colchester Garden Community.	Assessment completed November 2005. Completed November 2015
Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Study (HAGGIS).	To ensure there are sufficient open space, sport and recreational facilities, that they are in the right places, are of high quality, attractive to users and well managed and maintained.	Study completed April 2008.
Colchester Green Infrastructure Study	To provide additional detail at the local level	Work completed in October 2011.

PPG17 Study	To assess provision and requirements for open space and indoor/outdoor recreational facilities to 2021	PPG17 Study completed February 2008.
Sports Pitches and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy	To update the PPG17 study and assess requirements for playing pitches and indoor sports facilities	July 2015
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	To update 2007 and recommend mitigation measures	June 2017.
Water Cycle Study	To assess provision and need for water and waste infrastructure	February 2017.
Transport Model for Colchester	To enable area-wide traffic and public transport modelling to take place including the future traffic scenarios to be predicted and transport solution to be tested Further work required for Preferred Options Local Plan Traffic Modelling Report	December 2015. July 2016, updated Sept 2016 May 2017
East Transit Corridor study	To investigate options for a high-speed, high-frequency public transport link between the University, East Colchester regeneration area and the Town Centre.	Initial stage of feasibility study complete November 2015. Update September 2016
North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study	To investigate options for sustainable transport for Garden Communities	May 2017
Review of Local Wildlife Sites	Update 2008 review of existing local wildlife sites	Review of 2008 work completed February 2016.
Coastal Protection Belt Review	Update evidence base for Coastal Protection Belt designation	Completed June 2016
Historic Environment Characterisation	This project design presents a programme of work to characterise the historic environment of Colchester Borough	Work completed November 2008.
Whole Plan viability work	Addresses overall deliverability of plan	Work completed June 2017
CIL Viability work	To assess the impact of a Community Infrastructure Levy on the viability of schemes across the Borough	Initial work commenced in 2011, review of evidence base completed in October 2015,
Demographic and Household Projections	To inform decisions on future Borough growth and Objectively Assessed Housing Need. Joint Essex project led by Essex Planning Officers Association	Phase 7 work published May 2015.
Essex Wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment	An Essex wide study commissioned by the Essex Planning Officers Association to provide information on the appropriate number of gypsy and traveller pitches to be provided	Completed in November 2009. Review completed Summer 2014, updated October 2014. Colchester update completed June 2017.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

The development plan system is a continuous process with monitoring and review being fundamental aspects to the delivery of a successful plan. While production of an Authority Monitoring Report is no longer a statutory requirement, local authorities continue to need to demonstrate how plan objectives are being delivered. The AMR has been used to inform the review of this Local Development Scheme.

The AMR will analyse the period of the previous April to March of the current year. The report will:

- Set out how the Council is performing in the production of documents against the timescales and milestones set out in the previous years LDS;
- Provide information on how the strategies/policies/targets in the Local Plan are being achieved;
- Advise on whether any documents need reviewing;
- Review progress on SPDs and whether any new ones are required or old ones withdrawn or reviewed;
- Advise on the need to update the LDS as appropriate; and
- Provide information on the 'State of the Borough'.

The LDS will be monitored, informed by the AMR, and a report produced and submitted to the Local Plan Committee for revision should changes be required.

Review

Following the initial adoption of development plan document, it is anticipated that subsequent reviews will be in the form of a rolling programme following recommendations from the Local Plan Committee.

The AMR will provide information regarding the performance of each document as well as identifying areas where strategies/policies/targets are not being achieved. The outcomes will be dependent on a variety of influences such as changes to Government policy or pressures for development(s) across the Borough.

Resources

Professional Officer Input

The Local Plan process will be led by the Spatial Policy Team as part of Commercial Services at Colchester Borough Council.

The Spatial Policy Team consists of Planning Policy and Transportation Policy, lead by the Place Strategy Manager who will be responsible for the overall project and policy direction. The team also includes a planning policy manager and four planning officers, who will be responsible for various elements of the Local Plan process and policy. Braintree, Colchester and Tendring have jointly retained a planning officer to assist with preparation of the detailed Development Plan Documents for each proposed new Garden Community. Transportation officers will also be heavily involved in the production of the Local Plan, working alongside colleagues from Essex County Council.

Additional staff resources will be brought in to the process from time to time as required from other professional groups within the Council and outside agencies as follows:

Commercial Services

- Housing Policy
- Economic Growth
- Regeneration
- Leisure, Tourism and Cultural services

Other CBC Services

- Development Management
- Environmental Protection
- Research and Engagement
- Community Strategies
- Operational Services
- Elections

Others

- Highways England (strategic highways matters)
- Essex County Council (other highway matters, education, planning etc)
- Rural Community Council for Essex (to promote/facilitate links with parish councils)
- Specialist consultants (to develop elements of the evidence base).

Consultee groups

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out in detail who we will consult and at what stage in the production of all documents. The SCI covers both plan making and decision taking so all aspects of the Council's statutory planning functions have been included within the SCI.

Risk Assessment

There are several factors which may impact upon the ability of the Council to keep to the timetable for the production of documents. The table below considers and deals with the main risks.

Issue and level of risk	Comment and proposed mitigating measures
<p>Significant public opposition to plan proposals.</p> <p>High Risk, Medium Impact</p>	<p>The production of the Local Plan and specifically the allocation of land is likely to be contentious. Whilst every effort will be made to build cross-community consensus, there is a high risk of significant public opposition.</p>
<p>Inability of PINS to deliver examinations/reports to timetable.</p> <p>Low Risk, Medium Impact</p>	<p>The capacity of the Planning Inspectorate is an issue given the demands on its limited resources.</p> <p>There is also uncertainty as to the Governments plans for planning policy.</p> <p>PINS may not be able to provide Inspectors at the appropriate times.</p> <p>If problems do occur, caused by factors outside the council's control, we may have to accept some slippage of the timetable.</p> <p>The LDS would need to be amended accordingly.</p>
<p>Loss/turnover of staff</p> <p>Medium Risk, High Impact</p>	<p>The Spatial Policy Team have benefitted from low turnover in recent years, but there is currently a national shortage of planning officers.</p>
<p>Financial shortfall</p> <p>Medium Risk, High Impact</p>	<p>Any review of documents is a costly exercise, involving preparation of an evidence base, production of documents, consultation and examination.</p> <p>In previous years the Council has allocated funds through the Housing & Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) and its Service and Financial Planning process to allow for the preparation of the Local Plan. In the longer term no HPDG funding is available. Additional Council expenditure will be subject to scrutiny.</p> <p>Examination costs may inflate due to the length/complexity of the Examination. This will be kept under review.</p>
<p>Changing Political Priorities</p> <p>High Risk, Medium Impact</p>	<p>This document has been considered and approved by Local Plan Committee which has a cross party representation of members. Elections in the borough could result in political changes and/or there could be changing priorities. Any future changes in the documents to be produced can be dealt with at the annual review.</p>

<p>Legal Challenge</p> <p>Low Risk, High Impact</p>	<p>A legal challenge may be lodged to any document within six week of adoption. The degree to which this will happen is uncertain due to the untried nature of the system emerging. However, a challenge will only succeed if the Council (or Inspector) has made a mistake in procedure or in fact.</p> <p>To avoid a legal challenge, every effort will be made to ensure that procedures are followed and facts are correct.</p>
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Appendix 1 - Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents and Planning Guidance Notes - status as at February 2017

Existing Supplementary Planning Documents

Subject	Approval Date
Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities	July 2006, charges updated 2012
Backland and Infill Development	December 2010
Community Facilities	September 2009, revised July 2013
Car Parking Standards (ECC)	September 2009
Shop front Design Guide	June 2011
Affordable Housing	August 2011
Cycling Delivery Strategy	January 2012
North Colchester Growth Area	June 2012
Street Services	October 2012, revised February 2016
Better Town Centre	December 2012
Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide	April 2015
Sustainable Construction	June 2011

Proposed Supplementary Planning Documents

Planning Obligations SPD (to align with Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule)	Adoption 2018
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If you need help reading or understanding this document, please take it to our Community Hub in Colchester Library or telephone 01206 282222. We will try to provide a reading service, a translation, or any other format you need.

Report of	Assistant Director Policy and Corporate	Author	Chris Downes ☎ 01206 282473
Title	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Issues and Options consultation		
Wards affected	All wards		

The Local Plan Committee is asked to approve the draft Issues and Options consultation document for public consultation.

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree to the publication of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Issues and Options consultation document (attached as Appendix 1 to this Report) for publication and consultation over an eight week period from 13th November 2017 to 8th January 2018.
- 1.2 To agree to publish the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment for consultation.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Place Strategy Manager to make minor revisions to the document prior to publication.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 To ensure the Council's Local Plan commitment of delivering a Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders is planned in a consultative manner, taking account of the views of all interested parties at an early stage in its planning. The Issues and Options consultation forms the first stage of the planning process towards a Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Plan, which once adopted will provide an informed and robust basis for guiding future development in the cross-boundary Garden Community as well as meeting the Council's Duty to Cooperate with Braintree District Council.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option would be to not proceed with this first stage of consultation for the preparation of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Plan. However, this option would be contrary to the Council's Submission Local Plan and would leave the Council out of alignment with the strategic planning programme agreed with Braintree District Council (and Tendring District Council as part of the wider programme). This could result in the Council finding itself in a vulnerable position without a long term strategic planning approach not only in respect of the Garden Community but across the Borough.

4. Supporting Information

Background

- 4.1 The principle of development of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC) is identified in the joint strategic Section One of Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils' Submission Local Plans. Local Plan Policy SP9

specifically refers to development of a Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders and requires that a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document (DPD) is prepared to guide its delivery. The emerging CBBGC Plan which is subject to the Issues and Options consultation will be the Strategic Growth DPD referred to in the Local Plan.

- 4.2 The emerging Local Plans for Braintree District and Colchester Borough are now at submission stage and will be examined early next year by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Government. The carrying out of an Issues and Options consultation on the planning of the Garden Community prior to the Local Plan examination serves to demonstrate progress on the Section One proposals whilst at the same time providing the Councils with an opportunity to carry out an additional, early stage of consultation with local communities and stakeholders.
- 4.3 The preparation of the CBBGC Plan will follow a similar process to that of the Local Plan; there will be distinct stages accompanied by public consultation. The Issues and Options stage is the first of these stages which will be followed by a Preferred Options stage and finally a Publication stage prior to the CBBGC Plan's independent examination and eventual adoption. In addition to each stage of public consultation, local communities affected by the proposals will be proactively engaged to ensure their views are fed back into proposals as well as ensuring they are kept abreast of the Plan's progress. The Councils have commissioned independent Community Enablers to facilitate this additional layer of engagement.
- 4.4 Once adopted, the CBBGC Plan will provide the strategies, policies and proposals required to guide the delivery of the Garden Community. It will set out a shared Vision for the new community and a strategy for its delivery. It will also set out a range of development objectives that will help deliver this Vision, and more detailed planning policies that will guide future proposals and secure timely delivery of development and infrastructure in the short, medium and long term. Importantly, the CBBGC Plan will be prepared in accordance with the relevant emerging Local Plan policies as well as the North Essex Garden Communities Charter.

The Purpose of the Issues and Options Consultation

- 4.5 As mentioned, the Issues and Options consultation is the first stage in the detailed planning of the Garden Community. An important part of the consultation will be forming a distinct Vision for the Garden Community which can encapsulate the ambition of the Councils whilst reconciling the views of local communities and stakeholders, effectively providing a mandate for the Garden Community's future development. The Vision needs to be a shared view that governs all processes from design through to delivery of the development and management of community assets.
- 4.6 Another purpose of the consultation is to summarise the existing evidence base (much of which was produced to inform Section One of the Local Plan) and from this baseline set out emerging strategies which have been prepared to respond to numerous issues that planning the Garden Community involves. At this stage much of the planning approach across the Garden Communities is similar, reflecting a similar baseline evidence, however as consultation and stakeholder discussions progress, these strategies will become more refined and specific to each settlement.

The Councils and North Essex Garden Communities Ltd

- 4.7 The consultation document explains that the Garden Communities are being overseen both by the strategic planning partnership agreed between Colchester Borough Council,

Braintree District Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council, as well as North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC Ltd). NEGC Ltd is jointly owned by the four Councils to drive the delivery of the three Garden Communities and secure investment in enabling infrastructure across the wider area. Through NEGC Ltd, the Councils will act as the 'lead developer', and so would not only have more control over the type of development, the design and the rate of delivery but also the ability to commit to an 'infrastructure first' approach. Such an approach will ensure that transport improvements (including new roads), schools, health and leisure facilities are developed ahead of or alongside new housing, to adequately serve the needs of the new community and to minimise any adverse impacts on existing communities. Similarly, this innovative delivery approach will also give the Councils a key role in attracting investment and businesses to assist in the creation of vibrant, thriving and sustainable communities.

The Consultation Approach

- 4.8 A key part of the evidence base which underpins the Issues and Options consultation document is the North Essex Garden Communities Charter. This Charter was produced to articulate the Councils' aspirations for the Garden Communities and has been directly informed by the Town and Country Association's (TCPA's) Garden City Principles. The Charter comprises ten Principles based around three Themes, as follows:

Theme 1: Place and Integration

- Green Infrastructure
- Integrated and Sustainable Transport
- Employment Opportunity
- Living Environment
- Smart and Sustainable Living
- Good Design

Theme 2: Community

- Community Engagement
- Active Local Stewardship

Theme 3: Delivery

- Strong Corporate and Political Public Leadership
- Innovative Delivery Structure

The intention is for the North Essex Garden Communities Charter to be embedded into every stage of the planning and delivery of the Garden Communities, providing a set of Principles against which strategies, policies and proposals can be monitored against. Accordingly the Charter provides the framework for the Issues and Options consultation document.

- 4.9 The Issues and Options document sets out the emerging strategies and approaches to how the Councils will realise each of the Charter Principles at Colchester Braintree Borders and invites consultees to respond to these emerging strategies and approaches. Each Principle is accompanied by a 'Have Your Say' section which poses a question and suggests some factors which consultees may wish to consider in their response. These questions are intentionally broad, reflecting the early stage of the Garden Community's planning and thus ensuring that all views, however divergent, are considered before the CBBGC Plan can proceed to the next stage.

The Concept Framework

- 4.10 The development potential of CBBGC has been explored in a Concept Framework study which has been published as part of the evidence base. This study looked at the area of search identified in the Local Plan for the Garden Community, suggesting the distribution and location of land uses and associated infrastructure that could be accommodated to meet the aspirations of the North Essex Garden Communities Charter as well as emerging Local Plan policies.
- 4.11 The Concept Framework identifies an overall capacity within the Garden Community for up to 24,000 homes with the following key attributes:
- Distinct development parcels each with its own characteristics and each with a particular role to play in the new community as a whole. Each of these 'neighbourhoods' is serviced by essential community infrastructure, all within walking distance, including educational establishments, local shops, public transport services, employment opportunities and recreational facilities.
 - Green buffers that provide visual and physical separation between new development and existing communities; establishing an attractive landscape setting for the new development; providing space for functions such as storm water management; and creating opportunities for formal and informal recreation, including enhanced cycle and footway links to surrounding settlements.
 - Rerouting of the A120 to a new alignment between Braintree and Marks Tey, removing strategic through-traffic from passing through the centre of Marks Tey and thereby improving the living environment and cohesiveness of the existing community.
 - Rerouting of the A12 between Feering and east of Junction 25 to a new alignment to the south of the Garden Community.
 - An opportunity to relocate the railway station to increase capacity and frequency of services.
 - New employment areas between the railway and the old A12 alignment, and separately close to the new junctions on the A12 and A120.
 - Five large new residential neighbourhoods around a new Town Centre, separated by broad green corridors connecting to open countryside.
 - Sites for up to nine new primary schools and three new secondary schools.
 - Sites for future health provision to service the needs of the future settlement.
 - A rapid transit public transport spine through the centre of the Garden Community connecting a new Park and Ride site near the A12, new employment areas, the new Town Centre and the settlements local centres with Colchester, Sudbury, Braintree and the wider north Essex area.
 - Generous amounts of accessible green spaces and landscaping, providing opportunities for recreation as well as creating a distinctive, verdant townscape.
- 4.12 The key findings of the Concept Framework study have been presented in the consultation document to gauge stakeholder feedback on the spatial aspects of the Garden Community. Whilst the Concept Framework was produced in consultation with local communities, this affords the first opportunity for the wider public to comment on the location and distribution of land uses in the new settlement. Within the document consultees are asked their opinion on what is perceived to work well in the Concept Framework and also what perhaps does not work as well. As with the development of the emerging strategies for the Garden Community, the spatial approach presented in the Concept Framework is included as part of the consultation to provoke discussion and will be refined as the CBBGC Plan progresses.

The Next Stage

- 4.13 Following the close of the Issues and Options consultation, the Councils will collate, analyse and review all of the responses received. In combination with ongoing community engagement and stakeholder liaison, the consultation responses will play a key role in shaping the next stage of the CBBGC Plan. This stage will be the 'Preferred Options' which will set out the Councils' preferred strategies and approaches to addressing the planning issues at Colchester Braintree Borders in the form of a draft Plan. The Preferred Options will be subject to formal public consultation which is anticipated to take place in Summer 2018.

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.14 The Issues and Options consultation document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which provide a high-level evaluation of options that consider potential social, economic and environmental impacts of the emerging CBBGC Plan. The SEA/SA will also be subject to consultation and will be available to view and comment on alongside the Issues and Options consultation document. The SEA/SA document is appended to this Committee Report.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Issues and Options consultation document and associated documentation be published for consultation over the eight week period between 13th November 2017 and 8th January 2018.
- 5.2 The consultation will include a range of measures to encourage engagement including an online consultation portal where stakeholders can respond to the questions posed in the consultation document. Additionally local exhibitions will be held at the following locations (venues subject to confirmation):
- Marks Tey Village Hall
 - Great Tey Village Hall
 - Colchester Market
 - Easthorpe Church Hall
 - Coggeshall Village Hall
 - Greenstead Community Centre
 - Elmstead, Marketfield School
 - Wivenhoe, William Loveless Hall
 - Rayne Village Hall
 - Stebbing Village Hall
 - The Salings Millennium Village Hall (Great Saling)
- 5.3 Following this consultation stage, the Council will carry out further engagement and consultation to inform future stages of the CBBGC plan. An indication of the timescales involved for each stage of the planning process of the CBBGC Plan can be found in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), available on the Council's website.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The 2015 to 2018 Strategic Plan sets out a commitment for Colchester Borough to be Vibrant, Prosperous and Thriving. Effective strategic planning can help achieve all of these objectives.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Public consultation is a fundamental part of preparing the CBBGC Plan and it is recognised that early and meaningful engagement with stakeholders is important to not only ensure that the Garden Community is a successful place to live, work and visit, but that it is also locally-led, accountable and transparent in its planning.
- 7.2 Consultation on the CBBGC Plan is guided by the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which is available on the Council's website.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 The Issues and Options consultation is likely to create a high level of publicity and will therefore need to be supplemented with a communications strategy including press releases and other publicity measures.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 None specifically relating to this report.

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 on the Colchester Borough Council website by following this pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Commercial Services > Local Plan.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Preparation of the CBBGC Plan will address the community safety implications of creating sustainable communities.

12. Health and Safety Implications

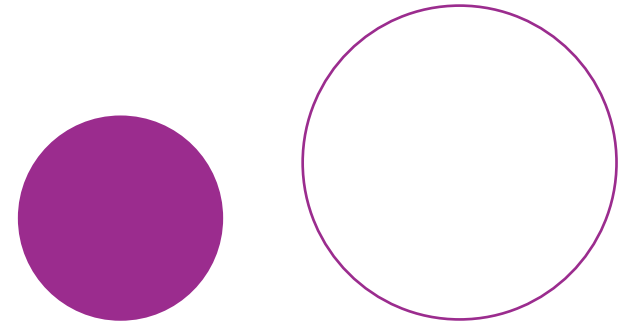
- 12.1 Development of the CBBGC will address the health and well-being implications of creating sustainable communities.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The preparation of the CBBGC will directly assist in the effective delivery of the emerging Local Plan.

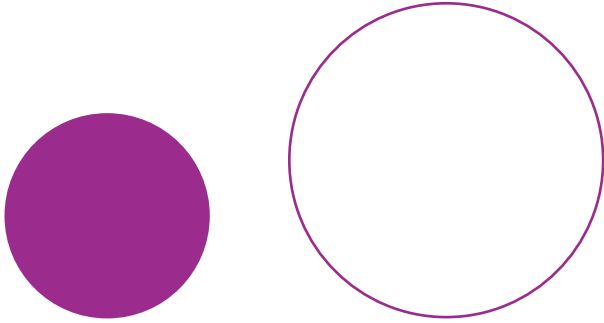
14. Disclaimer

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



A PLAN FOR COLCHESTER BRAINTREE BORDERS GARDEN COMMUNITY **Issues and Options Report**

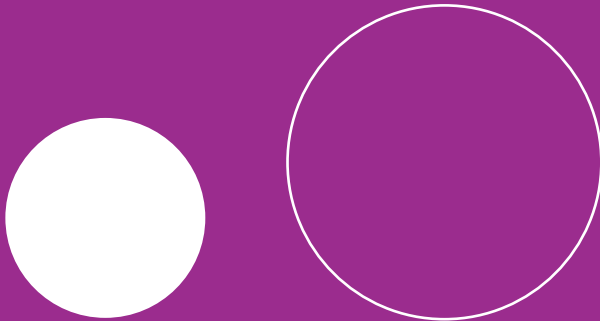




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Have your say



This consultation represents the first stage in the planning process of preparing a Development Plan Document (DPD 'The Plan') for the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community.

The Plan, once prepared, will include the required strategies, policies and proposals to guide the delivery of the Garden Community. Public consultation is a fundamental part of preparing the Plan and the Councils recognise the importance of early and meaningful engagement with stakeholders to not only ensure that the Garden Community is a successful place to live, work and visit, but that it is also locally-led, accountable and transparent in its planning.

As a stakeholder in this process we welcome your views on the Issues and Options related to the planning of the new Garden Community and ask you to respond to the questions set out at the end of each section within the document.

There is no requirement for you to comment on every issue or to answer every question; we would like you to submit comments on any areas that you wish to. Additionally, if you believe some issues have been missed out or not accorded the weight they deserve, please raise this in your response.

Your feedback to this consultation will directly influence the strategies, policies and proposals in the final Development Plan for the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

The Councils have set up a dedicated online portal in order to make responding to the consultation as simple as possible. Following a simple registration process you will be able to respond to the questions posed in this document and comment on other areas you think are relevant to the planning of the Garden Community. The online portal also has a facility for respondents to upload documents relevant to their submissions and you are particularly encouraged to submit documents which may assist the understanding of issues raised in your responses, including for example, maps, plans and photographs which help illustrate points that cannot be explained as well through a written response.

PERIOD OF CONSULTATION

The Issues and Options consultation will be held between 13th November 2017 and 8th January 2018. Unfortunately, submissions received after 5pm on 8th January will not be able to be considered by the Councils so early submission of your responses is encouraged.

After the consultation ends all of the responses received will be validated and published on the online portal for public viewing to ensure the process is transparent. All responses will then be read and analysed by the Councils and collated into a consultation report. This report will collate responses into themes if common issues are raised and be accompanied by a formal response from the Councils on all issues raised.

For more information of what happens next in the planning process, please see Section 1.

SECTION 1.

Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

The purpose of this **Issues and Options** consultation is to gather your views on the development of the **Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC)**. The responses to this consultation will directly feed into the emerging planning strategies, policies and proposals which will guide future phases of the Garden Community's development.

As the planning process progresses these emerging policies will be refined through further public consultation and stakeholder engagement to ensure that as many views as possible are taken account of in the preparation of the Plan for the CBBGC. Eventually the Plan will be adopted by both Colchester Borough Council and Braintree District Council and will sit alongside their respective Local Plans.

WHY IS A DEVELOPMENT PLAN NEEDED?

The delivery of a Garden Community represents a step-change in the traditional approach to delivery of large-scale development and is a collective response by three local Authorities to the need to plan, long-term, for the economic and housing development needs across North Essex in a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable way. Tendring District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Braintree District Council together with Essex County Council (collectively known as the North Essex Authorities), are committed to delivery of development at scale, of high quality, and with all necessary infrastructure (roads and transport choices, jobs, schools, open spaces, and community facilities).

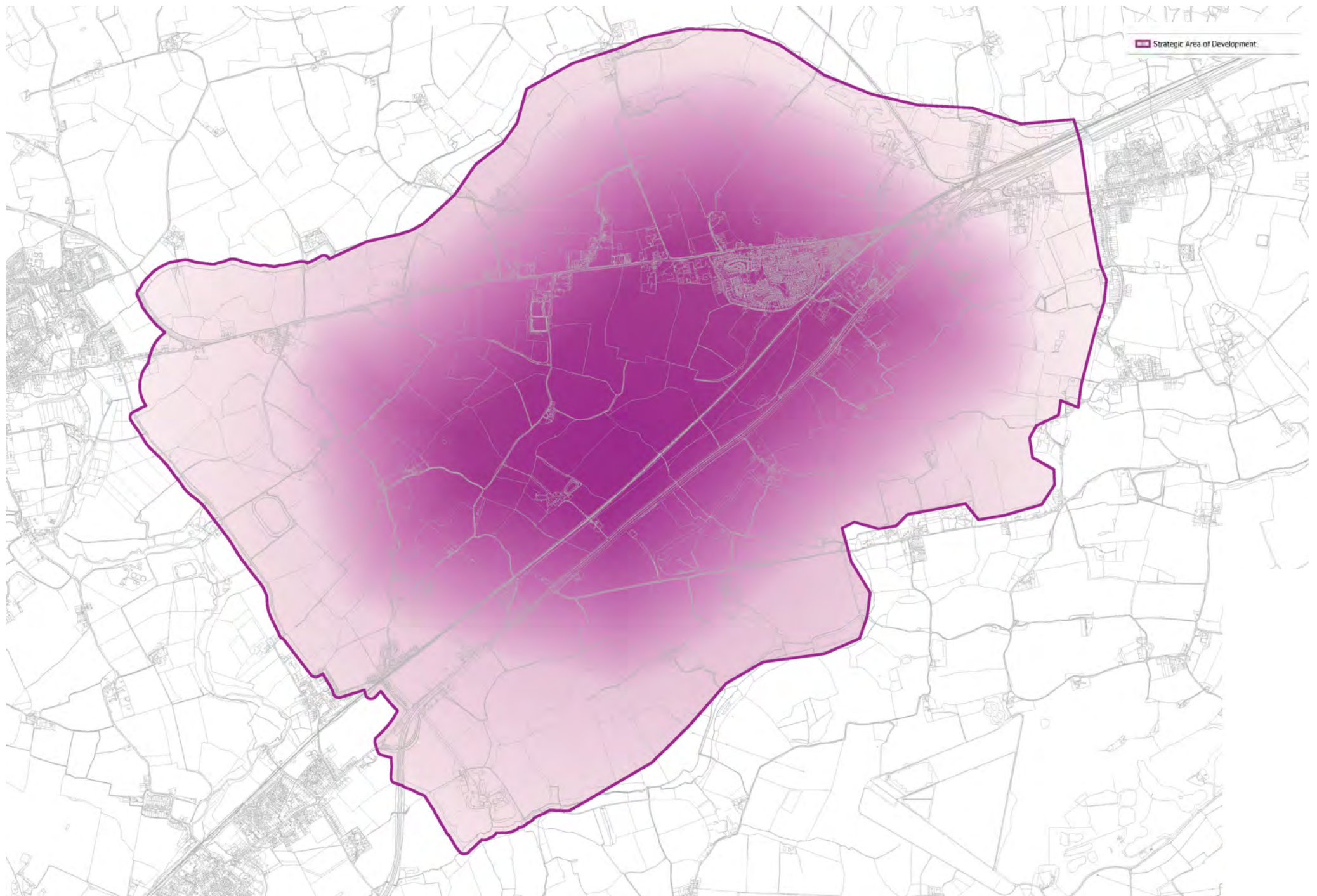
Development at CBBGC is identified in the joint Strategic Section 1 of the Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils' Draft Local Plans. **Draft Local Plan Policy SP9** specifically refers to development of a Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders and requires the preparation of a **Strategic Growth Development Plan Document (the Plan)** that will provide a framework for the subsequent preparation of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the site. The Proposed Strategic Development Area is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

Due to the new Garden Community covering land in both authorities the Plan will be adopted by both Braintree District Council and Colchester Borough Council. The Councils, have included the principle of development of a new Garden Community in the location proposed in this consultation within their respective draft Local Plans.

The Plan will have to take the principle of development further and include specific proposals, strategies and detailed policies to inform the delivery of the Garden Community. The Plan will provide certainty for stakeholders on the type, scale and location of specific land uses including the infrastructure required to accommodate them.

This Plan will build on Local Plan policy, including cross boundary issues identified and addressed through joint Strategic Section 1 of the draft Local Plans.

This Issues and Options consultation is the first stage in the preparation of the Plan.



WHY ARE YOUR VIEWS IMPORTANT?

In addition to strong local authority involvement and leadership, the delivery of Garden Communities will also rely on active and sustained engagement with local communities and stakeholders and with the residents and businesses of the new community once development starts, including, for example, opportunities for direct local stewardship of community assets and facilities.

It is important that future residents and businesses, existing surrounding communities, and local and public bodies and key stakeholders should be confident about:

- **what is being delivered;**
- **when it will be delivered; and**
- **how it will be delivered.**

The main purpose of the DPD is to set out a shared Vision for the new community at Colchester Braintree Borders and a strategy for its delivery. A strategy that includes both the requirement for **2,500 homes and related infrastructure to be delivered within the Plan period**, 2017 to 2033, with the majority of the development to be delivered over a longer-term beyond 2033.

It will also set out a range of development objectives that will help deliver this Vision, and more detailed policies that will guide land-use proposals and secure timely delivery of development and infrastructure in the short, medium and long term, in accordance with relevant Local Plan policies.

The Plan will need to have flexibility in the way that development might be delivered taking into account the long-term nature of a development of this scale, but must also be true to the development and design ambitions that are agreed for the new community.

WHAT STATUS WILL THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (THE PLAN) HAVE?

The Plan is required to guide the development of the Garden Community, rather than a lesser Supplementary Planning document (SPD), because of the scale of the development proposed; its cross-boundary nature; the associated land assembly required to accommodate the proposal; and the use of a local delivery vehicle which will put proposals into practice. All of these qualities depart from traditional forms of development and consequently require a higher-level document, subject to a greater degree of scrutiny and, as a result, afforded statutory weight.

The Plan's statutory weight will result in all subsequent planning proposals within the boundaries of the Garden Community being determined in accordance with it. Due to its importance, the DPD will have to be prepared in a diligent and transparent manner and provide all stakeholders with an opportunity not only to inform the planning of the Garden Community but also to scrutinise its preparation. Essentially the **preparation of the Plan will follow a similar planning process to that used in the adoption of each Councils' Local Plan.**

ABOUT THIS ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT

This Issues and Options report provides information to stakeholders and local communities, and it invites comments and views on initial issues and options for the development of a Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders (CBBGC) and represents the first stage of the production of the Plan to provide a framework for development will guide master planning stages that will follow.

This report is structured around five main sections.

Section 2 introduces North Essex Garden Communities Ltd and provides an overview of the site, the emerging evidence base and a summary of community engagement to date.

Section 3 introduces the North Essex Garden Community Charter which identifies a set of overarching principles that help inform potential development options. It also sets out an analysis of land use and environmental constraints as well as opportunities that will shape the design and delivery of CBBGC.

Section 4 further explores the Charter Principles and provides the LPA's emerging strategy for each. It presents a series of 'Issues' that are considered relevant to the design and delivery of a new Garden Community and seeks your views on these issues, how important they are and how they might be resolved through the Plan.

Section 5 presents a current development concept option for comment and invites alternative approaches based on a review and analysis of issues identified in this report.

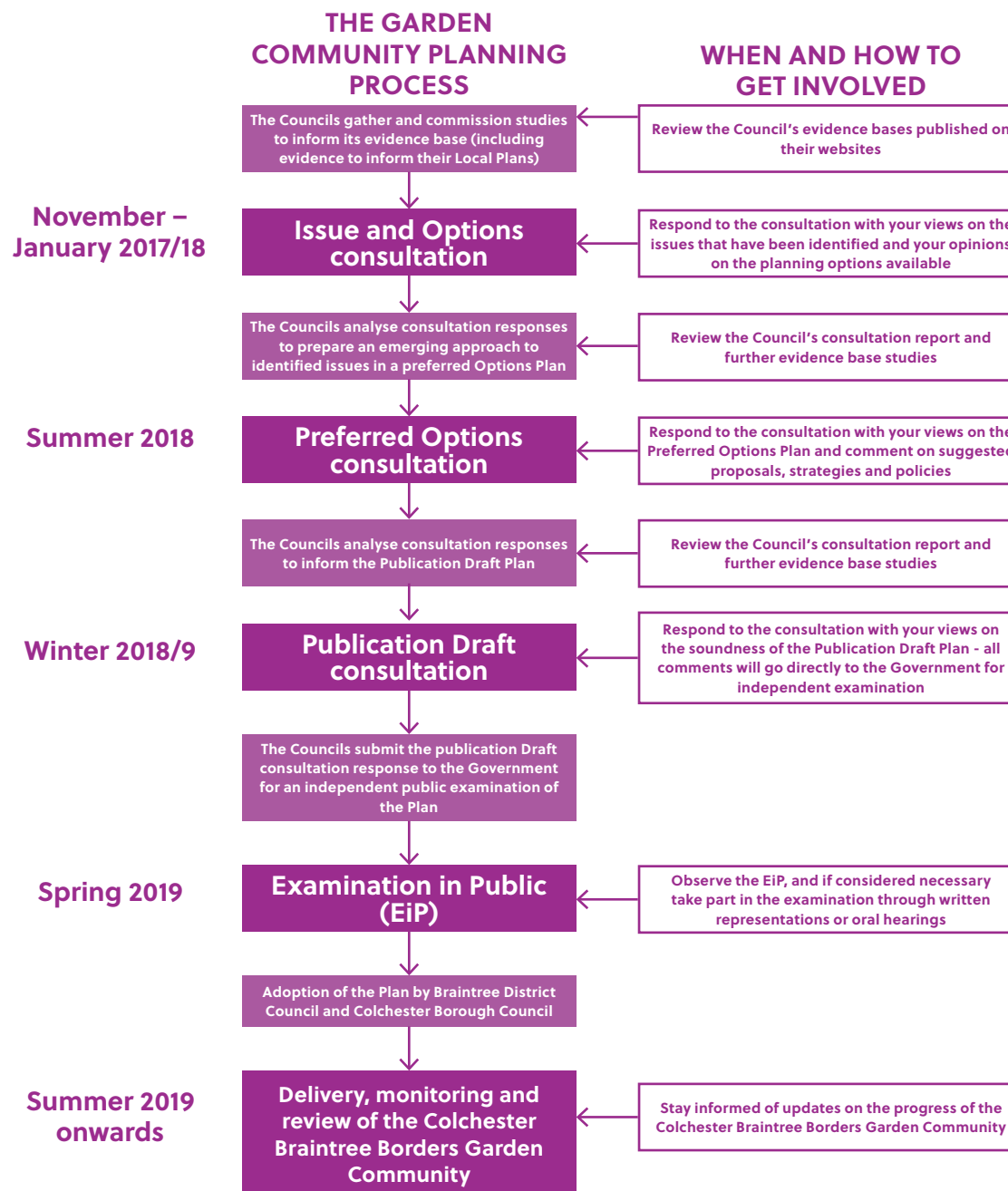
Section 6 sets out the next steps towards preparation of the Plan.

This document should be read in conjunction with the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** which provide a high-level evaluation of options that consider potential social, economic and environmental impacts. These documents can be downloaded at https://www.braintree.gov.uk/downloads/200592/new_local_plan

The Issues and Options report will be subject to an eight week period of consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the wider community. The aim of this consultation is to gain a clear understanding of the issues involved in the development of CBBGC, and to develop consensus around a set of options that can be explored and developed to refine a framework for development of the site that will underpin a Plan for CBBGC.

Steps to preparing the Plan (DPD)

The preparation of the Plan document will be an extensive process reflecting the importance of the final document to the area it covers. The following flowchart illustrates the individual stages in the planning process.



POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) articulates the Government's objectives for growth in the context of sustainable development. It identifies the elements of sustainable development:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing It is committed to a presumption in favour of development.

The NPPF advocates the use of large-scale developments which incorporate **Garden City principles** as one way of achieving development at scale (paragraph 52).

Development of new large-scale communities must be established by working with existing local communities, and significant weight is attributed to good design of the built environment and creating a high quality and inclusive design.

The NPPF also seeks to ensure an integrated approach to the planning of housing, and provision of commercial and employment uses alongside the delivery of community services and facilities, to include education and open space uses as part of the creation of healthy and inclusive communities (paragraph 69).

The NPPF also recognises the significance of financial viability in both plan making and decision taking.

A National Agenda for Garden Communities

In 2015 the Government invited proposals for new 'Garden Communities' across the UK as a way of tackling the housing crisis. The North Essex Authorities have responded positively to this significant opportunity for long-term comprehensively planned growth and put forward draft proposals within a joint Strategic Section 1 of their Local Plan's for three new settlements to be designed and delivered to Garden City Principles. Colchester Braintree Borders is one of the proposed new communities.

The Government continues to recognise the contribution that well-planned, well-designed new communities can make to meeting long-term housing needs and has confirmed its intention to legislate to allow locally accountable New Town Development Corporations to be set up which could further support public sector delivery of new communities.

The North Essex Authorities are working jointly to prepare a common strategic chapter for their new Local Plans. The Authorities are now also partners in **North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC)**, an overarching governance body that will provide strategic direction and oversight of the creation and delivery of the three new Garden Communities and secure investment in the infrastructure across the wider area.

Each of the three Garden Communities although part of a comprehensive strategy for growth, will be taken forward as separate 'schemes' to be planned and implemented independently of each other.

NEGC Ltd is jointly owned by Braintree and Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Essex County Councils. Through

NEGC Ltd, the Councils will act as the "lead developer", and so would not only have control over the type of housing, the design and the speed of delivery but also the ability to commit to timely delivery of infrastructure – ensuring that transportation, schools, health and leisure facilities etc, are all built ahead of or alongside the homes, to adequately serve the needs of the new community and to minimise any adverse impacts on existing communities. The authorities would also play a key role in attracting businesses to assist in the **creation of vibrant, thriving self-sufficient communities where people can choose to live, work and spend leisure time.**

The current strategy for CBBGC would see Colchester and Braintree Councils playing a key role in its delivery, giving the Councils the ability to control the design, type of housing, rate of construction and, importantly, the associated infrastructure requirements that will come alongside, or in advance of the development.

The Councils are working jointly to explore the most effective way to deliver the Garden Community that would maximise benefits of the development for all. One delivery option is through NEGC Ltd and Local Delivery Vehicles for each site; another may involve emerging Government proposals for locally led New Town Development Corporations which may offer an alternative means of delivery that is devolved and accountable locally.

Regardless of which delivery model is applied, **capturing the uplift in development land value will be critical** to ensuring that the long-term aspirations of community stewardship of public assets and infrastructure are delivered.

Local Planning Policy

Within their Local Plans, Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils must identify where housing and jobs will be delivered up to 2033. For the plan period to 2033, The North Essex authorities have to provide land for a minimum of 43,720 new homes and plan for some 1,900 new jobs per annum. The rates of both housing and employment growth are expected to continue beyond 2033.

The Local Plans will shape the future of North Essex and set the policy framework over the next 15 years. The Councils have committed to working collaboratively on a strategic approach to the allocation and distribution of large-scale, housing-led, mixed use development, including employment opportunities, community services and facilities and local and strategic infrastructure. This commitment is embedded in a joint Strategic Section 1 for the Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District draft Local Plans which gives primacy to the role of Garden Communities as part of each Council's sustainable strategy for growth and development.

Draft Policy SP2 - Spatial Strategy for North Essex, sets out a spatial strategy over the long-term that focuses growth at three new Garden Communities distributed across North Essex, in cross-boundary locations, well related to but distinct from existing population centres, and well served by a strategic transport network.

Draft Policy SP7- Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex, identifies three new Garden Communities to accommodate at least 7,500 new homes) and employment growth planned for North Essex up to 2033, with a significant capacity beyond the plan period in a sustainable way that meets the Local Plan vision and strategic objectives. The joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan recognises the substantial investment in infrastructure necessary to make growth at scale sustainable.

Draft Local Plan Policy SP9 identifies Colchester Braintree Borders as being capable of accommodating a range of **15,000- 24,000 homes** alongside associated transport, employment, education, open space and community infrastructure, in the long term. It also refers to the preparation of a Strategic Growth DPD that will provide a framework for the subsequent development of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community. The policy goes on to identify a number of design, development and delivery requirements that a DPD should address. This has helped to inform the scope of this Issues and Options Report.

Notwithstanding that development of the proposed Garden Communities would be delivered largely beyond the Plan period (beyond 2033), the Councils have a duty to demonstrate a robust growth strategy that is forward-looking and responds to future planning need, without which the Local Plan risks being found unsound when it goes before the Independent Planning Inspector.

The Section 1 Plan will be submitted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate in the autumn 2017.

SECTION 2.

Background and Evidence

THE NORTH ESSEX GARDEN COMMUNITIES CHARTER

The North Essex Garden Communities Charter has been jointly developed by the North Essex Authorities. The Charter sets out **10 place-making principles** that underpin the North Essex Authorities' ambition for the Garden Communities, and in accordance with which the development will be designed and delivered. The Charter sets out for consultation the Councils' ambitions for the new Garden Communities so that they **deliver more than large housing estates**.

These principles are shared across the Authorities and have been informed by the **Town and County Planning Association's (TCPA) Garden City Principles**. Together they cover a broad range of issues that drive the requirements set out in the draft, site-specific policy for CBBGC (SP9), having regard to the scope of issues that The Plan for the site might be expected to include.

The Charter, alongside the draft joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan Policies, has guided this Issues and Options Document (see Section 3).

EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

To support the preparation of the Plan, and indeed as part of the preparation of the draft joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan, a wide range of existing and new evidence and information has been drawn upon to further refine and qualify policy requirements, Councils' aspirations and development assumptions that will together shape a future for CBBGC. The evidence base to the draft local Plan is hosted by Braintree District Council: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/>

Garden Communities were amongst a range of options which were considered by the local authorities to deliver their long-term housing and employment needs. A number of sites of sufficient scale to accommodate a Garden Community were identified through the Call for Sites, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and wider evidence gathering processes by each of the local authorities. All these options were evaluated and the assessments can be seen in the Sustainability Appraisal, a key part of the Local Plan preparation. **See Appendix B for a list of the relevant evidence documents.**

Technical Groups and Workshops

Technical groups and workshops have formed an important part of the evidence gathering process.

A number of NEGC technical meetings, attended by professionals and stakeholders as part of the Infrastructure and Masterplanning and Transport Working Groups, have helped to explore topics relevant to the evolution of proposals for CBBGC, and have included housing, design, transport, education, community provision, and health and wellbeing.

Two community stakeholder workshops were also held as part of the evolution of the Concept Framework for CBBGC and to begin to explore the joint work required to deliver on the objectives set out in Local Plan policy. These were attended by representatives of the local communities that relate to the site as well as Council officers and Councillors.

The aim of the first workshop was to ask participants to identify principles that they felt were important elements for the development at CBBGC that they would like to see embedded in any future concept framework.

Key design principles identified at the CBBGC concept framework workshop (November 2017)

- Infrastructure first i.e. facilities before houses.
- Need to deal with current A12/A120 capacity issues prior to additional development.
- Early delivery of schools and healthcare facilities.
- Get the key service providers on-board.
- Real jobs are needed and not just additional employment land.
- Respect the identity and character of existing communities.
- Repairing the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey.
- Realising the true Garden City Principles i.e. strong Green Infrastructure, strong Design Philosophy and a wide range of housing.
- A clear transport strategy (which maximises public transport, sorts out road and rail capacity issues and helps to minimise commuting).
- The need for a Special Purpose Vehicle/Local Development Vehicle to ensure legally binding agreements.

The second consultation took the form of a Briefing. A presentation was given which explored a potential growth scenario that illustrated how a new Garden Community of scale could be developed over time. It explored the stages of growth from its inception; to the creation of place that is self-sustaining and is supported by a commitment to high quality placemaking coupled with infrastructure investment.

Following the presentation was an active debate centred on a number of key topics, which included infrastructure, scale of development, community and benefits, economy and jobs and community engagement. Further details relating to the workshop and its outcomes can be found in the **CBBGC Concept Framework Report**.

SECTION 3.

Vision and Principles

A VISION FOR COLCHESTER BRAINTREE BORDERS

A Vision for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will provide a mandate for its future development. It should be a shared Vision that governs all processes from design through to delivery of the development and indeed management of community assets.

It should create an identity for the new community where residents and business feel like they “belong”. It should foster a collective sense of ownership and pride in the place where people will live, work and spend their leisure time.

The Concept Framework presents a draft Vision for CBBGC, relating to different characteristics felt to be important to the creation of CBBGC.

The Vision combines and reflects the evidence, community workshops, the Garden Communities Charter and design principles set out above. It is a good starting point from which to develop a more succinct, and shared Vision with which people can fully identify.

It is still a draft vision and your views are important to the creation of a shared Vision that provides direction for the growth of CBBGC which is distinctive, inspiring and endures over the long-term.

COLCHESTER BRAINTREE BORDERS GARDEN COMMUNITY DRAFT VISION:

Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC) represents a visionary approach to plan a new town for North Essex.

Beauty, Sense of Place, Health and Wellbeing

CBBGC will be a beautiful place with a strong sense of community and belonging. It is planned to be big enough to become a flourishing new town in its own right, complementary to Colchester and to Braintree, but with all the facilities, services and amenities needed by a new community that is town-sized, to deliver healthy and diverse new communities. It will have low-energy, high performance homes in a rich landscape setting with natural green space directly accessible to every home.

Transforming Economic Prospects

A new Garden Community will be big enough to create a new focus for economic growth that will be a catalyst to transform the economic prospects and prosperity for the whole of North Essex. It will be the main location in North Essex for housing development for the next thirty years and more. It will be planned for a population of 55,000 people with jobs, schools, shops and services to meet the new residents' needs. Support will be given to local small and medium sized businesses to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester and Braintree economy. This might include an element of homeworking.

A Comprehensive Vision

A new place that requires a different sort of “Vision”, one that considers all aspects of creating a new town in a new place. It is so much more than building houses in the countryside.

Making a Town

Standard large developments connected to existing towns are generally delivered in a single rolling programme of development by one or two developers. Creating a new Garden Community of up to 24,000 homes requires a structure of main roads and green spaces and utility services, and must be planned as defined and distinctive neighbourhoods within this framework. There is opportunity for co-ordinated development to achieve encouraging rates of delivery of homes, jobs and infrastructure.

Bespoke Infrastructure fit for a Town

CBBGC will not be reliant on the capacity of existing infrastructure – schools, primary healthcare, roads, utility services, parks and open spaces, etc. The plan will include new provision under each of these headings. Most will be built in parallel with the completion of new homes to ensure that new residents have their needs met in a timely and coordinated way. But systems of roads and public transport and strategic open space, will have to be created at timely intervals to ensure that the new Garden Community has the best possible start and has the minimum adverse impacts on existing communities.

Dealing with Existing Traffic Problems

Essex County Council has committed to leading on a feasibility study to upgrade the A120 between Braintree and the A12. It has been agreed by Essex County Council, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Highways England that the County Council will lead on the review of options through to Preferred Route status with the objective being for the scheme to be included in Highways England's Roads Investment Strategy: for the 2020/21 – 2024/25 Road Period (RIS2).

The A12 widening scheme between junctions 19 and 25 is committed within the Roads Investment Strategy for the 2015/16 to 2019/20. A preferred route announcement regarding whether there will be on line or off line widening has yet to be taken but it is expected in the Winter of 2017.

Optimum Benefits and Minimum Impacts

There are opportunities for existing residents, they will have ready access to a much greater array of facilities and services than they have at present; the volume of strategic-through traffic on local roads will decrease; yet careful planning and implementation will mean that their immediate surroundings may not change radically or quickly.

Future-Proofing Transport and Mobility

The timescales over which the Garden Community will grow and develop will need flexibility to incorporate exciting new technologies for future mobility, allowing the emerging neighbourhoods to respond to changes in patterns of travel behaviour which are constantly evolving in parallel with advances in new transport technology.

Respect for the Landscape and Existing Communities

There will be a positive relationship between new built form, existing communities and the landscape of the surrounding countryside. A network of extensive, new and accessible green spaces will preserve views and maintain the identity of existing communities - Marks Tey, Great Tey, Little Tey, Copford, Easthorpe, Surrex.

A Whole Bigger than the Sum of its Parts

This network will also create identity for distinctive new neighbourhoods, each self-sustaining and designed as a complete community, and each neighbourhood complementing and adding to range of services and facilities available to the whole.

A Comprehensive Green Network

A green network of connected walkways and cycleways that will provide attractive and safe non-vehicular access to core destinations such as the town centre, local centres, places of employment, schools and the railway station.

Phasing with Respect for Existing Residents

The first phase of development will be planned to minimise impacts on existing communities, address pressing accessibility and environmental issues and will deliver real benefits for existing residents.

Garden City Principles

Above all, there will be close adherence to Garden City Principles as promoted by the Town and Country Planning Association – the key to the creation of a distinctive, high-quality Garden Community.

A New, Exceptional Place

The Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will be an exceptional place to be born, to grow up, to make a career, to raise a family, to retire; to enjoy a rich and fulfilling life.



Q1 - Do you agree with the content of the Vision? Is anything missing? What are the priorities?

TAKING FORWARD THE NORTH ESSEX GARDEN COMMUNITIES CHARTER PRINCIPLES?

The Charter Principles form the bedrock of the Vision; they should be **cross cutting**, and should create a **robust and accountable framework** upon which to progress design and development of CBBGC.

The joint Strategic Section 1 of the draft Local Plans refers to the North Essex Garden Communities Charter, both within the site-specific policy for CBBGC (SP9) and in the general policy that relates to the development of cross-boundary Garden Communities (paragraph 8.11 and SP7). The draft Local Plan acknowledges that the Charter provides a good starting point for a framework through which to explore place-making, governance and delivery structures.

Building on the draft Local Plan, the North Essex Charter has helped to frame the Issues that are subject of this consultation. The Charter has three themes:

Place and Integration – which relates to issues such as making good places, high quality design, planning for a healthy economy, mobility and access within and around the development, and landscape and biodiversity objectives.

Community – which relates to issues such as creating identity in a new community, engaging with future residents and businesses, existing and surrounding communities and local and public bodies and ownership and maintenance of community assets.

Delivery – which relates to issues such as leadership, partnership and phasing and delivery of homes together with jobs; education, leisure and community facilities; and transport and utilities infrastructure. Under these three themes are a set of 10 guiding principles:

The 10 principles set out in the Charter have informed emerging strategies for CBBGC (see Section 4). Options identified by this document together with those identified through this consultation process will be 'tested' against the Charter Principles, the emerging strategies and the wider evidence base, to create a preferred option that will underpin the Development Plan for CBBGC.

Options considered must be realistic, feasible and must deliver against the Vision for CBBGC.



North Essex Garden Communities Charter Principles

Place and Integration

- *Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure*
- *Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport*
- *Principle 3 - Employment Opportunity*
- *Principle 4 - Living Environment*
- *Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living*
- *Principle 6 - Good Design*

Community

- *Principle 7 - Community Engagement*
- *Principle 8 - Active Local Stewardship*

Delivery

- *Principle 9 - Strong Corporate and Political Public Leadership*
- *Principle 10 - Innovative Delivery Structure*

Q2 - Is there anything missing from the NEGC Charter Principles?

SECTION 4.

Issues

WHAT ARE ISSUES?

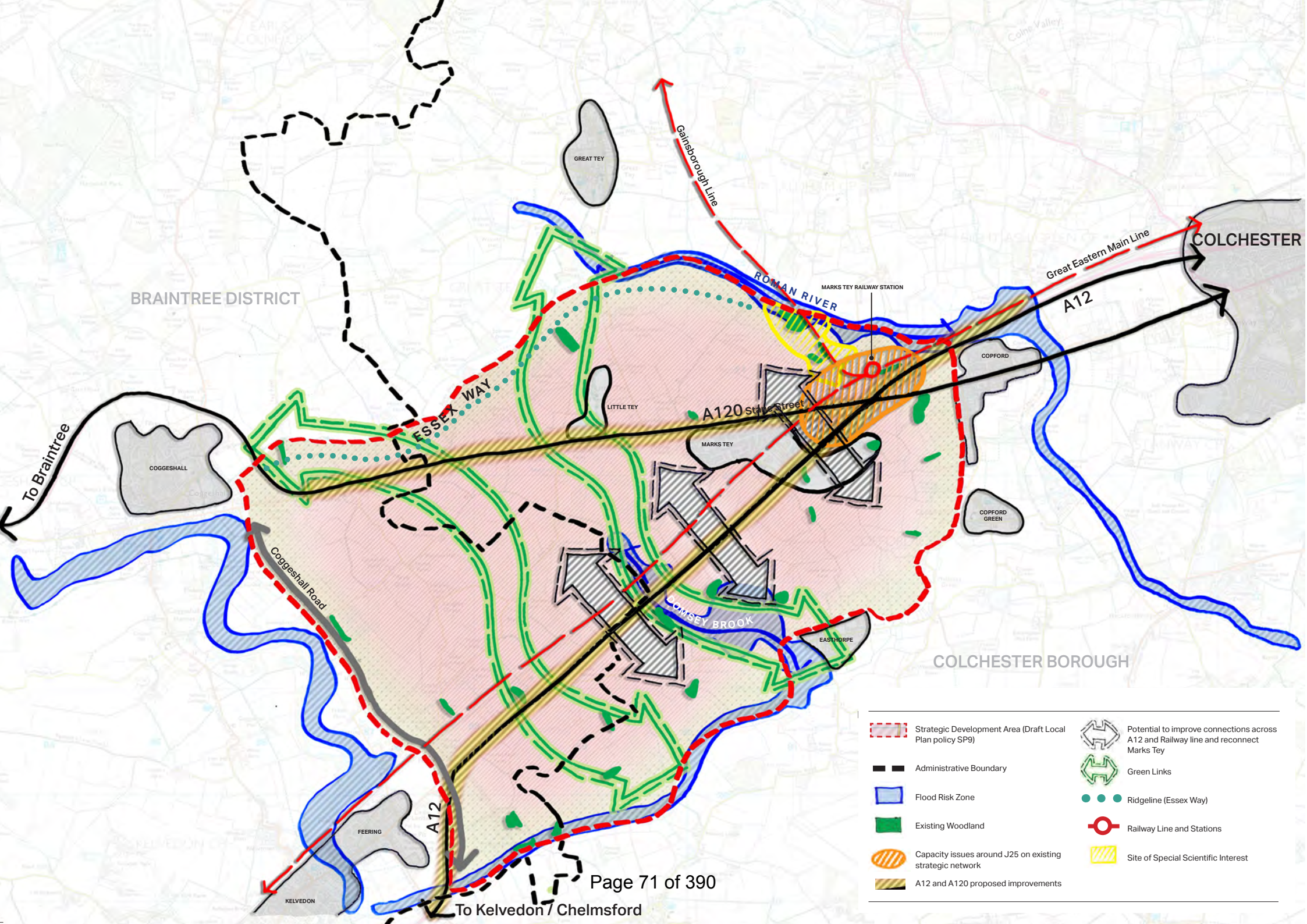
Issues are a set of considerations that are relevant to the design and delivery of development at CBBGC. The issues are understandably interrelated, they include and relate to elements of the Vision and the Charter guiding principles, but are also informed by constraints to the development that might limit the ability of some options to fulfil the Vision and Charter Principles as well as opportunities to maximise its potential.

This consultation seeks your views on these issues, how important they are, how they might be resolved but also whether there are any issues that have not been covered in this report. It also sets out the land-use, environmental and development constraints and potential opportunities related to the site.

Figure 4.1 shows some of the key constraints and opportunities for the site at CBBGC. When considered comprehensively, they start to reveal potential areas for development as well as factors to take into consideration as part of a detailed design and development strategy.

HOW WILL THE ISSUES HELP IDENTIFY THE RIGHT OPTION?

Understanding of the evidence base, emerging policy and guidance and engagement with stakeholders, specialist Council officers and Councillors has helped the Councils to compile a list of issues that needs to be addressed within a Plan for CBBGC.



THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

"The Garden Communities will provide a generous amount of green space. They will be set within a multi-functional and integrated natural environment; providing space for nature, making the communities more resilient to climate change; promoting healthy lifestyles, and creating beautiful places to live and work."



EMERGING STRATEGY

The concept of Garden Communities places great emphasis on the landscape framework and the availability of high-quality, accessible green space near to homes and community facilities. The strategy for these new Garden Communities is to draw upon natural assets and features within the site to generate high standards of design. It requires an approach that sets development within a strong framework of internal green space and surrounding buffer areas that separate the new development from existing communities.

- Habitats in and around the Domsey Brook and Roman River corridors and around Seven Star Green should be retained and enhanced. Subject to more detailed survey work, the area has the potential to support a number of protected species and other species of conservation importance.
- It is necessary to maintain the identity of distinct settlements to the west of Colchester, including Great Tey, Marks Tey, Coggeshall, Easthorpe, Kelvedon, Feering. Green settings should be safeguarded from inappropriate development. Care will be needed in new development to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent settlements and on the wider landscape – in particular, woodlands and mature hedgerows and field boundaries should be retained where they form screens.
- The existing landscape structure within the site should be retained and strengthened.
- The landscape framework should recognise the value of existing landscape and historic features and their ability to absorb and shape the development of a new community, it should:
 - provide an attractive setting to built development;
 - create a valuable and usable landscape in environmental terms,(biodiversity habitats, drainage) ; and
 - protect the amenity of existing and nearby settlements.

- A strategic green infrastructure framework will underpin the development of a more detailed green infrastructure framework that would accommodate the following functions:
 - Green links that will comprise formal open space, sports pitches, recreation and play areas and informal space for free play and recreation for all ages (such as pocket parks / outdoor gyms) that are accessible to communities and could help define and shape distinct new neighbourhoods
 - o Sustainable drainage and watercourses;
 - o Woodland, trees and hedgerows and areas of informal amenity;
 - o Productive landscapes such as allotments, community orchards, agriculture;
 - o Active green space which could include income generating uses supported by some built elements related to recreational activities, including access to footways, bridleways and cycle routes (eg commercial sports uses, cafes and restaurants, etc);
 - o Noise protection from strategic roads and the railways; and
 - o Green buffers to existing settlements, such as the creation of long Green park at Marks Tey.
- The provision of recreation facilities within the new Garden Community, including generous amounts of open space will help reduce the potential impact that additional residential uses will have on protected habitats in the area.

ISSUES

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for the new Garden Community will be the basis for achieving the different objectives outlined above. The Strategy should be comprehensive and balance the needs of the whole community with the natural environment. Your views are sought on the emerging approach to green infrastructure to help shape this future Strategy.

Q3 - Do you support the emerging approach to green infrastructure?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Parts of the site to be protected
- The sorts of public open space that are needed – parks, sports, play areas, natural places
- The importance of gardens and other private outside spaces
- How these spaces can be made available and accessible to everyone
- How they should be owned and maintained
- What are the open space priorities?

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 2: INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

"The Garden Communities will be planned around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport systems for the North Essex area which will put walking, cycling and public transit systems at the heart of the development, and be delivered in a timely way to support the communities as they grow."



EMERGING STRATEGY

The Partner Councils for North Essex have agreed a set of objectives for Integrated and Sustainable Transport across the area providing a strategic mobility backdrop for the creation of three new Garden Communities. These objectives are para-phrased below:

- Each new Garden Community should make full provision for active travel (walking and cycling) and sustainable travel (public transport) so that together they account for 70% of all trips.
 - Timely delivery of sustainable transport alongside homes and employment development.
 - Using technology and information to make best use of changing travel technologies in the future.
 - Organise new Garden Communities so that homes, jobs and facilities support sustainable travel and make public transport viable.
 - Inclusive, affordable and sustainable access to education, skills, jobs, shopping, healthcare, community facilities and transport hubs in each new Garden Community.
 - Walking and cycling that makes best use of current and future green infrastructure.
 - Minimise carbon emissions and pollutants associated with transport - such as supporting installation of electric charging points; cycle parking; and bike share schemes.
 - Modern, frequent and reliable public transport access to surrounding major towns and cities from the Garden Communities as an attractive and sustainable alternative to travel by car.
- Support the function and effective operation of local and strategic transport networks – roads, public transport, rail.

In the CBBGC area there are existing issues of poor connectivity and traffic congestion, transport corridors that divide existing communities and create environmental problems, particularly at peak times, and poor access to key locations such as schools, local shops and the railway station. These require a strategic approach to mobility and transport planning. The aim at CBBGC is to increase capacity for journeys by providing attractive alternatives to travel by car, and to redistribute through traffic to realigned routes. To these ends there are some specific proposals:

- Ensuring the most appropriate alignment of the A120 is designed and delivered in advance of longer term development.
- Connectivity by active travel modes – walking and cycling –to key destinations from the outset.,
- Reducing severance caused by the A12 and the mainline railway.
- Better accessibility for Marks Tey Station
- In conjunction with the scheme to widen the A12 from Junction 19 to Junction 25, there is potential to downgrade the existing Junction 25 on the A12 to reduce through traffic in Marks Tey if an off line A12 option is pursued
- Potential for downgrading of the A120 within the new Garden Community to become a 'community road' and unattractive to through traffic once a new A120 route has been confirmed.

- Optimising the development potential made possible by realignment of the A12 and A120.
- Potential for high quality rapid transit along Stane Street/ London Road corridor in the longer term and dependant on the A120 and A12 preferred options ;
- In the Medium- to Long-term, a Rapid Transit service to Colchester allied to dedicated routes and park & ride with phased construction through the new Garden Community.
- The potential for a new Town Centre railway station area in the longer term.
- Travel Plan development from the outset with exemplar levels of funding for travel plan measures to make the best use of infrastructure for active and sustainable modes of transport.

ISSUES

The approach to Transport and Infrastructure will have a direct relationship with the overall sustainability of the Garden Community and how it functions as a place. The availability of different transport choices will influence residents' behaviour strongly. Ensuring sustainable and active transport modes are given priority will be an underlying principle of the Strategy. Your views are sought on the emerging approach to help shape the future Transport Strategy.

Q4 - Do you support the emerging approach to integrated and sustainable transport?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Reducing the need to travel
- Encouraging people to walk, cycle and use public transport
- The importance of having public transport available in a timely manner to maximise its use in the community
- The best ways to accommodate cars so they don't dominate the environment
- Improving the environment of and access to Marks Tey Station and the need for a new station area for the Garden Community

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 3: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

"The Garden Communities will seek to provide access to one job per household within the new community or within a short distance by public transport. The employment function will be a key component of creating character and identity and sustainable communities."



EMERGING STRATEGY

This location, along with the proposed transport improvements, provides great access across North Essex to Colchester – the primary regional centre - Chelmsford and Braintree. Ipswich, Harwich, Basildon, Romford, Southend, London Stansted Airport are all within 30-60 minutes. The railway station opens destinations along the Great Eastern Main Line, including London.

Existing sectors of the economy have potential for growth:

- Logistics
- Financial services
- Digital and creative
- Construction and links to advanced manufacturing.

The new location could provide for:

- Grade A offices linked to a new station and attractive to financial services
- The creative and digital economy related to Colchester's emerging role in this sector and the presence of the University, but requiring investment in ultra-fast broadband.
- Construction innovation
- Logistics
- The energy sector, in particular opportunities in renewables and waste.

The evidence to date suggests that new jobs across North Essex as a whole will be created by:

- Internal growth within each Garden Community – new homes and a bigger population generate more demand for public and consumer service, and jobs related directly to the construction of the new Garden Community.
- External growth created by organisations that serve wider regional, national and international markets, organisations that grow locally or are attracted in from outside. Unlocking the potential of the A120 corridor connecting across North Essex will deliver a further 20% of the new jobs required.

The special nature of the new Garden Communities will be at the core of targeted and pro-active efforts to attract new employment organisations into North Essex as part of inward investment strategies.

Wider North Essex has the potential to become a site for every stage of business growth (R&D, warehouse, logistics, office – small, medium and large), with a clear focus on key growing sectors such as knowledge and creative industries. It can develop to be a cohesive economic corridor in the South East of England which will offer business workspace, access to labour and clusters of expertise in:

- Good access to international markets via London Stansted airport and Haven ports
- Logistics hub
- High quality office space for support services/back office functions

- Development of trade deals to capitalise on markets in the USA and Asia
- Enterprise Zones / LDOs / financial incentives for companies to locate
- Investment in smart technology and high quality commercial space

The employment evidence to date identifies a need across Essex for an additional 100 large firms in its economy, and many of these could be in North Essex. The Garden Communities offer particular advantages of good locations and access; modern business premises; available, good quality housing and services; and a supportive business environment. Such large companies would be the drivers to deepen and broaden the economic base of North Essex, creating high quality jobs in the new Garden Communities providing a broad range of employment opportunities to the citizens of North Essex.

ISSUES

An Employment Strategy will underpin the economic growth potential of the Garden Community and will also be an important factor in sustainable development. Planning for economic growth is very different from planning for new housing because so many more factors are outside the control of the Councils; but the Garden Community can provide the right conditions to attract employers and employment and job growth. Your views on how the right conditions can be created are welcome.

Q5 - Do you support the emerging approach to employment opportunity?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Making best use of nearby economic drivers – the University, the Ports, town centres, existing employment centres
- Businesses that can grow with the new Garden Community
- Attracting employment that complements existing employment
- Jobs for a wide range of different people
- Changing technology and business needs
- Sustainable journeys to work

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 4: **LIVING ENVIRONMENT**

“Community inclusiveness and walkable, sociable and vibrant neighbourhoods will be a defining characteristic of the Garden Communities. A diverse mix of homes responding to existing and future local needs will be provided alongside a range of community services, including health, education, leisure and recreation, culture and shopping.”



EMERGING STRATEGY

Living Environment is a key Garden Communities principle that aims to set these new communities apart from run of the mill development. The North Essex Garden Communities Charter seeks the creation of social, vibrant, mixed and inclusive communities.

Neighbourhoods where everything is within easy walking distance, planned around connected centres, which provide a mix of homes, jobs and services set within attractive and green environments, and busy streets; places where residents can socialise, enjoy cultural facilities and lead healthy lifestyles.

The Charter also seeks innovative approaches to delivering local community services and facilities.

New ways to provide and deliver the education, health and other social and community facilities and services needed to support the new community will be explored to make sure these services are inclusive and available to all.

Options might include:

- Services gathered together in ‘hubs’ in the most accessible places to encourage cooperation and collaboration without duplication so that they make the best use of the land available.
- Flexible and adaptable, multi-purpose spaces (outdoor and indoor) that provide for specific but changing needs of a wide range of the individuals, groups, organisations, workers and visitors who together form the community.
- The new Garden Community as a responsible neighbour – planning social Infrastructure to ensure that facilities are of benefit to both existing and new communities without compromising services which already exist.

Provision of a variety of housing tenures with levels of affordability reflected in different ownership models is an essential part of the creation of a balanced Garden Community.

Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will have a Town Centre that will be the heart of the Garden Community. It will likely contain the highest development density with a mix of employment, shopping, education needs, cultural and amenity and health facilities, together with the main public transport interchange.

Neighbourhood centres will contain a smaller range of local services including primary schools, nurseries, health services, day-to-day convenience shopping and cafés. They will be located in within 10 minutes’ walk of homes. They may be grouped around public space to encourage cooperation

and collaboration between community facilities and opportunities to share management costs.

CBBGC will provide for a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and types including provision for self-build and custom-built homes, lifetime homes and affordable and starter homes, independent living and housing for older people, driven by local needs, including how this may change over time. This strategy will help to achieve lively, sociable and diverse neighbourhoods, giving single people, couples, families, retirees and elderly people the chance play a full part in the life of CBBGC.

ISSUES

Part of creating an attractive living environment is the delivery of a good mix of land uses that promote social interaction and integration, fostering a sense of place and community. Your views on this subject will help shape a future strategy that will make the Garden Community a celebrated place to live, work and spend time, with a strong sense of identity.

Q6 - Do you support the emerging approach to the living environment?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Providing homes for all – singles, couples, families, older people, to rent, to buy or to build themselves
- Good examples of public places that are safe, sociable and busy
- What services should a new Town Centre include (social, cultural, education and leisure activities)
- What services should new local centres include (social, cultural, education and leisure activities)
- Making places and spaces flexible for future users

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 5: SMART AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING STRATEGY

“Planned for the 21st century, the Garden Communities will secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters resilient environments and communities; able to respond positively to changing circumstances. Innovation and technology will be embraced to achieve resource efficiency, higher quality of life and healthier lifestyles; creating the conditions for sustainable living.”



EMERGING STRATEGY

The Partner Councils for North Essex are preparing a strategy for Smart and Sustainable Living based on five Key Principles:

- Smart Places – places that incorporate the best of technology to support sustainable living
- Smart Mobility – technology that facilitate sustainable travel choices
- Smart Lives – technology that enable independent living throughout life
- Smart Infrastructure – technology that delivers sustainable energy and waste solutions
- Smart Public Services – enabling access to public services as effectively and efficiently as possible

The aim of the strategy is to support Sustainable Living, focused on the new Garden Communities but with the potential to transform existing communities too.

In the context of a new Garden Community on the Colchester Braintree Borders, it is possible to elaborate on what Smart and Sustainable Living might mean.

Smart Mobility would see the application of Active by Design principles using the planning and design of the new Garden Community to encourage active and healthy lifestyles. The Partnership subscribes to the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and will design in opportunities for a step change in Active Travel including Smart Hubs that make interchange with public transport simple and secure.

Beyond active travel, use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicles charging infrastructure linked to renewable generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. Planning for autonomous and internet connected service vehicles would enable consolidated deliveries – either to neighbourhood hubs or individual residences.

Smart Lives would support Independent Living by using technology and apps to enable and support independence for longer, reducing the burden on social and health services.

Smart Infrastructure could include:

- cutting edge digital communications, designed for ultrafast broadband and 5G from the outset and future-proofed for simple upgrades.
- Smart Energy systems that use collective contracts to deliver sustainable energy at lower prices through a community owned network tailored to the community's needs
- capacity and adaptability for technological change through the design of flexible cable ducts etc
- considering space for Hubs/Centres for energy – heat and power - generation within each new Garden Community.
- maximising efficiency at the household level, with on-site generation and use of battery storage, with technology to monitor individual energy
- a mixed portfolio of energy technologies to avoid dependence on any one energy solution.
- Smart Waste to aim at zero carbon and maximum waste recycling with a Waste Hub linked to generation

Smart Public Services could involve greater collaboration and coordination to deliver comprehensive services effectively through “one-stop” arrangements in terms of joint offices and on-line operations through a common portal.

ISSUES

The creation of a new Garden Community provides an exciting opportunity to embrace the latest innovations and technologies available to make buildings, infrastructure and lifestyles more efficient, more enjoyable and more sustainable than what could be achieved through smaller, disjointed development proposals.

Q7 - Do you support the emerging approach to smart and sustainable living?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Making new technology available to everyone
- Encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Adapting to new technologies

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 6: GOOD DESIGN

"Through all stages of the planning, design and development of the Garden Communities the highest quality of design and management of the built and public realm will be promoted. Existing local assets will be capitalised to help create distinctive places."



EMERGING STRATEGY

Garden Communities must achieve attractive and locally distinctive, high quality and sustainable design. Development should be well-laid out to help people find their way easily, and should have generous open spaces, public, private and communal to help create distinctiveness and interest. Masterplans and design guidance will be developed as important tools to secure good design throughout the development.

Greener and more efficient development blocks, be designed so they are outward facing onto the streets for good surveillance of public places, but should accommodate substantial areas of integrated green space within, to provide for good sized gardens, landscaping, recreation, wildlife and food growing and other private space.

How a new community interacts with its existing landscape is an important design consideration. The design and layout should respond positively to the historic environment which creates opportunities for developing distinctiveness and interesting places. It is considered desirable to retain a 'green gap' between the new Garden Communities and the settlement limits of existing villages and towns, to avoid coalescence and maintain identity. The design of the edges of the new community must reflect that ambition.

The layout of this new Garden Community will be strongly influenced by the re-routing/re-alignment of the two strategic roads – the A12 and the A120 – and a decision on the potential relocation and/or expansion of the railway station. The new and re-aligned road routes will take all through traffic out of the new Garden Community, creating an environment much better suited to the creation of a good residential environment for future and existing residents. The possible future relocation and enhancement of the railway station will determine the optimum location for a proposed town centre.

The layout should also accommodate future innovations in travel, especially potential Rapid Transit networks.

The landscape framework will inform and define development parcels for residential, employment and mixed use development. Employment development will be closely related to the railway and to new junctions on the new strategic road network as well as the town centre. The Town Centre will be at the point most accessible to the greatest number of possible users, and well related to the railway station which will be the key public transport hub. Neighbourhood centres will be at the heart of neighbourhood, of between 4000 and 6000 homes each. These locations will support a higher density of development that can make best use of the higher level of accessibility by non-car means.

The Green Infrastructure that makes up the landscape framework will retain the identity existing communities, both around the new Garden Community – Coggeshall, Feering, Great Tey, etc – and within it – the parts of Marks Tey, Little Tey, etc. But they will also be a shared recreational resource available to both existing and future residents. These will create a positive edge to open countryside

ISSUES

The approach to design and management of the built environment and public realm will help shape an identity for the new Garden Community and will be the most prominent factor for many people in their perception of the Garden Community. To get this right your responses will influence the design approach adopted.

Q8 - Do you support the emerging approach to good design?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- How to ensure high quality, sustainable design through all stages of the development and delivery of CBBGC so that it a successful place to live and work
- The relationship between new development with the open countryside – defining edges
- Protecting identity of existing communities

THEME 2. COMMUNITY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"The Garden Communities are a locally-led initiative, and their development will be shaped through engaging existing communities and emerging new communities; residents will be empowered to contribute to shaping the future of North Essex."



EMERGING STRATEGY

Continued, meaningful engagement from inception to implementation is necessary. Each Garden Community will be developed from a locally-led vision, and ongoing and meaningful public and stakeholder participation through the Local Plan process and beyond. Community engagement will form a key part of developing a masterplan for each Garden Community and subsequent planning applications, both utilising the extensive knowledge and views of the existing and new communities to help shape and refine proposals. Exhibitions and other forms of community engagement events will be held locally as the plans for the Garden Communities are progressed.

Existing communities will be given the opportunity to define how they want to engage with the new communities being created. Community enablers are engaged to help communities participate effectively.

A bespoke site-specific engagement strategy will be developed for CBBGC in parallel with future design and master planning stages as well as throughout its implementation and delivery.

ISSUES

The Councils are committed to ensuring the Garden Community is planned to incorporate a grass-roots approach that gives the local community the opportunity to take part in the evolution of the development as it progresses. The Councils are seeking your views on how they best engage with the local community over the longer-term.

Q9 - Do you support the emerging approach to community engagement?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The best way to involve local people and other stakeholders in planning for CBBGC
- The value of a shared vision for CBBGC
- The best way to involve new residents and businesses as they arrive in the new community

THEME 2. COMMUNITY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 8: ACTIVE LOCAL STEWARDSHIP

"The Garden Communities will be developed, owned and managed in perpetuity with the direct involvement of their residents and businesses; residents will be directly engaged in the long-term management and stewardship, fostering a shared sense of ownership and identity."



EMERGING STRATEGY

One of the defining principles of Garden Communities is that assets that are important to the local community should be owned and managed by them directly, helping to build a sense of community and collective responsibility.

At this stage, the emerging strategy consists of a number of proposals:

- There should be one Local Stewardship Body for each proposed garden community. The Bodies should be encouraged to collaborate actively with each other, and other bodies to achieve economies through shared services and to use best practice.
- The agreement with the landowners needs to make provision for the cost of endowing the Body with rental assets that cover their stewardship costs, to be reflected in the land value. Such endowment should be as generous as possible and include flexibility to obtain ownership of commercial property created as part of the garden communities to generate rental income.
- The Body could have the ability to raise revenue from residents through a local levy. Such a levy would be controlled by the residents to further in interests of the community, for example by managing grounds maintenance and the provision of community facilities within CBBGC.

A bespoke site-specific management and stewardship strategy will be developed for CBBGC in parallel with future design and master planning stages as well as throughout its implementation and delivery. Given the scale of the development, the strategy will need to be flexible to adapt to changes in the procurement and delivery of assets and facilities over time, in the interests of the new community and its population.

ISSUES

Garden Communities are most commonly associated with delivering high levels of 'hard' infrastructure such as new means of transportation, health and educational facilities, and generous amounts of open space; but ensuring the 'soft' infrastructure of active local stewardship is given adequate support and resources is just as essential. Your view on how arrangements can be made from the outset to help the Garden Community's social infrastructure flourish are welcomed.

Q10 - Do you support the emerging approach to active local stewardship?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The best way to manage and maintain "community assets" - parks, sports pitches, allotments, community buildings and schools and community transport, for example
- Ownership of assets – the developer, a management company, a community trust, the Council or any other

THEME 3. DELIVERY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 9: STRONG CORPORATE & POLITICAL PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

"The Councils of North Essex will collaborate to provide clear vision for the Garden Communities and commitment to their long-term success. Central to this will be a commitment to high quality place-making, timely infrastructure provision, and achieving a steady pace of housing and employment delivery."



EMERGING STRATEGY

A successful Garden Community relies on strong corporate and political leadership and a clearly defined shared Vision. The Garden Communities project will be led by the partnership of four local councils. Strong, cross-party, political support will drive the project forward over several Local Plan periods and political cycles.

The delivery of the Garden Communities will require a positive and active approach by both the public and private sectors. The Councils will explore all opportunities to take a direct stake in the delivery process relating to good place-making, infrastructure delivery, funding and governance. The councils will need to take a long term strategic view of development to ensure that the vision and ambitions for the Garden Communities are delivered. This will require forward thinking and planning that is not limited to the current plan-making time horizon of 15 years, but looks well beyond that. The Garden Communities will place the Councils' commitment to high quality place-making and infrastructure delivery at the heart of the development, and a central tenet of all governance and delivery mechanisms created to bring forward the new Garden Communities.

A key outcome of this consultation process is to frame a shared Vision for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community that secures a high level of ambition and will set a benchmark for the standard of design and development to deliver against the Vision.

ISSUES

Strong corporate and political leadership is a key principle of the Garden Community, particularly given the significant challenges of delivering a new settlement of scale which crosses local authority boundaries and will cover future Local Plan periods.

Q11 - Do you support the emerging approach to corporate and political leadership?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The best way to secure design and quality by all involved in delivery
- Future governance

THEME 3. DELIVERY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 10: INNOVATIVE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

“The Garden Communities will be delivered through a genuine and pro-active partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward is shared and community empowerment enabled.”

EMERGING STRATEGY

The delivery of new Garden Communities on this scale requires delivery arrangements that are more complex and wide-reaching than those that would apply to conventional smaller -scale development. Most notable is a desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.

This involvement will go beyond the role of the three Local Planning Authorities in making local planning policy and determining planning applications.

The partnership of four Councils has created a jointly owned company, North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC Ltd) which intends to oversee the evolution and delivery of the Garden Communities. NEGC Ltd has an ambition to coordinate public funds to ensure that infrastructure is delivered at the right time to support the new Garden Communities and to minimise the impacts on existing communities.

Each Garden Community could be delivered by a special Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV), an agreement between the Councils, landowners and developers that will manage the planning design and construction process in each location. This will be overseen by NEGC Ltd.

The Councils are also exploring the formation of one or more local Development Corporations with the powers to acquire and to hold land, to prepare master plans and other guidance, and to determine planning applications in each Garden Community area, thereby ensuring high standards and capturing land values to pay for infrastructure and community assets. Such a Development Corporation would be locally accountable.

A site-specific delivery strategy will be prepared for CBBGC. This will need to consider the delivery and implementation of the three new Garden Communities in parallel and have regard to national guidance and emerging legislation relating to the delivery of ‘New Towns’ to include the consideration of delivery organisations that are locally accountable.

ISSUES

The Councils have a collective commitment to ensuring that the delivery of the Garden Community raises the expectations and the reputation of new, large scale development. This step-change in housing delivery is reliant on an innovative delivery structure which puts the Councils aspirations at the heart of future governance. Your thoughts on the form an innovative delivery structure take are sought.

Q12 - Do you support the emerging approach to innovative delivery structure?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The level of involvement of the Local Authorities and NEGC Ltd in promotion and delivery of CBBGC
- Funding the investments
- The need for public funds to secure infrastructure in advance of development

SECTION 5.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT OPTION

ESTABLISHING A BOUNDARY FOR DEVELOPMENT

The area of land that could accommodate a new Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders has been refined from options presented in the "Options and Evaluation" work undertaken by AECOM in July 2016 and influenced by stakeholder consultation with local community representatives in November 2016 and April 2017, as well as an understanding of the issues and the interrelationship between them which include:

- identification of clear and defensible boundaries (water courses, roads, woodland belts);
- appreciation of distance and separation of communities – (physical, visual, perceived);
- relationship to existing settlements;
- nature of land that will perform the role of a "green buffer" which will define an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated that remains distinct from other existing settlements;
- planning policy protection (how might this land be protected "in perpetuity" from built development whilst allowing complementary activities that support both the new community and existing communities?).

At this stage the range in development scale (15,000-24,000 homes) as referred to in the draft Strategic Section 1 Local Plan Policy SP9, limits the extent to which boundaries can be fixed. The boundaries of development will be further refined in the Development Plan Document that follows this exploration of Issues and Options.

WHAT IS A CONCEPT FRAMEWORK?

As part of the development, the development potential for a Garden Community on the Colchester Braintree Borders (CBBGC) has been explored in a **Concept Framework**, presented at Figure 5.1.

A Concept Framework is a diagram of structure. It interprets key criteria from the Town and Country Planning Association's Garden City Principles and the North Essex Garden Communities Charter and responds positively to site constraints and opportunities and has been subject to critical review following local consultation.

Whilst it is a robust basis for development that has been tested, it is not yet a master plan for the new Garden Community. It presents a layout option for consideration, evaluation and to prompt wider responses or generate alternative approaches to structuring development at CBBGC. The development quantity, form and disposition of land uses presented for CBBGC will be further explored and refined through later policy making and master planning stages. The Sustainability Appraisal process is a critical part of exploration and refinement of options and is carried out at each stage of plan development.

The full report on the Concept Framework is available as part of the evidence base for this Issues and Options consultation.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL AT CBBGC

The capacity range of CBBGC identified in the draft joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan policy SP9 is 15,000 - 24,000 homes. There are, of course, factors that could limit the number of homes that can be built and the locations where they can be built. Some development constraints are flexible and can be accommodated through appropriate design and some are fixed. But all options will require choices, choices that lead to compromises, often between important but competing objectives.

Essex County Council has committed to leading on a feasibility study to upgrade the A120 between Braintree and the A12. It has been agreed by Essex County Council, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Highways England that the County Council will lead on the review of options through to Preferred Route status with the objective being for the scheme to be included in Highways England's Roads Investment Strategy: for the 2020/21 – 2024/25 Road Period (RIS2).

The A12 widening scheme between junctions 19 and 25 is committed within the Roads Investment Strategy for the 2015/16 to 2019/20. A preferred route announcement regarding whether there will be on line or off line widening has yet to be taken but it is expected in the Winter.

This Concept Framework presents a spatial option which identifies potential for 727 hectares of residential land. Table 1 presents a summary of the land uses and key elements that are contained within the Concept Framework.

The working option presented, identifies seven development parcels each with its own characteristics and each with a particular role to play in the new community as a whole.

- TC Town Centre
- NC Neighbourhood Centre
- SS Secondary School
- PS Primary School
- Residential
- Employment
- Connected network of open space
- Rapid Transit / public transport route
- Park and Ride

***Please refer to page 34 in Section 5 for further information concerning the proposals for the A12 a A120**

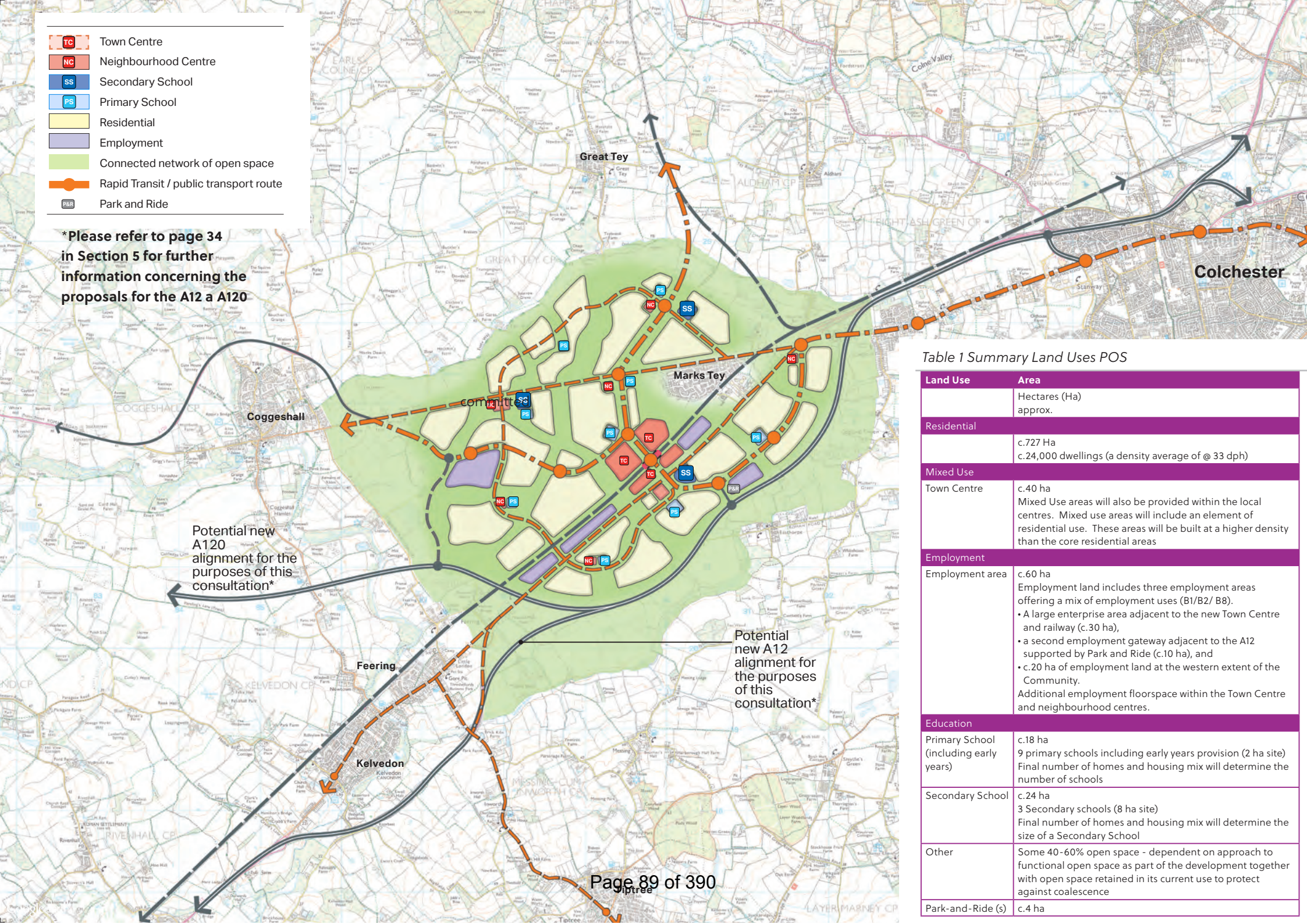


Table 1 Summary Land Uses POS

Land Use	Area
	Hectares (Ha) approx.
Residential	c.727 Ha c.24,000 dwellings (a density average of @ 33 dph)
Mixed Use	
Town Centre	c.40 ha Mixed Use areas will also be provided within the local centres. Mixed use areas will include an element of residential use. These areas will be built at a higher density than the core residential areas
Employment	
Employment area	c.60 ha Employment land includes three employment areas offering a mix of employment uses (B1/B2/ B8). • A large enterprise area adjacent to the new Town Centre and railway (c.30 ha), • a second employment gateway adjacent to the A12 supported by Park and Ride (c.10 ha), and • c.20 ha of employment land at the western extent of the Community. Additional employment floorspace within the Town Centre and neighbourhood centres.
Education	
Primary School (including early years)	c.18 ha 9 primary schools including early years provision (2 ha site) Final number of homes and housing mix will determine the number of schools
Secondary School	c.24 ha 3 Secondary schools (8 ha site) Final number of homes and housing mix will determine the size of a Secondary School
Other	Some 40-60% open space - dependent on approach to functional open space as part of the development together with open space retained in its current use to protect against coalescence
Park-and-Ride (s)	c.4 ha

At an assumed average density of some 33 dwelling per hectare (consistent with Garden City principles) this could deliver some 24,000 homes, a community of some 55,000 people. Even at the upper range of development, the Concept Framework meets the aspirations of a new Garden Community, to include sufficient provision of high quality and accessible open space and self-contained neighbourhoods at appropriate densities that contain a good mix of facilities and services to sustain a new population, but also could cater for nearby rural communities.

The fundamental rationale for three new Garden Communities across North Essex is that all the infrastructure, services and facilities required by these new communities can be planned and coordinated from the outset, and the long-term commitment means that the mechanisms, resources and funding can be put in place to deliver them in a timely way. Roads, public transport, walking and cycling, schools, health and welfare, jobs, open spaces, local shopping, sports and recreation, community development, etc. are all planned in advance, comprehensively. People in these new communities (and in nearby existing communities) will have real choices about where to live and to work, and where to walk and shop, all aspects of an active and fulfilling life. And the range of infrastructure and choice can be delivered because of the proposed scale of development. In simple terms, the bigger the development, the greater the investment in infrastructure, services and facilities and the greater the certainty that it will all be delivered when it is required.

This is in sharp contrast to incremental growth and development spread across many existing communities when the scale of development in any one place is seldom able to cover the investment in infrastructure, facilities and services required.

The Concept Framework for CBBGC has shown capacity for development at the upper end of the target range for the eventual number of households and population. Commitment to delivery at that scale will provide the justification for the level of investment required over the long-term.

Table 1 presents a summary of the land uses and key elements shown in the Concept Framework “working development option” (Figure 1).

DEVELOPMENT PHASING AT CBBGC

The size of the proposed new Garden Community means that it is a long-term project that will take time to be completed. It is also dependent on major infrastructure investments – transport infrastructure – that will be implemented over an extended timescale as well.

The Concept Framework has been devised with these stages of development in mind, and two possible interim stages are illustrated.

INITIAL STAGE

Figure 5.2 presents an initial stage of development.

The initial stage of development illustrates how some limited development can commence in the absence of planned strategic highway interventions. This approach will rely on alternative ‘interim’ infrastructure that provide sufficient alleviation from traffic along the A120 through Marks Tey.

It has been made clear through previous consultation with local community groups, that no development of any significance should be started without diversion of traffic on the existing A120 away from Marks Tey and Junction 25. As part of a first stage of works, the Concept Framework illustrates how a new by-pass link between the A120 from the existing Cogeshall by-pass, across the railway to a new junction on the existing A12 or indeed a new alignment of the A12, if that is constructed early, could be provided in advance of any improvement to the A120, to ease traffic flows on the existing A120 route through Marks Tey.

INTERMEDIATE STAGE

Figure 5.3 presents a second stage of development.

This stage presents an opportunity to embed a new community supported by a new Town Centre. As presented in the Concept Framework, it illustrates the A12 and A120 diverted to new alignment options (please refer to page 34 for more details) and the potential relocation of the existing Marks Tey railway station as part of a new station area adjacent to the new Town Centre. The Town Centre will expand onto the safeguarded land and new residential development can expand around the Town centre and north, west and south of Marks Tey. The majority of strategic through traffic will be diverted from the existing A12 and A120 allowing the road space to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. The new Rapid Transit route could connect to Colchester via Stanway.

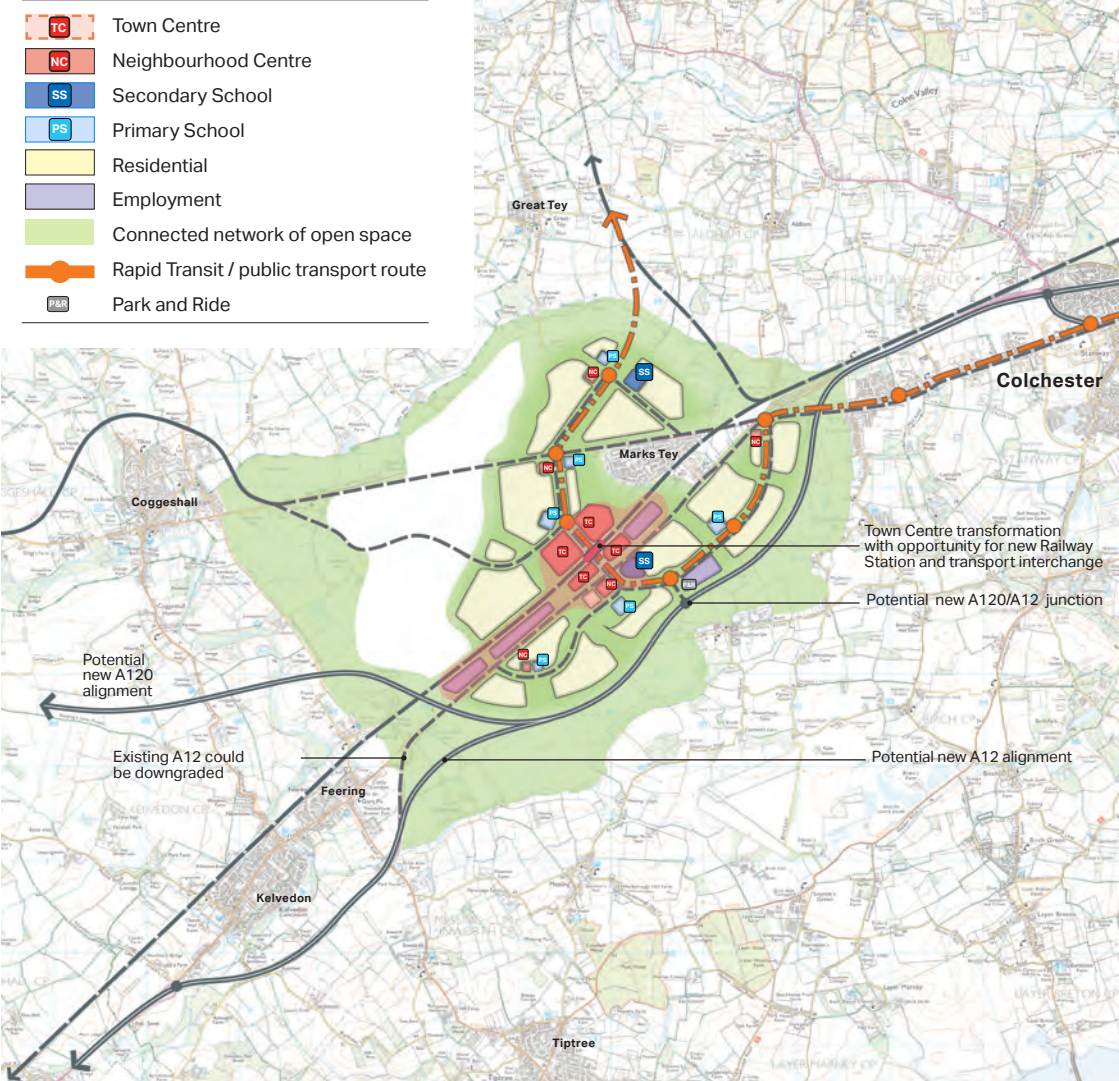


Figure 5.3: Growing a Garden Community

STRATEGIC ROAD PROPOSALS

The A12 widening scheme between junction 19 and 25 is within a committed government programme to begin building by 2020. A preferred route announcement regarding whether there will be on-line or off-line widening has yet to be taken but is expected in Winter 2017/18.

The Concept Framework embraces an A12 'offline solution' but is purposefully, more 'offline' than the options presented by the HE. It could take heavy traffic out of the heart of Marks Tey community and define a defensible southern and eastern edge to the new community, whilst providing the opportunity to convert the existing A12 alignment to a boulevard function through CBBGC with one carriageway repurposed for rapid transit and active modes.

In March 2017, ECC completed an Options Consultation on potential routes for the A120 for the section between Braintree and the A12. ECC will recommend a preference to Government / Highways England in Autumn 2017 and will lobby for the project to be included in the Road Investment Strategy 2020-2025.



A120 Braintree to A12 options

There are currently five potential A120 routing options that have been subject to public consultation by Essex County Council.

Options A, B and C route would run nearest to its current alignment. Option A proposes a continuation of the Coggeshall bypass, running south east to meet the A12. This option would result in the new A120 section running through the Garden Community – in an alignment similar to that presented as the initial strategic Marks Tey relief link in the Concept Framework. This could be designed to be the long-term solution, but with some impacts on the layout and integration of the Garden Community.

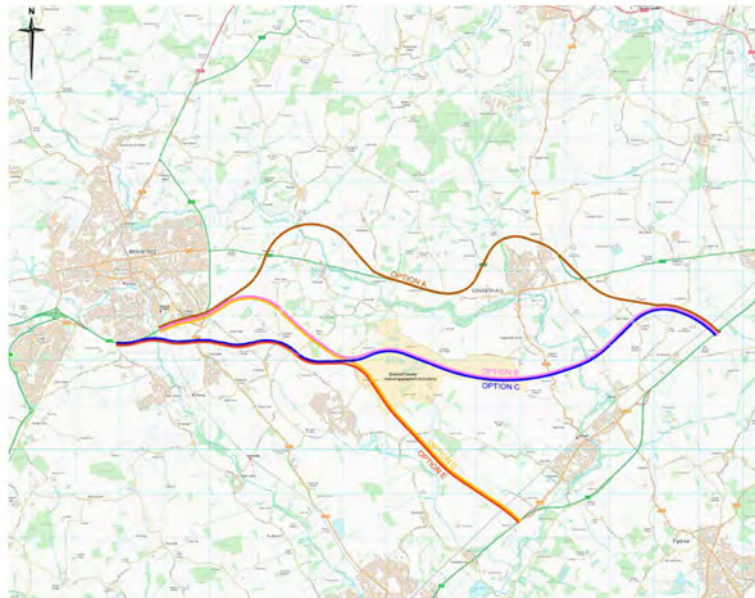
‘Option D/E’ would meet the A12 south of Kelvedon, some distance from CBBGC. If either one of these options were to be pursued, local highways access solutions for the CBBGC could be developed independent of the strategic A120 and A12 junction improvements, however appropriate access should be provided to the strategic network.

Whilst A120 alignments A, B and C could influence the form and layout of development at CBBGC, it is unlikely that these routes would have a direct effect on the scale of development that would be achieved, to the same degree as choices to be made on the A12 improvements.

The A120 alignment as presented by the Concept Framework could help form a defensible south-western edge to the new community. A new junction with the A12 that is designed to provide network efficiencies in the form of free-flowing slips, could be created north of Kelvedon.

The Concept Framework supports the realignment of the A12 and A120 to remove strategic through traffic from existing communities and the proposed new Garden Community.

The County Council will maintain close working relationships with the Department for Transport, Highways England and the Local Planning Authorities’ to facilitate the delivery of these important strategic projects.



Layout of development

The Concept Framework (Figure 5.1) is a working' option. It presents a layout that establishes a series of identifiable neighbourhoods proportionate to the walking distances that people might experience day-to-day – to school, local shops, transport services, recreation, consistent with the charter and T CPA principles.

The Concept Framework includes:

- Green buffers that separate the new development from existing communities, create an attractive landscape setting for the new development, provide space for functions such as storm water management and create opportunities for formal and informal recreation
- Removal of strategic through traffic from the existing and proposed new communities
- Potential re-routing of the A12 between Feering and east of Junction 25 to a new alignment to the south
- Potential re-routing of the A120 to a new alignment between Braintree and Marks Tey, removing through traffic from Coggeshall Road/Stane Street and downgrading Junction 25
- Potential to relocate the railway station to increase capacity and frequency of services
- Employment areas between the railway and the A12
- Employment areas accessible to new junctions on the A12 and A120
- Five large new residential neighbourhoods around a new Town Centre, separated by broad green corridors connecting to open countryside

- A new Town Centre to the west of Marks Tey incorporating potential for a relocated railway station as part of a new station area.
- Local Centres that serve the other neighbourhoods
- Sites for up to nine new primary schools and three new secondary schools - education provision will be informed by number of houses to be delivered.
- Rapid Transit services to be incorporated through the centre of the Garden Community connecting a potential Park-and-Ride site near the A12, employment areas, the Town Centre and most local centres with Colchester, Braintree and the wider North Essex area.
- A variety of accessible green spaces that accommodate a network of prioritised walking and cycling routes

Landscape and Open Space Framework

The green spaces in the landscape framework can accommodate the following functions:

- Some 40-60% open space - dependent on approach to functional open space as part of the development together with open space retained in its current use to protect against coalescence
- Formal open space, sports pitches, recreation and play areas;
- SUDS/ drainage and watercourses;
- Woodland, trees and hedgerows and areas of informal amenity;
- Productive landscapes such as allotments, community orchards, agriculture;
- Active green space which could include income generating uses supported by some built elements that could be related to recreational activities and accommodate footpath and cycle routes;
- Informal resource for recreation and free play allowing direct intimate contact with the natural environment permeating residential areas;
- Noise mitigation of the A120; and
- Development buffers between existing settlements.

Mobility and Access Framework

The mobility and access principles as presented by the framework include:

- integration of a Rapid Transit system as a principal route through CBBGC, as a step change in public transport provision for Colchester Town and the wider urban area. The route includes a principal route serving the Garden Community and its Town Centre, as part of a string of Rapid Transit nodes that extend eastwards along London Road (B1408) towards Stanway and onto Colchester Town, and, potentially, north along the Gainsborough Line to connect with Sudbury.
- Removal of strategic through traffic from the existing and proposed new communities;
- Marks Tey relief link to be delivered as part of a first phase of development and serve as a development route in the long term.
- Potential re-routing of the A12 between Feering and east of Junction 25 to a new alignment to the south
- Potential re-routing of the A120 to a new alignment between Braintree and Marks Tey, removing through traffic from Coggeshall Road/Stane Street and downgrading Junction 25.
- Potential for relocation of the existing Marks Tey station to create a new station area at the heart of CBBGC.

- High quality public transport corridors to include enhanced bus connections beyond the development site: west towards Coggeshall and Braintree; south towards Feering and Kelvedon and Chelmsford; and east towards Stanway and on to Colchester Town, supported by a package of measures that encourage travel by sustainable modes of transport.
- Key Rapid Transit nodes complemented by a series of local transport interchanges supporting the integration of public transport with cycling / walking. This network would promote the principles of walkable community catchments, and serve key community facilities such as schools.

Employment Framework

The employment principles as presented by the framework include:

- Maximising economic advantages provided by the co-location of a new Town Centre, a new central Railway Station Area, Rapid Transit interchange, and direct and convenient access to the A12 – defined as an A12 Enterprise Corridor, with a mix of employment uses such as office, R&D and high skill employment uses associated with a Town Centre location, as well as B2 and B8 opportunities.
- Opportunities for two business park sites, adjacent to the A12 (Eastern Gateway); and at the western extent of the new Garden Community (Western Gateway Business Park), with convenient access to the A120.
- employment opportunities within the neighbourhood centres, complementary to the provision of retail, community uses and schools.
- Promoting opportunities for homeworking and accommodating new working practices.

Density Framework / Typical Typologies

The density principles as presented by the framework include a mix of densities that will be informed by a masterplanning approach to development and will accommodate detached family homes, terraced houses, apartment blocks and mix-used areas (such as apartments over shops) :

Areas of Higher Density

Town Centre (60-100 dwellings per hectare (dph))

- Higher densities support mixed uses and offer significant design benefits, creating attractive urban places for shopping and leisure, incorporating space for businesses
- Provides sufficient population to support development of a rapid transit network to secure sustainable transport alternatives to the private car;

Higher density up to 60 dph

- around the Rapid Transit interchanges and neighbourhood centres to maximise the adjacent catchment population. Denser residential forms will also complement and help frame mixed use areas associated with centres, providing legibility and character to the built form distinct from wider residential areas and improving

their viability.

Average Density (30-40 dph)

- residential neighbourhoods close to the town centre could accommodate densities of some 40 dwellings per hectare (dph)
- range of 35-40 dph, likely to be appropriate for core

residential areas.

Areas of Lower Density up to 30 dph

lower density development might be appropriate to ensure sensitive integration of development around the western and southern edges of the site.



Hammarby Sjöstad, Stockholm



Bishop's Walk, Ely



Ravenswood Ipswich

SECTION 6.

Next steps

Community Infrastructure Framework

The community infrastructure principles as presented by the framework include a range of mixed use areas. These should respond to a clear hierarchy of centres:

- Town Centre – proposed as the heart of the new community. It will provide a wide range of retail, leisure, employment, education community and health uses that support a town in its economic, social and cultural life. Colchester Town Centre will however, remain the principal focus for retail and town centre uses in the Borough.
- Mixed use neighbourhood centres within will cater for day-to-day needs close to each home and help reinforce the concept of self-contained neighbourhoods, located to maximise the proportion of residential properties within 400m or 5 minutes walk; served by public transport and likely to be co-located with schools.

Q13 - Do you support the emerging Concept Framework for the site?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The proposed size of the new Garden Community
- Where to start and what to do first
- Delivery of the Garden Communities Charter Principles, and where it could do better
- Parts of the Concept Framework that work well and parts that could do better
- Particular aspects that ought to be changed

Q14 - Are there any other considerations relevant to the delivery of Garden Communities, in general or in relation to this site in particular, that have not been identified or discussed in this document?

This document has provided information on the proposed Vision, Principles, Issues and a working option for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community.

We welcome your views on all those elements, and anything you feel should be added or emphasised. Please do complete the accompanying questionnaire.

Your responses will be reviewed and analysed and will help decide which spatial options are progressed, informing the content of the final Document, its supporting policies and shape the accompanying Plan for CBBGC.

Where your comments are considered to merit further consideration of issues or indeed require additional evidence to be gathered, we will progress this as part of the continued evolution of this document.

Many thanks for your contribution, this is an exciting long-term project and we are keen that you continue to engage with us as we prepare a shared Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community.

GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing - Includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Air Quality Assessment - A detailed study of the effects of a development on air quality.

Allocation - The specific identification of an area of land for a particular use or to protect an area from unsuitable development.

Ancient Woodland - An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

Archaeological interest- There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places and of the people and cultures that made them.

Biodiversity - The wealth of wildlife or variety of life on earth. It includes all living organisms (plants and animals) and collections of species that form different natural habitats.

Bridleway - A bridle path or bridleway is a path, trail or a thoroughfare that is used by people riding on horses.

Broadband (Ultrafast)- Ultrafast is defined, depending on the supplier, as delivering between 300Mbps and 1,000Mbps. Achieving these speeds would require FTTP.

Car Clubs/ Car Sharing - Sharing cars for regular travelling, especially for commuting.

Climate Change - Climate Change is a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperatures.

Community Assets- Community assets are land and buildings owned or managed by community organisations. These assets cover a wide spectrum and include town halls, community centres, sports facilities, affordable housing and libraries.

Community Facilities – The wide range of facilities and services required by any community. It includes education, health and community care, meeting halls, libraries, places of worship, burial grounds and emergency services.

Concept Feasibility Study- Conducted by Aecom in 2015 to investigate a range of scenarios covering the scope and scale of development that may be feasible, together with an evaluation of how development at scale could meet strategic objectives, deliverability and anticipated infrastructure requirements.

Conservation (for heritage policy) - The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Conservation Area - An area designated for special protection under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, for which it is considered desirable to preserve and/or enhance an historic interest and/or a special architectural character. Such areas have restrictions over works which can be done to buildings or trees.

Convenience Shops- Shops selling day-to-day goods which are purchased regularly such as food.

Countryside - The area outside defined development boundaries.

Custom build / Self Build - Custom build homes are where an individual or a group works with a developer to help deliver their own homes. Self-build is where an individual directly organises the design and construction of their own home

Cycleway - Either a mandatory or an advisory route along which bicycles may travel, either segregated from pedestrians or as shared users.

Development - 'Means the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land.' (Section 55, Town & Country Planning Act 1990)

District Heat Networks - a system for distributing heat generated in a centralised location for residential and commercial heating requirements such as space heating and water heating

DPD - Development Plan Document - The planning policy documents that make up the Local Plan and help to guide development within a local planning authority.

Driverless Vehicles – An autonomous vehicle that is designed to travel between destinations without a human operator.

Environment Agency – The public body responsible for the protection and enhancement of the environment in England.

Essex County Council – The public body which governs the county of Essex and has responsibilities covering transport, highways, education, adult social care, minerals, waste, surface water management and Public Health.

Educational Infrastructure - Pre-school education and childcare, primary and secondary schools and post-sixteen and adult life-long learning facilities.

Flood Protection - The measures taken to reduce or prevent the detrimental effects of flooding.

Flora and Fauna - Flora is plant life and fauna refers to animals.

Formal Recreation - Recreational activities which use or require dedicated or purpose-built facilities, either in public or private ownership, for example, sports pitches, swimming pools, playing fields, tennis courts, bowling greens.

FTTP - Fibre to the Premises (broadband)
Garden City Principles (TCPA) – Principles developed to shape the sustainable development of new communities, using the opportunity and economies of scale to innovate and create high-quality places that put people at the heart of developing new settlements.

Garden Community – A community that is holistically and comprehensively developed with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context, and is of a sufficient scale to incorporate a range of homes, employment, green space and other uses to enable residents to meet the majority of their day to day needs, reducing the need for out commuting.

Garden Communities Charter – The key themes and placemaking principles that will inform the approach to the development of Garden Communities.

Grade II* and Grade II Listed Buildings – Particularly important buildings of more than special interest and buildings that are of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them.

Green Infrastructure - A strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces which may include parks and gardens, village greens, woodlands, cycling routes, allotments, churchyards and other environmental features.

Green Network- The linking together of natural, semi- natural and man-made open spaces to create an interconnected network that provides opportunities for physical activity, increases accessibility within settlements and to the surrounding countryside, whilst enhancing biodiversity and the quality of the external environment.

Greenspaces - an area of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetic purposes in an otherwise urban environment.

Heritage Asset - Heritage Assets include Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens.

Heritage Impact Assessment- The process of establishing the impact of a specific proposal on the significance of a place and identifying ways of mitigating any adverse impacts.

Historic Parks and Gardens - Sites included in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest compiled and maintained by English Heritage, that make a significant contribution to the diversity of the local and/or national landscape and/or which are of particular historical importance.

Housing Density - The number of dwellings proposed to be accommodated on a set unit of land. Urban areas tend to have higher densities than rural areas.

Important Hedgerow - A hedgerow meeting the criteria set out in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

Independent Living Schemes - a living arrangement that maximizes the independence of vulnerable people.

Informal Recreation - Recreational activities which do not make use of or require dedicated or purpose-built facilities, either in public or private ownership. Informal recreation land would include trails and walks.

Infrastructure - Infrastructure means any structure, building, system facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or well-being including.

Landscape Buffers - the on-site use of landscaping elements, screening devices, open space, drainageways and landforms for reduction of the potentially adverse impacts of adjoining, dissimilar land uses.

Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) – The body that could be responsible for delivering the new community. It will be locally accountable, with both public and private sector representation. The LDVs will be responsible for delivering development and infrastructure required for the new communities in accordance with the approved masterplan and also for meaningful participation of the existing and emerging communities in the process.

Local Development Schemes (LDS) - Public project plans that identify which local development documents will be produced, in what order and when.

Local Infrastructure – The infrastructure needed to-support large scale housing developments

Local Plan – The development plan for the future of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Mitigation - Action taken to reduce the severity of adverse impacts. Mitigation can include minimising impacts by limiting the degree of magnitude of an action, or rectifying impacts by restoring, rehabilitating, or repairing the affected environment or reducing or eliminating impacts over time.

‘Mixed use’ sites - Land developed to consist of a combination and integration of uses including residential, employment and community.

National Cycle Network – A series of traffic-free paths and quiet, on-road cycling and walking routes, that connect to every major town and city.

Neighbourhood Centres - typically contain a small supermarket, shops, sub-post office etc. Other facilities could include takeaways and launderettes and community uses.

New Town Development Corporations (NTDCs) - (originally established under the New Towns Act 1946, now the New Towns Act 1981) are answerable through the Secretary of State to Parliament. They give a project a 'blue chip covenant' to the private sector, in the sense that explicit Cabinet-level commitment is taken to mean that it will not be allowed to fail.

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework - Government guidance on Planning Issues, Local Plans are expected to conform to the guidelines set down in it. Noise Preferential Routes (NPR's) - These direct aircraft where possible over less densely populated areas to reduce potential for disturbance by aircraft noise.

North Essex Garden Communities (NEGC) – a strategic partnership between Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council, Tendring Borough Council and Essex County Council to manage and co-ordinate the Councils' resources towards the delivery of Garden Communities. Permeable Surface - Permeable surfaces consist of a variety of types of pavement, pavers and other devices that provide stormwater infiltration while serving as a structural surface.

Placemaking - Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

Public Rights of Way- A category of right of way created under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. A restricted byway allows a right of way on foot, on horseback, or leading a horse, cycling and for any vehicles other than mechanically propelled vehicles.

Rapid Transit – An urban public transport system providing regular and fast services on protected routes.

Settlement Boundary - The designated boundary surrounding a built-up area within which there is a presumption in favour of development subject to the detailed policies in the plan.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) - made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding £40 million and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding £34 million.

Smart Living - Incorporating the best of technology to support sustainable living

Sociocultural- Combining social and cultural factors.

Starter Homes – Help to meet the housing needs of young first-time buyers, many of whom increasingly cannot afford to buy their own home, by allowing Starter Homes to be offered to them at below their open market value.

Stewardship – The direct involvement of residents and businesses in the long-term management of their communities.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) - These documents are supplementary to the Development Plan and are used to provide additional detail as deemed necessary.

Surface Runoff – water, from rain, snowmelt, or other sources, that flows over the land surface, and is a major component of the water cycle.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)- Assessment required by European and national law into how the plan will impact on the District's environment in the long term and contribute towards sustainable development.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Assessment required by European and national law to ensure environmental consequences of Plans are identified and assessed during their preparation and before their adoption.

Sustainable Transport – A focus on walking, cycling and public transit systems.

Sustainable Development - Development that is in accord with economic, social and environmental objectives. Development that meets today's needs without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) - A sustainable drainage system is designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges.

Swale - A swale is a low tract of land, especially one that is moist or marshy. The term can refer to a natural landscape feature or a human-created one.

Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) – An independent charity that works to improve planning practice in the UK by making planning more responsive to people's needs and to promote sustainable development.

Town Centre - provides a wide range of retail, leisure, employment and community uses to support a town. The town centre areas as defined on the proposals map will be used as the basis for applying the sequential test for comparison goods.

Transport Hub – A place where passengers exchange between vehicles or between transport modes, such as train stations, bus stops, airports and ferry slips. Water Course - A brook, stream, or artificially constructed water channel.

Water Framework Directive - The Water Framework Directive is a European Union directive which commits European Union member states to achieve good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies.

APPENDIX A

Draft Local Plan Policy SP7- Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex

"The following three new garden communities are proposed in North Essex.

Tendring/Colchester Borders, a new garden community will deliver 2,500 homes within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 7,000-9,000 homes to be delivered beyond 2033)

Colchester/Braintree Borders, a new garden community will deliver 2,500 within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 15,000 – 24,000 homes to be delivered beyond 2033)

West of Braintree in Braintree DC, a new garden community will deliver 2,500 homes within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 7,000- 10,000 homes to be delivered beyond 2033)

Each of these will be an holistically and comprehensively planned new community with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context and is of sufficient scale to incorporate a range of homes, employment, education & community facilities, green space and other uses to enable residents to meet the majority of their day-to-day needs, reducing the need for outward commuting. Delivery of each new community will be phased and underpinned by a comprehensive package of infrastructure.

The Councils will need to be confident, before any consent is granted, that the following requirements have been secured either in the form of appropriate public ownership, planning agreements and obligations and, if necessary a local infrastructure tariff.

The design, development and phased delivery of each new garden community will conform with the following principles:

(i) Community and stakeholder empowerment in the design and delivery of each garden community from the outset and a long-term community engagement and activation strategy.

(ii) The public sector working pro-actively and collaboratively with the private sector to design, and bring forward these garden communities, deploying new models of delivery, sharing risk and reward and ensuring that the cost of achieving the following is

borne by landowners and those promoting the developments: (a) securing a high-quality of place-making, (b) ensuring the timely delivery of both on-site and off-site infrastructure required to address the impact of these new communities, and (c) providing and funding a mechanism for future stewardship, management, maintenance and renewal of community infrastructure and assets. Given the scale of and time period for development of these new garden communities, the appropriate model of delivery will secure a comprehensive approach to the delivery of each new community in order to achieve the outcomes outlined above, avoid a piecemeal approach to development, provide the funding and phasing of both development and infrastructure, and be sustainable and accountable in the long term.

(iii) Promotion and execution of the highest quality of planning, design and management of the built and public realm so that the Garden Communities are characterised as distinctive places that capitalise on local assets and establish environments that promote health, happiness and well-being. This will involve developing a cascade of design guidance including concept frameworks, detailed masterplans and design codes and other guidance in place to inform and guide development proposals and planning applications. Planning applications and any local development orders or other consenting mechanisms for the garden communities will be expected to be consistent with approved design guidance.

(iv) Sequencing of development and infrastructure provision (both on-site and off-site) to ensure that the latter is provided ahead of or in tandem with the development it supports to address the impacts of the new garden communities, meet the needs of residents and establish sustainable travel patterns.

(v) Development that provides for a truly balanced and inclusive community and meets the housing needs of local people including a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and types including provision for self- and custom-built homes and provision for the aging population; to meet the requirements of those most in need including 30% affordable housing in each garden community.

(vi) Provide and promote opportunities for employment within each new community and within sustainable commuting distance of it.

(vii) Plan the new communities around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport systems for the North Essex area that put walking, cycling and rapid public transit networks and connections at the heart of growth in the area, encouraging and incentivising more sustainable active travel patterns.

(viii) Structure the new communities to create sociable, vibrant and walkable neighbourhoods with equality of access for all to a range of community services and facilities including health, education, retail, culture, community meeting spaces, multi-functional open space, sports and leisure facilities.

(ix) Develop specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land.

(x) Create distinctive environments which relate to the surrounding environment and that celebrate natural and historic environments and systems, utilise a multi-functional green-grid to create significant networks of new green infrastructure including new country parks at each garden community, provide a high degree of connectivity to existing corridors and networks and enhance biodiversity.

(xi) Secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters climate resilience and a 21st century environment in the design and construction of each garden community to secure net gains in local biodiversity, highest standards of energy efficiency and innovation in technology to reduce impact of climate change, water efficiency (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste and mineral management.

(xii) Ensure that the costs and benefits of developing a garden community are shared by all landowners, with appropriate measures being put in place to equalise the costs and land contributions.

(xiii) Consideration of potential on-site mineral resources through a Minerals Resource Assessment as required by the Minerals Planning Authority.

(xiv) Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden communities, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the developments and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.

These principles are elaborated upon in the North Essex Garden Community Charter.

Development Plan Documents will be developed for each of the garden communities to set out the principles of their design, development and phasing as well as a mechanism to appropriately distribute housing completions to the three Councils and this will be agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding”.

Draft Local Plan Policy SP9 – Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community

“The adopted policies map identifies a strategic area for development of a new garden community of which the details and final number of homes will be set out in a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document to be prepared jointly between Colchester BC and Braintree DC and which will incorporate provision of around 2,500 dwellings within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 15,000 to 24,000 homes) and provision for Gypsy and Travellers.

The Strategic Growth DPD will set out the nature, form and boundary of the new community. The document will be produced in consultation with stakeholders and will include a concept plan showing the disposition and quantity of future land-uses, and give a three dimensional indication of the urban design and landscape parameters which will be incorporated into any future planning applications; together with a phasing and implementation strategy which sets out how the rate of development will be linked to the provision of the necessary social, environmental and physical infrastructure to ensure that the respective phases of the development do not come forward until the necessary infrastructure has been secured. The DPD will provide the framework for the subsequent development of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community.

The DPD and any planning application will address the following principles and requirements in the design, development and delivery of the new garden community:

A Place-making and design quality

1. The development of a new garden community to high standards of design and layout drawing on its context and the assets within its boundaries including streams, land drains and ditches, mature hedgerows and field boundaries, woodland, existing and re-established habitats, and historic buildings. A mixed use district centre will provide a vibrant heart to this new community

supplemented by neighbourhood centres to form foci for new neighbourhoods. The design of the community will also address the challenges offered by other features in particular the severance created by the A12 and A120 and maximise the opportunities afforded through integration with the existing community of Marks Tey, and the presence of the railway station, all underpinned by a strong green-grid of connected green space that provides great recreational opportunities for residents and connection to the wider countryside. The garden community will be designed and developed to have its own identity and be as self-sustaining as possible. Clear separation will be maintained between the new garden community and the nearby settlements of Coggeshall, Stanway, Easthorpe and Feering.

2. Detailed masterplans and design guidance will be put in place to inform and guide development proposals and planning applications. Planning applications for this garden community will be expected to be consistent with approved DPDs and subsequent masterplans and design and planning guidance.

B. Housing

3. A mix of housing types and tenures including self- and custom-build and starter homes will be provided on the site, including a minimum of 30% affordable housing. The affordable housing will be phased through the development;

4. New residential development will seek to achieve appropriate densities which reflect both context, place-making aspirations and opportunities for increased levels of development around neighbourhood centres and transport hubs.

C. Employment and Jobs

5. Provision for a wide range of job, skills and training opportunities will be created in the garden community. This may include B1 and/or non B class employment generating uses around the rail station as part of mixed use urban development to provide for a wide range of local employment opportunities where appropriate;

6. High speed and reliable broadband will be provided and homes will include specific spaces to enable working from home.

D. Transportation

7. A package of measures will be introduced to encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new community and maximise the opportunities for sustainable travel including the provision of a network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways to enhance permeability within the site and to access and to access the adjoining areas; development of a public rapid transit system connecting this new garden community to the wider Colchester context; development of opportunities to improve accessibility to Marks Tey rail station (or provide for its relocation to a more central location within the garden community); and effective measures to mitigate the transport impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road network. Longer term transport interventions will need to be carefully designed to minimise the impacts on the strategic road network and fully mitigate any environmental or traffic impacts. Other specific transport-related infrastructure requirements identified through the subsequent Strategic Growth Development Plan Document and masterplans for this garden community will be delivered in a phased manner;

8. Primary vehicular access to the site will be provided via the strategic road network;

9. Improvements to the local road infrastructure will be necessary to mitigate adverse traffic impacts and serve the new development. These shall include bus/rapid transit priority measures between the site, Colchester and Braintree town centres, employment areas and rail stations;

10. Foot and cycle ways shall be provided throughout the development and existing communities and surrounding countryside, including seamlessly linking key development areas to the wider network;

11. Opportunities will be explored to establish how Marks Tey rail station can be made more accessible to residents of the new community including relocation of the station to a more central location and improvement of walking, cycling and public transport links to the station.

E. Community Infrastructure

12. District and local centres of an appropriate scale will be provided to serve the proposed development. The centres will be located where they will be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transit to the majority of residents in the garden community including residents of the existing Marks Tey village;

13. Community meeting places will be provided within the district and local centres;

14. Primary healthcare facilities will be provided to serve the new development;

15. At least one secondary school, primary schools and early-years facilities will be provided to serve the new development;

16. A network of multi-functional green infrastructure will be provided within the garden community incorporating key elements of the existing green assets within the site. It will include community parks, allotments, a new country park and the provision of sports areas with associated facilities and play facilities;

17. Indoor leisure and sports facilities will be provided with the new community, or contributions made to the improvement of off-site leisure facilities to serve the new development.

F Other Requirements

18. Provision of improvements to waste water treatment including an upgrade to the Colchester Waste Water Treatment Plant and off-site drainage improvements;

19. Provision, management and on-going maintenance of sustainable surface water drainage measures to manage and mitigate the risk of flooding on site and which will reduce the risk of flooding to areas downstream or upstream of the development;

20. Landscape buffers between the site and Landscape buffers between the site and Coggeshall, Feering, Stanway and Easthorpe;

21. Protection and/or enhancement of heritage and biodiversity assets within and surrounding the site; including the SSSI at Marks

Tey brick pit, Marks Tey Hall, Easthorpe Hall Farm, Easthorpe Hall and the habitats along and adjoining the Domsey Brook and Roman River corridors;

22. Provision of appropriate buffers along strategic road and rail infrastructure to protect new development;

23. Provision of appropriate design and infrastructure that incorporates the highest standards of innovation in energy efficiency and technology to reduce impact of climate change, water efficiency (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste / recycling management facilities;

24. Measures to support the development of the new community including provision of community development support workers (or other provision) for a minimum of ten years from initial occupation of the first homes and appropriate community governance structures;

25. Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden community, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.

APPENDIX A: DRAFT LOCAL PLAN POLICY SP9

The Draft Policy for the creation of new Garden Community at the Colchester Braintree Borders (Draft Local Plan Policy SP9) contains a significant number of criteria by which development proposals can be assessed.

The principles that were set in the Garden Communities Charter address these criteria, some are relevant to more than one criterion. The connections between policy criteria and the Charter Principles are shown.

Draft Policy SP9 Criteria	Charter Principle
<i>A1 - high standard of design and layout</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure Principle 4 - Living Environment Principle 6 - Good Design
<i>A2 - detailed master plan and design guidance</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure Principle 6 - Good Design
<i>B3 - housing mix and tenure</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>B4 - Residential development at appropriate densities</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment Principle 6 - Good Design
<i>C5 - B1 and non-B class uses near the railway station as part of mixed use urban development.</i>	Principle 3 - Employment Opportunity
<i>C6 - provision of high speed broadband</i>	Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living
<i>D7 - smarter transport choices - footpaths, cycleways, rapid transit system, railway station accessibility, minimum impact on the strategic road system</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D8 - Primary vehicular access from the strategic road network</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D9- Improvements to local road infrastructure</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D10 - Foot and cycle ways</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D11 - Accessibility of the Marks Tey railway station</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>E12 - District/Neighbourhood centres</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E13 - Community meeting places</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E14 - Primary healthcare</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E15 - Schools</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E16 - A network of green infrastructure</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>E17- Indoor leisure</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>F18 - Improvements to waste water treatment</i>	Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living
<i>F19 - Surface water drainage</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F20 - Landscape Buffers</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F21 - Protection of heritage and biodiversity</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F22 - Buffers to major roads and railways</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F23 - Design and infrastructure with the highest standards of innovation in technology.</i>	Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living
<i>F24 - Development of a new community including community workers</i>	Principle 7 - Community Engagement
<i>F25- Appropriate long-term governance and stewardship</i>	Principle 8 - Active Local Stewardship Principle 9 - Strong Corporate and Political Leadership

APPENDIX B

Evidence Documents

Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study (June 2016) by AECOM

In preliminary work, the North Essex Authorities identified four broad search areas for new Garden Communities and commissioned AECOM to undertake a 'Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study' (June 2016) to explore the potential of these four locations to support a new garden community.

This Concept Feasibility Study work informed the Councils' selection of the CBBGC as one of three sites for Garden Communities to be taken forward through consultation on the Preferred Options Local Plans (2016).

Concept Framework Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (2017) DLA, see Appendix B

David Lock Associates (DLA) was commissioned to prepare a Concept Framework Plan to explore the development potential of land at CBBGC through the preparation of conceptual spatial development options. The DLA-led consultant team has engaged with the landowner consortia and wider stakeholders at a series of meetings and workshops that informed production of a Concept Framework for the site.

This work is used to "test" development options through this Issues and Options Stage (see section 5), informing the preparation of the Plan Document for CBBGC alongside other evidence and constraints information.

As part of this work, the consultant team has engaged with Marks Tey Parish Council, to better understand the aspirations of the local community in the context of its emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies (2017) SQW and Cambridge Econometrics.

SQW and Cambridge Econometrics were jointly commissioned to determine the likely demographic profile of each Garden Community to inform planning for future service provision, and to develop scenarios for future employment growth and job creation targets..

North Essex Local Plans (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment (2017) Hyas Associates Limited

Hyas was commissioned to test the viability of policies set out in the joint Strategic Section 1 of the Local Plans, focusing on the viability of the three proposed new Garden Communities. The report acknowledges that the Garden Communities are at an early stage in their evolution and, as such, it presents a high-level, strategic assessment. Costs and values are likely to change over time so the viability of the sites will need to be actively monitored in parallel with the evolution of development and design proposals.

NEGC Movement and Access Study (2017) Jacobs and Ringway Jacobs

Jacobs and Ringway Jacobs prepared a report which explored opportunities for the Garden Communities to internalise their journeys as well as opportunities to maximise their integration and connectivity with the rest of North Essex via high quality public transport. The report includes a review of the existing transport network as well as emerging issues as reported in the current Local Plan work. It also provides some initial high level findings and recommendations, based on previous work carried out by AECOM and DLA, that can help shape more detailed transport strategies and infrastructure requirements for each of the Garden Communities.



David Lock Associates
Town Planning and Urban Design





A Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders: Issues & Options Report (Regulation 18)

Draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA): Scoping & Environmental Report – November 2017



Essex County Council



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Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Appropriate Assessment
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BDC	Braintree District Council
CA	Conservation Area
CBBGC	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
ECC	Essex County Council
EU	European Union
GC	Garden Community
GCP	Garden City Principle
Ha	Hectare
HE	Historic England
HMA	Housing Market Area
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
I&O	Issues and Options
LB	Listed Building
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MSA	Minerals Safeguarding Area
NE	Natural England
NEGC	North Essex Garden Communities
NHS	National Health Service
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OAN	Objectively Assessed Need
PDL	Previously Developed Land
PO	Preferred Options
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRoW	Public Right of Way



SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SM	Scheduled Monument
SO	Sustainability Objective
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Specific Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Association
UDC	Uttlesford District Council
UK	United Kingdom
WPA	Waste Planning Authority

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Braintree District Council and Colchester Borough Council, in conjunction with Essex County Council as a key partner in its strategic role for infrastructure and service provision, commissioned Place Services of Essex County Council to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders Issues and Options Report.

Place Services are acting as consultants for this work; therefore the content of this SA should not be interpreted or otherwise represented as the formal view of Essex County Council.

1.2 A Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders

The main purpose of the Plan is to set out a shared Vision for the new community at Colchester Braintree Borders and a strategy for its delivery. It intends to set out a strategy that includes both the requirement for 2,500 homes and related infrastructure to be delivered within the Plan period, with the majority of the development to be delivered over a longer-term beyond 2033.

It will also set out a range of development objectives that will help deliver this Vision, and more detailed policies that will guide land-use proposals and secure timely delivery of development and infrastructure in the short, medium and long term, in accordance with relevant Local Plan policies.

The Plan will need to have flexibility in the way that development might be delivered taking into account the long-term nature of a development of this scale, but must also be true to the development and design ambitions that are agreed for the new community.

The first stage in the plan-making process has been the preparation of an Issues and Options (Regulation 18) stage Plan. It intends to provide information to stakeholders and local communities, and invites comments and views on initial issues and options for the development of a Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders (CBBGC). The Plan represents the first stage of the production of a formal document to provide a framework for development which will guide the master planning stages that will follow.

This SA represents the appraisal of the Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders at the first Issues and Options stage and accompanies the consultation of the Plan.

1.3 The Principle of the Garden Community in emerging Local Plans

Local Plans are the main vehicle for conveying an area's growth requirements and how these will be accommodated. Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council agreed to come together through a shared desire to promote a sustainable growth strategy for the longer term. Each Local Planning Authority (LPA) in their production of Local Plans for their administrative areas, intend to adopt a strategic 'Section One' that addresses and articulates strategic priorities over the area of the three authorities. Central to this is the effective delivery of planned strategic growth, particularly housing and employment development, with the necessary supporting infrastructure.

The Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community is being jointly prepared by David Lock Associates on behalf of Braintree District Council and Colchester Borough Council because the Garden Community area covers land in each authority's administrative boundary. This joint working has been brought about as a result of the Councils' inclusion of the principle of development of a new Garden Community in their emerging Local Plans.

It should be noted that development at the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community is identified in the joint Strategic Section One of the Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils' Draft Local Plans. The principle of and need for allocating Garden Communities within the North Essex area is established within the strategic Section One for the aforementioned Local Planning Authorities' Local Plans. This is in consideration of a number of reasonable alternative approaches to delivering growth and meeting housing needs in both areas.

Within Section One, draft Local Plan Policy SP9 specifically refers to development of a Garden Community at the Colchester Braintree Borders and sets out the requirement for the preparation of a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document (DPD) that will provide a framework for the subsequent preparation of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the site.

2. Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 The Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal

The requirement for Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) emanates from a high level national and international commitment to sustainable development. The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is that drawn up by the World Trade Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 which states that sustainable development is:

‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’

This definition is consistent with the themes of the NPPF, which draws upon The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future’s five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

SEA originates from the European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment” (the ‘SEA Directive’) which came into force in 2001. It seeks to increase the level of protection for the environment; integrate environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes; and promote sustainable development.

The Directive was transposed into English legislation in 2004 by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (the ‘SEA Regulation’) which requires an SEA to be carried out for plans or programmes,

‘subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions’.

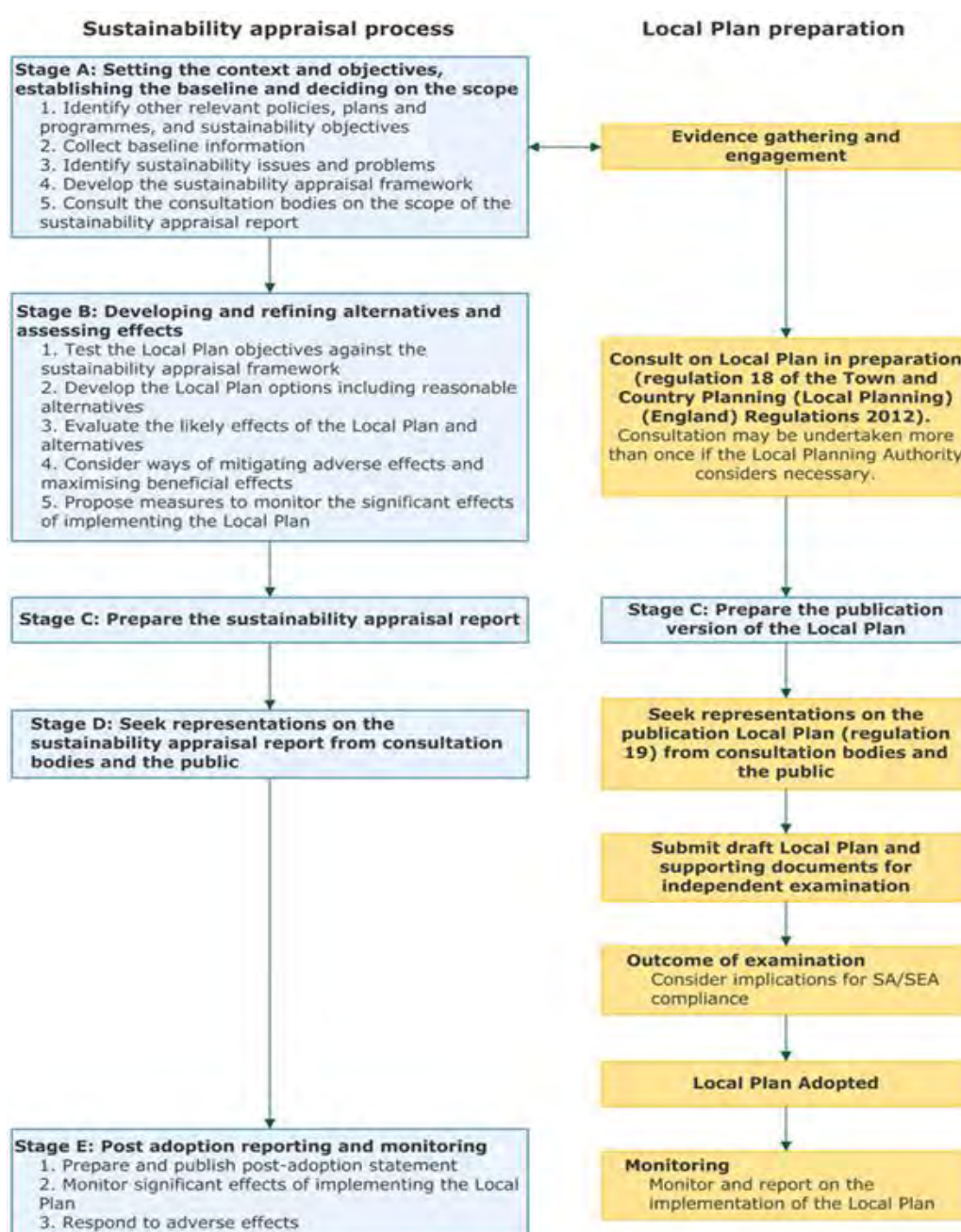
This includes Development Plan Documents. The aim of the SEA is to identify potentially significant environmental effects created as a result of the implementation of the plan or programme on issues such as *‘biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors’* as specified in Annex 1(f) of the Directive. SA examines the effects of proposed plans and programmes in a wider context, taking into account economic, social and environmental considerations in order to promote sustainable development. It is mandatory for Local Plans to undergo a Sustainability Appraisal in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Planning Act 2008, and in accordance with paragraph 165 of the NPPF.

Whilst the requirements to produce a SA and SEA are distinct, Government guidance considers that it is possible to satisfy the two requirements through a single approach providing that the requirements of the SEA Directive are met. This integrated appraisal process will hereafter be referred to as SA.

2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Process

The SA of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community DPD follows that of the Sustainability Appraisal process as iterated in National Planning Practice Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal requirements for local plans. The following 5 sequential stages are documented below.

Figure 1: Stages in the Sustainability Appraisal Process and Local Plan / DPD Preparation



Source: Planning Practice Guidance – Sustainability appraisal requirements for local plans (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 11-013-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014)

2.3 The Aim and Structure of this Report

This report responds to Stages A and B in the SA process above. It is the intention of the Plan to follow the process of a second Regulation 18 consultation on the Plan's 'Preferred Options' in summer 2018 and with this in mind, elements of Stage B above will be completed through the accompanying SA at that stage.

The production of a Sustainability Appraisal (Environmental) Report is a statutory requirement at the Regulation 18 stage, and this SA Report has been produced to accompany the Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders.

This report is accompanied by two Annexes. These are:

- Annex A – Plans and Programmes
- Annex B – Baseline Information

Following the finalisation of this Report, the SA requires consultation. There are three statutory consultees or 'environmental authorities' that are required to be consulted for all Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment documents. These are:

- The Environment Agency;
- Natural England; and
- Historic England.

In addition to these, consultation will seek to engage the wider community in order to encompass comprehensive public engagement. The relevant authorities may additionally wish to invite comments from focussed groups, relevant stakeholders and interested parties. The detailed arrangements for consultation are to be determined by Braintree District Council and Colchester Borough Council.

The environmental authorities and public are to be given 'an early and effective opportunity' within appropriate time-frames to express their opinion. This includes the specific notification of the consultation documents and timeframes to those persons or bodies on the 'consultation databases' of the LPAs. This reflects those persons or bodies who have commented on previous planning documents through consultation.

This SA has been produced suitably in advance of the start of the formal consultation period, to accompany and influence decision making within the Plan process iteratively. Notably this SA has been produced to be available to inform the relevant LPAs' Local Plan Committee meetings.

3. Setting the Scope of the SA: Sustainability Context, Baseline and Objectives

3.1 Introduction

The SA of the Section One for Local Plans set the scope for the appraisal of options and Plan content relevant to that strategic area. Although still a strategic undertaking, this SA needs to develop a framework for appraising the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community options that is more specifically relevant to the area in question.

That established, the Section One SA forms a good starting point for identifying any sustainability issues relevant to the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community, both in the scope of that SA (identified in an initial Scoping Report) and the appraisal of the Garden Community itself. In addition, Policy SP9 of Section One identifies policy criteria relevant to the Garden Community and these also assist in the identification of sustainability issues. Further, the North Essex Garden Community Charter identifies a set of more general overarching principles, which can aid the identification of sustainability objectives.

The following sub-sections outline the relevant plans and programmes and the baseline information profile for the Colchester Braintree Borders area, building on the Section One SA.

3.2 Plans and Programmes (Stage A1)

DPDs must have regard to existing policies, plans and programmes at national and regional levels and strengthen and support other local plans and strategies. It is therefore important to identify and review those policies, plans and programmes and Sustainability Objectives which are likely to influence the DPD at an early stage. The content of these plans and programmes can also assist in the identification of any conflicting content of plans and programmes in accumulation with the DPD. Local supporting documents have also been included within this list as they will significantly shape policies and decisions in the three authority areas.

It is recognised that no list of plans or programmes can be definitive and as a result this report describes only the key documents which influence the Plan.

Table 1 outlines the key documents, whilst a comprehensive description of these documents together with their relevance to the Plan is provided within Annex A.

Table 1: Key Documents

International Plans and Programmes
European Commission (EC) (2011) A Resource-Efficient Europe – Flagship Initiative Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions.
European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2002)
European Union Water Framework Directive 2000
European Union Nitrates Directive 1991
European Union Noise Directive 2002
European Union Floods Directive 2007
European Union Air Quality Directive 2008 (2008/50/EC) and previous directives (96/62/EC; 99/30/EC; 2000/69/EC & 2002/3/EC)
European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009
European Union Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 1992
European Community Biodiversity Strategy to 2020
United Nations Kyoto Protocol
World Commission on Environment and Development 'Our Common Future' 1987
The World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg Summit 2002
Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010
Review of the European Sustainable Development Strategy (2009)
Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice (2003)
SEA Directive 2001
The Industrial Emissions Directive 2010

Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2010 on the energy performance of buildings 2010/31/EU
The Drinking Water Directive 1998
The Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive 1994
EU Seventh Environmental Action Plan (2002-2012)
European Spatial Development Perspective (1999)
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992)
Aarhus Convention (1998)
National Plans and Programmes
National Planning Practice Guidance (2016)
The Localism Act 2011
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
The Housing White Paper (February 2017)
The Future of Transport White Paper 2004
Housing Act (2004)
Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement (July 2007)
Community Infrastructure Levy Guidance (April 2013)
Underground, Under Threat - Groundwater protection: policy and practice (GP3)
Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination – Contaminated Land Report 11 (September 2004)
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
The Education (School Information) (England) (Amendments) Regulations, 2002

Childcare Act, 2006
Flood & Water Management Act 2009
The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007)
Safeguarding Our Soils: A Strategy for England (2009)
Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011)
The National Adaptation Programme – Making the Country Resilient to a Changing Climate (2013)
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012)
National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)
Adapting to Climate Change: Ensuring Progress in Key Sectors (2013)
DECC National Energy Policy Statement EN1 (2011)
DCLG: An Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning (2012)
JNCC/Defra UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2012)
Mainstreaming Sustainable Development (2011)
UK Marine Policy Statement, HM Government (2011)
Electricity Market Reform White Paper 2011
DfT (2013) Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration
DCLG (2011) Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England
DEFRA (2011) Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
DECC (2011) UK Renewable Energy Roadmap (updates setting out progress and changes to the strategy dated 2013 and 2013)
Community Energy Strategy (DECC, 2014)
The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (Environment Agency, 2011)
Waste prevention programme for England: Prevention is better than cure – The role of waste prevention in

moving to a more resource efficient economy (HM Government, 2013)

Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2008)

Water for People and the Environment: Water Resources Strategy for England and Wales (Environment Agency, 2009)

Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2009)

Sub-national Plans and Programmes

Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment – on behalf of EPOA (July 2014)

Looking Back, Moving Forward – Assessing the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex (2006)

Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts Phase 7 (2015)

Essex Transport Strategy: the Local Transport Plan for Essex (2011)

2011 Essex Biodiversity Action Plan

Commissioning School Places in Essex 2015-2020

Essex County Council Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007-2032

Anglian River Basin Management Plan (2015)

Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape plans

Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Statements

Respecting our Past, Embracing our Future: A Strategy for Rural Essex (2016)

ECC Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (September 2009)

The Essex Local Area Agreement – 'Health and Opportunity for the People of Essex' 2008 – 2011 (2010 Refresh)

ECC Development Management Policies (February 2011)

The Essex Strategy 2008 – 2018

Sustainable Drainage Systems Design and Adoption Guide 2012

Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
Essex Replacement Waste Local Plan (submitted June 2016)
Haven Gateway: Programme of Development: A framework for Growth, 2008 – 2017 (2007)
Haven Gateway: Integrated Development Plan (2008)
South East LEP Investment and Funding (March/April 2014)
Anglian Water Business Plan (2015-2020) (2012)
Draft Water Resource Management Plan (2014-2039) (2014)
Combined Essex Catchment Abstraction Management Plan (2013)
Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study: Stage 1 and 2 Reports (2008)
South East LEP Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan (2004)
ECC Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (Revised Edition 2016)
Vision for Essex 2013-2017: Where Innovation Brings Prosperity (2013)
Corporate Outcomes Framework 2014-2018 Essex County Council (2014)
Colchester Draft Surface Water Management Plan (2014)
A12/A120 Route Based Strategy (2013)
Highway Authority's Development Management Policies (2011)
Economic Plan for Essex (2014)
Essex Design Guide (2005)
North Essex Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009)
Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (second phase) (2011)
Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan 2010 – 2015
Local Plans and Programmes

Braintree District Council, Chelmsford City Council, Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council, Objectively Assessed Housing Need Study - Peter Brett Associates (July 2015 and updated 2016)
North Essex Concept Feasibility Study (AECOM) - July 2016
HRA Report for North Essex Authorities Strategic Section 1 for Local Plans (LUC) (including Appropriate Assessment) – May 2017
Braintree Local Plan Preferred Option Assessment Highways/Transport Planning -March 2017
North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies (2017)
North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study – March 2017
Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006)
Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study (2016)
Technical Groups and Workshops (2016-2017)
North Essex Local Plans (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment (2017)
Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies – February 2017
North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study – March 2017
Colchester Infrastructure Delivery Plan Report - March 2017
Retail and Town Centre Uses Study Colchester Borough Council: Retail Update 2013 (2013)
Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006)
CBC Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014)
Creative Colchester Strategy & Action Plan (2012)
Safer Colchester Partnership: Strategic Assessment of Crime and Annual Partnership Plan 2012-2013 (2012)
CBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)
CBC Local Air Quality Management Progress Report (2013)
2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) - July 2016

Colchester Borough Council Landscape Strategy (2013)

Colchester Cycling Strategy SPD (2012)

Colchester Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)

3.3 Baseline Information (Stage A2)

Annex B details the complete Baseline Information profile for the area relevant to the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community and surrounds.

The following section outlines a summary of the key baseline information relevant to the Garden Community area and therefore the current state of the environment in the area.

3.3.1 Economy

- The area covered by this strategic planning approach comprises a large part of the Haven Gateway, an established partnership area which is identified in a range of existing strategy and investment documents. The Haven Gateway includes the Essex administrative areas of Braintree, Colchester, Maldon and Tendring Councils and extends northwards into parts of Suffolk.
- Braintree and Colchester are the major centres of employment within the broad area. While there are high levels of commuting to London, many residents work and live within the area with significant commuting across borough and district boundaries, reflecting a functional economic geography.
- The area has a mixed economy focused on the service sector, including wholesale and retail, business services, tourism, health and education, alongside manufacturing, logistics and construction. Due to the extensive rural area outside urban settlements, agriculture and its related industries play an important part in the overall economy.
- Braintree District has a wide employment base of mainly small and medium-sized businesses. In 2011, approximately 58,000 residents worked within the District, 15,000 travelled into the District to work and 32,000 travelled from the District to work in the major centres of London, Chelmsford and Colchester. Unemployment and youth employment rates have been falling and are below the national average.
- Colchester has maintained good levels of employment growth over the last two decades with declining industrial employment being offset by a growth in office jobs.
- Colchester registered 92,300 workforce jobs in 2014 representing an increase of 20% over 1991 levels. This increase was higher than in the UK (14.6%) and similar to the East of England (19.6%), but was lower than employment growth recorded across Essex as a whole (27.9%) over the same period.
- The town centre of Colchester serves as a centre not only for the Borough but for a much wider area of North East Essex, with residents of Braintree, Maldon and Tendring districts travelling

into the town to work, shop and use its community facilities.

3.3.2 Heath

- Braintree District Council has invested in new and enhanced leisure facilities in the District. In 2014 facilities at Braintree Sports & Health Club and at Braintree Swimming and Fitness were expanded and enhanced. Outdoor gyms have also been provided in Braintree.
- Participation in sport has seen a reduction in Colchester, and Braintree also has reduced overall since 2012-13.
- The site is in a broad area where there is little access to natural accessible greenspace (ANGSt). There is limited official public access beyond the footpath network.
- Braintree has a higher proportion of adults classified as obese but a lower proportion of children aged 4-5. Colchester has lower percentages of both adults and children aged 4-5 classified as obese.
- There are no existing GP surgeries within the Garden Community area, the closest being in Coggeshall and Stanway, some 3 miles from the centre of the site.

3.3.3 Housing

- Braintree District has been one of the fastest growing areas in the country over the past decade. The population of the District is currently approximately 150,000 and is projected to rise substantially by 2033. As life expectancy increases, the age structure is expected to change, with a marked increase in the number and proportion of the population who will be aged 65 and over. The number of one-person households is also expected to increase.
- In 2014/15, 73.9% in Braintree and 40.0% in Colchester of net dwelling completions, which accounts for 10 dwellings, were affordable.
- Meeting the housing needs in the Districts is an important issue. The SHMA for Braintree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Tendring Councils indicates that the majority of market housing and affordable housing should be 2 and 3 bedroom properties. This trend is replicated when assessing all housing, with 70.3% of housing need across the Districts and Boroughs is 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings.
- Colchester delivered 12,644 new homes between 2001/02 and 2014/15 at an average rate of 903 dwellings per year. Given the continuing pressures on the South East housing market, Colchester will need to maintain its good rate of delivery over the next plan period to meet the Objectively Assessed Need figure of 920 houses a year, while also ensuring that increasing quantity is matched with high design quality and sustainable construction.

3.3.4 Biodiversity

- Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention which have a high degree of protection. They often incorporate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas for Conservation (SACs). In the wider area there are a number of Ramsar sites which include Hamford Water, and parts of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries which

include coastal areas, estuaries, rivers and lakes/reservoirs. These Ramsar sites are also SPAs.

- Colchester has a similarly rich biodiversity, including 8 SSSIs, the Colne Estuary SPA, the Blackwater Estuary and Abberton Reservoir SPA. The Garden Community area contains the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI.
- There are only a small number of important areas of deciduous woodland, which is a priority habitat, scattered throughout the site. These are mainly located north of the A12 corridor and to the immediate west boundary of the site.
- There are a number of National Nature Reserves located in the Plan Area: Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary, Dengie and Hamford Water.
- All 8 SSSIs in Colchester are meeting the target of at least 95% of the SSSI area being brought into favourable condition. 3 of the 4 SSSIs in Braintree are meeting the target, but Bovingdon Hall Woods is at 93.30% favourable or unfavourable recovering. Colne Estuary in Tendring and Colchester, Bovingdon Hall in Braintree and Blackwater Estuary in Colchester are the only SSSIs and not meeting the PSA target for 100% of their area, however the area not in a favourable or favourable recovering condition is small.
- In addition to designated sites, consideration should also be given to non-designated value in regards to ecology on a site-by-site basis in order to protect and enhance species and habitats, including those that are protected. This could include Greenfield sites and areas of habitat considered to enrich appreciably the habitat resource within the context of local areas, such as species-rich hedgerows, municipal parklands or individual veteran trees.
- The Appropriate Assessment undertaken for the Colchester and Braintree Local Plans concludes that the site will not have any specific impacts related to the loss of off-site impacts on Natura 2000 sites.

3.3.5 Landscapes

- Natural England's National Character Area Profile for the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands, within which the site lies, states that the contrasts within the local landscape character, between the plateau and river valleys should be retained, with an enhancement of the balance between the urban and rural landscapes.
- The landscape character of the broad area is not particularly sensitive to change, with limited views associated with medium to large field patterns and mature hedgerows, however the northern part of wide area has implications associated with the Blackwater River Valley Landscape Character Area which is more sensitive to views.

3.3.6 Soil Quality

- The Garden Community area is almost entirely within land that is identified as Grade 2 Agricultural Land; classed as 'very good' by Natural England.

3.3.7 Population and Social (including Education and Skills)

- The population in Braintree and Colchester are predicted to increase over Local Plan Periods,

with the highest growth rates in Colchester. The population structure in Colchester is more weighted towards 20-44 year olds, similar to the trends in Braintree but with less dominance in this age group.

- Colchester Borough's population has grown by 15.6% between 2001 and 2014 and was estimated to stand at 180,420 people in mid-2014. The borough's growing population is accommodated within a spatial structure defined by the urban area at its centre, surrounded by a rural hinterland with three smaller centres, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe.
- Braintree and Colchester have higher life expectancies for men and women than the national figures, but are both below the regional figures. In general, life expectancy is increasing within the Districts and nationwide. The implications of this will mean that as people live longer there will be increased pressure on services and housing for the elderly.
- In Braintree District, the level of demand for secondary school places in Year 7 is predicted to rise over the course of the next 5 years. In Colchester, pressure on primary school places is forecast to continue in line with considerable housing development in the area. In the Stanway area in particular new housing developments are progressing and there is likely to be more pressure on school places, which will be monitored closely.
- Secondary school Year 7 intakes in Colchester are forecast to rise significantly from September 2017 onwards and options are being explored in active collaboration with the schools in Colchester town to provide the additional places required.
- While Colchester is less deprived than Essex as a whole, 2 small areas in Colchester were in the top 10% most deprived in England in 2010, Magnolia in St. Andrew's Ward and St Anne's Estate in St Anne's ward. Sustainable development for the future will require the development of sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.

3.3.8 Air Quality and Noise

- There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) located in or in proximity of the area of the Garden Community.
- There may however be air quality issues related to nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate emissions from vehicles travelling on the A12 and A120.
- There are four Air Quality Management Areas in Colchester, located in the following areas:
 1. 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).
 2. Area 2 - East Street and the adjoining lower end of Ipswich Road.
 3. Area 3 - Harwich Road/St Andrew's Avenue junction.
 4. Area 4 - Lucy Lane North, Stanway; Mersea Road; and Brook Street.

3.3.9 Climatic Factors

- Colchester Borough and Braintree District all consume more energy from non-renewable sources as a percentage of their consumption compared to the East of England as a whole. More than three quarters of Braintree District's 3,019.1GWh respective energy consumption is from petroleum products and natural gas. For Colchester, the percentage is just below 75% for the same energy sources.
- Industry, domestic and transport each produce roughly 1/3 of the total CO2 emissions within Colchester, however there is more variation in the statistics for Braintree. The industry and commercial sector produces the smallest amount in each District at 29.7% in Braintree and 31.6% in Colchester. Transport produces the most in Braintree at 37.4%, whereas domestic emissions are higher in Colchester at 34.8%.
- Regarding CO2 emission reductions, Braintree and Colchester have a higher percentage than the Essex average at 18.7% and 18.6% respectively.
- Mean summer precipitation has a 67% likelihood of decreasing by up to 10% across the whole region by 2020 and by 2050 the south of the East of England will see decreases by up to 20%. By 2050 much of the region is expected to see a mean winter precipitation increase of between 10% and 20%.

3.3.10 Transport

- The Great Eastern Main Line provides rail services between London Liverpool Street and the East of England, including Witham, Chelmsford, Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea. It also carries freight traffic to and from Harwich International Port, which handles container ships and freight transport to and from the rest of the UK. Harwich is also one of the major UK ports for ferry and cruise departures. This mainline bisects the site from east to west, separating the northern and southern halves of the Garden Community area. A rail station is present in the Garden Community area, at Marks Tey.
- The A12 also bisects the site from east to west, separating the northern and southern halves of the Garden Community area. The current route of the A120 also bisects the site in this manner further north.
- Planned A120 re-routing may affect the design and layout proposals of any Garden Community at this location, also affecting issues surrounding severance. Equally however, the preferred re-routing option could offer significant benefits regarding the future built form.
- The Marks Tey / Little Tey area is already connected by public transport - both bus and rail to Colchester, Braintree and other centres, including London.
- Currently it is forecast that numerous junctions in and around Braintree will be overcapacity by 2032 if no improvements to the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey take place. This is particularly important because the lack of existing road infrastructure to the north of the site results in dependency on access from the south, putting pressure on A120, its junctions and the town centre route via the B1256.
- The growing demand for the use of airports, including London Stansted, will create additional associated pressures on road and rail infrastructure. The County Council, along with South East

Local Enterprise Partnership, local and national agencies and other organisations, will also need to work collaboratively with the Local Planning Authorities to ensure infrastructure meets demand for enhanced economic growth.

- Regarding public transport, the direct access of the site to the A120 can be considered advantageous in terms of connecting the site with North Essex inter-urban bus routes, providing connectivity employment centres.
- Just 59.9% of residents in Braintree remain in the District for their work. The work destination attracting the highest proportion of Uttlesford residents was the City of London (10.9%). The next most popular destinations for employment were the neighbouring areas of Cambridge with 991 commuters (5.5%) and Harlow with 410 (2.3%).
- Colchester Borough's self-containment rate (share of residents who also work within the Borough) was 69% in 2011, with 24,850 employed residents leaving the Borough to work. Of these 25% go to Greater London, 15% to Tendring District, 15% to Braintree District and 10% to Chelmsford City. The Local Plan will need to manage the continuing pressures of vehicle congestion and parking while developing practical solutions to minimise the need to travel and provide non-car based alternatives to movement around the Borough.
- There are network efficiency issues on a number of strategic inter-urban routes which are operating at or near to capacity. In addition, the capacity of the A12 is further constrained by the operation of the junctions and sub-standard slip roads. The A12, managed by Highways England, has recognised issues with poor reliability and delays, and the Roads Investment Strategy (2015 – 2020) seeks to implement major improvements to address these issues. The A120 between Braintree and the A12 junction suffers from heavy congestion, high accident risk and poor journey reliability. ECC is leading a project, with Highways England, to study options for dualling this section of the route. A number of key junctions on the local highway network also operate at 'over capacity' during peak hours.
- Proportionately more households own 1 car or van within Colchester than the regional and national figures at 43.8%. Braintree has a lower proportion of households owning 1 or more car at 40.3%.
- Despite this, a lower proportion of people use a private car or van to travel to work. Similarly, Colchester has fewer employees travelling to work by car or van, which could be as a result of a higher number of employment opportunities closer to their homes negating the need for travel by car. The same reasoning applies to Braintree, where more employment opportunities are in rural locations and more people travel to work by car or van.
- Both Braintree and Colchester registered significant proportions of residents travelling outside to other local authority areas to find employment. Just 59.9% of residents in Braintree remained in the District for work.

3.3.11 Water

- Water management is challenging given the combination of development growth and Essex being one of the driest counties in England. In respect of water quantity a significant portion of the resource is considered to be 'water stressed'; the resource availability status of rivers and aquifers show that they are generally over abstracted; and not self-sufficient in relation to local

sources of water supply and needs to import substantial quantities of water to satisfy existing demand.

- In Braintree, the latest Water Cycle Study concludes that potable water may require an upgrade, but that potable water supply can support the predicted growth in the District. A stage 2 report explores the possibility of reducing water demand through dwelling design. Additional Wastewater Treatment Works (now Water Recycling Centres) and Sewerage Networks may be required as environmental water quality is highlighted as a cause for concern, but again there is confidence that existing treatment facilities can support the additional wastewater.
- The latest Colchester Water Cycle Study identified issues with a number of smaller ward areas within the Borough. Relevant to the Garden Community area, an issue exists at Marks Tey regarding Wastewater Treatment and water quality.
- Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Domsey Brook and the Roman River, both within the site, have a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:
 1. Alteration of river banks and river beds
 2. Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish
 3. Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment
 4. Diffuse pollution from surface water
 5. Reduced flow in rivers

3.3.12 Flooding

- The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, but where development is necessary, to ensure that it is safe and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. The Roman River (Colne) exists at the site's north eastern boundary and the channel ensures that the surrounding area has land with is in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3.
- This is also the case at the site's southern boundary associated with Domsey Brook. This brook also extends to the central area of the site from the south.

3.3.13 The Historic Environment

- The historic environment should be effectively protected and valued for its own sake, as an irreplaceable record which contributes to our understanding of both the present and the past.
- Archaeological deposits across Braintree and Colchester range in date from the Palaeolithic, through to structures related to the Cold War. However, it should also be remembered that the EHER records represent only the known deposits with many new sites being identified each year. Archaeological sites (and their setting) constitute a finite, non-renewable resource which is vulnerable to damage.

- Colchester Borough boasts 52 Scheduled Monuments. Braintree District contains 40 Scheduled Monuments which include above and below ground features.
- A Scheduled Monument (circular brick kilns, W H Collier Brick and Tile Works, Church Lane) exists within the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI and within the site.
- The Garden Community boundary is in close proximity to a Scheduled Monument (a Roman villa 450m south of Warren's Farm to the north).
- A number of Listed Buildings extend north of the existing A120 around the existing nursery, Mott's Farm and Knave's Farm.
- Another cluster of Listed Buildings north of the existing A120 is situated at Teybrook Farm.
- The Garden Community area contains a small number of isolated Listed Buildings within the central areas.
- Outside, but bordering the red-line boundary of the Garden Community, lies a number of Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument (a long mortuary enclosure and round barrow 160m south west of Frame Farm) at Feering.

3.3.14 Minerals and Waste

- The majority of local authority collected household waste is sent for recycling, composting or reuse in the Plan Area. Despite this, no non-household local authority collected waste is recycled, composted or re-used.
- The Strategic Area has extensive deposits of sand and gravel. The sand and gravel resources in Essex are significant in national, sub-national and local terms - Essex is one of the largest producers in the UK; most geographically extensive and significantly mixed within the centre and north of Essex – namely the districts of Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester and Tendring.

3.3.15 Utilities

- Due to the nature and scale of Garden Communities, utility provision does not exist within the site currently.
- There is capacity in the medium pressure gas network in the region, but local low pressure upgrades will be required.
- Anglian Water has stated that the site is forecast to be in a deficit state by 2040. One of the main measures to mitigate the forecasted deficit will be to increase the transfer from neighbouring areas that benefit from a supply surplus.

3.3.16 Existing Communities

- The settlements of Marks Tey would be 'subsumed' by the proposed development. In addition, numerous farm buildings and other individual dwellings exist within the area.
- The 'red-line boundary' of the site extends the Garden Community area to Copford in the north east, Copford Green in the east, Easthorpe in the south, Feering in the south west and

Coggeshall in the north west.

3.3.17 Trans-national Implications

This Scoping & Environmental Report explores the state of the environment within the broad area of the Plan; however consideration has since been given to the possibility of trans-national impacts resulting from the scale of growth and those broad locations identified for development.

In view of this, no trans-national effects are deemed likely as a result of the Plan singularly or in combination with the relevant Local Plans of Braintree and Colchester or any other plans and programmes. This is as result of the Section One Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Assessment and associated Appropriate Assessment (AA) (2017) which explores the environmental impacts of the principle of the Garden Community on international and national designations for nature conservation. The AA identifies that although impacts arise as a result of the level of growth resulting from Garden Communities due to recreation, effective mitigation is possible.

3.3.18 Data Limitations

Relevant information is not available for the focused Garden Community area on a particularly detailed basis on all sustainability themes. As a result there are some gaps within the data set. It is believed however that the available information shows a comprehensive view on sustainability within the Garden Community area. New data that becomes available will be incorporated in the SA.

It should be noted that while the baseline will be continually updated throughout the SA process, the information outlined within this report represents a snapshot of the information available at the beginning of November 2017.

3.4 Key Sustainability Issues and Problems and Sustainability Objectives (Stage A3)

The outcome of Stages A1 – A2 in the SA Process is the identification of key sustainability issues and problems facing the Strategic Area which assist in the finalisation of a set of relevant Sustainability Objectives. Issues are also identified from the review of plans and programmes and a strategic analysis of the baseline information.

The appraisal of the Plan will be able to evaluate, in a clear and consistent manner, the nature and degree of impact and whether significant effects are likely to emerge from the Plan's content.

The following table outlines the thought process which has led to the formulation of the Sustainability Objectives for the Plan. The state of the environment in absence of the Plan is derived from the Baseline Information addressed in Annex B accompanying this report, the remit of the Plan in the wider planning policy context, and the wider benefits that can be expected of growth at the scale proposed in accordance with Garden City principles and the North Essex Garden Community Charter.

Table 2: Key Sustainability Issues and Problems

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
Economy	<p>Due to its rural nature the site does not currently accommodate many retail uses aside from those located along the A120. It is however well located to Colchester and Tollgate via public transport means.</p> <p>The site is well located to Tollgate, which could become a preferable retail destination for new residents rather than Colchester town centre</p>	<p>Despite emerging policy in regard to ensuring services and facilities are integrated into the Garden Community existing in the form of the Strategic Section One for Braintree and Colchester's Local Plans, the Plan can ensure that sufficient retail and employment premises are integrated into any new community through an effective framework regarding the eventual form of the development. The Plan can ensure that provision can need to be planned to complement, rather than displace, existing local service provision in the town of Braintree. This may not be the case in the absence of the Plan.</p>	To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.
	<p>There are significant economic 'anchors' in the wider vicinity; however links need to be made to utilise these.</p>		To ensure that new employment complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.
	<p>The site is close to the established employment centre of Colchester. The site has good access to London Stansted Airport. The continued growth in the airport's operations means that the airport itself increasingly acts as a hub which attracts a range of high level economic activities, particularly in knowledge-based sectors.</p>	<p>The growth of London Stansted Airport will also provide an opportunity for the Garden Community to capture future associated employment growth. Utilising the existing strengths of existing employment providers and centres is a key opportunity for the Garden Community. The Plan can provide this opportunity, which perhaps could not be expected to be realised through alternative development approaches.</p>	To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.
	<p>Jobs linked to homeworking will be physically associated with the homes of residents and therefore also on site; in relation to these jobs, the design of housing will be crucially important (The North Essex Garden Communities</p>	<p>The planning of the Garden Community provides a unique opportunity to deliver truly innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies, including but not limited to state of the art telecommunications infrastructure which could provide an ultra-fast broadband</p>	To ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	Employment & Demographic Studies (SQW / Cambridge Econometrics 2017)).	service for existing and future residents. This could otherwise not be forthcoming within the Garden Community in the absence of the Plan.	related technologies.
Health	Access to natural greenspace (ANGSt) is an issue within the wider areas of Braintree and Colchester, and particularly within the Garden Community area.	The Plan has the opportunity to suitably include accessible natural green space throughout the design and layout of the Garden Community. This might not be the case in the absence of a plan-led approach, or otherwise not be given due weight in favour of marketable land uses.	To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.
	There are no existing GP surgeries within the Garden Community area, the closest being in Coggeshall and Stanway, some 3 miles from the centre of the site.	In facilitating inclusive facilities, the Plan can ensure that a new Garden Community can incorporate premises for a local centre, including doctors' surgeries and sports provision. In the absence of the Plan it can not be certain whether this would be forthcoming through more traditional delivery models and a possible lack of liaison with service providers.	To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.
	The proportion of adults participating in 30 minutes, moderate intensity sport has decreased in recent surveys at local, sub-national and national levels.		
Housing	As life expectancy increases, the age structure is expected to change, with a marked increase in the number and proportion of the population who will be aged 65 and over. The number of one-person households is also expected to increase.	The Plan is committed to ensuring varied housing tenures, ensuring affordability and ownership models. This can not be considered as forthcoming through development that is not plan-led, where it is likely that outcomes are sought that are most profitable.	To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	The SHMA for Braintree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Tendring Councils indicates that the majority of market housing and affordable housing should be 2 and 3 bedroom properties. This trend is replicated when assessing all housing, with 70.3% of housing need across the Districts and Boroughs is 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings.	A plan-led Garden Community can enable large scale development that is sustainable. The scale of development, established within the Strategic Section One of Braintree's Local Plan and similarly established in the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan, ensures that a larger amount of affordable units can be delivered without affecting viability. Whereas a higher percentage can not be ensured through the Plan, instead being subject to exploration within the Local Plans the Plan can ensure that affordable units are appropriately located within the development. This can be considered comparatively unlikely to be forthcoming without a plan led approach.	
Biodiversity	There are only a small number of important areas of deciduous woodland, which is a priority habitat, scattered throughout the site. These are mainly located north of the A12 corridor and to the immediate west boundary of the site.	A plan-led approach to strategic development can ensure that existing features of biodiversity are protected and integrated into the Garden Community's green infrastructure. Comparatively, this is unlikely to be the case through more traditional strategic development approaches.	To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.
	The Garden Community area contains the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI towards the eastern boundary.		
	As identified within the HRA / AA of the Strategic Section One (and Two) of Braintree's emerging Local Plan, a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy will be needed to ensure that the level of growth does not have likely significant effects on Natura 2000	The relationship between areas of biodiversity interest and human activity through recreation are often incompatible in terms of wildlife conservation. A plan led approach can ensure that such management and the identification of land for recreational purposes is ensured.	To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	sites within the wider area.		
Landscape	Natural England's National Character Area Profile for the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands, within which the site lies, states that the contrasts within the local landscape character, between the plateau and river valleys should be retained, with an enhancement of the balance between the urban and rural landscapes.	A plan-led Garden Community can ensure that sensitive natural features are integrated, protected and enhanced through a framework approach to design and layout. This is not unique to Garden Communities and can be expected to be ensured through more traditional approaches to development.	To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.
	The northern part of wide area has implications associated with the Blackwater River Valley Landscape Character Area which is more sensitive to views.		
	There are a number of sensitive receptors associated with the surrounding area and large scale development has the potential to impact on the rural character of the small settlements surrounding and within the site.	A plan-led Garden Community, adhering to Garden City principles and the Garden Community Charter, can ensure better integration of development within the open countryside. This would otherwise be unlikely to be the case through more traditional development approaches.	To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.
Soil quality	The Garden Community area is almost entirely within land that is identified as Grade 2 Agricultural Land; classed as 'very good' by Natural England.	The loss of agricultural land is inevitable through any strategic scale development. In the absence of the Plan, it can be considered that there would be a similar loss of such land.	To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
Education and skills	In Braintree District, the level of demand for secondary school places in Year 7 is predicted to rise over the course of the next 5 years.	A plan led approach enables an 'infrastructure first' approach to delivering the Garden Community, through effective working with the	To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	Secondary school Year 7 intakes in Colchester are forecast to rise significantly from September 2017 onwards and options are being explored in active collaboration with the schools in Colchester town to provide the additional places required.	commissioning authority. It is more likely that a less holistic approach to ensuring adequate school capacity would be forthcoming in the absence of the Plan.	support the Garden Community.
Energy consumption	Colchester Borough and Braintree District all consume more energy from non-renewable sources as a percentage of their consumption compared to the East of England as a whole. More than three quarters of Braintree District's 3,019.1GWh respective energy consumption is from petroleum products and natural gas. For Colchester, the percentage is just below 75% for the same energy sources.	The Garden Community offers a significant opportunity for the utilisation of renewable energy sources to be utilised. The Plan can ensure that renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures are included within the development that would otherwise be unlikely to be integrated in its absence.	To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.
	Industry, domestic and transport each produce roughly 1/3 of the total CO2 emissions within Colchester, however there is more variation in the statistics for Braintree. The industry and commercial sector produces the smallest amount in each District at 29.7% in Braintree and 31.6% in Colchester. Transport produces the most in Braintree at 37.4%, whereas domestic emissions are higher in Colchester at 34.8%.		
Transport and Access	Both Braintree and Colchester registered significant proportions of residents travelling outside to other local authority areas to find	A plan-led approach, together with the delivery model of the Garden Community, can ensure that effective improvements can be made to rail	To maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	employment. Just 59.9% of residents in Braintree remained in the District for work.	services. It is unlikely that this would be ensured through any planning application without such a requirement either physically or through sufficient contributions.	vehicle emissions and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.
	There are network efficiency issues on a number of strategic inter-urban routes which are operating at or near to capacity. In addition, the capacity of the A12 is further constrained by the operation of the junctions and sub-standard slip roads. The A12, managed by Highways England, has recognised issues with poor reliability and delays, and the Roads Investment Strategy (2015 – 2020) seeks to implement major improvements to address these issues. The A120 between Braintree and the A12 junction suffers from heavy congestion, high accident risk and poor journey reliability.	It is considered that the Plan can ensure an appropriate level of services and facilities on-site. This can ensure that residents take fewer trips outside the Garden Community for convenience shopping and day to day needs. This can offset traffic implications on existing roads as much as possible. It is thought that without this requirement established within the Plan, planning applications are unlikely to ensure provision to the same level.	To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure safe, sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.
	Planned A120 re-routing may affect the design and layout proposals of any Garden Community at this location, also affecting issues surrounding severance. Equally however, the preferred re-routing option could offer significant benefits regarding the future built form.	The issues of bisection surrounding the site can affect permeability. Development at the scale proposed can ensure that such issues are overcome and solutions become viable. These are best consulted on and ensured through a plan-led system. This can not be expected in the absence of the Plan	To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.
	The mainline bisects the site from east to west, separating the northern and southern halves of the Garden Community area. The		

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	A12 also bisects the site from east to west, separating the northern and southern halves of the Garden Community area. The current route of the A120 also bisects the site in this manner further north.		
	Proportionately more households own 1 car or van within Colchester than the regional and national figures at 43.8%. Braintree has a lower proportion of households owning 1 or more car at 40.3% however this is still above the regional average.	The Plan can ensure a level of car parking, and design in such parking, that is suitable for the number of homes. The requirements are unlikely to be clear and specifically suitable to the wider design requirements of the Garden Community in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.
Sustainable Transport	Both Braintree and Colchester registered significant proportions of residents travelling outside to other local authority areas to find employment. Just 59.9% of residents in Braintree remained in the District for work.	A plan-led approach, together with the delivery model of the Garden Community, can ensure that effective links and improvements can be made to rail and bus services within the wider area. It is unlikely that this would be ensured through any planning application without such a requirement either physically or through sufficient contributions.	To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes on site.
	Regarding public transport, the direct access of the site to rail links, the A12 and the A120 can be considered advantageous in terms of connecting the site with North Essex inter-urban bus routes, providing connectivity employment centres.		
Water	Opportunities for improving the status of water bodies should be identified as part of development proposals. Typical water body improvements might be creating 'natural' river banks, overcoming	As stated in the Plan, substantial investment in this essential area of infrastructure will be required to facilitate the improvements needed and ensure adequate ongoing maintenance. It is uncertain whether this infrastructure	To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	<p>barriers to fish movement or providing sustainable drainage systems.</p> <p>The latest Colchester Water Cycle Study identified issues with a number of smaller ward areas within the Borough. Relevant to the Garden Community area, an issue exists at Marks Tey regarding Wastewater Treatment and water quality.</p> <p>Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Domsey Brook and the Roman River, both within the site, have a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Alteration of river banks and river beds 2.Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish 3.Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment 4.Diffuse pollution from surface water 5.Reduced flow in rivers 	would be forthcoming from development proposals in the absence of the Plan.	
Flood Risk	Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. The Roman River exists at the site's north eastern boundary and the channel ensures that the surrounding area has land with is	In the absence of the Plan there is unlikely to be any significant difference in how areas of flood risk are considered within the Garden Community. That said, the design and layout of the Garden Community can ensure that	To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. This is also the case at the site's southern boundary associated with Domsey Brook. This brook also extends to the central area of the site from the south.	<p>existing water courses are maximised as features of a blue infrastructure interest throughout the site.</p> <p>The delivery of the Garden Community will provide an opportunity to provide this level of investment and also provide an unprecedented opportunity to integrate innovative sustainable urban drainage systems into the design of new development. It is unlikely that this would be the case to the same degree through development proposals in the absence of the Plan.</p>	positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.
The Historic Environment	<p>A Scheduled Monument (circular brick kilns, W H Collier Brick and Tile Works, Church Lane) exists within the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI and within the site. The Garden Community boundary is in close proximity to a Scheduled Monument (a Roman villa 450m south of Warren's Farm to the north). Outside, but bordering the red-line boundary of the Garden Community, lies a number of Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument (a long mortuary enclosure and round barrow 160m south west of Frame Farm) at Feering.</p> <p>A number of Listed Buildings extend north of the existing A120 around the existing nursery, Mott's Farm and Knave's Farm. Another cluster of Listed Buildings north of the existing A120 is situated at Teybrook Farm.</p>	In the absence of the Plan, such features would have to be protected through suitable schemes both in regard to designations and their settings. The Plan can further ensure that enhancements to assets are sought where possible.	To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
Utilities	Due to the nature and scale of Garden Communities, utility provision does not exist within the site currently.	The development of a new Garden Community provides significant opportunities to not only provide new infrastructure but also the opportunity to deliver innovative forms of infrastructure and ensure their integration from the outset, reducing and avoiding the need for disruptive retrofitting which could otherwise be the case in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband.
	There is capacity in the medium pressure gas network in the region, but local low pressure upgrades will be required.		
	Anglian Water has stated that the site is forecast to be in a deficit state by 2040. One of the main measures to mitigate the forecasted deficit will be to increase the transfer from neighbouring areas that benefit from a supply surplus.	The creation of a new settlement offers an opportunity to design these improvements in such a way as to make them as efficient (in terms of operation and maintenance) and as complementary to surrounding land uses as possible. To ensure the success of this integration, strong collaboration with service providers will be required. This can be considered to be maximised through a plan-led approach, the absence of which would have less positive outcomes through the absence of such a framework regarding place making.	
	Broadband provision is integral to the Garden Community's target of 'one job per home' through effective home working.		
Existing communities	The settlements of Marks Tey would be 'subsumed' by the proposed development. In addition, numerous farm buildings and other individual dwellings exist within the area.	The proximity of existing villages to the Garden Community opens up opportunities to improve areas between these existing settlements and new development. Existing private farmland, for example, could be opened up as publicly accessible parkland with new green links formed to improve walking and cycling connectivity in the area for both existing and future residents. It can be considered comparably less likely that such a joined up approach to development would be forthcoming in the absence of the Plan and the reliance on Policy SP9 within the LPAs' emerging	To improve areas between existing settlements and new development, to repair the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.
	The 'red-line boundary' of the site extends the Garden Community area to Copford in the north east, Copford Green in the east, Easthorpe in the south, Feering in the south west and Coggeshall in		

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	the north west.	Local Plans.	
	Due to the nature and scale of Garden Communities, few local facilities exist within the site currently.	Despite emerging policy in regard to ensuring services and facilities are integrated into the Garden Community existing in the form of the Strategic Section One for Braintree and Colchester's Local Plans, the Plan can ensure that sufficient retail and employment premises are integrated into any new community through an effective framework regarding the eventual form of the development. The Plan can ensure that provision can need to be planned to complement, rather than displace, existing local service provision in local town centres. This may not be the case in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity.

The following table explores whether the identified Sustainability Objectives above fall into the three broad categories of sustainability, namely social, environmental and economic themes.

Table 3: The SA Objectives

SA Objective	Economic	Social	Environmental
1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	✓		
2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	✓		
3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	✓		
4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	✓		
5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.		✓	
6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development, to repair the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.		✓	
7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities		✓	
8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.		✓	
9) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.		✓	
10) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.		✓	
11) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.		✓	

SA Objective	Economic	Social	Environmental
12) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.		✓	
13) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.			✓
14) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.			✓
15) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.			✓
16) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.			✓
17) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.			✓
18) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.			✓
19) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.			✓
20) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.			✓
21) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.			✓

3.4.1 The Compatibility of the SA Objectives

A total of 21 SA Objectives have been derived for the appraisal of the Plan. They are based on the scope of the document, policy advice and guidance and to the assessment of the current state of the environment.

It is useful to test the compatibility of SA Objectives against one another in order to highlight any areas where potential conflict or tensions may arise.

It is to be expected that some objectives are not compatible with other objectives thereby indicating that tensions could occur. Objectives which are based around environmental issues sometimes conflict with economic and social objectives, and vice versa.

Areas of potential incompatibility or uncertainty between the objectives relevant to the Plan are explained within the following bullet points:

- **Protecting soil quality and the majority of the economic and social based objectives:**
There can be expected to be unavoidable harm in regard to minimising the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land with all other objectives relevant to build development within the Garden Community. The site is within Grade 2 Agricultural Land, which represents the best and most versatile agricultural land within both Braintree District and Colchester Borough. It should be acknowledged however that the majority of Greenfield land within the authority areas is comprised of this agricultural classification and the loss can not be considered significant in view of proportional loss.
- **Sustainable transport and the need to ensure road access and car parking:** The integration of sustainable transport modes and necessary infrastructure, and the promotion of their uptake, can be seen as potentially incompatible with the needs of ensuring appropriate linkages to the existing road network. Similarly, the impacts of poorly designed and insufficient car parking can be significant negative from both design and safety aspects. Although truly sustainable outcomes can be seen to correspond to a modal shift to sustainable transport methods, notions of inclusivity determine that safe and efficient road access need to also be ensured to reflect the baseline of car ownership and the reality that sustainable transport modes can not be considered suitable for all demographics. An effective balance of private and public transport accessibility should be considered the most realistic outcome for the Garden Community.
- **Landscape based objectives with those associated with recreation and wildlife conservation / enhancement:** Although similar in form, it must be noted that the inclusion of recreational land should largely be provided in isolation from those areas that have been identified as contributing to green infrastructure. Similarly, land for purely landscape purposes should be managed in a way that offers either recreational or biodiversity value. The impacts of recreational activity on biodiversity and wildlife conservation can be significantly damaging to habitats.

3.5 The Approach to Assessing the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Plan

3.5.1 Introduction

As previously set out, the Plan will include specific proposals, strategies and detailed policies to inform the delivery of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community. At this Issues and Options stage, these proposals, strategies and policies are at an early stage of development but will be refined during the Plan-making process. The final Plan will provide certainty for stakeholders on the type, scale and location of specific land uses including the infrastructure required to accommodate them.

The SA, in line with the scope of the Plan, is required to assess the impacts of the Plan's content. For this purpose, and as required of SA, a broad sustainability framework relevant to the geographical scope of the Garden Community has been devised. The sustainability framework takes the Sustainability Objectives identified previously in this report as a starting point, and elaborates on each objective in turn with a series of criteria or 'key questions' to aid the assessment of the Plan's content in more detail.

3.5.2 The Sustainability Framework for Assessing Options

The following sustainability framework forms the basis of the methods used to evaluate the effects of the Plan. Quantitative analysis is used where available; however a number of assumptions are required in order to make qualitative and comparable judgements to assess options to the same level of detail. It is important that a level playing field is ensured for the assessment of options, with the same level of information being used to assess all options. Assumptions are set out in the relevant sections of this SA in which specific elements of the Plan are appraised.

Table 4: Sustainability Framework for Assessing the Plan

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it ensure the delivery of a range of employment opportunities to support the Community? - Will it tackle employment associated deprivation? - Does it seek to improve existing training and learning facilities and/or create more facilities? - Will the employment opportunities available be mixed to suit a varied employment skills base? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amount of floor space developed for employment, sqm - Level 2 qualifications by working age residents. - Level 4 qualifications and above by working age residents. - Employment status of residents. - Average gross weekly earnings. - Standard Occupational Classification.

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to include a suitable level of convenience shopping? - Does it promote and enhance the viability of existing centres? - Does it seek to locate development within easy public travelling distance to town centres? - Does it seek to improve public transport networks to town centres? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Footfalls in Colchester town centre - Traffic flows
3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it support business innovation, diversification, entrepreneurship and changing economies? - Will it provide complimentary employment to existing major employment areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type and amount of employment uses delivered
4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it seek to locate development in areas of lower soil quality or not in farming use? - Will it ensure that soil quality is not compromised? - Will it support or lead to the remediation of contaminated land, avoiding environmental pollution or exposure of occupiers or neighbouring land uses to unacceptable health risk? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of Grade 2 ALC (Ha). - Contaminated land brought back into beneficial use, hectares
5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it ensure that new green and open space provision is accessible to all? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking distances to natural greenspace over 800m
6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development, to repair the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will landscapes and features sensitive to development be protected? - Will it lead to coalescence with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of landscape features - Number of proposals permitted contrary to a desire to restrict coalescence

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.	neighbouring settlements?	
7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it ensure a high quality and safe public realm? - Does it seek to preserve PRoWs and bridleways? - Does it seek to promote active modes? - Will services and facilities be located in strategic locations within the Garden Community? - Will it provide a mix of leisure and sports pitch provision? - Does it seek to provide facilities for young people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New leisure and sports provision (Sqm) - Loss of bridleways / PRoWs - Traffic flows within the Garden Community
8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to provide housing for an ageing population? - Does it ensure a proportion of housing for social rent? - Does it seek to ensure a mix of dwelling types? - Does it seek to include a mix of dwelling sizes? - Does it seek to provide as high a proportion of affordable units as possible / viable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of lifetime homes - Number of homes for social rent - Number of affordable units - Housing mix - Housing size (bedrooms)
9) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it ensure adequate school places (through expansion / new facilities) and early years provision to support growth? - Will it ensure the required improvements to utilities infrastructure? - Will it ensure the required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes of public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre - Additional capacity of local schools / incidents of new school applications

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
	improvements in capacity to GP services?	
10) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it increase and/or improve the availability and usability of sustainable transport modes? - Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation other than private vehicle? - Will it lead to the integration of transport modes? - Will it improve rural public transport? - Does it seek to increase the uptake or viability of walking and cycling as methods of transportation, through new infrastructure or integration? - Will it improve, or not detrimentally affect air quality along the A120? - Does it direct growth away from AQMAs? - Does it seek to improve or avoid increasing traffic flows generally? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of journeys to work by walking and cycling and percentage of journeys to work by public transport - Traffic flows
11) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it contribute positively to reduce social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, services and leisure facilities for all? - Does it seek to concentrate development and facilities where access via sustainable travel is greatest? - Does it seek to minimise congestion at key destinations / areas that witness a large amount of vehicle movements at peak times? - Would the scale of development require significant supporting transport infrastructure? - Will it provide a suitable amount of sports, recreational, leisure and open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number / amount of new homes / employment development completed at ward level within Growth / Regeneration Areas - Percentage of new development within 30 minutes of community facilities (as defined by each authority)

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
	space facilities?	
12) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to provide an appropriate level of car parking? - Are parking spaces of a suitable size? - Are the locations of parking spaces suitable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parking violations - Number of parking spaces per dwelling approved.
13) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it ensure energy efficiency measures? - Does it seek to reduce building emissions? - Does it seek to integrate renewable sources of energy? - Does it seek to ensure high speed broadband? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code for Sustainable Homes certificates - Energy consumption per dwelling - Percentage of energy consumption from renewable sources - Broadband speeds
14) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will development have a potential impact on a national, international or European designated site (SPA, SAC, Ramsar, SSSI)? - Will it maintain and enhance sites otherwise designated for their nature conservation interest, such as LoWSs? - Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats? - Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to indigenous BAP priority species? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impacts (direct and indirect) on designated sites - Amount of development in designated areas - Area of land offset for biodiversity
15) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will recreational spaces be carefully managed and promoted? - Will habitats be suitably protected and enhanced, either physically or through careful management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Journeys to Natura 2000 sites for recreational uses - Condition of habitats on site
16) To ensure the protection, enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to create new landscape features on site? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of TPOs

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to include public art and a high quality public realm? - Does it seek to protect and enhance existing on-site features of a landscape value? 	
17) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to utilise current conditions and character in the wider landscape? - Will existing features be utilised as part of landscape character of newly created areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presence of indigenous and non-indigenous species through ecological surveys and requirements at the planning application stage
18) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption? - Will it lead to an increased generation of energy from renewable sources? - Will it encourage greater energy efficiency? - Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources, minimising waste and promoting recycling? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total CO2 emissions - Renewable Energy Installed by Type - Number of zero carbon homes delivered
19) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it lead to no deterioration on the quality of water bodies? - Will water resources and sewerage capacity be able to accommodate growth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of Rivers (number achieving ecological good status) - Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on grounds of water quality

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
20) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding (fluvial, coastal, surface water)? - Does it seek to avoid increasing flood risk (fluvial, surface water, groundwater) in areas away from initial development? - Does it promote the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and will their integration be viable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood defence grounds - Number of SuDS schemes approved by ECC
21) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it protect and enhance designations, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas? - Will it have a negative impact on the significance of a designated historic environment asset or its setting? - Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces? - Does it encourage the use of high quality design principles to respect local character? - Will / can any perceived adverse impacts be reduced through adequate mitigation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land - Number of listed buildings demolished, repaired or brought back to use, including locally listed buildings - New Conservation Area Appraisals adopted - Number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens (and percentage at risk) - Area of highly sensitive historic landscape characterisation type(s) which have been altered and their character eroded - Number of major development projects that enhance or detract from the significance of heritage assets or historic landscape character - Percentage of planning applications where archaeological investigations were required prior to approval or mitigation strategies developed or implemented

3.6 The Appraisal of the Plan's Content

The SA of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Plan appraises the document's policies against the Sustainability Objectives (SOs) outlined in the above framework. The aim is to assess the sustainability effects of the document following implementation. The appraisal will look at the secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary effects in accordance with Annex 1 of the SEA Directive, as well as assess alternatives and suggest mitigation measures where appropriate. The findings will be accompanied by an appraisal matrix which will document the effects over time.

The content to be included within the table responds to those 'significant effects' of the policy or element of the Plan subject to appraisal. Appraisals will also look at the following:

- Temporal effects;
- Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic effects;
- The appraisal of Alternatives; and
- Proposed mitigation measures / recommendations.

These, and 'significant effects' are further described in the following sub-sections.

3.6.1 Description of 'Significant Effects'

The strength of impacts can vary dependant on the relevance of the policy content to certain sustainability objectives or themes. Where the policies have been appraised against the Sustainability Objectives the basis for making judgements within the assessment is identified within the following key:

Possible impact	Basis for judgement
++	Strong prospect of there being significant positive impacts
+	Strong prospect of there being minor positive impacts
?	Possibility of either positive or negative impacts, or general uncertainty where there is a lack on current information (to be elaborated in commentary in each instance)
0	No impact
N/A	Not applicable to the scope or context of the appraised content
-	Strong prospect of there being minor negative impacts and mitigation would be possible / issues can be rectified
--	Strong prospect of there being significant negative impacts with mitigation unlikely to be possible (pending further investigation) / further work is needed to explore whether issues can be rectified

Commentary is also included to describe the significant effects of the policy on the sustainability objectives.

3.6.2 Description of 'Temporal Effects'

The appraisal of the Plan's content recognises that impacts may vary over time. Three time periods have been used to reflect this and are shown in the appraisal tables as S (short term), M (medium term) and L (long term). For the purpose of the policy elements of the Plan S, M and L depict:

(S) Short term: early stages of the plan period / development of the Garden Community.

(M) Medium Term: middle stages of the plan period / development of the Garden Community.

(L) Long term: latter stages of the plan period (2033) / development of the Garden Community and where relevant beyond.

3.6.3 Description of 'Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic Effects'

In addition to those effects that may arise indirectly (secondary effects), relationships between different elements of the Plan will be assessed in order to highlight any possible strengthening or weakening of impacts from their implementation together. Cumulative effects respond to impacts occurring directly from two different policies together, and synergistic effects are those that offer a strengthening or worsening of more than one policy that is greater than any individual impact. Additionally, any cumulative impacts with other plans or projects will be highlighted within the appraisal.

3.6.4 Description of 'Alternatives Considered'

Planning Practice Guidance states that reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in its plan. They must be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The alternatives must be realistic and deliverable.

At this current stage, it is envisaged that further alternatives will be identified and developed during further stages of the Plan and as a result of the (this) Issues and Options consultation. The SA process will refine what constitutes a reasonable alternative at each consultation stage, and assess reasonable alternatives as they emerge, with findings shared with the Local Planning Authorities ahead of Local plan committee meetings for consideration.

3.6.5 Description of 'Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations'

Negative or uncertain impacts may be highlighted within appraisals. As such, mitigation measures may be needed and these will be highlighted in this section for each policy where relevant. In addition to this, this section will also include any recommendations that are not directly linked to negative or uncertain impacts, but if incorporated may lead to sustainability improvements.

4. The Appraisal of the Plan's Vision and Principles

4.1 Introduction

The following sub-sections respond to an initial appraisal of each element of the Plan. This responds to an appraisal of each part of the document that could give rise to environmental, social or economic effects. In each sub-section, an appraisal of all identified reasonable alternatives, where they exist at this stage, has been included for transparency and robustness. The process behind the identification of each alternative has been included, citing the source of each alternative in each instance. The following elements of the Plan are subject to assessment in this Sustainability Appraisal:

- Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Draft Vision;
- Theme 1: Place and Integration;
- Theme 2: Community; and
- Theme 3: Delivery.

4.2 A Vision for the Garden Community

4.2.1 Context / Justification

A Vision for Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will provide a mandate for its future development. It should be a shared Vision that governs all processes from design through to delivery of the development and indeed management of community assets.

It should create an identity for the new community where residents and business feel like they “belong”. It should foster a collective sense of ownership and pride in the place where people will live, work and spend their leisure time.

The Vision combines and reflects the evidence, community workshops, the Garden Communities Charter and design principles set out above. It is a good starting point from which to develop a more succinct, and shared Vision with which people can fully identify.

The Vision for the Garden Community is as follows:

Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Draft Vision

Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC) represents a visionary approach to plan a new town for North Essex.

BEAUTY, SENSE OF PLACE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

CBBGC will be a beautiful place with a strong sense of community and belonging. It is planned to be big enough to become a flourishing new town in its own right, complementary to Colchester and to Braintree, but with all the facilities, services and amenities needed by a new community that is town-sized, to deliver healthy and diverse new communities. It will have low-energy, high performance homes in a rich landscape setting with natural green space directly accessible to every home.

TRANSFORMING ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

A new Garden Community will be big enough to create a new focus for economic growth that will be a catalyst to transform the economic prospects and prosperity for the whole of North Essex. It will be the main location in North Essex for housing development for the next thirty years and more. It will be planned for a population of 55,000 people with jobs, schools, shops and services to meet the new residents' needs. Support will be given to local small and medium sized businesses to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester and Braintree economy. This might include an element of homeworking.

A COMPREHENSIVE VISION

A new place that requires a different sort of "Vision", one that considers all aspects of creating a new town in a new place. It is so much more than building houses in the countryside.

MAKING A TOWN

Standard large developments connected to existing towns are generally delivered in a single rolling programme of development by one or two developers. Creating a new Garden Community of up to 24,000 homes requires a structure of main roads and green spaces and utility services, and must be planned as defined and distinctive neighbourhoods within this framework. There is opportunity for co-ordinated development to achieve encouraging rates of delivery of homes, jobs and infrastructure.

BESPOKE INFRASTRUCTURE FIT FOR A TOWN

CBBGC will not be reliant on the capacity of existing infrastructure – schools, primary healthcare, roads, utility services, parks and open spaces, etc. The plan will include new provision under each of these headings to ensure health. Most will be built in parallel with the completion of new homes to ensure that new residents have their needs met in a timely

and coordinated way. But systems of roads and public transport and strategic open space will need to be created at timely intervals to ensure that the new Garden Community has the best possible start, and has the minimum adverse impacts on existing communities'

DEALING WITH EXISTING TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

Essex County Council has committed to leading on a feasibility study to upgrade the A120 between Braintree and the A12. It has been agreed by Essex County Council, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Highways England that the County Council will lead on the review of options through to Preferred Route status with the objective being for the scheme to be included in Highways England's Roads Investment Strategy: for the 2020/21 – 2024/25 Road Period (RIS2). The A12 widening scheme between junctions 19 and 25 is committed within the Roads Investment Strategy for the 2015/16 to 2019/20. A preferred route announcement regarding whether there will be on line or off line widening has yet to be taken but it is expected in the Winter of 2017.

OPTIMUM BENEFITS AND MINIMUM IMPACTS

There are opportunities for existing residents, they will have ready access to a much greater array of facilities and services than they have at present; the volume of strategic-through traffic on local roads will decrease; yet careful planning and implementation will mean that their immediate surroundings may not change radically or quickly.

FUTURE-PROOFING TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

The timescales over which the Garden Community will grow and develop will need flexibility to incorporate exciting new technologies for future mobility, allowing the emerging neighbourhoods to respond to changes in patterns of travel behaviour which are constantly evolving in parallel with advances in new transport technology.

RESPECT FOR THE LANDSCAPE AND EXISTING COMMUNITIES

There will be a positive relationship between new built form, existing communities and the landscape of the surrounding countryside. A network of extensive, new and accessible green spaces will preserve views and maintain the identity of existing communities - Marks Tey, Great Tey, Little Tey, Copford, Easthorpe, Surrex.

A WHOLE BIGGER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

This network will also create identity for distinctive new neighbourhoods, each self-sustaining and designed as a complete community, and each neighbourhood complementing and adding to range of services and facilities available to the whole.

A COMPREHENSIVE GREEN NETWORK

A green network of connected walkways and cycleways that will provide attractive and safe non-vehicular access to core destinations such as the town centre, local centres, places of

employment, schools and the railway station.

PHASING WITH RESPECT FOR EXISTING RESIDENTS

The first phase of development will be planned to minimise impacts on existing communities, address pressing accessibility and environmental issues and will deliver real benefits for existing residents.

GARDEN CITY PRINCIPLES

Above all, there will be close adherence to Garden City Principles as promoted by the Town and Country Planning Association – the key to the creation of a distinctive, high quality Garden Community.

A NEW, EXCEPTIONAL PLACE

The Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will be an exceptional place to be born, to grow up, to make a career, to raise a family, to retire; to enjoy a rich and fulfilling life.

4.2.2 Significant and Temporal Effects

The following assessment explores whether the plan's Vision is broadly compatible with the Sustainability Objectives that have been specifically devised for the Garden Community area.

Table 5: Compatibility with the Sustainability Objectives: A Vision for the Garden Community

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	✓
	2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	✓
	3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	?
	4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	x
Commentary	The Plan's Vision adheres to the majority of the 'on-site' requirements of the Garden Community as established within Policy SP9 of Section One of the emerging Local Plans of Braintree and Colchester. The Vision refers to the need for retail and employment opportunities within the	

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
	development. The Vision states that, 'Support will be given to local small and medium sized businesses to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester and Braintree economy. This might include an element of homeworking.' Uncertainty surrounds the aspiration to maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy in so far as this is not specifically included, however it is likely to be ensured through a number of transport related themes within the Vision. The Vision does not aspire to minimising the loss of the best and most agricultural land; however this can not be seen to be influenced through the Plan or indeed the notion of Garden Community at this location or within the wider area.	
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.	✓
	6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development, to repair the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.	✓
	7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities	✓
	8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.	?
	9) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.	✓
	10) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.	✓
	11) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.	✓
	12) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.	?
	13) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.	✓
Commentary	The Vision states that the Garden Community 'will not be reliant on the capacity of existing infrastructure – schools, primary healthcare, roads, utility services, parks and open spaces, etc.' This	

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
	ensures compatibility with the majority of the social Sustainability Objectives and the Plan will include new provision under all of these themes. There is compatibility with transport infrastructure, solution, and sustainable and active modes. There is no specific mention of car parking within the Vision, however reference to future-proofing transport and mobility seeks to ensure that modal shift is promoted as far as is possible. Bespoke infrastructure will also ensure further compatibility with wider notions of social sustainability. The Vision is however not explicit in aspiring to deliver a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible, however the wider Plan seeks these assurances and mention of this requirement is implied through close adherence to Garden City Principles. Nevertheless the Vision could be expanded to include this aspiration.	
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	14) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.	?
	15) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.	?
	16) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.	✓
	17) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.	✓
	18) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.	?
	19) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.	?
	20) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.	?
	21) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.	?
Commentary	Strong compatibility exists between the Vision's content surrounding landscape and existing communities and relevant Sustainability Objectives. The Plan's Vision does not specifically include the aspiration of biodiversity gain, habitat creation or a green infrastructure for this purpose, or the protection of existing features. Uncertainty surrounds the compatibility of the Vision with this Sustainability Objective and also that of ensuring that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area. It is recommended that these aspirations of the Garden City Principles and Policy SP9 of Section One are integrated into the Plan's	

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
	<p>Vision. The Vision could also be expanded to reflect the possibility of renewable energy production and distribution throughout the Garden Community, as well as more specific environmental concerns regarding water quality and minimising the risk of flooding with wider landscape improvements. The Vision could also include specific reference to the historic environment in reflection of those Listed Buildings on site and those Scheduled Monuments that exist at the site's boundary.</p>

4.2.3 Alternatives Considered

The Vision can be seen as a general summary of the content of the Plan. The individual elements of the Vision are elaborated on in more detail within other elements of the document. Alternatives are explored in more detail within the assessment of these elements, presented as 'themes and principles' later within this SA, commensurate to their individual context.

4.2.4 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

The Plan's Vision and the Sustainability Objectives are largely compatible. The Plan is not compatible with the objective to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land, however this is no criticism of the Plan's Vision and related to the nature of Greenfield development. Uncertainty surrounds the Vision where certain objectives are not specifically covered, such as ensuring a mix of housing types and tenures, car parking, biodiversity, ensuring that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation, fluvial or surface water flood risk, water quality, renewable energy production and distribution and the historic environment. These elements of sustainability, specifically relevant to the area are recommended to be included within future iterations of the Plan's Vision.

4.3 Planning Themes and Principles of the Garden Community

4.3.1 Context / Justification

Section 4 of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Plan contains a number of 'themes' related to Garden Community Charter Principles. Within this SA the content of these 'themes', as outlined in the Plan, are appraised.

The Plan includes a narrative of how each Charter Principle can be met within the Garden Community, physically and in terms of how development can be shaped within the mechanisms of the Plan itself. These narratives form the basis for each thematic appraisal.

4.3.2 Theme 1: Place and Integration

This Section of the Plan relates to issues such as making good places, high quality design, planning for a healthy economy, mobility and access within and around the development, and landscape and biodiversity objectives.

The principles that form the content of this theme are as follows:

THEME 1: PLACE AND INTEGRATION

PRINCIPLE 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Garden Communities will provide a generous amount of green space. They will be set within a multi-functional and integrated natural environment; providing space for nature, making the communities more resilient to climate change; promoting healthy lifestyles, and creating beautiful places to live and work.

PRINCIPLE 2: INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The Garden Communities will be planned around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport system for the north Essex area, which will put walking, cycling and public transit systems at the heart of the development, and be delivered in a timely way to support the communities as they grow.

PRINCIPLE 3: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Garden Communities will seek to provide access to one job per household within the new community or within a short distance by public transport. The employment function will be a key component of creating character and identity and sustainable communities.

PRINCIPLE 4: LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Community inclusiveness and walkable, sociable and vibrant neighbourhoods will be a defining characteristic of the garden communities. A diverse mix of homes responding to existing and future local needs will be provided alongside a range of community services,

including health, education, leisure and recreation, culture and shopping.

PRINCIPLE 5: SMART AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Planned for the 21st century, the Garden Communities will secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters resilient environments and communities; able to respond positively to changing circumstances. Innovation and technology will be embraced to achieve resource efficiency, higher quality of life and healthier lifestyles; creating the conditions for sustainable living.

PRINCIPLE 6: GOOD DESIGN

Through all stages of the planning, design and development of the Garden Communities the highest quality of design and management of the built and public realm will be promoted. Existing local assets will be capitalised to help create distinctive places.

4.3.2.1 Significant, Secondary and Temporal Effects

Table 6: Impact on Sustainability Objectives: Theme 1 – Place and Integration

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	++	++	++
	2	+	+	+
	3	++	++	++
	4	-	-	-
	Commentary	<p>Significant positive impacts are highlighted for Sustainability Objective 1, where the Plan identifies that the new location could provide for Grade A offices linked to a new station and attractive to financial services, the creative and digital economy related to Colchester's emerging role in this sector and the presence of the University, construction innovation, logistics and the energy sector, in particular opportunities in renewables and waste.</p> <p>Positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objective 2 and a need for convenience retail provision. The Plan acknowledges that the Garden Community will need to establish neighbourhoods where everything is within easy walking distance, planned around connected centres, which provide a mix of homes, jobs and services set within attractive and green environments. It adds that, 'Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community will have a Town Centre that will be the heart of the Garden Community. It will likely contain the highest development density with a mix of employment, shopping, education needs, cultural and amenity</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
	<p>and health facilities, together with the main public transport interchange. Neighbourhood centres will contain a smaller range of local services including primary schools, nurseries, health services, day-to-day convenience shopping and cafés.' Despite this, the type of retail offer within the main Garden Community centre is not yet established, and therefore the possible effects on the existing town centre of Colchester and the function of Tollgate are yet to be identified. As such, only minor positive impacts are highlighted at this stage of the Plan.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 3, regarding capitalising on the links to local employment opportunities and taking advantage of the site's proximity to economic hubs. The Plan recognises that the Garden Community can assist in the development of an economic corridor in the South East of England which will offer business workspace, access to labour and clusters of expertise in research (associated with the University of Essex), a logistics hub, and high quality office space for support services/back office functions. The Plan recognises the possibilities associated with the site's good access to international markets via London, and London Stansted Airport and Haven ports.</p> <p>Negative impacts have been highlighted for the loss of Grade 2 Agricultural Land, which represents the highest grade soils within the Districts of both Braintree and Colchester. Despite this, impacts are not highlighted as significant due to the prevalence of Grade 2 soils in both Districts.</p>		
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	++	++
	6	++	++
	7	+	+
	8	+	+
	9	+	+
	10	++	++
	11	++	++
	12	?	?
	13	+	+
	Commentary	<p>There will be significant positive impacts regarding accessible natural green space through requirements for open space to be integrated throughout the Garden Community and also the integration of major local new parkland. Additionally, the</p>	

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
	<p>Plan successfully seeks to ensure sports pitches, recreation and play areas and informal space for free play and recreation for all ages. As a result, additional positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 7 regarding accessibility to facilities in so far as is relevant to this specific theme.</p> <p>There will be significant positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 6 regarding coalescence in response to the new community, through Theme 1, addressing the relationship with existing communities close to and within its boundaries, stating that care will be needed in new development to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent settlements and on the wider landscape. Similarly, Principle 2 acknowledges that specific proposals will need to reduce severance caused by the A12 and the mainline railway. Further detail is likely to be provided at later consultation stages</p> <p>There will be positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 8, regarding the provision of a mix of house types and tenures. The Plan states that, 'provision of a variety of housing tenures with levels of affordability reflected in different ownership models is an essential part of the creation of a balanced Garden Community.' This can be seen to go beyond what the market can be expected to provide, however the Plan could elaborate in future iterations how these different types of housing could be integrated within the wider design of the Garden Community, in addition to affordable units, to ensure social inclusivity.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objective 9 and the provision of schools and other supporting infrastructure. Charter Principle 4 of the Plan states that, 'Neighbourhood centres will contain a smaller range of local services including primary schools, nurseries, health services, day-to-day convenience shopping and cafés. They will be located in within 10 minutes' walk of homes.' This also ensures additional positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 7. The commentary regarding Charter Principle 4 could however elaborate on the locational requirements of secondary schools that will be forthcoming from the Garden Community development.</p> <p>The Plan's Principle 2 recognises the importance of ensuring the highest level of strategic connectivity with the wider transport system, additionally identifying that the Garden Community site has existing issues of poor connectivity and traffic congestion, transport corridors that divide existing communities and create environmental problems, particularly at peak times, and poor access to key locations such as schools, local shops and the railway station. This is not surprising, given the greenfield status of the majority of the land, which presents a 'blank canvas' for high levels of connectivity and public transport to be integrated. The Plan states that the new Garden Community should make full provision for active travel (walking and cycling) and sustainable travel (public transport) so that together they account for 70% of all trips. The Plan identifies that this could represent (in the medium to long</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES		<p>term), a Rapid Transit service to Colchester allied to dedicated routes and park & ride with phased construction through the new Garden Community, with the potential for a new Town Centre railway station area and a Rapid Transit system along the Stane Street / London Road corridor in the longer term.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts are also identified regarding Sustainability Objective 11, regarding access to existing roads and the provision of a suitable network of roads on site. The Plan states that ‘the aim at CBBGC is to increase capacity for journeys by providing attractive alternatives to travel by car, and to redistribute through traffic to realigned routes.’ The Plan identifies some specific possible solutions, including the realignment of the A120 in advance of development at any significant scale, connectivity by active travel modes, better accessibility for Marks Tey Station, potential to downgrade the existing Junction 25 on the A12 to reduce through traffic in Marks Tey, and potential for downgrading of the A120 within the new Garden Community to become a “community road” unattractive to through traffic.</p> <p>Charter Principle 5 identifies that the use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure linked to renewable energy generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. It is unsure whether this element of the Plan is suitable in response to the baseline data of car ownership in the wider area and the need for the development of ‘specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land’ as identified in the emerging Colchester and Braintree Local Plan Policy SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex. As such, uncertain impacts are identified at this stage.</p> <p>Charter Principle 5 will ensure minor positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 13, regarding innovative utility provision. This Principle includes ‘Smart Infrastructure’ requirements, which include cutting edge digital communications, Smart Energy systems to deliver sustainable energy and capacity and adaptability for technological change. Despite this, future iterations of the Plan could include specific mention of the requirements of day to day utility provision on site, aside from those related to energy efficiency, power and digital communications.</p>		
	14	++	++	++
	15	+	+	+
	16	++	++	++
	17	++	++	++
	18	++	++	++

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
19	?	?	?
20	?	?	?
21	?	?	?
Commentary	<p>Significant positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 16, where the Plan states that, 'Habitats in and around the Domsey Brook, Roman River corridors and around Seven Star Green should be retained and enhanced. Subject to more detailed survey work, the area has the potential to support a number of protected species and other species of conservation importance.' Regarding a desire to ensure that recreational activity does not affect wildlife conservation minor positive impacts are highlighted at this stage. Although the issue is not specifically identified in the Plan, Principle 1 alludes to the need for separate and more 'purpose designed' open spaces within the Garden Community. This will need to be carefully managed however to ensure no possible compromise of the status of habitats through recreational activity.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts are also identified for all landscape and coalescence based objectives. This is in response to the Plan maintaining identity between settlements and in identifying that care will be needed in new development to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent settlements and on the wider landscape – in particular, woodlands and mature hedgerows and field boundaries should be retained where they form screens.</p> <p>In response to the aspirations of Sustainability Objectives 16 and 17, regarding protecting and creating landscape features on site, and also ensuring that the Garden Community is integrated within the existing rural landscape, there will be significant positive effects. This is due to the Plan ensuring a high standard of design and layout, drawing on its context and the assets within and close to its boundaries. These key assets will provide a context to form a new green-grid layout to provide an attractive setting for the new community and linking it to the wider countryside.</p> <p>There will be positive impacts associated with renewable energy and energy efficiency (Sustainability Objective 18) though Principle 5, in particular the Smart Infrastructure principles that state that future work will endeavour ensure that the Garden Community makes space for heat and power energy generation centres and hubs, maximises efficiency at the household and business level, with on-site generation, and a mixed portfolio of energy technologies to avoid dependence on any one energy solution.</p> <p>Uncertain impacts have been identified regarding Sustainability Objective 19, ensuring that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development, in the absence of direct mention of the potential effects of development on existing</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
	<p>water courses of the Roman River and Domsey Brook in Theme 1. Nevertheless, indirect positive implications can be expected through the enhancement and active management of the vegetation in and around water courses and through reinstating the natural route of the water course.</p> <p>Uncertain impacts are also highlighted for flood risk (Sustainability Objective 20). Fluvial flood risk is not specifically mentioned within the Plan; however the retention of such areas is implied. There is mention of surface water and the integration of SuDS through the Garden Community in the Plan's Charter Principle 1. This sets out the notion of Sustainable drainage forming part of wider green links.</p> <p>The Plan recognises that a landscape framework should recognise the value of existing landscape and historic features and their ability to absorb and shape the development of a new community. Despite this, the Plan does not include notions of enhancing the historic environment and the numerous designated assets within the site area. Uncertain impacts have been highlighted for Sustainability Objective 21 at this stage and it is recommended that the relationship between new built development and these assets and their settings is recognised and elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan, with enhancement sought.</p>		

4.3.2.2 Alternatives Considered

The Theme at this stage relates to practical ways in which the Garden Community could meet the requirements of related Garden Community Charter principles. As such, it would be premature to indicate which measures should and would be more suitable for integration on site at this early stage in the plan-making process and prior to any formal public consultation. In the absence of any firm details within the Plan, no alternative approaches can be identified for appraisal at this stage.

4.3.2.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

- The type of retail offer within the main Garden Community centre is not yet established, and therefore the possible effects on the existing town centre of Colchester and the function of Tollgate are yet to be identified. It is recommended that the type of shopping (convenience / comparison) is included within the Plan in order to identify any broad implications.
- The Plan could elaborate in future iterations how different types of housing could be integrated within the wider design of the Garden Community, in addition to affordable units, to ensure social inclusivity.
- The commentary regarding Charter Principle 4 could elaborate on the locational requirements of secondary schools that will be forthcoming from the Garden Community development.
- Charter Principle 5 identifies that the use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicles charging infrastructure linked to renewable energy generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. It is unsure whether this element of the Plan is suitable in response to the baseline data

of car ownership in the wider area and the need for the development of 'specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land' as identified in the emerging Colchester and Braintree Local Plan Policy SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex. It is recommended that more detail on parking requirements is included within future iterations of the Plan.

- Future iterations of the Plan could include specific mention of the requirements of day to day utility provision on site, aside from those related to energy efficiency, power and digital communications.
- Uncertain impacts have been identified regarding Sustainability Objective 19, ensuring that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development, in the absence of direct mention of the potential effects of development on existing water courses of the Roman River and Domsey Brook in Theme 1. It is recommended that measures to ensure that water quality does not deteriorate are included within the Plan.
- It is recommended that text as to specific areas of biodiversity creation and the enhancement of existing features is included within future iterations of the Plan.
- Fluvial flood risk is not specifically mentioned within the Plan, and it is recommended that ways to ensure areas of flood risk are factored into the wider landscape design of the Garden Community are included within future iterations of the Plan.
- The Plan does not include notions of enhancing the historic environment and the numerous designated assets within the site area. It is recommended that the relationship between new built development and these assets and their settings is recognised and elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan, with enhancement sought.

4.3.3 Theme 2: Community

This Section of the Plan relates to issues such as creating identity in a new community, engaging with future residents and businesses, existing and surrounding communities and local and public bodies and ownership and maintenance of community assets.

The principles that form the content of this theme are as follows:

THEME 2: COMMUNITY

PRINCIPLE 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Garden Communities are a locally-led initiative, and their development will be shaped through engaging existing communities and emerging new communities; residents will be empowered to contribute to shaping the future of north Essex.

PRINCIPLE 8: ACTIVE LOCAL STEWARDSHIP

The Garden Communities will be developed and managed in perpetuity with the direct involvement of their residents and businesses; residents will be directly engaged in the long term management and stewardship, fostering a shared sense of ownership and identity.

4.3.3.1 Significant, Secondary and Temporal Effects

Table 7: Impact on Sustainability Objectives: Theme 2 - Community

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0
	4	0	0	0
	Commentary	There will be no impacts on the economic Sustainability Objectives as a direct result of this Theme.		
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	+	+	+
	6	0	0	0
	7	+	+	+
	8	0	0	0

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
13	0	0	0
Commentary	There will be positive implications regarding those Sustainability Objectives related to open space management and ensuring an appropriate and desirable level of services and facilities, through effective community engagement and active stewardship once the Garden Community has been delivered.		
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	14	+	+
	15	+	+
	16	+	+
	17	0	0
	18	0	0
	19	0	0
	20	+	+
	21	0	0
Commentary	The Plan asks a consultation question within Charter Principle 8 that asks consideration of the best way to manage community assets such as parks, sports pitches, allotments, community buildings and schools and community transport. This can ensure positive impacts related to the maintenance of habitats, green and blue infrastructure (including indirectly those created through SuDS) and ensuring these are protected alongside recreational areas, and landscape features.		

4.3.3.2 Alternatives Considered

The Theme at this stage relates to practical ways in which the Garden Community could meet the requirements of related Garden Community Charter principles. As such, it would be premature to indicate which measures should and would be more suitable for integration on site at this early stage in the plan-

making process and prior to any formal public consultation. In the absence of any firm details within the Plan, no alternative approaches can be identified for appraisal at this stage.

4.3.3.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

4.3.4 Theme 3: Delivery

This Section of the Plan relates to issues such as leadership, partnership and phasing and delivery of homes together with jobs; education, leisure and community facilities; and transport and utilities infrastructure.

The principles that form the content of this theme are as follows:

THEME 3: DELIVERY

PRINCIPLE 9: STRONG CORPORATE AND POLITICAL PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

The councils of North Essex will collaborate to provide clear vision for the garden communities and commitment to their long term success. Central to this will be a commitment to high quality placemaking, timely infrastructure provision, and achieving a steady pace of housing and employment delivery.

PRINCIPLE 10: INNOVATIVE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

The Garden Communities will be delivered through a genuine and pro-active partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward is shared and community empowerment enabled.

4.3.4.1 Significant, Secondary and Temporal Effects

Table 8: Impact on Sustainability Objectives: Theme 3 - Delivery

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	+	+	+
	2	+	+	+
	3	+	+	+
	4	0	0	0
	Commentary	Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the economic Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
		and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes.		
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	+	+	+
	6	+	+	+
	7	+	+	+
	8	+	+	+
	9	+	+	+
	10	+	+	+
	11	+	+	+
	12	+	+	+
	13	+	+	+
	Commentary	Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the social Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes.		
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	14	+	+	+
	15	+	+	+
	16	+	+	+
	17	+	+	+

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
18	+	+	+
19	+	+	+
20	+	+	+
21	+	+	+
Commentary	Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the environmental Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes. Uncertain impacts regarding Sustainability Objective 9 reflect the absence of provision elsewhere in the Plan's Themes.		

4.3.4.2 Alternatives Considered

The Theme at this stage relates to practical ways in which the Garden Community could meet the requirements of related Garden Community Charter principles. As such, it would be premature to indicate which measures should and would be more suitable for integration on site at this early stage in the plan-making process and prior to any formal public consultation. In the absence of any firm details within the Plan, no alternative approaches can be identified for appraisal at this stage.

It should be noted however that the Strategic Section One for Braintree and Colchester's emerging Local Plans establishes and assesses alternatives relevant to the principle of the Garden Community delivery model in comparison to more traditional approaches to growth.

4.3.4.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

5. The Plan's Development Concept Options

5.1 The Identification of Options for Assessment

The Plan states that, 'The area of land that could accommodate a new Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders has been refined from options presented in the "Options and Evaluation" work undertaken by AECOM in July 2016 and influenced by stakeholder consultation with local community representatives in November 2016 and April 2017, as well as an understanding of the issues and the interrelationship between them which include:

- identification of clear and defensible boundaries (water courses, roads, woodland belts);
- appreciation of distance and separation of communities – (physical, visual, perceived);
- relationship to existing settlements;
- nature of land that will perform the role of a "green buffer" which will define an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated that remains distinct from other existing settlements;
- planning policy protection (how might this land be protected "in perpetuity" from built development whilst allowing complementary activities that support both the new community and existing communities?).

At this stage the range in development scale (15,000-24,000 homes) as referred to in the draft Strategic Section1 Local Plan Policy SP9, limits the extent to which boundaries can be fixed. The boundaries of development will be further refined in the Development Plan Document that follows this exploration of Issues and Options.'

5.1.1 A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme (Highways England)

Highways England has consulted on four different options to widen and potentially re-route the A12 from Chelmsford to its connection with A120 at Marks Tey. The four options are as follows:



In respect of the implications for the Garden Community, there are essentially two potential outcome of the A12 improvement scheme: An 'on-line' outcome – this would involve the widening of the existing A12 (the 1st and 3rd Options above); and an 'off-line' outcome – this would see the A12 re-routed further south of its existing route (the 2nd and 4th Options above).

Both outcomes would result in the A12 passing through the Garden Community as it is presented in the Plan's Development Concept. As a result, the Plan proposes an off-line alignment further south still from those presented in the 2nd and 4th Options above. This is in order to bypass the Garden Community. Highways England have postponed their Preferred Route Announcement to take account of its relationship with the Garden Community's proposed location.

5.1.2 The Options Identified for Appraisal in this SA

For the purposes of this SA, Highways England consultation options, which would all result in a widened / re-routed A12 passing through the Garden Community, provide a reasonable alternative to the Plan's Development Concept.

Two options have therefore been appraised within this SA as follows:

- SA Option 1: The Plan's Development Concept which includes a more southerly aligned A12, bypassing the entire Garden Community - within the Plan this option represents the 'Current Development Concept'.
- SA Option 2: An alternative option based on the A12 passing along its existing route (the 1st and 3rd Options above), or aligned to the south of its existing route but passing through the Garden Community's proposed area as per the Plan's Development Concept (the 2nd and 4th Options above) – within this SA this is referred to as an 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'

5.2 What has Sustainability Appraisals involved at this point?

Sustainability Appraisal work undertaken on the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Braintree Councils forms a good starting point to base the assessment of the Garden Community within the Plan. The SA of the Strategic Section One of the Local Plans of Braintree District, Colchester Borough and Tendring District Councils, appraises the Colchester Braintree Borders site. The Section One SA assessed a number of options relevant to the Garden Community. These included options related to:

- A North and South of the A12 / Rail Corridor Focus
- South of A120 and North of Marks Tey Existing Settlement
- South of A120 Focus
- Maximum Land Take

That SA also explored a number of alternative Garden Community options across a wider strategic area. Therefore the scope of that appraisal was broader and sustainability objectives were devised to be relevant to assess options across the strategic area on a level playing field. Also, the boundaries for the options were only broadly identified, and further work has been undertaken to determine 'red line' boundaries for the options.

The appraisal of the Garden Community within the Local Plan had a different context. Within the Section One Local Plan, broad areas were assessed within the Local Plan context, using broad sustainability criteria relevant to Garden City principles where relevant and in consideration of broad constraints relevant to sustainability. This approach would consider the sustainability of Garden Communities as broad locations and ensure that the most sustainable locations are progressed to the benefit of the area's specific needs.

Garden Communities are by nature large Greenfield sites that can maximise sustainability benefits over a wide area. The Local Plan SAs used assumptions that their scale can seek effective mitigation and enhancements where smaller sites can not. To that extent, 'constraints' were actually considered 'benefits' for many sustainability factors and a pragmatic approach was taken to ensure both a fair appraisal and also in order to identify different impacts between options for comparison purposes.

5.3 The Appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept Options

5.3.1 Introduction

Site specific issues at the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community need to be re-addressed commensurate to the level of detail and focus of the Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders. The scoping requirements of the SA are set out in earlier sections of this report, and have been devised to explore the sustainability issues that are relevant to the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community only.

5.3.2 The Appraisal of Options

This sub-section assesses the Garden Community boundary and content of the Development Concept that has been explored within the Plan against the Sustainability Objectives identified earlier in this report, in addition to the alternative SA Option identified (the 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals'). The assessment focuses on quantitative impacts where possible, with a limit on the use of qualitative judgements and assumptions in order to provide a snapshot of the sustainability of the boundary options 'on the ground'. Nevertheless, some qualitative conclusions / professional judgements are suitable to include to aid the appraisal of some of the more aspirational Sustainability Objectives at this early stage. The appraisal explores the form of the completed Development Concept as it is included within the Plan at this early stage in the plan-making process.

A more qualitative assumption based appraisal, filling in the gaps of those unaddressed Sustainability Objectives at this stage, is likely to follow in future iterations of this SA. At this stage, the conclusions section of this SA provides a 'whole plan' overview regarding adherence to the Sustainability Objectives, exploring whether these gaps are adequately covered or addressed through the Plan's thematic content and consideration of Garden Community Charter Principles.

5.3.2.1 Sustainability Objective 1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to new employment uses:

- Broad distance / access to strategic road and rail network
- Distribution / access in regard to new residential areas

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	++	+
Commentary	SA Option 1 has been assessed as having significant positive impacts on this Sustainability Objective. The employment areas included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to those larger areas of residential development, and all have good strategic access to rail or road links. SA Option 2, in comparison will have minor positive	

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
	impacts. Whereas employment areas are all likely to be within easy access of rail and strategic road networks, it is possible that these would represent a more suitable land use than residential in close proximity to the A12. Residential uses can be expected to experience some level of noise from traffic or otherwise be compromised by mitigation measures whereas employment uses are broadly less sensitive. As a result, the impacts of SA Option 2 are less positive than SA Option 1, which locates employment uses in relation to residential development within the Garden Community, and can offer potentially more appropriate conditions for employment developments of different use classes.	

5.3.2.2 Sustainability Objective 2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to existing employment links:

- Broad distance to Colchester town centre

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	+	+
Commentary	SA Options 1 and 2 have both been assessed as having (or otherwise can be expected as having in the consideration of SA Option 2) positive impacts due to the inclusion of a ‘town centre’ and the additional inclusion of a number of local / neighbourhood centres that are well located in response to residential areas. These centres are well located in regard to employment areas and public transport modes also, which are likely to ensure their viability through more sustained footfalls. The element of the Sustainability Objective that explores the potential impact of the Garden Community on the town centre of Colchester can not be assessed at this high level and without qualitative judgements. As such, this theme is considered more of a policy based criterion. Nevertheless, more high level judgements can be made through clear alignment to the retail strategies of Colchester and Braintree in regard to centre classification and policy requirements within the emerging Local Plans. This is a recommendation for future iterations of the Plan.	

5.3.2.3 Sustainability Objective 3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to existing employment links:

- Broad distances to employment centres

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	++	++
Commentary	Both SA Options are in close proximity to employment in the town of Colchester and Tollgate / Stanway and are accessible to regionally important employment hubs and London Stansted Airport wider afield via rail and strategic road links. The proximity of existing, and suitable integration, of public transport opportunities is explored in the assessment of options against Sustainability Objective 10. Both SA Options have been assessed as having significantly positive impacts at this stage.	

5.3.2.4 Sustainability Objective 4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to soil quality:

- Agricultural Land Classification
- Potential contamination issues

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	-	-
Commentary	Both SA Options are within Grade 2 Agricultural Land which is classified as very good and as such, negative impacts have been identified. Negative impacts are not significant however due to the prevalence of Grade 2 agricultural land within Colchester and Braintree districts and the inability of any development of the land to ensure that losses are minimised. This is not a criticism of the plan or the principle of the Garden Community and is more associated with the nature and notion of development of this scale within the two districts. At this early stage, contamination issues have not been identified specifically for parcels of land associated with former land uses; however it should be noted that there are not any identified land uses on site that have been identified as being identified as potential contaminants. In any eventuality, the scale of the Garden Community can ensure that remediation is ensured and that contaminated land is brought back into use with positive outcomes.	

5.3.2.5 Sustainability Objective 5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to the provision of accessible natural green space:

- The extent of open space within the SA Options
- The location of open space within the SA Options and accessibility to residential areas

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	+	+
Commentary	<p>Both SA Options have been identified as having positive impacts on the provision and location of new accessible natural green space within the Garden Community. The development concepts both include significant networks of green space commensurate to the requirements and notion of Garden Communities. At this early stage, impacts are not significant where only broad layouts are required to be identified. It is considered that the identification of accessible natural green space, in the form of identified areas for specific functions (such as parkland, recreation etc.) and the relationship between such areas is not necessary to be identified at this stage and will be better integrated into the Garden Community following public consultation and compliance with Charter Principles 7 (community engagement) and 8 (active local stewardship). A re-assessment of the options within the SA process, and any possible sub-options should they be identified through consultation / engagement, will likely be required to accompany future iterations of the Plan.</p>	

5.3.2.6 Sustainability Objective 6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development, to repair the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to landscape:

- Landscape Character Areas – sensitivity to change
- Possible coalescence with neighbouring settlements
- Presence of existing dwellings on site

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	+	?
Commentary	<p>Natural England's National Character Area Profile for the South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands, within which the options lie, states that the contrasts within the local landscape character, between the plateau and river valleys should be retained, with an enhancement of the balance between the urban and rural landscapes. It adds that the character of the area's settlements should be maintained in the rural areas and urban encroachment kept to a minimum. The local landscape character of the broad area is not particularly sensitive to change, with limited views associated with medium to large field patterns and mature hedgerows, however the northern part of options has implications associated with the Blackwater River Valley Landscape Character Area which is more sensitive to views. Both options can be seen to avoid any built development in those river valleys associated with the site, namely the Roman River towards the north of the Garden Community boundary (inclusive of a surrounding belt of open space) and Domsey Brook in the south and permeating the Garden Community towards the identified ‘town centre.’ Regarding coalescence, both options also present development concepts that do not result in urban encroachment on existing settlements. In this regard, the SA Options both adhere (or can be expected to adhere) to the Garden City Principle of ensuring a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl. Associated with existing settlements on site, both SA Options also have consideration of Marks Tey in the northern half of the Garden Community, with adequate separation of this settlement with new development. Consideration is also given to Little Tey. Severance is avoided in the case of both existing settlements through ensuring that the indicative road network serves both settlements and provides access to the new ‘town centre’ and the network of more localised local / neighbourhood centres.</p> <p>Despite this, SA Option 2 can be seen to (at least comparably) physically separate new development south and east of the A12 with the rest of the Garden Community to the north. For this reason, uncertain impacts are highlighted for SA Option 2, with positive impacts identified for SA Option 1. At this early stage in the plan-making process and equally in the process of developing the development frameworks, impacts are not highlighted as significant. A re-assessment of the SA Options would be needed when more detailed information is presented in future iterations of the Plan.</p>	

5.3.2.7 Sustainability Objective 7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to new services and facilities and accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities:

- Distribution / access of neighbourhood / local centres and employment areas in regard to new residential areas.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	++	+
Commentary	SA Option 1 has been assessed as having significant positive impacts on this Sustainability Objective. The employment areas and new local / neighbourhood centres included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to those larger areas of residential development, and all have good internal access to road links and green infrastructure / active modes of transportation. SA Option 2, in comparison can be expected to have minor positive impacts. The expected distribution of employment areas to the A12 corridor would ensure comparatively less easy access from residential areas, concentrating employment areas in a single broad area, although the distribution of other services and facilities could be seen as comparable to SA Option 1. Nevertheless, the severance of areas south of the A12 in SA Option 2 can be seen as not adhering as positively to notions of social inclusivity as SA Option 1.	

5.3.2.8 Sustainability Objective 8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more ‘policy based’ requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.9 Sustainability Objective 9) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.10 Sustainability Objective 10) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to public transport modes:

- Distribution / access of MRT and public transport routes / stops in regard to new residential areas and rail links.

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	++	+
Commentary	<p>The distribution and accessibility of MRT and public transport routes / stops in regard to new residential areas and rail links can be seen as / expected to be largely indistinguishable between SA Options. Despite this, a notable difference between the SA Options is the possible location of a newly integrated park and ride facility. There can be seen to be a larger possibility of negative social and environmental impacts (such as air quality) arising from SA Option 2, with park and ride facilities comparatively more internalised within the wider scheme. As an element of the Garden Community that can be seen to serve a wider function than that of the Garden Community itself, it is considered possible that there could be an increase in traffic from wider afield affecting residential areas (as a sensitive receptor) under SA Option 2 where routes might not be as well located. In comparison, the park and ride within the development concept for SA Option 1 is located with more direct access from the A12, with less traffic affecting residential areas. For these reasons, significantly positive impacts are highlighted for SA Option 1 and minor positive impacts identified for SA Option 2.</p>	

5.3.2.11 Sustainability Objective 11) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to access within the site:

- Permeability on site
- Severance due to the A12 and rail line

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	++	?/-
Commentary	The direct access of both options to the A12 and A120 can be considered advantageous in terms of connectivity in the wider context. Both options can be seen to offer numerous rail crossings and effective options for connectivity to spinal roads within the Garden Community. Regarding A12 separation, the severance of those residential areas south of the A12 in SA Option 2 can be seen as not adhering as positively to notions of social inclusivity as SA Option 1. This can be seen as the primary difference between the two SA Options across all of the Sustainability Objectives. For this reason, significantly positive impacts are highlighted for SA Option 1, and uncertain to negative impacts identified for SA Option 2.	

5.3.2.12 Sustainability Objective 12) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more ‘policy based’ requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.13 Sustainability Objective 13) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.14 Sustainability Objective 14) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to biodiversity:

- Direct impact on Natura 2000 sites
- The presence of SSSIs
- Presence of Local Wildlife Sites
- Presence of priority habitats on site

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	+	+
Commentary	Positive impacts have been highlighted for both SA Options The Appropriate Assessment undertaken for Braintree and Colchester’s emerging Local Plans concludes that the site (and therefore both options) will not have any specific impacts related to the loss of off-site impacts on Natura 2000 sites. Impacts have been identified commensurate to the level of growth in the wider area however, with Recreational Avoidance Mitigation Strategies being produced. Both options lie within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone of the Brickfield Pit SSSI, which is also a Local Wildlife Site (LoWS). In broad consideration of the impacts on this SSSI, it should be noted at this early indicative stage that both options seek to integrate the designation within a wider belt of countryside, with separation from the site to the nearest residential / built areas. Both SA Options contain an additional LoWS at Little Tey Churchyard, which is not identified, broadly, within any identified areas for development. Despite this, care will have to be taken to not impact on this designation within more detailed iterations of the Plan. No other significant areas of priority habitat exist within the wider area of the SA Options, with the majority of the site free from any such habitats.	

5.3.2.15 Sustainability Objective 15) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more ‘policy based’ requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.16 Sustainability Objective 16) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to landscape features:

- Presence of priority habitats and known features of landscape value on site.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	+	+
Commentary	At this early stage, detailed impacts have not been identified as quantitative. As such, landscape features can only be identified as designated assets. No significant areas of priority habitat or such other landscape features exist within the wider area of the Options, aside from those larger designations mentioned within the assessment of the Options against other Sustainability Objectives. With that in mind, and evidenced through the integration of significant areas of green infrastructure throughout the Garden Community under both SA Options, there will be generally positive impacts at this stage. A re-assessment of the SA Options against this Sustainability Objective will likely need to be undertaken in future iterations of the Plan and in response to public consultation and community engagement mechanisms in order to gather more localised perspectives on features of value on site. Until then, positive impacts are highlighted for both options.	

5.3.2.17 Sustainability Objective 17) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective at this stage and pending further detail. In addition to being considered a more ‘policy based’ requirement of any proposal through newly created and compatible on-site features, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.18 Sustainability Objective 18) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal through newly created and compatible on-site features, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	0	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.	

5.3.2.19 Sustainability Objective 19) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to water quality:

- Impacts on flows
- The presence of water bodies on site
- Groundwater Protection Zones
- Water quality of water courses in and in proximity of the site

	SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
Impacts	?	?
Commentary	<p>Both options have been identified as having the potential to impact on flows entering the Roman River and Domsey Brook. Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Domsey Brook and the Roman River, both within the site, have a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alteration of river banks and river beds 2. Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish 3. Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment 4. Diffuse pollution from surface water 5. Reduced flow in rivers <p>In the case of the Domsey Brook water course, the current location of the Brook follows the path of MRT and public transport route emanating from the 'town centre' for both Options. Although no specific development has been identified along this route that is not water compatible, effects on the water course can not be ruled out for either Option at this early</p>	

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
	stage. Other than these water course and small tributaries associated with them, the site does not contain any significant water bodies. Uncertain impacts are highlighted at this stage for both Options.	

5.3.2.20 Sustainability Objective 20) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to fluvial flood risk:

- Presence of land within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	?/+	?/+
Commentary	Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. The Roman River exists at the both SA Options’ north eastern boundary and the channel ensures that the surrounding area has land with is in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. No development is proposed for this area. At the Options’ southern boundary, Flood Risk zones 2 and 3 are associated with Domsey Brook. This brook also extends to the central area of the site from the south. The current location of the Brook follows the path of MRT and public transport route emanating from the ‘town centre’ for both SA Options. No specific development has been identified along this channel and at this early indicative development concept stage this is considered an adequate approach to this constraint subject to more detailed assessment in future Plan iterations. Further assessment will be required regarding surface water flood risk once more detailed concepts are developed. Overall, uncertain to positive impacts have been identified for both SA Options.	

5.3.2.21 Sustainability Objective 21) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to the historic environment:

- Presence of heritage assets
- Impact on heritage assets and their settings (subject to further investigation / assessment once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan)

	SA Option 1 – ‘Current Development Concept’	SA Option 2 – ‘Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.’
Impacts	?	?
Commentary	<p>A Scheduled Monument (circular brick kilns, W H Collier Brick and Tile Works, Church Lane) exists within the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI and within the site at the north eastern boundary, however this area is not identified for development in either Option and forms part of a surrounding belt of countryside. The Garden Community boundary is also in close proximity to a Scheduled Monument (a Roman villa 450m south of Warren’s Farm to the north), but not proposed for any built development. Outside, but bordering the red-line boundary of the Garden Community, are a number of Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument (a long mortuary enclosure and round barrow 160m south west of Frame Farm) at Feering. Again, these areas are not proposed for any development, however in each instance ‘proximity’ is not a sufficient indicator of any potential impacts and much will depend on detailed proposals in these broad areas to factor in wider impacts on setting. A number of Listed Buildings extend north of the existing A120 around the existing nursery, Mott’s Farm and Knave’s Farm. Another cluster of Listed Buildings north of the existing A120 is situated at Teybrook Farm. At this early stage, it would appear that a number of these clusters correlate to areas identified as neighbourhood centres however further assessment will be needed once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan and in consideration of each asset based on their individual sensitivities. Overall however, uncertain impacts are identified at this stage.</p>	

5.3.3 Mitigation Measures & Recommendations

No mitigation measures have been identified at this stage commensurate to the level of detail of the Plan and the acknowledgement that the Development Concepts presented are indicative and subject to public consultation and wider engagement. Nevertheless, a series of further recommendations are made for inclusion in future Plan iterations. These are:

- A clearer alignment to the retail strategies of Colchester and Braintree would be useful in regard to centre classification and policy requirements within the emerging Local Plans. It is possible that any comparison shopping facilities within the Garden Community 'town centre' could impact on Colchester Town Centre.
- It is considered that the identification of accessible natural green space, in the form of identified areas for specific functions (such as parkland, recreation etc.) and the relationship between such areas is not necessary to be identified at this stage and will be better integrated into the Garden Community following public consultation and compliance with Charter Principles 7 (community engagement) and 8 (active local stewardship). Nevertheless, better judgements as to sustainability can be made should specific areas be identified in future Plan iterations.
- Both SA Options contain a Local Wildlife Site at Little Tey Churchyard. Although not identified, broadly, within any identified areas for development, care will have to be taken to not impact on this designation within more detailed iterations of the Plan.
- Through the integration of significant areas of green infrastructure throughout the Garden Community under both SA Options, there will be generally positive impacts at this stage. A re-assessment of the SA Options against this theme will likely need to be undertaken in future iterations of the Plan and in response to public consultation and community engagement mechanisms in order to gather more localised perspectives on features of value on site.
- In the case of the Domsey Brook water course, the current location of the Brook appears to follow the path of MRT and public transport route emanating from the 'town centre' southwards. Although no specific development has been identified along this route that is not potentially water compatible, effects on the water course can not be ruled out at this early stage and further detail would need to be highlighted in future Plan iterations. Further assessment will also be required regarding surface water flood risk once a more detailed concept is developed.
- Although not specifically correlating to areas identified for development, a number of peripheral Scheduled Monuments exist at the site's boundary. Impacts on these designations and their settings will need to be assessed fully once more detailed proposals are identified for the Garden Community and sensitivities considered. This is also the case for the number of Listed Buildings (and clusters) within the site.

6. Non-Technical Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 The Plan's Themes and Principles

6.1.1 Key Points from the Assessment of the Plan's Themes and Principles

The following table sets out the impacts identified through the appraisal of the Plan's Themes and Principles.

Table 9: Summary of Impacts of the Plan's Themes and Principles

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Theme 1: Place and Integration	Theme 2: Community	Theme 3: Delivery
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	++	0	+
	2	+	0	+
	3	++	0	+
	4	-	0	0
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	++	+	+
	6	++	0	+
	7	+	+	+
	8	+	0	+
	9	+	0	+
	10	++	0	+
	11	++	0	+
	12	?	0	+
	13	+	0	+

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Theme 1: Place and Integration	Theme 2: Community	Theme 3: Delivery
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	14	++	+	+
	15	+	+	+
	16	++	+	+
	17	++	0	+
	18	++	0	+
	19	?	0	+
	20	?	+	+
	21	?	0	+

The following key points can be made from the appraisal of the Plan's Themes and Principles:

- Significant positive impacts are highlighted for Sustainability Objective 1, where the Plan identifies that the new location could provide for Grade A offices linked to a new station and attractive to financial services, the creative and digital economy related to Colchester's emerging role in this sector and the presence of the University, construction innovation, logistics and the energy sector, in particular opportunities in renewables and waste.
- Positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objective 2 and a need for convenience retail provision. The Plan acknowledges that the Garden Community will need to establish neighbourhoods where everything is within easy walking distance, planned around connected centres, which provide a mix of homes, jobs and services set within attractive and green environments.
- Significant positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 3, regarding capitalising on the links to local employment opportunities and taking advantage of the site's proximity to economic hubs.
- There will be significant positive impacts regarding accessible natural green space through requirements for open space to be integrated throughout the Garden Community and also the integration of major local new parkland.
- There will be significant positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 6 regarding coalescence in response to the new community, through Theme 1, addressing the relationship with existing communities close to and within its boundaries.
- There will be positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 8, regarding the provision of a mix of house types and tenures.

- Significant positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objective 9 and the provision of schools and other supporting infrastructure.
- The Plan's Principle 2 recognises the importance of ensuring the highest level of strategic connectivity with the wider transport system, additionally identifying that the Garden Community site has existing issues of poor connectivity and traffic congestion, transport corridors that divide existing communities and create environmental problems, particularly at peak times, and poor access to key locations such as schools, local shops and the railway station.
- Significant positive impacts are also identified regarding Sustainability Objective 11, regarding access to existing roads and the provision of a suitable network of roads on site.
- Charter Principle 5 will ensure positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 13, regarding innovative utility provision.
- Significant positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 16, where the Plan states that, 'Habitats in and around the Domsey Brook, Roman River corridors and around Seven Star Green should be retained and enhanced.
- In response to the aspirations of Sustainability Objectives 16 and 17, regarding protecting and creating landscape features on site, and also ensuring that the Garden Community is integrated within the existing rural landscape, there will be significant positive effects. This is due to the Plan ensuring a high standard of design and layout, drawing on its context and the assets within and close to its boundaries.
- There will be positive impacts associated with renewable energy and energy efficiency (Sustainability Objective 18) through Principle 5, in particular the Smart Infrastructure principles.
- There will be positive implications regarding those Sustainability Objectives related to open space management and ensuring an appropriate and desirable level of services and facilities, through effective community engagement and active stewardship once the Garden Community has been delivered.
- Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes.
- Negative impacts have been highlighted for the loss of Grade 2 Agricultural Land, which represents the highest grade soils within the Districts of both Braintree and Colchester. Despite this, impacts are not highlighted as significant due to the prevalence of Grade 2 soils in both Districts.

6.1.2 Mitigation Measures and Recommendations regarding the Plan's Vision, Themes and Principles

The following key points can be made from the appraisal of the Plan's Vision, Themes and Principles:

- The type of retail offer within the Garden Community's town centre is not yet established, and therefore the possible effects on the existing town centre of Colchester and the function of Tollgate are yet to be identified. It is recommended that the type of shopping (convenience / comparison) is included within the Plan in order to identify any broad implications.
- The Plan could elaborate in future iterations how different types of housing could be integrated within the wider design of the Garden Community, in addition to affordable units, to ensure social inclusivity.
- The commentary regarding Charter Principle 4 could elaborate on the locational requirements of secondary schools that will be forthcoming from the Garden Community development.
- Charter Principle 5 identifies that the use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure linked to renewable energy generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. It is unsure whether this element of the Plan is suitable in response to the baseline data of car ownership in the wider area and the need for the development of 'specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land' as identified in the emerging Colchester and Braintree Local Plan Policy SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex. It is recommended that more detail on parking requirements is included within future iterations of the Plan.
- Future iterations of the Plan could include specific mention of the requirements of day to day utility provision on site, aside from those related to energy efficiency, power and digital communications.
- Uncertain impacts have been identified regarding Sustainability Objective 19, ensuring that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development, in the absence of direct mention of the potential effects of development on existing water courses of the Roman River and Domsey Brook in Theme 1. It is recommended that measures to ensure that water quality does not deteriorate are included within the Plan.
- It is recommended that text as to specific areas of biodiversity creation and the enhancement of existing features is included within future iterations of the Plan.
- Fluvial flood risk is not specifically mentioned within the Plan, and it is recommended that ways to ensure areas of flood risk are factored into the wider landscape design of the Garden Community are included within future iterations of the Plan.

The Plan does not include notions of enhancing the historic environment and the numerous designated assets within the site area. It is recommended that the relationship between new built development and these assets and their settings is recognised and elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan, with enhancement sought.

6.2 The Plan's Development Concept Option

6.2.1 Key Points from the Assessment of the Plan's Development Concept Option

The following table sets out the impacts identified through the appraisal of the Plan's Development Concept option.

Table 10: Summary of Impacts of the Plan's Development Concept and Alternative Option

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	++	+
	2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	+	+
	3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	++	++
	4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	-	-
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.	+	+
	6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development, to repair the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.	+	?
	7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities	++	+

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
	8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.	0	0
	9) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.	0	0
	10) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.	++	+
	11) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.	++	?/-
	12) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.	0	0
	13) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.	0	0
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	14) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.	+	+
	15) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.	0	0
	16) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.	+	+
	17) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.	0	0
	18) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.	0	0

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		SA Option 1 – 'Current Development Concept'	SA Option 2 – 'Alternative Option Pending Decision on Strategic Road Proposals.'
	19) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.	?	?
	20) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.	?/+	?/+
	21) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.	?	?

The following key points can be made from the appraisal of the Plan's Spatial Boundary Options:

- The employment areas included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to those larger areas of residential development, and all have good strategic access to rail or road links. SA Option 2, in comparison will have minor positive impacts.
- SA Options 1 and 2 have both been assessed as having positive impacts on retail due to the inclusion of a 'town centre' and the additional inclusion of a number of local / neighbourhood centres that are well located in response to residential areas.
- Both SA Options are in close proximity to employment in the town of Colchester and Tollgate / Stanway and are accessible to regionally important employment hubs and London Stansted Airport wider afield via rail and strategic road links.
- Both SA Options are within Grade 2 Agricultural Land which is classified as very good and as such, negative impacts have been identified. Negative impacts are not significant however due to the prevalence of Grade 2 agricultural land within Colchester and Braintree districts and the inability of any development of the land to ensure that losses are minimised.
- Both SA Options have been identified as having positive impacts on the provision and location of new accessible natural green space within the Garden Community.
- Regarding coalescence, both options also present development concepts that do not result in urban encroachment on existing settlements. In this regard, the options both adhere to the Garden City Principle of ensuring a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl.
- Associated with existing settlements on site, both options also have consideration of Marks Tey, with adequate separation of this settlement with new development. Consideration is also given to Little Tey. Severance is avoided in the case of both existing settlements through ensuring that the indicative road network serves both settlements and provides access to the new 'town centre' and the network of more localised local / neighbourhood centres.

- SA Option 2 can be seen to (at least comparably) physically separate new development south and east of the A12 with the rest of the Garden Community to the north.
- The employment areas and new local / neighbourhood centres included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to those larger areas of residential development, and all have good internal access to road links and green infrastructure / active modes of transportation. SA Option 2, in comparison will have minor positive impacts.
- The severance of those areas south of the A12 in SA Option 2 can be seen as not adhering as positively to notions of social inclusivity as SA Option 1.
- The distribution and accessibility of MRT and public transport routes / stops in regard to new residential areas and rail links can be seen as largely indistinguishable between options. Despite this, a notable difference between the options is the location of a newly integrated park and ride facility. There can be seen to be a larger possibility of negative social and environmental impacts (such as air quality) arising from SA Option 2, with park and ride facilities potentially being comparatively more internalised within the wider scheme.
- The direct access of both SA Options to the A12 and A120 can be considered advantageous in terms of connectivity in the wider context. Both options can be seen to offer numerous rail crossings and effective options for connectivity to spinal roads within the Garden Community.
- Both SA Options lie within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone of the Brickfield Pit SSSI, which is also a Local Wildlife Site (LoWS). In broad consideration of the impacts on this SSSI, it should be noted at this early indicative stage that both SA Options seek to integrate the designation within a wider belt of countryside.
- Both SA Options contain an additional LoWS at Little Tey Churchyard, which is not identified, broadly, within any identified areas for development.
- No significant areas of priority habitat or such other landscape features exist within the wider area of the SA Options.
- Both options have been identified as having the potential to impact on flows entering the Roman River and Domsey Brook. Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Domsey Brook and the Roman River, both within the site, have a 'moderate' overall status.
- In the case of the Domsey Brook water course, the current location of the Brook follows the path of MRT and public transport route emanating from the 'town centre' for both Options. Although no specific development has been identified along this route that is not water compatible, effects on the water course can not be ruled out.
- Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. The Roman River exists at the both SA Options' north eastern boundary and the channel ensures that the surrounding area has land with is in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. No development is proposed for this area. At the Options' southern boundary, Flood Risk zones 2 and 3 are associated with Domsey Brook. This brook also extends to the central area of the site from the south.
- A Scheduled Monument (circular brick kilns, W H Collier Brick and Tile Works, Church Lane) exists within the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI and within the site at the north eastern boundary, however this area is not identified for development in either SA Option and forms part of a

surrounding belt of countryside.

- The Garden Community boundary is also in close proximity to a Scheduled Monument (a Roman villa 450m south of Warren's Farm to the north), but not proposed for any built development. Outside, but bordering the red-line boundary of the Garden Community, are a number of Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Monument (a long mortuary enclosure and round barrow 160m south west of Frame Farm) at Feering. Again, these areas are not proposed for any development, however in each instance 'proximity' is not a sufficient indicator of any potential impacts and much will depend on detailed proposals in these broad areas to factor in wider impacts on setting.
- A number of Listed Buildings extend north of the existing A120 around the existing nursery, Mott's Farm and Knave's Farm. Another cluster of Listed Buildings north of the existing A120 is situated at Teybrook Farm. Further assessment will be needed once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan and in consideration of each asset based on their individual sensitivities.

6.2.2 Mitigation Measures and Recommendations regarding the Plan's Development Concept Option

No mitigation measures have been identified at this stage commensurate to the level of detail of the Plan and the acknowledgement that the Development Concept presented is indicative and subject to public consultation and wider engagement. Nevertheless, a series of further recommendations are made for inclusion in future Plan iterations. These are:

- A clearer alignment to the retail strategies of Colchester and Braintree would be useful in regard to centre classification and policy requirements within the emerging Local Plans.
- Both options contain a Local Wildlife Site at Little Tey Churchyard. Care will have to be taken to not impact on this designation within more detailed iterations of the Plan.
- In the case of the Domsey Brook water course, the current location of the Brook appears to follow the path of MRT and public transport route emanating from the 'town centre' south for both Options. Although no specific development has been identified along this route that is not potentially water compatible, effects on the water course can not be ruled out for either Option at this early stage and further detail would need to be highlighted in future Plan iterations. Further assessment will also be required regarding surface water flood risk once more detailed concepts are developed.
- Although not specifically correlating to areas identified for development, a number of peripheral Scheduled Monuments exist at the site's boundary. Impacts on these designations and their settings will need to be assessed fully once more detailed proposals are identified for the Garden Community and sensitivities considered. This is also the case for the number of Listed Buildings (and clusters) within the site.

6.3 Key Impacts of the Plan as a Whole

The Plan includes a series of Themes and Principles that can negate or seek to mitigate some of those on-site impacts that have been identified in the appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept.

The assessment of the Development Concept has been undertaken from a 'policy off' point of view; impacts are identified without any consideration of the Plan's thematic content or principles at present. This section explores those instances where impacts can be negated or mitigated through the Plan as a whole at this stage.

It should be acknowledged however that the Plan is reflective of work undertaken to date, and some elements of site specifics will be more appropriately addressed within future stages of the Plan.

Issue identified in the appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept Options	Is the issue addressed in the Plan's Themes and Principles?
Accessible natural green space, in the form of identified areas for specific functions (such as parkland, recreation etc.) and the relationship between such areas and general wildlife conservation.	The impacts regarding the relationship between different areas of open space, specifically between newly created habitats and recreation are partly considered within the Plan. The Plan states that, 'The provision of recreation facilities within the new Garden Community, including generous amounts of open space will help reduce the potential impact that additional residential uses will have on protected habitats in the area.'
Both options contain a Local Wildlife Site at Little Tey Churchyard and include the Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI.	The specific considerations of the Garden Community and these existing areas of wildlife conservation are not specifically considered within the Plan.
The channel of the Domsey Brook follows the path of MRT and public transport route emanating from the 'town centre' south for both Options. Effects of the development on water quality can not be ruled out at this stage.	The specific considerations of the Garden Community and the water quality of existing river channels on site are not specifically considered within the Plan.
The specific considerations regarding fluvial flood risk within the site.	The specific considerations of the Garden Community and fluvial flood risk on site are not specifically considered within the Plan.
The specific considerations regarding surface water flood risk within the site.	The Plan states that, 'The green spaces in the landscape framework can accommodate the following

Issue identified in the appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept Options	Is the issue addressed in the Plan's Themes and Principles?
	functions: SUDS/ drainage and watercourses.'
Potential impacts on these Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings and their settings.	The importance of the historic environment is partly considered within the Plan although perhaps not in consideration of the protection and enhancement of assets as an irreplaceable resource. The Plan states, that, 'the landscape framework should recognise the value of existing landscape and historic features and their ability to absorb and shape the development of a new community'. It adds that, 'the design and layout should respond positively to the historic environment which creates opportunities for developing distinctiveness and interesting places.'

7. Next Steps & Monitoring

7.1 Consultation

This Scoping and Environmental Report will be subject to consultation alongside the Plan for Colchester Braintree Borders. There are three statutory consultees or ‘environmental authorities’ that are required to be consulted for all Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment documents. These are:

- The Environment Agency;
- Natural England; and
- Historic England.

In addition to these, consultation will seek to engage the wider community in order to encompass comprehensive public engagement. Braintree District Council and Colchester Borough Council may additionally wish to invite comments from focussed groups, relevant stakeholders and interested parties. The detailed arrangements for consultation are to be determined by the two Local Planning Essex Authorities. The environmental authorities and public are to be given ‘an early and effective opportunity’ within appropriate time-frames to express their opinion. This includes the specific notification of the consultation documents and timeframes to those persons or bodies on the ‘consultation databases’ of the two Local Planning Authorities.

PLEASE NOTE:

All comments on the content of this Scoping & Environmental Report should be sent to each authority’s online portal in line with the consultation arrangements of each Local planning Authority. Where consultation periods differ between each authority, the following links may need to be checked once consultation periods are live.

Comments should be focused on the detail of this SA that pertains to land use implications or issues relevant to each local authority area.

Please check the following links for more information, and direction to relevant consultation portals:

Regarding Braintree District Council:

https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200137/consultations/96/contribute_to_a_council_consultation

Regarding Colchester Borough Council:

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/planningconsult>



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November 2017



6 November 2017

Report of	Assistant Director Policy and Corporate	Author	Chris Downes ☎ 01206 282473
Title	Tending Colchester Borders Garden Community Issues and Options consultation		
Wards affected	All wards		

The Local Plan Committee is asked to approve the draft Issues and Options consultation document for public consultation.

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To agree to the publication of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Issues and Options consultation document (attached as Appendix 1 to this Report) for publication and consultation over an eight week period from 13th November 2017 to 8th January 2018.
- 1.2 To publish the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for consultation.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Place Strategy Manager to make minor revisions to the document prior to publication.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 To ensure the Council's Local Plan commitment of delivering a Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders is planned in a consultative manner, taking account of the views of all interested parties at an early stage in its planning. The Issues and Options consultation forms the first stage of the planning process towards a Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Plan, which once adopted will provide an informed and robust basis for guiding future development in the cross-boundary Garden Community as well as meeting the Council's Duty to Cooperate with Tendring District Council.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option would be to not proceed with this first stage of consultation for the preparation of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Plan. However, this option would be contrary to the Council's Submission Local Plan and would leave the Council out of alignment with the strategic planning programme agreed with Tendring District Council (and Braintree District Council as part of the wider programme). This could result in the Council finding itself in a vulnerable position without a long term strategic planning approach not only in respect of the Garden Community but across the Borough.

4. Supporting Information

Background

- 4.1 The principle of development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is identified in the joint strategic Section One of Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils' Submission Local Plans. Local Plan Policy SP8 specifically refers to development of a Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders and requires that a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document (DPD) is prepared to

guide its delivery. The emerging TCBGC Plan which is subject to the Issues and Options consultation will be the Strategic Growth DPD referred to in the Local Plan.

- 4.2 The emerging Local Plans for Tendring District and Colchester Borough are now at submission stage and will be examined early next year by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Government. The carrying out of an Issues and Options consultation on the planning of the Garden Community prior to the Local Plan examination serves to demonstrate progress on the Section One proposals whilst at the same time providing the Councils with an opportunity to carry out an additional, early stage of consultation with local communities and stakeholders.
- 4.3 The preparation of the TCBGC Plan will follow a similar process to that of the Local Plan; there will be distinct stages accompanied by public consultation. The Issues and Options stage is the first of these stages which will be followed by a Preferred Options stage and finally a Publication stage prior to the TCBGC Plan's independent examination and eventual adoption. In addition to each stage of public consultation, local communities affected by the proposals will be proactively engaged to ensure their views are fed back into proposals as well as ensuring they are kept abreast of the Plan's progress. The Councils have commissioned independent Community Enablers to facilitate this additional layer of engagement.
- 4.4 Once adopted, the TCBGC Plan will provide the strategies, policies and proposals required to guide the delivery of the Garden Community. It will set out a shared Vision for the new community and a strategy for its delivery. It will also set out a range of development objectives that will help deliver this Vision, and more detailed planning policies that will guide future proposals and secure timely delivery of development and infrastructure in the short, medium and long term. Importantly, the TCBGC Plan will be prepared in accordance with the relevant emerging Local Plan policies as well as the North Essex Garden Communities Charter.

The Purpose of the Issues and Options Consultation

- 4.5 As mentioned, the Issues and Options consultation is the first stage in the detailed planning of the Garden Community. An important part of the the consultation will be forming a distinct Vision for the Garden Community which can encapsulate the ambition of the Councils whilst reconciling the views of local communities and stakeholders, effectively providing a mandate for the Garden Community's future development. The Vision needs to be a shared view that governs all processes from design through to delivery of the development and management of community assets.
- 4.6 Another purpose of the consultation is to summarise the existing evidence base (much of which was produced to inform Section One of the Local Plan) and from this baseline set out emerging strategies which have been prepared to respond to numerous issues that planning the Garden Community involves. At this stage much of the planning approach across the Garden Communities is similar, reflecting a similar baseline evidence, however as consultation and stakeholder discussions progress, these strategies will become more refined and specific to each settlement.

The Councils and North Essex Garden Communities Ltd

- 4.7 The consultation document explains that the Garden Communities are being overseen both by the strategic planning partnership agreed between Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council, as well as North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC Ltd). NEGC Ltd is jointly owned by the four Councils to drive the delivery of the three Garden Communities and secure investment in enabling infrastructure across the wider area. Through NEGC Ltd, the Councils will act as

the 'lead developer', and so would not only have more control over the type of development, the design and the rate of delivery but also the ability to commit to an 'infrastructure first' approach. Such an approach will ensure that transport improvements (including new roads), schools, health and leisure facilities are developed ahead of or alongside new housing, to adequately serve the needs of the new community and to minimise any adverse impacts on existing communities. Similarly, this innovative delivery approach will also give the Councils a key role in attracting investment and businesses to assist in the creation of vibrant, thriving and sustainable communities.

The Consultation Approach

- 4.8 A key part of the evidence base which underpins the Issues and Options consultation document is the North Essex Garden Communities Charter. This Charter was produced to articulate the Councils' aspirations for the Garden Communities and has been directly informed by the Town and Country Association's (TCPA's) Garden City Principles. The Charter comprises ten Principles based around three Themes, as follows:

Theme 1: Place and Integration

- Green Infrastructure
- Integrated and Sustainable Transport
- Employment Opportunity
- Living Environment
- Smart and Sustainable Living
- Good Design

Theme 2: Community

- Community Engagement
- Active Local Stewardship

Theme 3: Delivery

- Strong Corporate and Political Public Leadership
- Innovative Delivery Structure

The intention is for the North Essex Garden Communities Charter to be embedded into every stage of the planning and delivery of the Garden Communities, providing a set of Principles against which strategies, policies and proposals can be monitored against. Accordingly the Charter provides the framework for the Issues and Options consultation document.

- 4.9 The Issues and Options document sets out the emerging strategies and approaches to how the Councils will realise each of the Charter Principles at Tendring Colchester Borders and invites consultees to respond to these emerging strategies and approaches. Each Principle is accompanied by a 'Have Your Say' section which poses a question and suggests some factors which consultees may wish to consider in their response. These questions are intentionally broad, reflecting the early stage of the Garden Community's planning and thus ensuring that all views, however divergent, are considered before the TCBGC Plan can proceed to the next stage.

The Concept Framework

- 4.10 The development potential of TCBGC has been explored in a Concept Framework study which has been published as part of the evidence base. This study looked at the area of search identified in the Local Plan for the Garden Community, suggesting the distribution and location of land uses and associated infrastructure that could be accommodated to

meet the aspirations of the North Essex Garden Communities Charter as well as emerging Local Plan policies.

- 4.11 The Concept Framework proposes that development commences at the southern part of the site, initially, on land adjacent and north of the A133, which provides a point of access onto the strategic highway network. The Concept Framework recommends identification of distinct parcels of development that are 'village' in scale, which would provide a clear strategy for phasing and delivery and would help support a construction and implementation programme that is capable of responding to changes in market conditions and/or local priorities over the lifetime of the development.
- 4.12 The Concept Framework identifies an overall capacity within the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community for 7,500 homes with the following key attributes:
- Distinct development parcels each with its own characteristics and each with a particular role to play in the new community as a whole. Each of these 'neighbourhoods' is serviced by essential community infrastructure, all within walking distance, including educational establishments, local shops, public transport services, employment opportunities and recreational facilities.
 - Green buffers that provide visual and physical separation between new development and existing communities; establishing an attractive landscape setting for the new development; providing space for functions such as storm water management; and creating opportunities for formal and informal recreation, including enhanced cycle and footway links to surrounding settlements.
 - A new Country Park at Salary Brook incorporating substantial amounts of additional land to that currently designated as a Local Nature Reserve.
 - A new link road from the A133 to a new junction on the A120.
 - An employment area close to the A120 to the east of the new link road.
 - Land for the expansion of the University's Knowledge Gateway to the north of the A133.
 - Land for the expansion of the University Campus to the east of Brightlingsea Road south of the A133.
 - Two residential neighbourhoods north of the A133 separated by a broad green corridor connecting Salary Brook to open countryside.
 - Smaller-scale, lower density areas of housing development close to Crockleford Heath.
 - Mixed use centres close to the A133, the proposed expansion of the University and to each proposed new neighbourhood.
 - Sites for up to four new primary schools and a new secondary school.
 - A rapid transit public transport spine through the centre of the Garden Community connecting a new park and ride with the A120 and A133, employment areas, the mixed use centres and the University with Colchester Town Centre and the wider north Essex area.
 - Generous amounts of accessible green spaces and landscaping, providing opportunities for recreation as well as creating a distinctive, verdant townscape.
- 4.13 The key findings of the Concept Framework study have been presented in the consultation document to gauge stakeholder feedback on the spatial aspects of the Garden Community. Whilst the Concept Framework was produced in consultation with local communities, this affords the first opportunity for the wider public to comment on the location and distribution of land uses in the new settlement. Within the document consultees are asked their opinion on what is perceived to work well in the Concept Framework and also what perhaps does not work as well. As with the development of the emerging strategies for the Garden Community, the spatial approach presented in the

Concept Framework is included as part of the consultation to provoke discussion and will be refined as the TCBGC Plan progresses.

The Next Stage

- 4.14 Following the close of the Issues and Options consultation, the Councils will collate, analyse and review all of the responses received. In combination with ongoing community engagement and stakeholder liaison, the consultation responses will play a key role in shaping the next stage of the TCBGC Plan. This stage will be the 'Preferred Options' which will set out the Councils' preferred strategies and approaches to addressing the planning issues at Tendring Colchester Borders in the form of a draft Plan. The Preferred Options will be subject to formal public consultation which is anticipated to take place in Summer 2018.

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.15 The Issues and Options consultation document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which provide a high-level evaluation of options that consider potential social, economic and environmental impacts of the emerging TCBGC Plan. The SEA/SA will also be subject to consultation and will be available to view and comment on alongside the Issues and Options consultation document. The SEA/SA document is appended to this Committee Report.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Issues and Options consultation document and associated documentation be published for consultation over the eight week period between 13th November 2017 and 8th January 2018.
- 5.2 The consultation will include a range of measures to encourage engagement including an online consultation portal where stakeholders can respond to the questions posed in the consultation document. Additionally local exhibitions will be held at the following locations (venues subject to confirmation):
- Marks Tey Village Hall
 - Great Tey Village Hall
 - Colchester Market
 - Easthorpe Church Hall
 - Coggeshall Village Hall
 - Greenstead Community Centre
 - Elmstead Marketfield School
 - Wivenhoe William Loveless Hall
 - Rayne Village Hall
 - Stebbing Village Hall
 - The Salings Millennium Village Hall (Great Saling)
- 5.3 Following this consultation stage, the Council will carry out further engagement and consultation to inform future stages of the TCBGC plan. An indication of the timescales involved for each stage of the planning process of the TCBGC Plan can be found in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), available on the Council's website.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The 2015 to 2018 Strategic Plan sets out a commitment for Colchester Borough to be Vibrant, Prosperous and Thriving. Effective strategic planning can help achieve all of these objectives.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Public consultation is a fundamental part of preparing the TCBGC Plan and it is recognised that early and meaningful engagement with stakeholders is important to not only ensure that the Garden Community is a successful place to live, work and visit, but that it is also locally-led, accountable and transparent in its planning.
- 7.2 Consultation on the TCBGC Plan is guided by the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which is available on the Council's website.

8. Publicity Considerations

- 8.1 The Issues and Options consultation is likely to create a high level of publicity and will therefore need to be supplemented with a communications strategy including press releases and other publicity measures.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 None specifically relating to this report.

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 on the Colchester Borough Council website by following this pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Equality and Diversity > Equality Impact Assessments > Commercial Services > Local Plan.

11. Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Preparation of the TCBGC Plan will address the community safety implications of creating sustainable communities.

12. Health and Safety Implications

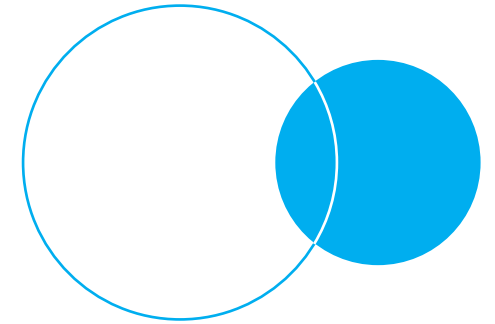
- 12.1 Development of the TCBGC will address the health and well-being implications of creating sustainable communities.

13. Risk Management Implications

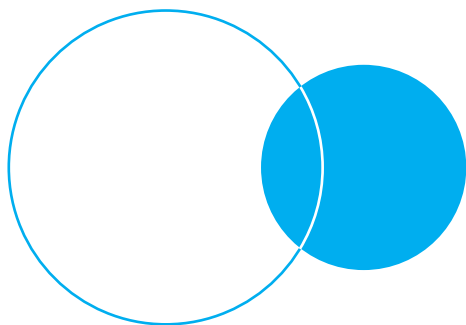
- 13.1 The preparation of the TCBGC will directly assist in the effective delivery of the emerging Local Plan.

14. Disclaimer

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



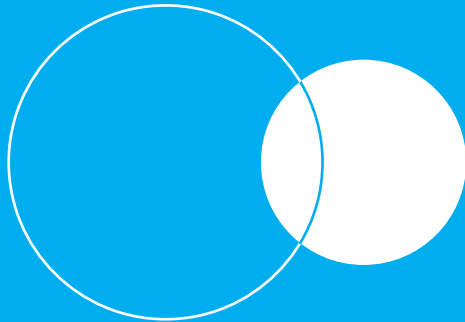
A PLAN FOR TENDRING COLCHESTER BORDERS GARDEN COMMUNITY **Issues and Options Report**



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Have your say



This consultation represents the first stage in the planning process of preparing a Development Plan Document (DPD) for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

The plan once prepared, will include the required strategies, policies and proposals to guide the delivery of the Garden Community. Public consultation is a fundamental part of preparing the Plan and the Councils recognise the importance of early and meaningful engagement with stakeholders to not only ensure that the Garden Community is a successful place to live, work and visit, but that it is also locally-led, accountable and transparent in its planning.

As a stakeholder in this process we welcome your views on the Issues and Options related to the planning of the new Garden Community and ask you to respond to the questions set out at the end of each section within the document.

There is no requirement for you to comment on every issue or to answer every question; we would like you to submit comments on any areas that you wish to.

Additionally, if you believe some issues have been missed out or not accorded the weight they deserve, please raise this in your response.

Your feedback to this consultation will directly influence the strategies, policies and proposals in the final Development Plan for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

The Councils have set up a dedicated online portal in order to make responding to the consultation as simple as possible. Following a simple registration process you will be able to respond to the questions posed in this document and comment on other areas you think are relevant to the planning of the Garden Community. The online portal also has a facility for respondents to upload documents relevant to their submissions and you are particularly encouraged to submit documents which may assist the understanding of issues raised in your responses, including for example, maps, plans and photographs which help illustrate points that cannot be explained as well through a written response.

PERIOD OF CONSULTATION

The Issues and Options consultation will be held between 13th November 2017 and 8th January 2018. Unfortunately, submissions received after 8th January will not be able to be considered by the Councils so early submission of your responses is encouraged.

After the consultation ends all of the responses received will be validated and published on the online portal for public viewing to ensure the process is transparent. All responses will then be read and analysed by the Councils and collated into a consultation report. This report will collate responses into themes if common issues are raised and be accompanied by a formal response from the Councils on all issues raised.

For more information of what happens next in the planning process, please see Section 1.

SECTION 1.

Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

The purpose of this **Issues and Options** consultation is to gather your views on the development of the **Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC)**. The responses to this consultation will directly feed into the emerging planning strategies, policies and proposals which will guide future phases of the Garden Community's development.

As the planning process progresses these emerging policies will be refined through further public consultation and stakeholder engagement to ensure that as many views as possible are taken account of in the preparation of the plan for the TCBGC. Eventually the plan will be adopted by both Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council and will sit alongside their respective Local Plans.

WHY IS A DEVELOPMENT PLAN NEEDED?

The delivery of a Garden Community represents a step-change in the traditional approach to delivery of large-scale development and is a collective response by three local Authorities to the need to plan, long-term, for the economic and housing development needs across North Essex in a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable way. Tendring District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Braintree District Council together with Essex County Council (collectively known as the North Essex Authorities), are committed to delivery of development at scale, of high quality, and with all necessary infrastructure (roads and transport choices, jobs, schools, open spaces, and community facilities).

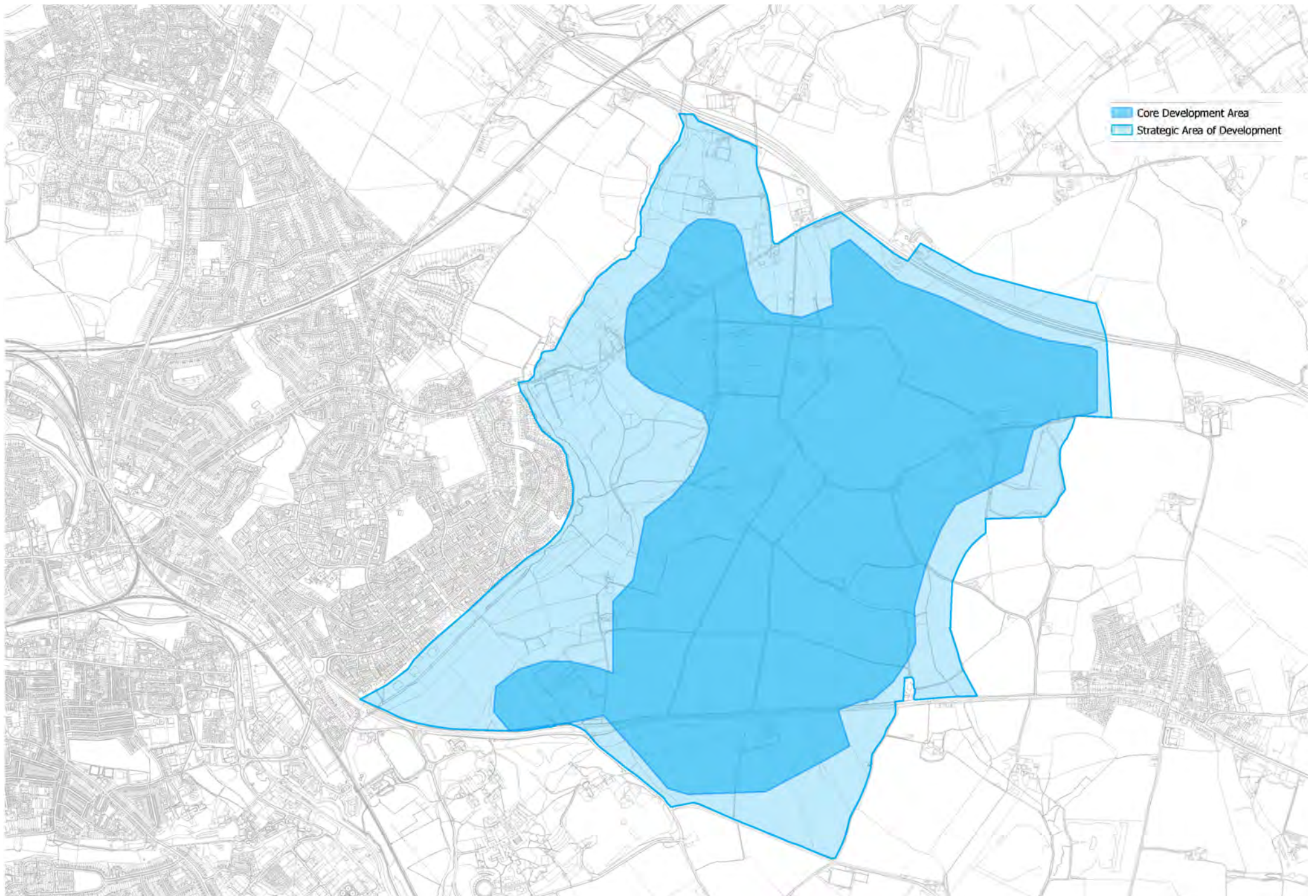
Development at TCBGC is identified in the joint Strategic Section 1 of the Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils' Draft Local Plans. **Draft Local Plan Policy SP8** specifically refers to development of a Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders and requires the preparation of a **Strategic Growth Development Plan Document (The Plan)** that will provide a framework for the subsequent preparation of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the site. The Proposed Strategic Development Area is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

Due to the new Garden Community covering land in both authorities the plan will be adopted by both Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council. The Councils have included the principle of development of a new Garden Community in the location proposed in this consultation, within their respective draft Local Plans.

The Plan will have to take the principle of development further and include specific proposals, strategies and detailed policies to inform the delivery of the Garden Community. The plan will provide certainty for stakeholders on the type, scale and location of specific land uses including the infrastructure required to accommodate them.

The Plan will build on Local Plan policy, including cross boundary issues identified and addressed through joint Strategic Section 1 of the draft Local Plans.

This Issues and Options consultation is the first stage in the preparation of the Plan.



WHY ARE YOUR VIEWS IMPORTANT?

In addition to strong local authority involvement and leadership, the delivery of Garden Communities will also rely on active and sustained engagement with local communities and stakeholders and with the residents and businesses of the new community once development starts, including, for example, opportunities for direct local stewardship of community assets and facilities.

It is important that future residents and businesses, existing surrounding communities, and local and public bodies and key stakeholders should be confident about:

- what is being delivered,
- when it will be delivered, and
- how it will be delivered.

The main purpose of the DPD is to set out a shared Vision for the new community at Tendring Colchester Borders and a strategy for its delivery. A strategy that includes both the requirement for **2,500 homes and related infrastructure to be delivered within the Plan period, 2017 to 2033**, with the majority of the development to be delivered over a longer-term beyond 2033. It will also set out a range of development objectives that will help deliver this Vision, and more detailed policies that will guide land-use proposals and secure timely delivery of development and infrastructure in the short, medium and long term, in accordance with relevant Local Plan policies.

The Plan will need to have flexibility in the way that development might be delivered taking into account the long-term nature of a development of this scale, but must also be true to the development and design ambitions that are agreed for the new community.

WHAT STATUS WILL THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (THE PLAN) HAVE?

A Development Plan is required to guide the development of the Garden Community, rather than a lesser Supplementary Planning document (SPD), because of the scale of the development proposed; its cross-boundary nature; the associated land assembly required to accommodate the proposal; and the use of a local delivery vehicle which will put proposals into practice. All of these qualities depart from traditional forms of development and consequently require a higher-level document, subject to a greater degree of scrutiny and, as a result, afforded statutory weight.

The Plan's statutory weight will result in all subsequent planning proposals within the boundaries of the Garden Community being determined in accordance with it. Due to its importance, the DPD will have to be prepared in a diligent and transparent manner and provide all stakeholders with an opportunity not only to inform the planning of the Garden Community but also to scrutinise its preparation. Essentially the **preparation of the Plan will follow a similar planning process to that used in the adoption of each Councils' Local Plan.**

ABOUT THIS ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT

This Issues and Options report provides information to stakeholders and local communities, and it invites comments and views on initial issues and options for the development of a Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders (TCBGC) and represents the first stage of the production of the Plan to provide a framework for development that will guide master planning stages that will follow.

This report is structured around five main sections.

Section 2 introduces North Essex Garden Communities Ltd and provides an overview of the site, the emerging evidence base and a summary of community engagement to date.

Section 3 introduces the North Essex Garden Community Charter which identifies a set of overarching principles that help inform potential development options. It also sets out an analysis of land use and environmental constraints as well as opportunities that will shape the design and delivery of TCBGC.

Section 4 further explores the Charter Principles and provides the LPA's emerging strategy for each. It presents a series of 'Issues' that are considered relevant to the design and delivery of a new Garden Community and seeks your views on these issues, how important they are and how they might be resolved through the Plan.

Section 5 presents the current development concept option for comment and invites alternative approaches based on a review and analysis of issues identified in this report.

Section 6 sets out the next steps towards preparation of a draft Development Framework

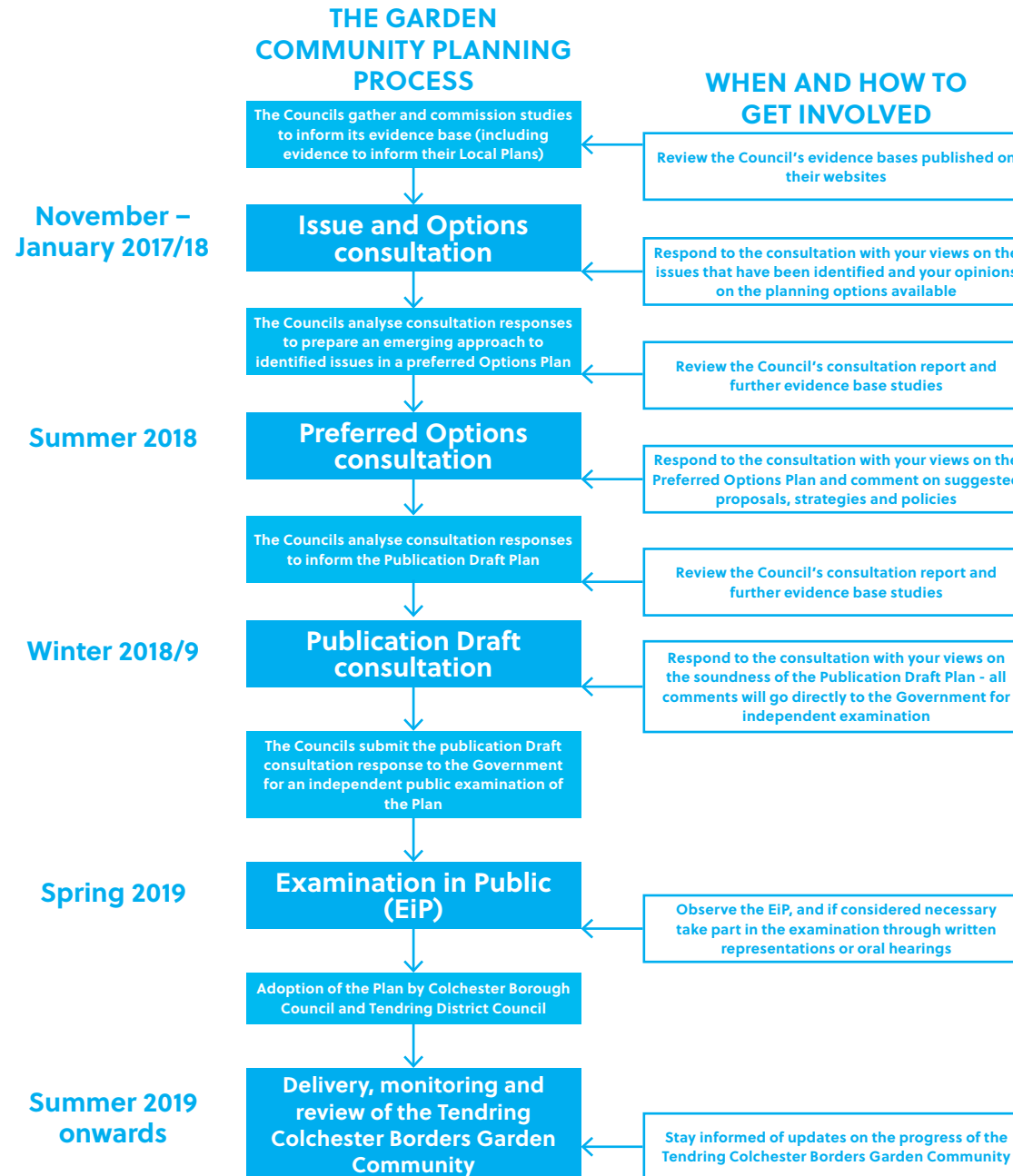
This document should be read in conjunction with the

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which provide a high-level evaluation of options that consider potential social, economic and environmental impacts.

The Issues and Options report will be subject to an eight week period of consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the wider community. The aim of this consultation is to gain a clear understanding of the issues involved in the development of TCBGC, and to develop consensus around a set of options that can be explored and developed to refine a framework for development of the site that will underpin a Plan for TCBGC.

Steps to preparing the Plan

The preparation of the Plan will be an extensive process reflecting the importance of the final document to the area it covers. The following flowchart illustrates the individual stages in the planning process.



POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) articulates the Government's objectives for growth in the context of sustainable development. It identifies the elements of sustainable development:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing It is committed to a presumption in favour of development.

The NPPF advocates the use of large-scale developments which incorporate **Garden City principles** as one way of achieving development at scale (paragraph 52).

Development of new large-scale communities must be established by working with existing local communities, and significant weight is attributed to good design of the built environment and creating a high quality and inclusive design.

The NPPF also seeks to ensure an integrated approach to the planning of housing, and provision of commercial and employment uses alongside the delivery of community services and facilities, to include education and open space uses as part of the creation of healthy and inclusive communities (paragraph 69).

The NPPF also recognises the significance of financial viability in both plan making and decision taking.

A National Agenda for Garden Communities

In 2015 the Government invited proposals for new 'Garden Communities' across the UK as a way of tackling the housing crisis. The North Essex Authorities have responded positively to this significant opportunity for long-term comprehensively planned growth and put forward draft proposals within a joint Strategic Section 1 of their Local Plan's for three new settlements to be designed and delivered to Garden City Principles. Tendring Colchester Borders is one of these proposed new communities

The Government continues to recognise the contribution that well-planned, well-designed new communities can make to meeting long-term housing needs¹ and has confirmed its intention to legislate to allow locally accountable New Town Development Corporations to be set up which could further support public sector delivery of new communities.

The North Essex Authorities are working jointly to prepare a common strategic chapter for their new Local Plans. The Authorities are now also partners in **North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC)**, an overarching governance body that will provide strategic direction and oversight of the creation and delivery of the three new Garden Communities and secure investment in the infrastructure across the wider area.

Each of the three Garden Communities although part of a comprehensive strategy for growth, will be taken forward as separate 'schemes' to be planned and implemented independently of each other.

NEGC Ltd is jointly owned by Braintree and Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Essex County Councils. Through NEGC Ltd, the Councils will act as the "lead developer", and so would not only have control over the type of housing, the design and the speed of delivery but also the wherewithal to commit to timely delivery of infrastructure – ensuring that transportation, schools, health and leisure facilities etc. are all built ahead of or alongside the homes, to adequately serve the needs of the new community and to minimise any adverse impacts on existing communities. The authorities would also play a key role in attracting businesses to assist in the **creation of vibrant, thriving self-sufficient communities where people can choose to live, work and spend leisure time.**

The current strategy for TCBGC would see Tendring and Colchester Councils playing a key role in its delivery, giving the Councils the ability to control the design, type of housing, rate of construction and, importantly, the associated infrastructure requirements that will come alongside, or in advance of the development.

The Councils are working jointly to explore the most effective way to deliver the Garden Community that would maximise benefits of the development for all. One delivery option is through NEGC Ltd and Local Delivery Vehicles for each site; another may involve emerging Government proposals for locally led New Town Development Corporations which may offer an alternative means of delivery that is devolved and accountable locally.

Regardless of which delivery model is applied, **capturing the uplift in development land value will be critical** to ensuring that the long-term aspirations of community stewardship of public assets and infrastructure are delivered.

Local Planning Policy

Within their Local Plans, Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils must identify where housing and jobs will be delivered up to 2033. For the plan period to 2033, the North Essex authorities have to provide land for a minimum of 43,720 new homes and plan for some 1,900 new jobs per annum. The rates of both housing and employment growth are expected to continue beyond 2033.

The Local Plans will shape the future of North Essex and set the policy framework over the next 15 years. The Councils have committed to working collaboratively on a strategic approach to the allocation and distribution of large-scale, housing-led, mixed use development, including employment opportunities, community services and facilities, and local and strategic infrastructure. This commitment is embedded in a joint Strategic Section 1 for the Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District draft Local Plans which gives primacy to the role of Garden Communities as part of each Council's sustainable strategy for growth and development.

Draft Policy SP2 - Spatial Strategy for North Essex, sets out a spatial strategy over the long-term that focuses growth at three new Garden Communities distributed across North Essex, in cross-boundary locations, well related to but distinct from existing population centres, and well served by a strategic transport network.

Draft Policy SP7- Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex, identifies three new Garden Communities to accommodate at least 7,500 new homes) and employment growth planned for North Essex up to 2033, with a significant capacity beyond the plan period in a sustainable way that meets the Local Plan vision and strategic objectives. The joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan recognises the substantial investment in infrastructure necessary to make growth at scale sustainable.

Draft Local Plan Policy SP8 identifies Tendring Colchester Borders as being capable of accommodating a range of 7,000-9,000 homes alongside associated transport, employment, education, open space and community infrastructure, in the long term. It also refers to the preparation of a Strategic Growth DPD that will provide a framework for the subsequent development of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The policy goes on to identify a number of design, development and delivery requirements that a DPD should address. This has helped to inform the scope of this Issues and Options Report.

Notwithstanding that development of the proposed Garden Communities would be delivered largely beyond the Plan period (beyond 2033), the Councils have a duty to demonstrate a robust growth strategy that is forward-looking and responds to future planning need.

The joint Strategic Section 1 Plan will be submitted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate in the autumn 2017.

SECTION 2.

Background and Evidence

THE NORTH ESSEX GARDEN COMMUNITIES CHARTER

The **North Essex Garden Communities Charter** has been jointly developed by the North Essex Authorities. The Charter sets out **10 place-making principles** that underpin the North Essex Authorities' ambition for the Garden Communities, and in accordance with which the development will be designed and delivered. The Charter sets out for consultation the Councils' ambitions for the new Garden Communities so that they **deliver more than large housing estates**.

These principles are shared across the Authorities and have been informed by the **Town and County Planning Association's (TCPA) Garden City Principles**. Together they cover a broad range of issues that drive the requirements set out in the draft, site-specific policy for TCBGC (SP8), having regard to the scope of issues that a The Plan for the site might be expected to include.

The Charter, alongside the draft joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan Policies, has guided this Issues and Options Document (see Section 3).

EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS

To support the preparation of a Development Plan Document, and indeed as part of the preparation of the draft joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan, a wide range of existing and new evidence and information has been drawn upon to further refine and qualify policy requirements, Councils' aspirations and development assumptions that will together shape a future for TCBGC. The evidence base to the draft Local Plan is hosted by Braintree District Council: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/>.

Garden Communities were amongst a range of options which were considered by the local authorities to deliver their long-term housing and employment needs. A number of sites of sufficient scale to accommodate a Garden Community were identified through the Call for Sites, the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and wider evidence gathering processes by each of the local authorities. All these options were evaluated and the assessments can be seen in the Sustainability Appraisal, a key part of the Local Plan preparation. The evidence base for the section 1 Local Plan is hosted by Braintree District Council. See **Appendix B** for a list of the relevant evidence documents.

Technical Groups and Workshops

Technical groups and workshops have formed an important part of the evidence gathering process.

A number of NEGC technical meetings, attended by professionals and stakeholders as part of the Infrastructure and Masterplanning and Transport Working Groups, have helped to explore topics relevant to the evolution of proposals for TCBGC, and have included housing, design, transport, education, community provision, and health and wellbeing.

Two community stakeholder workshops were also held as part of the evolution of the Concept Framework for TCBGC, and to begin to explore the joint work required to deliver on the objectives set out in Local Plan policy. These were attended by representatives of the local communities that relate to the site as well as Council officers and Councillors.

The aim of the first workshop was to ask participants to identify principles that they felt were important elements for the development at TCBGC that they would like to see embedded in any future concept framework.

At the second workshop a draft Concept Framework was presented to the same audience who were then asked to critically review the draft against the principles identified at the first workshop. Feedback was encouraged on specific aspects of the design approach, which included strategic open space/landscape, highway access, high quality public transport corridors, strategic cycleway network, density strategy, and employment/jobs. Further details relating to the workshop and its outcomes can be found in the **TCBGC Concept Framework Report**.

Key design principles identified at the TCBGC Concept Framework Workshop

- The importance of Salary Brook as a key natural asset.
- The important role of Green Buffers in any potential masterplan.
- Ensure the area feels separate and not simply an urban extension of east Colchester.
- Avoiding coalescence with other settlements in particular Wivenhoe and Elmstead Market.
- Protection of the separate identities of existing communities through the use of open space and undeveloped land.
- Protection of the rural character of the land to the east of Colchester.
- Build on the important role of the University of Essex.
- The need to plan in and deliver community facilities in the early phases of the development.
- The incorporation of good public transport routes.
- Exploration of alternative forms of sustainable transport networks (e.g. tramways and guided transit routes).

SECTION 3.

Vision and Principles

A VISION FOR TENDRING COLCHESTER BORDERS

A Vision for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will provide a mandate for its future development. It should be a shared Vision that governs all processes from design through to delivery of the development and indeed management of community assets.

It should create an identity for the new community where residents and business feel like they “belong”. It should foster a collective sense of ownership and pride in the place where people will live, work and spend their leisure time.

The Concept Framework presents a draft Vision for TCBGC relating to different characteristics felt to be important to the creation of TCBGC.

The Vision combines and reflects the evidence, community workshops, the Garden Communities Charter and design principles set out above. It is a good starting point from which to develop a more succinct, and shared Vision with which people can fully identify.

It is, still a draft vision and your views are important to the creation of a shared Vision that provides direction for the growth of TCBGC which is distinctive, inspiring and endures over the long-term.

TENDRING COLCHESTER BORDERS GARDEN COMMUNITY DRAFT VISION:

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is an ambitious plan to create an exemplar Garden Community. It will be a beautiful community with a strong sense of identify and belonging.

21st Century Community, Rooted in Essex Traditions

TCBGC will combine the best of traditional Essex residential environments with the expectations of a 21st century lifestyle. It will have low-energy, high performance homes in a rich landscape setting with natural green space directly accessible to every home. It will be well served by sustainable transport modes to encourage travel behaviour change, with a network of Public Rights of Way, streets and greenspaces that will integrate its distinctive neighbourhoods with each other and with neighbouring communities in particular Wivenhoe, Elmstead Market, Greenstead and with Colchester Town.

A New Country Park

A new Country Park in the valley of the Salary Brook will be the centrepiece of an open space framework that will preserve important habitats – wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows, meadows, etc - and give existing and new residents access to extensive green landscape areas for leisure and recreation. There will be a network of leisure routes to, through and around the Garden Suburb.

New Community Facilities and Services, Planned from the Start.

There will be a new District Centre and smaller Local Centres to provide for convenience shopping, healthcare and community services and facilities, and space for businesses, located alongside primary schools and key public transport stops. These will be planned to be convenient to every new home, and, where possible, to serve passing trade. TCBGC will have a range of early years and childcare facilities, primary and secondary schools developed alongside its housing.

Active Mobility – Walking and Cycling

It will be a place where walking and cycling to local destinations – schools, convenience shops, play spaces, places of work – will be as attractive and convenient than getting in the car. Every new home will be within walking distance of local shops and other services that support daily life, supporting health and wellbeing objectives .

Aligning University Aspirations

An extension to the campus of the University of Essex will be planned as part of the new community with opportunities to deliver a mix of uses – academic space, student housing, sports facilities, etc, to complement the district centre. There will be land to expand the University’s Knowledge Hub business park.

Public Transport for All

Good value, frequent, high-quality, reliable public transport will connect the Community to the University, Colchester Town centre, Colchester Station and to the main employment areas, and could link TCBGC to Clacton and Braintree and to other destinations across North Essex. A choice of travel modes, including high quality public transport, will provide households in

TCBGC with the opportunity to seek employment in locations across North Essex and beyond.

New Jobs alongside New Homes

TCBGC will support the economic growth of Colchester Town and the regeneration of towns and villages in Tendring, and provide opportunities for established and new residents to access a wide range of employment opportunities. There will be a variety of jobs available in businesses housed in modern accommodation – in the district centre, in business parks located close to the A120, and in an expanded Knowledge Gateway close to the University, all accessible from new homes by sustainable transport routes. Support will be given to local small and medium sized businesses to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester and Tendring economy. This might also include an element of homeworking.

Dealing with Strategic Traffic and Congestion

TCBGC will benefit from good links to the strategic road network, aligned to keep more through-traffic away from where people live but accessible to make journeys over a wide area as convenient as possible.

Future-Proofing Transport and Mobility

The timescales over which the Garden Community will grow and develop will need flexibility to incorporate exciting new technologies for future mobility, allowing the emerging neighbourhoods to respond to changes in patterns of travel behaviour which are constantly evolving in parallel with advances in new transport technology.

A New, Exceptional Place

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be an exceptional place to be born, to grow up, to make a career, to raise a family, to retire; to enjoy a rich and fulfilling life.



Q1 - Do you agree with the content of the Vision? Is anything missing? What are the priorities?

TAKING FORWARD THE NORTH ESSEX GARDEN COMMUNITIES CHARTER PRINCIPLES?

The Charter Principles form the bedrock of the Vision; they should be **cross cutting**, and should create a **robust and accountable framework** upon which to progress design and development of TCBGC.

The joint Strategic Section 1 of the draft Local Plans refers to the North Essex Garden Communities Charter, both within the site-specific policy for TGBGC (SP8) and in the general policy that relates to the development of cross-boundary Garden Communities (paragraph 8.11 and SP7). The draft Local Plan acknowledges that the Charter provides a good starting point for a framework through which to explore place-making, governance and delivery structures.

Building on the draft Local Plan, the North Essex Charter has helped to frame the Issues that are subject of this consultation. The Charter has three themes:

Place and Integration –

which relates to issues such as making good places, high quality design, planning for a healthy economy, mobility and access within and around the development, and landscape and biodiversity objectives.

Community – which relates to issues such as creating identity in a new community, engaging with future residents and businesses, existing and surrounding communities and

local and public bodies and ownership and maintenance of community assets.

Delivery – which relates to issues such as leadership, partnership and phasing and delivery of homes together with jobs; education, leisure and community facilities; and transport and utilities infrastructure. Under these three themes are a set of 10 guiding principles:

The 10 principles set out in the Charter have informed emerging strategies for TCBGC (see Section 4). Options identified by this document together with those identified through this consultation process will be ‘tested’ against the Charter Principles, the emerging strategies and the wider evidence base to create a preferred option that will underpin the Development Plan for TCBGC. Options considered must be realistic, feasible and must deliver against the Vision for TCBGC.



North Essex Garden Communities Charter Principles Place and Integration

- *Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure*
- *Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport*
- *Principle 3 - Employment Opportunity*
- *Principle 4 - Living Environment*
- *Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living*
- *Principle 6 - Good Design*

Community

- *Principle 7 - Community Engagement*
- *Principle 8 - Active Local Stewardship*

Delivery

- *Principle 9 - Strong Corporate and Political Public Leadership*
- *Principle 10 - Innovative Delivery Structure*

Q2 - Is there anything missing from the NEGCC Charter Principles?

SECTION 4.

Issues

WHAT ARE ISSUES?

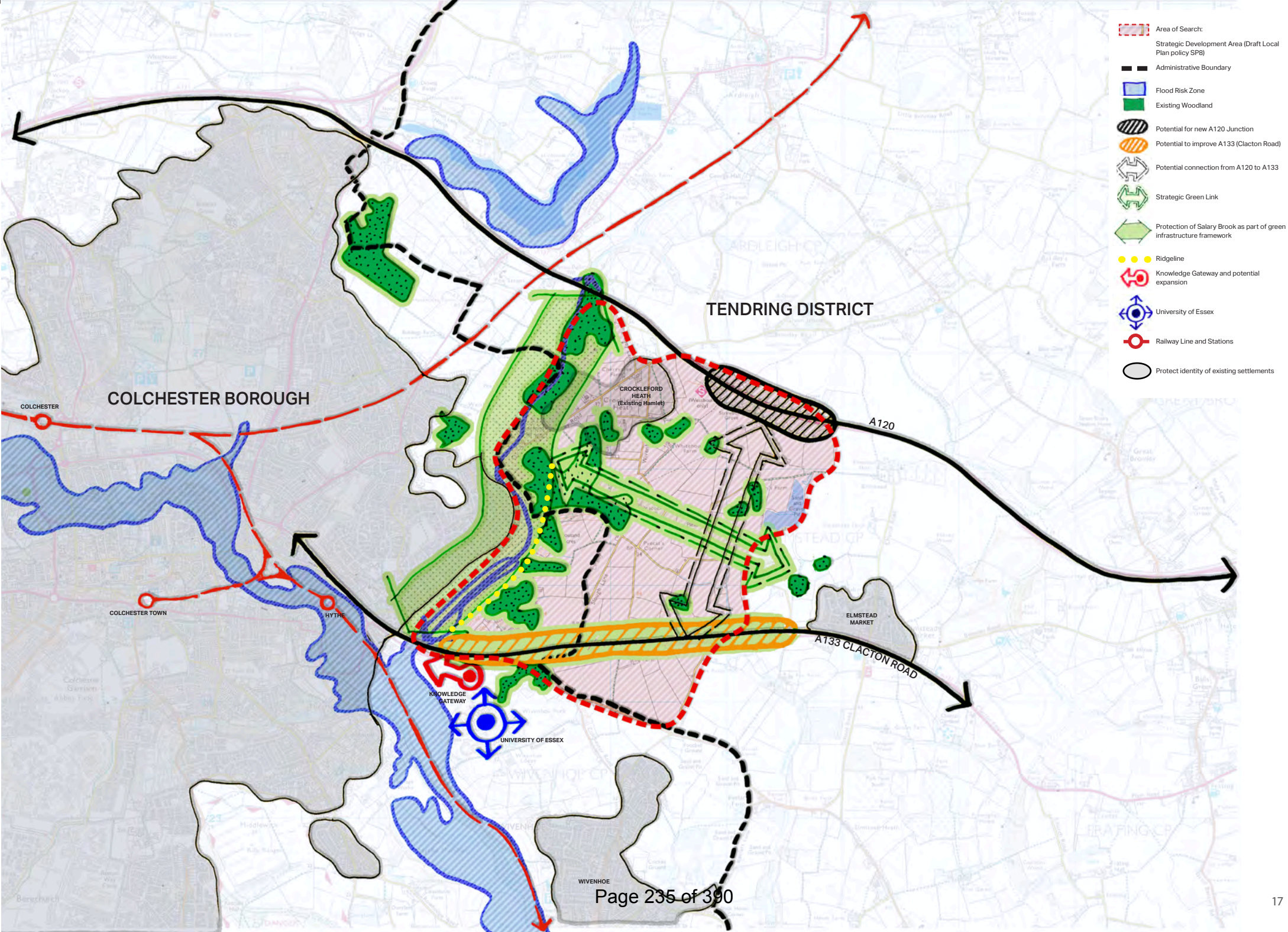
Issues are a set of considerations that are relevant to the design and delivery of development at TCBGC. The issues are understandably interrelated, they include and relate to elements of the Vision and the Charter guiding principles, but are also informed by constraints to the development that might limit the ability of some options to fulfil the Vision and Charter Principles as well as opportunities to maximise its potential.

This consultation seeks your views on these issues, how important they are, how they might be resolved but also whether there are any issues that have not been covered in this report. It also sets out the land-use, environmental and development constraints and potential opportunities related to the site.

Figure 4.1 shows some of the key constraints and opportunities for the site at TCBGC. When considered comprehensively, they start to reveal potential areas for development as well as factors to take into consideration as part of a detailed design and development strategy.

HOW WILL THE ISSUES HELP IDENTIFY THE RIGHT OPTION?

Understanding the evidence base, emerging policy and guidance and engagement with stakeholders, specialist Council officers and Councillors has helped the Councils to compile a list of issues that needs to be addressed within a Plan for TCBGC.



THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

"The Garden Communities will provide a generous amount of green space. They will be set within a multi-functional and integrated natural environment; providing space for nature, making the communities more resilient to climate change; promoting healthy lifestyles, and creating beautiful places to live and work."



EMERGING STRATEGY

The concept of Garden Communities places great emphasis on the landscape framework and the availability of high-quality, accessible green space near to homes and community facilities. The strategy for these new Garden Communities is to draw upon natural assets and features within the site to generate high standards of design. It requires an approach that sets development within a strong framework of internal green space and surrounding buffer areas that separate the new development from existing communities, linked by walking and cycling routes which prioritise active travel over motorised vehicle access.

Habitats along the valleys and corridors of the Salary Brook and Sixpenny Brook include woodland, including Ancient Woodland, species-rich grassland and wetland habitats and should be retained and enhanced. The same should apply to the Nationally Important Bullock Wood. Subject to more detailed survey work, the area has the potential to support a number of protected species and other species of conservation importance.

Important hedgerows and trees should be retained as part of the structural landscape framework.

Land to the southwest of the site create a separation between Colchester and Wivenhoe that should be retained. There should also be a clear separation between new development and Elmstead Market. This will help retain the character and identity of the existing settlements.

Care will be needed in new development to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent settlements and on the wider landscape – in particular, woodlands and mature hedgerows and field boundaries should be retained where they form screens.

The existing landscape structure within the site should be retained and strengthened.

Within the landscape framework, a network of informal and formal open spaces would be created, including:

- green links within and around the new Garden Community
- provision for a new Country Park along Salary Brook;
- landscape buffers to existing communities;
- areas of woodland planting both existing and proposed, to include an extension of Wivenhoe Park; and
- primary amenity open space that includes Sustainable Urban Drainage features.

The provision of recreation facilities within the new Garden Community, including generous amounts of open space and a dedicated County Park, will help reduce the potential impact that additional residential uses will have on protected habitats in the area.

The landscape framework extends the green landscape of the urban edge of Colchester into the new Garden Community to provide a strong landscape link that connects existing communities (such as Wivenhoe, Elmstead Market,

Greenstead and Salary Brook) with the new Garden Community. The Concept Framework emphasises a central 'east-west' orientated corridor between Greenstead, Salary Brook and new Country Park towards the rural eastern edge of the Suburb and on to Elmstead Market to the east. There is also potential to link across the A120 to Ardleigh Reservoir.

This 'east-west' link is defined by woodland blocks and belts above the Salary Brook, a green corridor east to west along the line of Slough Lane and the tributary valley of Salary Brook heading towards Churn Wood, combining to provide informal movement and habitat connections which delineate distinct development parcels within a green, functional and accessible landscape setting.

The landscape framework provides the following functions:

- Formal open space, sports pitches, recreation and play areas (such as pocket parks and or gyms);
- Sustainable drainage and watercourses;
- Woodland, trees and hedgerows and areas of informal amenity;
- Productive landscapes such as allotments, orchards, agriculture;
- Active green space which could include income generating uses supported by some built elements that could be related to recreational activities and accommodate footpath and cycle routes (e.g. commercial sports uses, cafés and restaurants, etc);

- Informal resource for recreation and free play allowing direct intimate contact with the natural environment permeating residential areas;
- Noise protection from the A120; and
- Green buffers between existing settlements.

ISSUES

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for the new Garden Community will be the basis for achieving the different objectives outlined above. The Strategy should be comprehensive and balance the needs of the whole community with the natural environment. Your views are sought on the emerging approach to green infrastructure to help shape this future Strategy.

Q3 - Do you support the emerging approach to green infrastructure?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Parts of the site to be protected
- The sorts of public open space that are needed – parks, sports, play areas, natural places
- What are the open space priorities?
- How these spaces can be made available and accessible to everyone
- How they should be owned and maintained
- What are the open space priorities?
- The importance of gardens and other private outside spaces

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 2: INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The Partner Councils for North Essex have agreed a set of objectives for Integrated and Sustainable Transport across the area providing a strategic mobility backdrop for the creation of three new Garden Communities. These objectives are para-phrased below:

- Each new Garden Community should make full provision for active travel (walking and cycling) and sustainable travel (public transport) so that together they account for 70% of all trips.
 - Timely delivery of sustainable transport alongside homes and employment development
 - Using technology and information to make best use of changing travel technologies in the future.
 - Organise new Garden Communities so that homes, jobs and facilities support sustainable travel and make public transport viable.
 - Inclusive, affordable and sustainable access to education, skills, jobs, shopping, healthcare, community facilities and transport hubs in each new Garden Community.
 - Walking and cycling that makes best use of current and future green infrastructure.
 - Minimise carbon emissions and pollutants associated with transport - such as supporting installation of electric charging points; cycle parking; and bike share schemes.
 - Modern, frequent and reliable public transport access to surrounding major towns and cities from the Garden Communities as an attractive and sustainable alternative to travel by car.
 - Support the function and effective operation of local and strategic transport networks – roads, public transport, rail.
- In the TCBGC area there are existing issues of poor connectivity and traffic congestion, particularly at peak times, that cannot easily be addressed by simply creating more road capacity. Rather, the aim is to increase capacity for journeys by providing attractive alternatives to travel by car, and to redistribute through traffic to other routes.

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WITHIN THE TCBGC, THERE ARE SOME SPECIFIC POSSIBILITIES:

- A Rapid Transit service to Colchester on dedicated routes with new park & ride, and with phased construction through the new Garden Community to provide a good alternative to travel by car.
- A new link road from the A133 to a new junction on the A120, with the potential to also connect to the B1027 and B1028 to provide a new connection to the strategic road network without the need to go through Colchester.
- Priority for active travel modes – walking and cycling – including “green links” and great public spaces.
- Good connections to the University of Essex a key node for new transport infrastructure.
- Enhanced cycle links to central Colchester and to other nearby communities of East Colchester, Greenstead, Elmstead Market, Wivenhoe, The Hythe and Colne Harbour.

ISSUES

The Transport Strategy and the infrastructure it contains will have a direct relationship with the overall sustainability of the Garden Community and how it functions as a place. The availability of different transport choices will influence residents' behaviour strongly. Ensuring sustainable and active transport modes are given priority will be an underlying principle of the Strategy. Your views are sought on the emerging approach to help shape the future Transport Strategy.

Q4 - Do you support the emerging approach to integrated and sustainable transport?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Reducing the need to travel
- Encouraging people to walk, cycle and use public transport
- The importance of having public transport available early
- The best ways to accommodate cars so they don't dominate the environment

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 3: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

"The Garden Communities will seek to provide access to one job per household within the new community or within a short distance by public transport. The employment function will be a key component of creating character and identity and sustainable communities."



EMERGING STRATEGY

TCBGC is well located to Colchester and accessible to Harwich, Chelmsford, Braintree, Ipswich, London Stansted Airport, each within 30-60 minutes travel.

Existing sectors of the economy have potential for growth which could be further supported through development at TCBGC, these such sectors include:

- The University Research Park and Knowledge Gateway
- Digital and creative activities – big data, games hub, robotics
- Offshore renewable energy

New employment space at TCBGC could be provided to accommodate the following employment opportunities:

- Commercialising the research and innovation strengths of the University of Essex, capitalising on the staff/ student population and the emerging talent pipeline, potential for a University Enterprise Zone
- Renewable and offshore energy sector, including nuclear supply chain/maintenance
- Smart technology clusters– there are strong high tech aspirations
- Expansion of port-related activities
- Renewable and offshore energy sector, including nuclear supply chain/maintenance
- Health and care (new approaches to the delivery of health solutions)

- Commercialising the research and innovation strengths of the University of Essex, capitalising on the staff/ student population and the emerging talent pipeline, potential for a University Enterprise Zone
- Smart technology clusters– high tech aspirations
- Tourism and leisure
- Logistics

The evidence to date suggests that new jobs across North Essex as a whole will be created by:

- Internal growth within each Garden Community – new homes and a bigger population generate more demand for public and consumer service, and jobs related directly to the construction of the new Garden Community.
- External growth created by organisations that serve wider regional, national and international markets, organisations that grow locally or are attracted in from outside. Unlocking the potential of the A120 corridor connecting across North Essex will deliver a further 20% of the new jobs required.

The special nature of the new Garden Communities will be at the core of targeted and pro-active efforts to attract new employment organisations into North Essex as part of inward investment strategies.

Wider North Essex has the potential to become a site for every stage of business growth (R&D, warehouse, logistics, office – small, medium and large), with a clear focus on key

growing sectors such as knowledge and creative industries. It can develop to be a cohesive and cohesive economic corridor in the South East of England which will offer business workspace, access to labour and clusters of expertise in the following sectors:

- Research - big data at the University of Essex
- Logistics hub
- High quality office space for support services/back office functions
- Good access to international markets via Stansted airport and Haven ports
- Development of trade deals to capitalise on markets in the USA and Asia
- Enterprise Zones / LDOs / financial incentives for companies to locate
- Investment in smart technology and high quality commercial space

The employment evidence to date identifies a need across Essex for an additional 100 large firms in its economy, and many of these could be in North Essex. The Garden Communities offer particular advantages of good locations and access; modern business premises; available, good quality housing and services; and a supportive business environment. Such large companies would be the drivers to deepen and broaden the economic base of North Essex, creating high quality jobs in the new Garden Communities providing a broad range of employment opportunities to the citizens of North Essex.

ISSUES

An Employment Strategy will underpin the economic growth potential of the Garden Community and will also be an important factor in sustainable development. Planning for economic growth is very different from planning for new housing because so many more factors are outside the control of the Councils; but the Garden Community can provide the right conditions to attract employers and employment and job growth. Your views on how the right conditions can be created are welcome.

Q5 - Do you support the emerging approach to employment opportunity?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Making best use of nearby economic drivers – the University, the Ports, town centres, existing employment centres
- Businesses that can grow with the new Garden Community
- Attracting employment that complements existing employment
- Jobs for a wide range of different people
- Changing technology and business needs
- Sustainable journeys to work

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 4: **LIVING ENVIRONMENT**

“Community inclusiveness and walkable, sociable and vibrant neighbourhoods will be a defining characteristic of the Garden Communities. A diverse mix of homes responding to existing and future local needs will be provided alongside a range of community services, including health, education, leisure and recreation, culture and shopping.”



EMERGING STRATEGY

“Living Environment” is a key Garden Communities principle that aims to set these new communities apart from standardised development. The North Essex Garden Communities Charter seeks the creation of social, vibrant, mixed and inclusive communities.

Neighbourhoods where everything is within easy walking distance, planned around connected centres, which provide a mix of homes, jobs and services set within attractive and green environments, and busy streets; places where residents can socialise, enjoy cultural facilities and lead healthy lifestyles.

The Charter also seeks innovative approaches to delivering local community services and facilities.

New ways to provide and deliver the education, health and other social and community facilities and services needed to support the new community will be explored to make sure these services are inclusive and available to all.

Options might include:

- Services gathered together in ‘hubs’ in the most accessible places to encourage cooperation and collaboration without duplication so that they make the best use of the land available.
- Flexible and adaptable, multi-purpose spaces (outdoor and indoor) that provide for specific but changing needs of a wide range of the individuals, groups, organisations, workers and visitors who together form the community.
- The new Garden Community as a responsible neighbour – planning social Infrastructure to ensure that facilities are of benefit to both existing and new communities without compromising services which already exist.

Provision of a variety of housing tenures recognising levels of affordability which are reflected in ownership models is an essential part of the creation of a balanced Garden Community.

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will have a District Centre that will be the heart of the Garden Community. It will likely contain the highest development density with a mix of employment, shopping, secondary school, cultural and amenity facilities, together with the main public transport interchange. These uses will be interspersed with new homes, typically of higher density than elsewhere in the Garden Communities.

Local centres will contain a smaller range of local services including primary schools, nurseries, health services, day-to-day convenience shopping and cafés. They will be

located in within 10 minutes' walk of homes. They may be grouped around a space to encourage cooperation and collaboration of community facilities and opportunities to share management costs.

Street corners might accommodate individual café's or corner shops located within residential streets.

TCBGC will provide for a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and types including provision for self-build and custom-built homes, lifetime homes and affordable and starter homes, driven by local needs, including how this may change over time.

This strategy will help to achieve lively, sociable and diverse neighbourhoods, giving single people, couples, families, retirees and elderly people the chance play a full part in the life of TCBGC.

ISSUES

Part of creating an attractive living environment is the delivery of a good mix of land uses that promote social interaction and integration, fostering a sense of place and community. Your views on this subject will help shape a future strategy that will make the Garden Community a celebrated place to live, work and spend time, with a strong sense of identity.

Q6 - Do you support the emerging approach to the living environment?
In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Providing homes for all – singles, couples, families, older people, to rent, to buy or to build themselves Good examples of public places that are safe, sociable and busy
- What services should a new District Centre include (social, cultural, education and leisure activities)
- What services should new local centres include (social, cultural, education and leisure activities)
- Making places and spaces flexible for future users

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 5: SMART AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING STRATEGY

"Planned for the 21st century, the Garden Communities will secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters resilient environments and communities; able to respond positively to changing circumstances. Innovation and technology will be embraced to achieve resource efficiency, higher quality of life and healthier lifestyles; creating the conditions for sustainable living."



EMERGING STRATEGY

The Partner Councils for North Essex are preparing a strategy for Smart and Sustainable Living based on five Key Principles:

- Smart Places – places that incorporate the best of technology to support sustainable living
- Smart Mobility – technology that facilitate sustainable travel choices
- Smart Lives – technology that enables independent living throughout life
- Smart Infrastructure – technology that delivers sustainable energy and waste solutions
- Smart Public Services – enabling access to public services as effectively and efficiently as possible

The aim of the strategy is to support Sustainable Living, focused on the new Garden Communities but with the potential to transform existing communities too.

In the context of a new Garden Community on the Tendring Colchester Borders, it is possible to elaborate on what Smart and Sustainable Living might mean.

Smart Places the public realm would be designed to create opportunities for more active lifestyles irrespective of age, ability or cultural background.

Smart Mobility would see the application of Active by Design principles using the planning and design of the new Garden Community to encourage active and healthy lifestyles. The Partnership subscribes to the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and will design in opportunities for a step change in Active Travel including Smart Hubs that make interchange with public transport simple and secure.

Beyond active travel, use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicles charging infrastructure linked to renewable generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. Planning for autonomous and internet connected service vehicles would enable consolidated deliveries – either to neighbourhood hubs or individual residences.

Smart Lives would support Independent Living by using technology and apps to enable and support independence for longer, reducing the burden on social and health services.

Smart Infrastructure could include:

- cutting edge digital communications, designed for ultrafast broadband and 5G from the outset, and future-proofed for simple upgrades.
- Smart Energy systems that use collective contracts to deliver sustainable energy at lower prices through a community owned network tailored to the community's needs
- capacity and adaptability for technological change through the design of flexible cable ducts, etc
- considering space for Hubs/Centres for energy – heat and power generation within each new Garden Community.
- Maximising efficiency at the household level, with on-site generation and use of battery storage, with technology to monitor individual energy
- a mixed portfolio of energy technologies to avoid dependence on any one energy solution.
- Smart Waste to aim at zero carbon and maximum waste recycling with a Waste Hub linked to generation
- **Smart Public Services** could involve greater collaboration and coordination to deliver comprehensive services effectively through "one-stop" arrangements in terms of joint offices and on-line operations through a common portal.

ISSUES

The creation of a new Garden Community provides an exciting opportunity to embrace the latest innovations and technologies available to make buildings, infrastructure and lifestyles more efficient, more enjoyable and more sustainable than what could be achieved through smaller, disjointed development proposals.

Q7 - Do you support the emerging approach to smart and sustainable living?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- Making new technology available to everyone
- Encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Adapting to new technologies

THEME 1. PLACE AND INTEGRATION

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 6: GOOD DESIGN

"Through all stages of the planning, design and development of the Garden Communities the highest quality of design and management of the built and public realm will be promoted. Existing local assets will be capitalised to help create distinctive places."



EMERGING STRATEGY

Good Design is a key Garden Communities principle that aims to elevate new communities above standardised development.

Garden Communities must achieve attractive and locally distinctive, high quality and sustainable design. They will be characterised by continuous and connected streets rather than dead ends. Development should be well-laid out to help people find their way easily, and should have generous open spaces - public, private and communal - to help create distinctiveness and interest. Masterplans and design guidance will be developed as important tools to secure good design throughout the development.

Greener and more efficient development blocks should be designed so they are outward facing onto the streets for good surveillance of public places, but should accommodate integrated green space within to provide for good sized gardens, landscaping, recreation, wildlife and food growing and other private space.

How a new community interacts with its existing landscape is an important design consideration. The design and layout should respond positively to the historic environment which creates opportunities for developing distinctiveness and interesting places. Development must achieve a suitable transition from urban development to countryside. It is considered desirable to retain a 'green gap' between the new Garden Communities and the settlement limits of existing villages and towns, to avoid coalescence and maintain identity. Edge treatment to the new community must reflect that ambition.

The new Garden Community will have a close relationship with the town of Colchester and its facilities, connected by high-quality public transport.

A District Centre should be located at the point that is accessible to the greatest possible catchment – new residents, existing residents, employees and people passing by.

Expansion of the University of Essex could include academic space, student housing and services and more land for the Knowledge Gateway to further exploit the commercialisation of university research and therefore should be located close to and support a new District Centre. Further land for employment will be located close to a new junction with the A120 and in District and Neighbourhood Centres.

The layout of development will be driven by the need to retain and enhance key elements of the existing landscape including woodland blocks and belts and mature hedgerows and the need to avoid the valley of the Salary brook. These features will define development parcels for residential, employment and mixed use development.

The Green Infrastructure that makes up the landscape framework will retain the identity existing communities, around the new Garden Community – Wivenhoe, Elmstead Market, Greenstead, etc. But they will also be a shared recreational resource available to both existing and future residents. These will create a positive edge to open countryside.

ISSUES

The approach to design and management of the built environment and public realm will help shape an identity for the new Garden Community and will be the most prominent factor for many people in their perception of the Garden Community. To get this right your and your responses will influence the design approach adopted.

Q8 - Do you support the emerging approach to good design?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- How to ensure high quality, sustainable design through all stages of the development and delivery of TCBGC so that it a successful place to live and work
- The relationship between new development with the open countryside – defining edges
- Protecting identity of existing communities

THEME 2. COMMUNITY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"The Garden Communities are a locally-led initiative, and their development will be shaped through engaging existing communities and emerging new communities; residents will be empowered to contribute to shaping the future of North Essex."



EMERGING STRATEGY

Continued, meaningful engagement from inception to implementation is necessary. Each Garden Community will be developed from a locally-led vision, and ongoing and meaningful public and stakeholder participation through the Local Plan process and beyond. Community engagement will form a key part of developing a masterplan for each Garden Community and subsequent planning applications, both utilising the extensive knowledge and views of the existing and new communities to help shape and refine proposals. Exhibitions and other forms of community engagement events will be held locally as the plans for the Garden Communities are progressed.

Existing communities will be given the opportunity to define how they want to engage with the new communities being created. Community enablers are engaged to help communities participate effectively.

A bespoke site-specific engagement strategy will be developed for TCBGC in parallel with future design and master planning stages as well as throughout its implementation and delivery.

ISSUES

The Councils are committed to ensuring the Garden Community is planned to incorporate a grass-roots approach that, gives the local community the opportunity to take part in the evolution of the development as it progresses. The Councils are seeking your views on how they best engage with the local community over the longer-term.

Q9 - Do you support the emerging approach to community engagement?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The best way to involve local people and other stakeholders in planning for TCBGC
- The value of a shared vision for the TCBGC
- The best way to involve new residents and businesses as they arrive in the new community

THEME 2. COMMUNITY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 8: ACTIVE LOCAL STEWARDSHIP

"The Garden Communities will be developed, owned and managed in perpetuity with the direct involvement of their residents and businesses; residents will be directly engaged in the long-term management and stewardship, fostering a shared sense of ownership and identity."



EMERGING STRATEGY

One of the defining principles of Garden Communities is that assets that are important to the local community should be owned and managed by them directly, helping to build a sense of community and collective responsibility.

At this stage, the emerging strategy consists of a number of proposals:

- There should be one Local Stewardship Body for each proposed garden community. The Bodies should be encouraged to collaborate actively with each other, and other bodies to achieve economies through shared services and to use best practice.
- The agreement with the landowners needs to make provision for the cost of endowing the Body with rental assets that cover their stewardship costs, to be reflected in the land value. Such endowment should be as generous as possible and include flexibility to obtain ownership of commercial property created as part of the garden communities to generate rental income.
- The Body could have the ability to raise revenue from residents through a local levy. Such a levy would be controlled by the residents to further in interests of the community, for example by managing grounds maintenance and the provision of community facilities within TCBGC.

A bespoke site-specific management and stewardship strategy will be developed for TCBGC in parallel with future design and master planning stages as well as throughout its implementation and delivery. Given the scale of the development, the strategy will need to be flexible to adapt to changes in the procurement and delivery of assets and facilities over time, in the interests of the new community and its population.

ISSUES

Garden Communities are most commonly associated with delivering high levels of 'hard' infrastructure such as new means of transportation, health and educational facilities, and generous amounts of open space; but ensuring the 'soft' infrastructure of active local stewardship is given adequate support and resources is just as essential. Your view on how arrangements can be made from the outset to help the Garden Community's social infrastructure flourish are welcomed.

Q10 - Do you support the emerging approach to active local stewardship?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The best way to manage and maintain "community assets" - parks, sports pitches, allotments, community buildings and schools, and community transport, for example
- Ownership of assets – the developer, a management company, a community trust, the Council or any other

THEME 3. DELIVERY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 9: STRONG CORPORATE & POLITICAL PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

"The Councils of North Essex will collaborate to provide clear vision for the Garden Communities and commitment to their long-term success. Central to this will be a commitment to high quality place-making, timely infrastructure provision, and achieving a steady pace of housing and employment delivery."



EMERGING STRATEGY

A successful Garden Community relies on strong corporate and political leadership and a clearly defined shared Vision. The Garden Communities project will be led by the partnership of four local councils. Strong, cross-party, political support will drive the project forward over several Local Plan periods and political cycles.

The delivery of the Garden Communities will require a positive and active approach by both the public and private sectors. The Councils will explore all opportunities to take a direct stake in the delivery process relating to good place-making, infrastructure delivery, funding and governance. The councils will need to take a long term strategic view of development to ensure that the vision and ambitions for the Garden Communities are delivered. This will require forward thinking and planning that is not limited to the current plan-making time horizon of 15 years, but looks well beyond that.

The Garden Communities will place the Councils' commitment to high quality place-making and infrastructure delivery at the heart of the development, and a central tenet of all governance and delivery mechanisms created to bring forward the new Garden Communities.

A key outcome of this consultation process is to begin to frame a shared Vision for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, that secures a high level of ambition that will set a benchmark for the standard of design and development that will be demanded from the development in order to deliver against the Vision.

ISSUES

Strong corporate and political leadership is a key principle of the Garden Community, particularly given the significant challenges of delivering a new settlement of scale, which crosses local authority boundaries and will cover future Local Plan periods.

Q11 - Do you support the emerging approach to corporate and political leadership?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The best way to secure design and quality by all involved in delivery
- Future governance

THEME 3. DELIVERY

CHARTER PRINCIPLE 10: INNOVATIVE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

"The Garden Communities will be delivered through a genuine and pro-active partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward is shared and community empowerment enabled."

EMERGING STRATEGY

The delivery of new Garden Communities on this scale requires delivery arrangements that are more complex and wide-reaching than those that would apply to conventional smaller -scale development. Most notable is a desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.

This involvement will go beyond the role of the three Local Planning Authorities in making local planning policy and determining planning applications.

The partnership of four Councils has created a jointly owned company, North Essex Garden Communities Ltd (NEGC Ltd) which intends to oversee the evolution and delivery of the Garden Communities. NEGC Ltd has an ambition coordinate public funds to ensure that infrastructure is delivered at the right time to support the new Garden Communities and to minimise the impacts on existing communities.

Each Garden Community could be delivered by a special Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV), an agreement between the Councils, landowners and developers that will manage the planning design and construction process in each location. This will be overseen by NEGC Ltd.

The Councils are exploring the formation of one or more local Development Corporations with the powers to acquire and to hold land, to prepare master plans and other guidance, and to determine planning applications in each Garden Community area, thereby ensuring high standards and capturing land values to pay for infrastructure and community assets. Such a Development Corporation would be locally accountable.

A site-specific delivery strategy will be prepared for TCBGC, this will need to consider the delivery and implementation of the three new Garden Communities' in parallel and have regard to national guidance and emerging legislation relating to the delivery of 'New Towns' to include the consideration of devolved powers.

ISSUES

The Councils have a collective commitment to ensuring that the delivery of the Garden Community raises the expectations and the reputation of new, large scale development. This step-change in housing delivery is reliant on an innovative delivery structure which puts the Councils aspirations at the heart of future governance. Your thoughts on the form an innovative delivery structure take are sought.

Q12 - Do you support the emerging approach to innovative delivery structure?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The level of involvement of the Local Authorities and NEGC Ltd in promotion and delivery of CBBGC
- The need for public funds to secure infrastructure in advance of development
- Funding the investments

SECTION 5.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

ESTABLISHING A BOUNDARY FOR DEVELOPMENT

The area of land that could accommodate a new Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders has been refined from options presented in the “Options and Evaluation” work undertaken by AECOM in July 2016 and influenced by stakeholder consultation with local community representatives in November 2016 and April 2017, as well as our understanding of the issues and the interrelationship between them which include:

- identification of clear and defensible boundaries (water courses, roads, woodland belts);
- appreciation of distance and separation of communities – (physical, visual, perceived);
- relationship to existing settlements;
- nature of land that will perform the role of a “green buffer” which will define an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated that remains distinct from other existing settlements;
- planning policy protection (how might this land be protected “in perpetuity” from built development whilst allowing complementary activities that support both the new community and existing communities?).

The boundaries of development will be further refined in the Development Plan Document that follows this exploration of Issues and Options.

WHAT IS A CONCEPT FRAMEWORK?

As part of the development, the development potential for a Garden Community on the Tendring Colchester Borders (TCBGC) has been explored in a Concept Framework, presented at **Figure 5.1**.

A Concept Framework is a diagram of structure. It interprets key criteria from the Town and Country Planning Association’s Garden City Principles and the North Essex Garden Communities Charter and responds positively site constraints and opportunities and has been subject to critical review following local consultation.

Whilst it is a robust basis for development that has been tested, it is not yet a master plan for the new Garden Community. It presents a layout option for consideration, evaluation and to prompt wider responses or generate alternative approaches to structuring development at TCBGC. The development quantity, form and disposition of land uses presented for TCBGC will be further explored and refined through later policy making and master planning stages. The Sustainability Appraisal process is a critical part of exploration and refinement of options and is carried out at each stage of plan development.

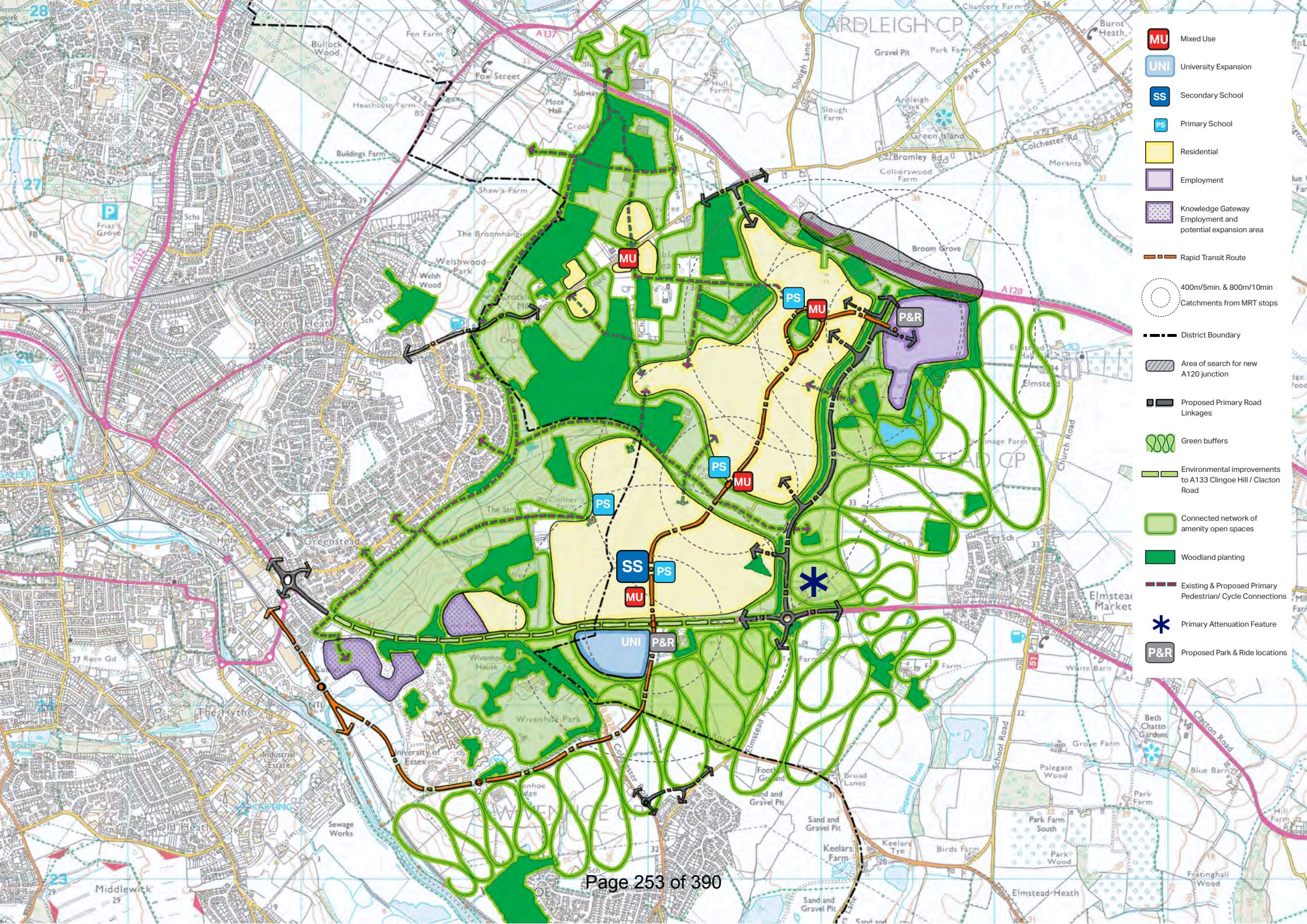
The full report on the Concept Framework is available as part of the evidence base for this Issues and Options consultation.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL AT TCBGC

The capacity range of TCBGC identified in the draft joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan policy SP8 is 7,000 – 9,000 homes. There are, of course, factors that could limit the number of homes that can be built and the locations where they can be built. Some development constraints are flexible and can be accommodated through appropriate design and some are fixed. But all options will include choices, choices that lead to compromises, often between important but competing objectives.

The working option presented, identifies seven development parcels each with its own characteristics and each with a particular role to play in the new community as a whole.

The fundamental rationale for three new Garden Communities across North Essex is that all the infrastructure, services and facilities required by these new communities can be planned and coordinated from the outset, and the long-term commitment means that the mechanisms, resources and funding can be put in place to deliver them in a timely way. Roads, public transport, walking and cycling, schools, health and welfare, jobs, open spaces, local shopping, sports and recreation, community development, etc. are all planned in advance, comprehensively.



- MU** Mixed Use
- UNI** University Expansion
- SS** Secondary School
- PS** Primary School
- Residential
- Employment
- Knowledge Gateway
Employment and
potential expansion area
- Rapid Transit Route
- 400m/5min. & 800m/10min
Catchments from MRT stops
- District Boundary
- Area of search for new
A120 junction
- Proposed Primary Road
Linkages
- Green buffers
- Environmental improvements
to A133 Clingoe Hill / Clacton
Road
- Connected network of
amenity open spaces
- Woodland planting
- Existing & Proposed Primary
Pedestrian/ Cycle Connections
- Primary Attenuation Feature
- P&R Proposed Park & Ride locations

Table 1 Summary Land Use

Land Use	Area
	Hectares (Ha) approx.
Residential	
	c.198 Ha c.7529 dwellings (a density average of @ 38.3 dph)
Mixed Use	
Mixed Use Centres (4)	c.8 ha Might include higher residential density and other land uses associated with mixed use centres such as retail, commercial and community spaces.
Employment	
Employment area	c.25 ha Employment land includes an extension to the University's Knowledge Gateway; a Business Park adjacent to the A120 with a mix of employment uses supported by Park and Ride, and potential to be served by a Rapid Transit network; and employment floorspace within the mixed-use centres
Education	
Primary School (including early years)	c.8 ha 3/4 primary schools (schools including early years provision) (2 ha site) Final number of homes and housing mix will determine the number of schools
Secondary School	c.8 ha 1 Secondary school (8 ha site) Final number of homes and housing mix will determine the size of a Secondary School
Open Space	Some 40-60 % open space land dependent on approach to functional open space as part of the development together with open space retained in its current use to protect against coalescence.
Park-and-Ride (s)	c.7 ha
University Expansion	c.10.7 ha Potential land for expansion of North Essex University, for academic purposes, or student housing, or a combination.
Core Garden Community Development Footprint	c. 258 ha

This Concept Framework presents a spatial option which identifies potential for 198 hectares of residential land. Table 1 presents a summary of the land uses and key elements that are contained within the Concept Framework. At an assumed average density of some 38 dwelling per hectare (consistent with Garden City principles) this could deliver approximately 7,500 homes, a community of some 17,000 people.

People in these new communities (and in nearby existing communities) will have real choices about where to live and to work, where to send the kids to school, and where to walk and shop, all aspects of an active and fulfilling life. And the range of infrastructure and choice can be delivered because of the proposed scale of development.

This is in sharp contrast to incremental growth and development spread across many existing communities when the scale of development in any one place is seldom able to cover the investment in infrastructure, facilities and services required.

The Concept Framework for TCBGC has shown capacity for development in the middle of the target range for the eventual number of households and population. It is considered that the site could deliver up to 9,000 homes (as referenced in the draft policy). This would involve amendments to the spatial option as presented that would consider enlargements to and/or additional development parcels and review of approaches to density across parts of the site. The upper target would require residential development south of the A133 which has been resisted by local stakeholders. Commitment to delivery at that scale will provide the justification for the level of investment required over the long-term.

Figure 5.2 Early phases

DEVELOPMENT PHASING AT CBBGC

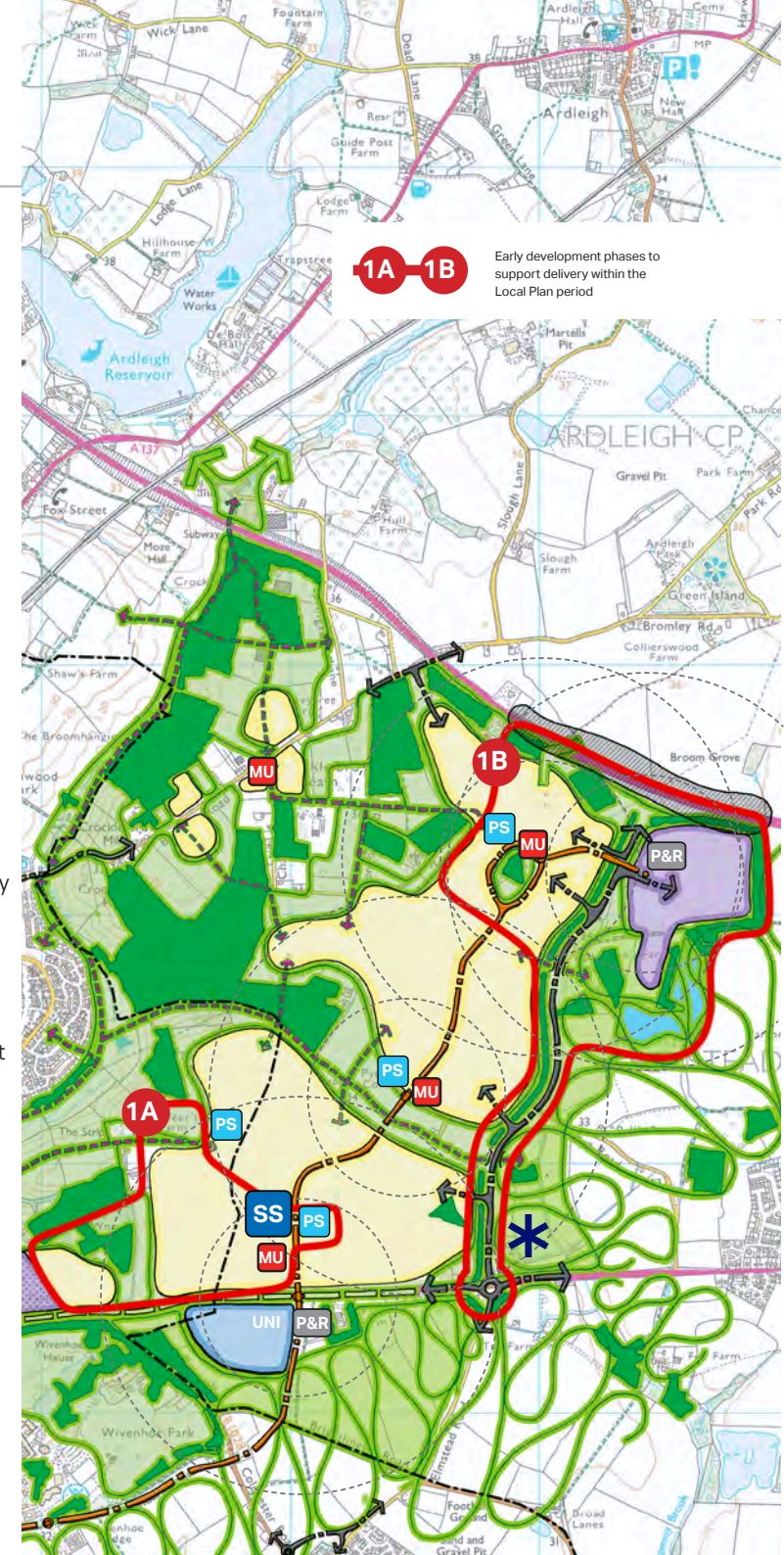
A clear strategy for phasing and delivery will be established. Developers should be able to develop individual parcels, whilst being consciously connected to the wider development and its community. **Figure 5.2** presents an option for early phases of development.

Development is likely to commence at the southern part of the site, initially, on land adjacent and north of the A133, which provides a point of access onto the strategic highway network.

Early commitment to the delivery of the A120-A133 link road will open up further opportunities for development fronts along its length, offering flexibility for the extent of the first phase of development. A second opportunity for early development phases could be at the northern extent of the site, to deliver homes with a local centre and school. Unlocking development to the north of the site through early delivery of the A120 junction and link road would also make strategic employment land available to market.

Developing at scale and over time requires a flexible approach that is capable of responding to changes in market and and/ or priorities over the lifetime of the development. However deliver of timely infrastructure alongside homes will still be a driving principle in the creation of the new community.

Identifying distinct parcels of development that are 'village' in scale, would provide a clear strategy for phasing and delivery and would help support a responsive construction and implementation programme.



Layout of development

The Concept Framework presents a layout that establishes a series of identifiable neighbourhoods or 'villages' proportionate to the walking distances that people might experience day-to-day – to school, local shops, transport services, recreation, consistent with the Charter and TCPA principles.

The Concept Framework includes:

- Green buffers that separate the new development from existing communities, create an attractive landscape setting for the new development, provide space for functions such as storm water management and create opportunities for formal and informal recreation
- A new link road from the A133 to a new junction on the A120
- An employment area close to the A120 to the east of the new link road
- Land for the expansion of the University's Knowledge Gateway to the north of Clingoe Hill
- Land for the expansion of the University Campus to the east of Brightlingsea Road south of the A133
- Two large new residential neighbourhoods north of the A133 separated by a broad green corridor connecting the Salary Brook to open countryside
- Smaller-scale, lower density areas of housing development close to Crockleford Heath
- Mixed use centres close to the A133 and the proposed expansion of the University and to each proposed new neighbourhood.

- Sites for up to four new primary schools and a new secondary school – education provision will be informed by number of houses to be delivered.
- A Rapid Transit public transport spine through the centre of the Garden Community connecting Park-and-Ride sites near the A120 and A133, employment areas, the mixed-use centres and the University with Colchester Town Centre and the wider North Essex area.
- A variety of accessible green spaces including a Country Park

Landscape and Open Space Framework

The green spaces in the landscape framework can accommodate the following functions:

- Some 40-60 % open space land dependent on approach to functional open space as part of the development together with open space retained in its current use to protect against coalescence;
- A central 'east-west' corridor between Greenstead, Salary Brook and new Country Park towards the rural eastern edge of the Suburb and on to Elmstead Market to the east
- Formal open space, sports pitches, recreation and play areas;
- Stormwater storage, drainage and watercourses;
- An opportunity for a new Country Park along the Salary Brook incorporating Churn Wood;
- Woodland, trees and hedgerows and areas of informal amenity and recreation;
- Productive landscapes such as allotments, orchards, agriculture;
- Active green space which could include income generating uses supported by some built elements that could be related to recreational activities;
- New and enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections;
- An informal resource for recreation and free play allowing direct intimate contact with the natural environment permeating residential areas;
- Expansion of Wivenhoe Park;
- Noise mitigation of the A120; and
- Development buffers between existing settlements.

Mobility and Access Framework

The mobility and access principles as presented by the framework include:

- integration of a mass rapid transit system as a principal route through TCBGC, providing a service connecting the employment areas in the north (co-located with Park-and-Ride provision) and the mixed-use centres. Outside the site it could connect Colchester Town and its stations with the University and Knowledge Gateway providing opportunities for rail-based services to deliver frequent and reliable journeys to rail stations, which, over time, could be expanded as part of a wider Rapid Transit network that extends across the urban area of Colchester;
- A new junction on the A120 will provide a highway link to the A133 and access to TCBGC. The link road would form a development edge.
- Junctions at either end of the new link road would allow traffic travelling into Colchester access to new Park-and-Ride facilities at the northern and southern ends of the link road;
- An opportunity to change the form and character of the A133 from Clingoe Hill, to better incorporate dedicated walking and cycling routes on both sides, with appropriate crossing points encouraging lower vehicle speeds and prioritising travel by sustainable transport modes.
- High quality public transport corridors to include enhanced bus connections beyond the development site; to the University, and to Colchester and its railway stations.
- Key Rapid Transit nodes complemented by a series of local transport interchanges supporting the integration of public transport with cycling / walking. This network would promote the principles of walkable community catchments, and serve key community facilities such as schools.
- Well-connected network of walking and cycling routes to include opportunities to enhance connections to ensure active travel is prioritised for shorter journeys
 - to the university campus via Wivenhoe Park
 - to Elmstead Market following Tye Lane
 - routes through to Hythe Quay via 'zig zag' bridge

Employment Framework

The employment principles as presented by the framework include:

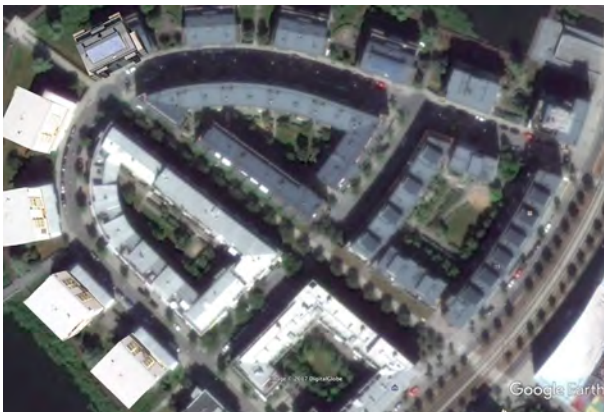
- A120 junction related employment which could generate general industrial, warehouse distribution opportunities, capitalising on proximity to a strategic transport corridor and the route to Harwich port and Stansted;
- opportunities for office, R&D and high skill employment uses, that might be associated with the Knowledge Gateway, supported by Park-and-Ride facilities, Rapid Transit services and proximity to A120, with links to Colchester Town Centre and the wider area; and
- employment opportunities within the mixed-use district centre and local centres, associated with provision of retail, community uses and schools.
- Expansion of the University

Density Strategy / Typologies

The density principles as presented by the framework include a mix of densities that will be informed by a masterplanning approach to development and will be accommodate detached family homes, terraced houses, apartment blocks and mix-used areas (such as apartments over shops) :

Higher Density (60-100 dph)

Higher densities support mixed use areas and offer significant design benefits, creating attractive urban places for convenience, shopping and leisure, incorporating space for businesses.



Hammarby Sjostad, Stockholm

- Providing areas that use more dense development to increase the catchment population within easy walking distance of mixed use centres and public transport routes, improves their viability.
- Higher density development could be achieved through a combination of two- three- and four-storey buildings with continuous frontages along a regular grid of streets. House types could include apartments and/or town houses with commercial uses on the ground floors and some buildings for employment uses.

It also helps to provide sufficient population to support development of a mass rapid transit network to secure sustainable transport alternatives to the private car;

Average Density (30-40 dph)

- Likely to be appropriate for core residential areas;
- Allows for a reasonably compact layout, mix of housing types and integration of green spaces.



Bishop's Walk, Ely

Lower Density (up to 30 dph)

lower density development might be appropriate to ensure sensitive integration of development within the landscape and the existing scattered development forms – such as around Crockleford Heath



Ravenswood Ipswich

Community Infrastructure

The community infrastructure principles as presented by the framework include a range of mixed use areas. These should respond to a clear hierarchy of centres:

- Higher Order Mixed Use Centre (District Centre) which could incorporate a number of complementary uses associated with the University, to include student/ visitor accommodation and opportunities for business start-up initiatives; complemented by MRT interchange and primary and secondary schools.
 - These core mixed use centres are best located where they are accessible to the greatest number of regular passers-by, generally the "centre of gravity" of the new community – the point passed most regularly by the greatest number of people using all modes of transport, private and public transport. NB - this is not always the centre of the development but is more likely to relate to the main point of access and connection for traffic and for public transport
 - a location close to the A133 would provide accessible and convenient, higher-level retail and related facilities and services including to other nearby villages without the need to travel further into Colchester, and provides an excellent context for co-location of complementary University activities.
- smaller local centres that to help cater for day-to-day needs close to each home and help reinforce the concept of self-contained neighbourhoods, located to maximise the proportion of residential properties within 400m or 5 minutes walk; served by public transport.

Q13 - Do you support the emerging Concept Framework for the site?

In preparing your response, you may like to consider:

- The proposed size of the new Garden Community
- Where to start and what to do first
- Delivery of the Garden Communities Charter Principles, and where it could do better
- Parts of the Concept Framework that work well and parts that could do better
- Particular aspects that ought to be changed

Q14 - Are there any other considerations relevant to the delivery of Garden Communities, in general or in relation to this site in particular, that have not been identified or discussed in this document?

SECTION 6.

Next steps

This document has provided information on the proposed Vision, Principles, Issues and a working option for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

We welcome your views on all those elements, and anything you feel should be added or emphasised. Please do complete the accompanying questionnaire.

Your responses will be reviewed and analysed and will help decide which spatial options are progressed, informing the content of the final Document, its supporting policies and shape the accompanying Plan for TCBGC.

Where your comments are considered to merit further consideration of issues or indeed require additional evidence to be gathered, we will progress this as part of the continued evolution of this document.

Many thanks for your contribution, this is an exciting long-term project and we are keen that you continue to engage with us as we prepare a shared Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing - Includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Air Quality Assessment - A detailed study of the effects of a development on air quality.

Allocation - The specific identification of an area of land for a particular use or to protect an area from unsuitable development.

Ancient Woodland - An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

Archaeological interest- There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places and of the people and cultures that made them.

Biodiversity - The wealth of wildlife or variety of life on earth. It includes all living organisms (plants and animals) and collections of species that form different natural habitats.

Bridleway - A bridle path or bridleway is a path, trail or a thoroughfare that is used by people riding on horses.

Broadband (Ultrafast)- Ultrafast is defined, depending on the supplier, as delivering between 300Mbps and 1,000Mbps. Achieving these speeds would require FTTP.

Car Clubs/ Car Sharing - Sharing cars for regular travelling, especially for commuting.

Climate Change - Climate Change is a large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns or average temperatures.

Community Assets- Community assets are land and buildings owned or managed by community organisations. These assets cover a wide spectrum and include town halls, community centres, sports facilities, affordable housing and libraries.

Community Facilities – The wide range of facilities and services required by any community. It includes education, health and community care, meeting halls, libraries, places of worship, burial grounds and emergency services.

Concept Feasibility Study- Conducted by Aecom in 2015 to investigate a range of scenarios covering the scope and scale of development that may be feasible, together with an evaluation of how development at scale could meet strategic objectives, deliverability and anticipated infrastructure requirements.

Conservation (for heritage policy) - The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Conservation Area - An area designated for special protection under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, for which it is considered desirable to preserve and/or enhance an historic interest and/or a special architectural character. Such areas have restrictions over works which can be done to buildings or trees.

Convenience Shops- Shops selling day-to-day goods which are purchased regularly such as food.

Countryside - The area outside defined development boundaries.

Custom build / Self Build - Custom build homes are where an individual or a group works with a developer to help deliver their own homes. Self-build is where an individual directly organises the design and construction of their own home

Cycleway - Either a mandatory or an advisory route along which bicycles may travel, either segregated from pedestrians or as shared users.

Development - 'Means the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land.' (Section 55, Town & Country Planning Act 1990)

District Centre - A centre which serves a wider area than a local centre.

District Heat Networks - a system for distributing heat generated in a centralised location for residential and commercial heating requirements such as space heating and water heating

DPD - Development Plan Document - The planning policy documents that make up the Local Plan and help to guide development within a local planning authority.

Driverless Vehicles – An autonomous vehicle that is designed to travel between destinations without a human operator.

Environment Agency – The public body responsible for the protection and enhancement of the environment in England.

Essex County Council – The public body which governs the county of Essex and has responsibilities covering transport, highways, education, adult social care, minerals, waste, surface water management and Public Health.

Educational Infrastructure - Pre-school education and childcare, primary and secondary schools and post-sixteen and adult life-long learning facilities.

Flood Protection - The measures taken to reduce or prevent the detrimental effects of flooding.

Flora and Fauna - Flora is plant life and fauna animals.

Formal Recreation - Recreational activities which use or require dedicated or purpose-built facilities, either in public or private ownership, for example, sports pitches, swimming pools, playing fields, tennis courts, bowling greens.

FTTP - Fibre to the Premises (broadband)

Garden City Principles (TCPA) – Principles developed to shape the sustainable development of new communities, using the opportunity and economies of scale to innovate and create high-quality places that put people at the heart of developing new settlements.

Garden Community – A community that is holistically and comprehensively developed with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context, and is of a sufficient scale to incorporate a range of homes, employment, green space and other uses to enable residents to meet the majority of their day to day needs, reducing the need for out commuting.

Garden Communities Charter – The key themes and placemaking principles that will inform the approach to the development of Garden Communities.

Grade II* and Grade II Listed Buildings – Particularly important buildings of more than special interest and buildings that are of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them.

Green Infrastructure - A strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces which may include parks and gardens, village greens, woodlands, cycling routes, allotments, churchyards and other environmental features.

Green Network- The linking together of natural, semi- natural and man-made open spaces to create an interconnected network that provides opportunities for physical activity, increases accessibility within settlements and to the surrounding countryside, whilst enhancing biodiversity and the quality of the external environment.

Greenspaces - an area of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetic purposes in an otherwise urban environment.

Heritage Asset - Heritage Assets include Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens.

Heritage Impact Assessment- The process of establishing the impact of a specific proposal on the significance of a place and identifying ways of mitigating any adverse impacts.

Historic Parks and Gardens - Sites included in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest compiled and maintained by English Heritage, that make a significant contribution to the diversity of the local and/or national landscape and/or which are of particular historical importance.

Housing Density - The number of dwellings proposed to be accommodated on a set unit of land. Urban areas tend to have higher densities than rural areas.

Important Hedgerow - A hedgerow meeting the criteria set out in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

Independent Living Schemes - a living arrangement that maximizes the independence of vulnerable people.

Informal Recreation - Recreational activities which do not make use of or require dedicated or purpose-built facilities, either in public or private ownership. Informal recreation land would include trails and walks.

Infrastructure - Infrastructure means any structure, building, system facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or well-being including.

Landscape Buffers - the on-site use of landscaping elements, screening devices, open space, drainageways and landforms for reduction of the potentially adverse impacts of adjoining, dissimilar land uses.

Local Centres - typically contain a small supermarket, shops, sub-post office etc. Other facilities could include takeaways and launderettes and community uses.

Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) – The body that could be responsible for delivering the new community. It will be locally accountable, with both public and private sector representation. The LDVs will be responsible for delivering development and infrastructure required for the new communities in accordance with the approved masterplan and also for meaningful participation of the existing and emerging communities in the process.

Local Development Schemes (LDS) - Public project plans that identify which local development documents will be produced, in what order and when.

Local Infrastructure – The infrastructure needed to-support large scale housing developments

Local Plan – The development plan for the future of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Mitigation - Action taken to reduce the severity of adverse impacts. Mitigation can include minimising impacts by limiting the degree of magnitude of an action, or rectifying impacts by restoring, rehabilitating, or repairing the affected environment or reducing or eliminating impacts over time.

'Mixed use' sites - Land developed to consist of a combination and integration of uses including residential, employment and community.

National Cycle Network – A series of traffic-free paths and quiet, on-road cycling and walking routes, that connect to every major town and city.

New Town Development Corporations (NTDCs) - (originally established under the New Towns Act 1946, now the New Towns Act 1981) are answerable through the Secretary of State to Parliament. They give a project a 'blue chip covenant' to the private sector, in the sense that explicit Cabinet-level commitment is taken to mean that it will not be allowed to fail.

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework - Government guidance on Planning Issues, Local Plans are expected to conform to the guidelines set down in it. Noise Preferential Routes (NPR's) - These direct aircraft where possible over less densely populated areas to reduce potential for disturbance by aircraft noise.

North Essex Garden Communities (NEGC) – a strategic partnership between Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council, Tendring Borough Council and Essex County Council to manage and co-ordinate the Councils' resources towards the delivery of Garden Communities.

Permeable Surface - Permeable surfaces consist of a variety of types of pavement, pavers and other devices that provide stormwater infiltration while serving as a structural surface.

Placemaking - Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

Public Rights of Way- A category of right of way created under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. A restricted byway allows a right of way on foot, on horseback, or leading a horse, cycling and for any vehicles other than mechanically propelled vehicles.

Rapid Transit – An urban public transport system providing regular and fast services on protected routes.

Settlement Boundary - The designated boundary surrounding a built-up area within which there is a presumption in favour of development subject to the detailed policies in the plan.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) - made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding £40 million and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding £34 million.

Smart Living - Incorporating the best of technology to support sustainable living.

Sociocultural- Combining social and cultural factors.

Starter Homes – Help to meet the housing needs of young first-time buyers, many of whom increasingly cannot afford to buy their own home, by allowing Starter Homes to be offered to them at below their open market value.

Stewardship – The direct involvement of residents and businesses in the long-term management of their communities.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) - These documents are supplementary to the Development Plan and are used to provide additional detail as deemed necessary. Surface Runoff – water, from rain, snowmelt, or other sources, that flows over the land surface, and is a major component of the water cycle.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)- Assessment required by European and national law into how the plan will impact on the District's environment in the long term and contribute towards sustainable development.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Assessment required by European and national law to ensure environmental consequences of Plans are identified and assessed during their preparation and before their adoption.

Sustainable Transport – A focus on walking, cycling and public transit systems.

Sustainable Development - Development that is in accord with economic, social and environmental objectives. Development that meets today's needs without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) - A sustainable drainage system is designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges.

Swale - A swale is a low tract of land, especially one that is moist or marshy. The term can refer to a natural landscape feature or a human-created one.

Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) – An independent charity that works to improve planning practice in the UK by making planning more responsive to people's needs and to promote sustainable development.

Transport Hub – A place where passengers exchange between vehicles or between transport modes, such as train stations, bus stops, airports and ferry slips.

Water Course - A brook, stream, or artificially constructed water channel.

Water Framework Directive - The Water Framework Directive is a European Union directive which commits European Union member states to achieve good qualitative and quantitative status of all water bodies.

APPENDIX

New Garden Communities in North Essex

"The following three new garden communities are proposed in North Essex.

Tendring/Colchester Borders, a new garden community will deliver 2,500 homes within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 7,000-9,000 homes to be delivered beyond 2033)

Colchester/Braintree Borders, a new garden community will deliver 2,500 within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 15,000 – 24,000 homes to be delivered beyond 2033)

West of Braintree in Braintree DC, a new garden community will deliver 2,500 homes within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 7,000- 10,000 homes to be delivered beyond 2033)

Each of these will be an holistically and comprehensively planned new community with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context and is of sufficient scale to incorporate a range of homes, employment, education & community facilities, green space and other uses to enable residents to meet the majority of their day-to-day needs, reducing the need for outward commuting. Delivery of each new community will be phased and underpinned by a comprehensive package of infrastructure.

The Councils will need to be confident, before any consent is granted, that the following requirements have been secured either in the form of appropriate public ownership, planning agreements and obligations and, if necessary a local infrastructure tariff.

The design, development and phased delivery of each new garden community will conform with the following principles:

- (i) Community and stakeholder empowerment in the design and delivery of each garden community from the outset and a long-term community engagement and activation strategy.*
- (ii) The public sector working pro-actively and collaboratively with the private sector to design, and bring forward these garden*

communities, deploying new models of delivery, sharing risk and reward and ensuring that the cost of achieving the following is borne by landowners and those promoting the developments: (a) securing a high-quality of place-making, (b) ensuring the timely delivery of both on-site and off-site infrastructure required to address the impact of these new communities, and (c) providing and funding a mechanism for future stewardship, management, maintenance and renewal of community infrastructure and assets. Given the scale of and time period for development of these new garden communities, the appropriate model of delivery will secure a comprehensive approach to the delivery of each new community in order to achieve the outcomes outlined above, avoid a piecemeal approach to development, provide the funding and phasing of both development and infrastructure, and be sustainable and accountable in the long term.

(iii) Promotion and execution of the highest quality of planning, design and management of the built and public realm so that the Garden Communities are characterised as distinctive places that capitalise on local assets and establish environments that promote health, happiness and well-being. This will involve developing a cascade of design guidance including concept frameworks, detailed masterplans and design codes and other guidance in place to inform and guide development proposals and planning applications. Planning applications and any local development orders or other consenting mechanisms for the garden communities will be expected to be consistent with approved design guidance.

(iv) Sequencing of development and infrastructure provision (both on-site and off-site) to ensure that the latter is provided ahead of or in tandem with the development it supports to address the impacts of the new garden communities, meet the needs of residents and establish sustainable travel patterns.

(v) Development that provides for a truly balanced and inclusive community and meets the housing needs of local people including a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and types including provision for self- and custom-built homes and provision for the aging population; to meet the requirements of those most in need including 30% affordable housing in each garden community.

(vi) Provide and promote opportunities for employment within each new community and within sustainable commuting distance of it.

(vii) Plan the new communities around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport systems for the North Essex area that put walking, cycling and rapid public transit networks and connections at the heart of growth in the area, encouraging and incentivising more sustainable active travel patterns.

(viii) Structure the new communities to create sociable, vibrant and walkable neighbourhoods with equality of access for all to a range of community services and facilities including health, education, retail, culture, community meeting spaces, multi-functional open space, sports and leisure facilities.

(ix) Develop specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land.

(x) Create distinctive environments which relate to the surrounding environment and that celebrate natural and historic environments and systems, utilise a multi-functional green-grid to create significant networks of new green infrastructure including new country parks at each garden community, provide a high degree of connectivity to existing corridors and networks and enhance biodiversity.

(xi) Secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters climate resilience and a 21st century environment in the design and construction of each garden community to secure net gains in local biodiversity, highest standards of energy efficiency and innovation in technology to reduce impact of climate change, water efficiency (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste and mineral management.

(xii) Ensure that the costs and benefits of developing a garden community are shared by all landowners, with appropriate measures being put in place to equalise the costs and land contributions.

(xiii) Consideration of potential on-site mineral resources through a Minerals Resource Assessment as required by the Minerals Planning Authority.

(xiv) Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden communities, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the developments and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.

These principles are elaborated upon in the North Essex Garden Community Charter.

Development Plan Documents will be developed for each of the garden communities to set out the principles of their design, development and phasing as well as a mechanism to appropriately distribute housing completions to the three Councils and this will be agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding”.

Draft Local Plan Policy SP8 - Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community

“The adopted policies map identifies the broad location for the development of a new garden community of which the details and final number of homes will be set out in a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document to be prepared jointly between Colchester BC and Tendring DC and which will incorporate around 2,500 dwellings within the Plan period (as part of an overall total of between 7,000-9,000 homes) and provision for Gypsy and Travellers.

The Strategic Growth DPD will set out the nature, form and boundary of the new community. The document will be produced in consultation with stakeholders and will include a concept plan showing the disposition and quantity of future land-uses, and give a three dimensional indication of the urban design and landscape parameters which will be incorporated into any future planning applications; together with a phasing and implementation strategy which sets out how the rate of development will be linked to the provision of the necessary social, physical and environmental infrastructure to ensure that the respective phases of the development do not come forward until the necessary infrastructure has been secured. The DPD will provide the framework for the subsequent development of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community.

The DPD and any planning application will address the following principles and requirements in the design, development and delivery of the new garden community:

A Place-making and design quality

1. The development of a new garden community to high standards of design and layout drawing on its context and the considerable assets within its boundaries such as woodland, streams and changes in topography, as well as the opportunities afforded by the proximity of the University of Essex campus to create a new garden community that is innovative, contemporary and technologically enabled, set within a strong green framework with

new neighbourhood centres at its heart. It will be designed and developed to have its own identity and be as self-sustaining as possible recognising its location close to the edge of Colchester. It will secure appropriate integration with Colchester and the nearby University of Essex campus by the provision of suitable walking and cycling links and rapid public transport systems and connections to enable residents of the new community to have convenient access to town centre services and facilities in Colchester as well as Elmstead Market. Clear separation will be maintained between the new garden community and the nearby villages of Elmstead Market and Wivenhoe. Safeguarding the important green edge to Colchester will be essential with a new country park provided along the Salary Brook corridor and incorporating Churn Wood.

2. Detailed masterplans and design guidance will be put in place to inform and guide development proposals and planning applications. Planning applications for this garden community will be expected to be consistent with approved DPDs and subsequent masterplans and design and planning guidance.

B. Housing

3. A mix of housing types and tenures including self- and custom-build and starter homes will be provided on the site, including a minimum of 30% affordable housing. The affordable housing will be phased through the development;

4. New residential development will seek to achieve appropriate densities which reflect both context, place-making aspirations and opportunities for increased levels of development around neighbourhood centres and transport hubs.

C. Employment and Jobs

5. Provision for a wide range of job, skills and training opportunities will be created in the garden community. This may include B1 and/or non B class employment generating uses towards the south of the site in proximity to the existing University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway and provision for B1, B2 and B8 businesses to the north of the site close to the A120;

6. High speed and reliable broadband will be provided and homes will include specific spaces to enable working from home.

D. Transportation

7. A package of measures will be introduced to encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new community and maximise the opportunities for sustainable travel including the provision of a network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways to enhance permeability within the site and to access and to access the adjoining areas; development of a public rapid transit system connecting the garden community to Essex University and Colchester town centre; park and ride facilities and other effective integrated measures to mitigate the transport impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road network. Longer term transport interventions will need to be carefully designed to minimise the impacts on the strategic and local road network and fully mitigate any environmental or traffic impacts arising from the development. These shall include bus (or other public transit provisions) priority measures between the site, University of Essex, Hythe station and Colchester Town Centre;

8. Foot and cycle ways shall be provided throughout the development and connecting with the surrounding urban areas and countryside, including seamlessly linking key development areas to the University of Essex, Hythe station and Colchester Town Centre;

9. Primary vehicular access to the site will be provided off the A120 and A133;

10. Other specific transport-related infrastructure requirements identified through the Strategic Growth Development Plan Document and masterplans for this garden community will be delivered in a phased manner.

E. Community Infrastructure

11. District and neighbourhood centres of an appropriate scale will be provided to serve the proposed development. The centres will be located where they will be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transit to the majority of residents in the garden community;

12. Community meeting places will be provided within the local centres;

13. Primary healthcare facilities will be provided to serve the new development;

14. A secondary school, primary schools and early-years facilities will be provided to serve the new development;

15. A network of multi-functional green infrastructure will be provided within the garden community incorporating key elements of the existing green assets within the site. It will include community parks, allotments, a new country park provided along the Salary Brook corridor and incorporating Churn Wood, the provision of sports areas with associated facilities; and play facilities;

16. Indoor leisure and sports facilities will be provided with the new community, or contributions made to the improvement of off-site leisure facilities to serve the new development.

F Other Requirements

17. Provision of improvements to waste water treatment including an upgrade to the Colchester Waste Water Treatment Plant and off-site drainage improvements;

18. Provision, management and on-going maintenance of sustainable surface water drainage measures to manage and mitigate the risk of flooding on site and which will reduce the risk of flooding to areas downstream or upstream of the development;

19. Landscape buffers between the site and existing development in Colchester, Wivenhoe and Elmstead Market;

20. Protection and/or enhancement of heritage and biodiversity assets within and surrounding the site;

21. Provision of appropriate buffers along strategic road and rail infrastructure to protect new development;

22. Provision of appropriate design and infrastructure that incorporates the highest standards of innovation in energy efficiency and technology to reduce impact of climate change, water efficiency (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste / recycling management facilities;

23. Measures to support the development of the new community including provision of community development support workers (or other provision) for a minimum of ten years from initial occupation of the first homes and appropriate community governance structures;

24. Establishment at an early stage in the development of the garden community, of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities; such arrangements to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long term development, stewardship and management of their community.

APPENDIX A: DRAFT LOCAL PLAN POLICY SP8

The Draft Policy for the creation of new Garden Community at the Tendring Colchester Borders (Draft Local Plan Policy SP8) contains a significant number of criteria by which development proposals can be assessed.

The principles that were set in the Garden Communities Charter address these criteria, some are relevant to more than one criterion. The connections between policy criteria and the Charter Principles are shown.

Draft Policy SP8 Criteria	Charter Principle
<i>A1 - High standard of design and layout</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure Principle 4 - Living Environment Principle 6 - Good Design
<i>A2 - Detailed master plan and design guidance</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure Principle 6 - Good Design
<i>B3 - Housing mix and tenure B4 - Housing density</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>B4 - Residential development at appropriate densities</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment Principle 6 - Good Design
<i>C5 - B1 and non-B class uses near University close to A120</i>	Principle 3 - Employment Opportunity
<i>C6 - Provision of high speed broadband</i>	Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living
<i>D7 - Smarter transport choices - footpaths, cycleways, rapid transit system, minimum impact on the strategic road system</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D8 - Foot and cycle ways</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D9 - main vehicular access from A120 and A133</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D10 - Improvements to local road infrastructure</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>D11 - Other transport infrastructure necessary</i>	Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport
<i>E12 - District/Neighbourhood centres</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E13 - Primary Healthcare facilities</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E14 - Schools</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E15 - A network of green infrastructure</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>E16 - Indoor leisure</i>	Principle 4 - Living Environment
<i>E17 - Improvements to waste water treatment</i>	Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living
<i>F18 - Surface water drainage</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F19 - Landscape Buffers</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F20 - protection of heritage and biodiversity</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F21 - Buffers to major roads and railways</i>	Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure
<i>F22 - Design and infrastructure with the highest standards of innovation in technology.</i>	Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living
<i>F23 - Development of a new community including community workers</i>	Principle 7 - Community Engagement
<i>F24 - Appropriate long-term governance and stewardship</i>	Principle 8 - Active Local Stewardship Principle 9 - Strong Corporate and Political Leadership

APPENDIX B

Evidence Documents

Concept Framework Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (2017) DLA

David Lock Associates (DLA) was commissioned to prepare a Concept Framework Plan to explore the development potential of land at TCBGC through the preparation of conceptual spatial development options. The DLA-led consultant team has engaged with the option-holder for the land and wider stakeholders at a series of meetings and workshops that informed production of a Concept Framework for the site. This work is used to “test” development options through this Issues and Options Stage (see section 5), informing the preparation of the Plan Document for TCBGC alongside other evidence and constraints information.

Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study (June 2016) by AECOM

In preliminary work, the North Essex Authorities identified four broad search areas for new Garden Communities and commissioned AECOM to undertake a ‘Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study’ (June 2016) to explore the potential of these four locations to support a new garden community.

This Concept Feasibility Study work informed the Councils’ selection of the TCBGC as one of three sites for Garden Communities to be taken forward through consultation on the Preferred Options Local Plans (2016).

North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies (2017) SQW and Cambridge Econometrics.

SQW and Cambridge Econometrics were jointly commissioned to determine the likely demographic profile of each Garden Community to inform planning for future service provision, and to develop scenarios for future employment growth and job creation targets.

North Essex Local Plans (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment (2017) Hyas Associates Limited

Hyas was commissioned to test the viability of policies set out in the joint Strategic Section 1 of the Local Plans, focusing on the viability of the three proposed new Garden Communities. The report acknowledges that the Garden Communities are at an early stage in their evolution and, as such, it presents a high-level, strategic assessment. Costs and values are likely to change over time so the viability of the sites will need to be actively monitored in parallel with the evolution of development and design proposals.

NEGC Movement and Access Study (2017) Jacobs and Ringway Jacobs

Jacobs and Ringway Jacobs prepared a report which explored opportunities for the Garden Communities to internalise their journeys as well as opportunities to maximise their integration and connectivity with the rest of North Essex via high quality public transport. The report includes a review of the existing transport network as well as emerging issues as reported in the current Local Plan work. It also provides some initial high-level findings and recommendations, based on previous work carried out by AECOM and DLA, that can help shape more detailed transport strategies and infrastructure requirements for each of the Garden Communities.



A Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community: Issues & Options Report (Regulation 18)

**Draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA):
Scoping & Environmental Report – November 2017**



Essex County Council



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Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Appropriate Assessment
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BDC	Braintree District Council
CA	Conservation Area
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
ECC	Essex County Council
EU	European Union
GC	Garden Community
GCP	Garden City Principle
Ha	Hectare
HE	Historic England
HMA	Housing Market Area
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
I&O	Issues and Options
LB	Listed Building
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MSA	Minerals Safeguarding Area
NE	Natural England
NEGC	North Essex Garden Communities
NHS	National Health Service
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OAN	Objectively Assessed Need
PDL	Previously Developed Land
PO	Preferred Options
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RAMS	Recreational Avoidance Mitigation Strategies



SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SM	Scheduled Monument
SO	Sustainability Objective
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Specific Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
TCBGC	Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Association
UDC	Uttlesford District Council
UK	United Kingdom
WPA	Waste Planning Authority

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council commissioned Place Services of Essex County Council to undertake an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders Issues and Options Report.

Place Services are acting as consultants for this work; therefore the content of this SA should not be interpreted or otherwise represented as the formal view of Essex County Council.

1.2 A Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders

The main purpose of the Plan is to set out a shared Vision for the new community at Tendring Colchester Borders and a strategy for its delivery. It intends to set out a strategy that includes both the requirement for 2,500 homes and related infrastructure to be delivered within the Plan period, with the majority of the development to be delivered over a longer-term beyond 2033.

It will also set out a range of development objectives that will help deliver this Vision, and more detailed policies that will guide land-use proposals and secure timely delivery of development and infrastructure in the short, medium and long term, in accordance with relevant Local Plan policies.

The Plan will need to have flexibility in the way that development might be delivered taking into account the long-term nature of a development of this scale, but must also be true to the development and design ambitions that are agreed for the new community.

The first stage in the plan-making process has been the preparation of an Issues and Options (Regulation 18) stage Plan. It intends to provide information to stakeholders and local communities, and invites comments and views on initial issues and options for the development of a Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders (TCBGC). The Plan represents the first stage of the production of a formal document to provide a framework for development which will guide the master planning stages that will follow.

This SA represents the appraisal of the Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders at the first Issues and Options stage and accompanies the consultation of the Plan.

1.3 The Principle of the Garden Community in emerging Local Plans

Local Plans are the main vehicle for conveying an area's growth requirements and how these will be accommodated. Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council agreed to come together through a shared desire to promote a sustainable growth strategy for the longer term. Each Local Planning Authority (LPA) in their production of Local Plans for their administrative areas, intend to adopt a strategic 'Section One' that addresses and articulates strategic priorities over the area of the three authorities. Central to this is the effective delivery of planned strategic growth, particularly housing and employment development, with the necessary supporting infrastructure.

The Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is being jointly prepared by David Lock Associates on behalf of Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council because the Garden Community area covers land in each authority's administrative boundary. This joint working has been brought about as a result of the Councils' inclusion of the principle of development of a new Garden Community in their emerging Local Plans.

It should be noted that development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is identified in the joint Strategic Section One of the Tendring District, Colchester Borough and Braintree District Councils' Draft Local Plans. The principle of and need for allocating Garden Communities within the North Essex area is established within the strategic Section One for the aforementioned Local Planning Authorities' Local Plans. This is in consideration of a number of reasonable alternative approaches to delivering growth and meeting housing needs in both areas.

Within Section One, draft Local Plan Policy SP8 specifically refers to development of a Garden Community at the Tendring Colchester Borders and sets out the requirement for the preparation of a Strategic Growth Development Plan Document (DPD) that will provide a framework for the subsequent preparation of more detailed masterplans and other design and planning guidance for the site.

2. Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 The Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal

The requirement for Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) emanates from a high level national and international commitment to sustainable development. The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is that drawn up by the World Trade Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 which states that sustainable development is:

‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’

This definition is consistent with the themes of the NPPF, which draws upon The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future’s five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

SEA originates from the European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment” (the ‘SEA Directive’) which came into force in 2001. It seeks to increase the level of protection for the environment; integrate environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes; and promote sustainable development.

The Directive was transposed into English legislation in 2004 by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (the ‘SEA Regulation’) which requires an SEA to be carried out for plans or programmes,

‘subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions’.

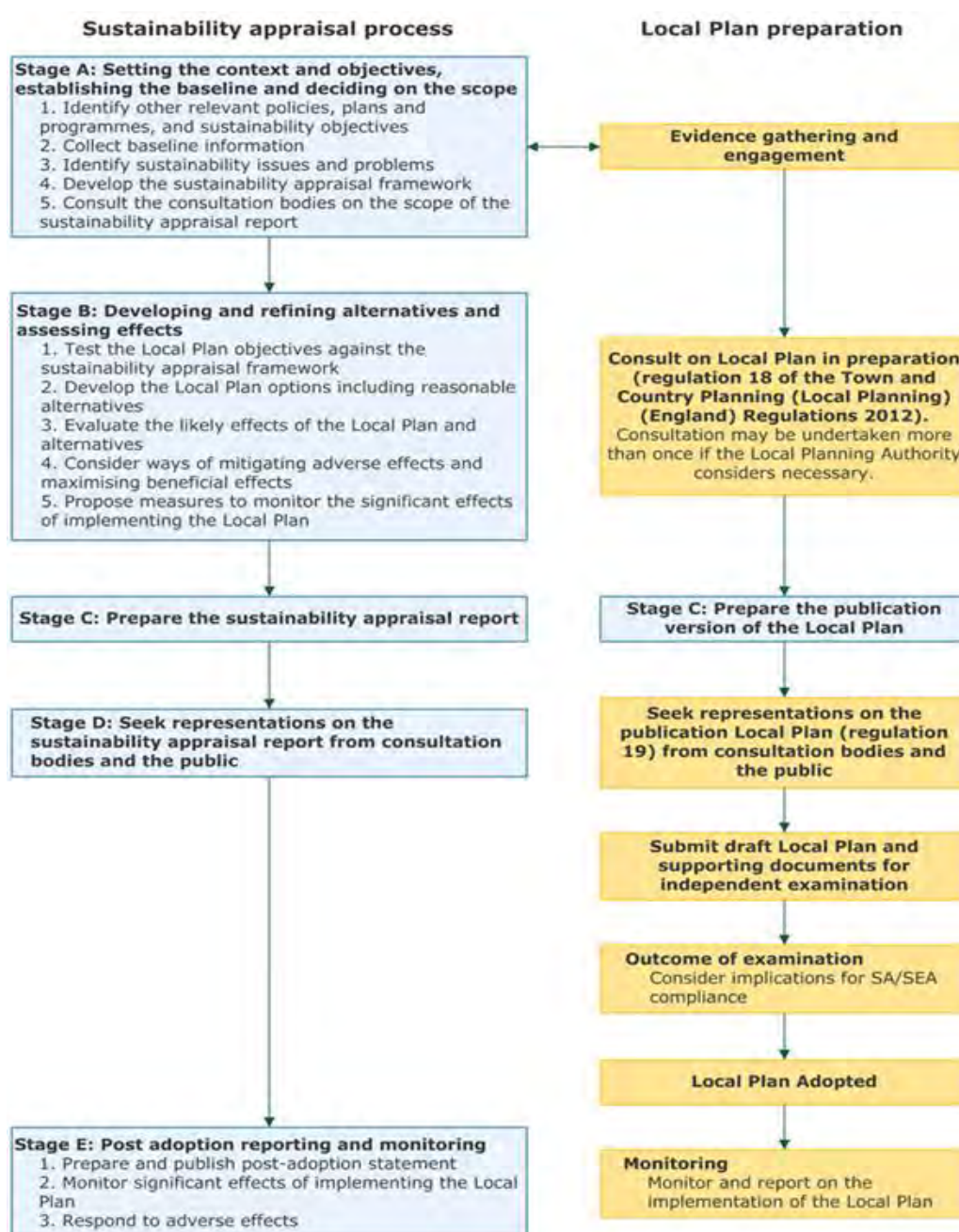
This includes Development Plan Documents. The aim of the SEA is to identify potentially significant environmental effects created as a result of the implementation of the plan or programme on issues such as *‘biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors’* as specified in Annex 1(f) of the Directive. SA examines the effects of proposed plans and programmes in a wider context, taking into account economic, social and environmental considerations in order to promote sustainable development. It is mandatory for Local Plans to undergo a Sustainability Appraisal in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Planning Act 2008, and in accordance with paragraph 165 of the NPPF.

Whilst the requirements to produce a SA and SEA are distinct, Government guidance considers that it is possible to satisfy the two requirements through a single approach providing that the requirements of the SEA Directive are met. This integrated appraisal process will hereafter be referred to as SA.

2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Process

The SA of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD follows that of the Sustainability Appraisal process as iterated in National Planning Practice Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal requirements for local plans. The following 5 sequential stages are documented below.

Figure 1: Stages in the Sustainability Appraisal Process and Local Plan / DPD Preparation



Source: Planning Practice Guidance – Sustainability appraisal requirements for local plans (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 11-013-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014)

2.3 The Aim and Structure of this Report

This report responds to Stages A and B in the SA process above. It is the intention of the Plan to follow the process of a second Regulation 18 consultation on the Plan's 'Preferred Options' in summer 2018 and with this in mind, elements of Stage B above will be completed through the accompanying SA at that stage.

The production of a Sustainability Appraisal (Environmental) Report is a statutory requirement at the Regulation 18 stage, and this SA Report has been produced to accompany the Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders.

This report is accompanied by two Annexes. These are:

- Annex A – Plans and Programmes
- Annex B – Baseline Information

Following the finalisation of this Report, the SA requires consultation. There are three statutory consultees or 'environmental authorities' that are required to be consulted for all Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment documents. These are:

- The Environment Agency;
- Natural England; and
- Historic England.

In addition to these, consultation will seek to engage the wider community in order to encompass comprehensive public engagement. The relevant authorities may additionally wish to invite comments from focussed groups, relevant stakeholders and interested parties. The detailed arrangements for consultation are to be determined by Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council.

The environmental authorities and public are to be given 'an early and effective opportunity' within appropriate time-frames to express their opinion. This includes the specific notification of the consultation documents and timeframes to those persons or bodies on the 'consultation databases' of the LPAs. This reflects those persons or bodies who have commented on previous planning documents through consultation.

This SA has been produced suitably in advance of the start of the formal consultation period, to accompany and influence decision making within the Plan process iteratively. Notably this SA has been produced to be available to inform the relevant LPAs' Local Plan Committee meetings.

3. Setting the Scope of the SA: Sustainability Context, Baseline and Objectives

3.1 Introduction

The SA of the Section One for Local Plans set the scope for the appraisal of options and Plan content relevant to that strategic area. Although still a strategic undertaking, this SA needs to develop a framework for appraising the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community options that is more specifically relevant to the area in question.

That established, the Section One SA forms a good starting point for identifying any sustainability issues relevant to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, both in the scope of that SA (identified in an initial Scoping Report) and the appraisal of the Garden Community itself. In addition, Policy SP8 of Section One identifies policy criteria relevant to the Garden Community and these also assist in the identification of sustainability issues. Further, the North Essex Garden Community Charter identifies a set of more general overarching principles, which can aid the identification of sustainability objectives.

The following sub-sections outline the relevant plans and programmes and the baseline information profile for the Tendring Colchester Borders area, building on the Section One SA.

3.2 Plans and Programmes (Stage A1)

DPDs must have regard to existing policies, plans and programmes at national and regional levels and strengthen and support other local plans and strategies. It is therefore important to identify and review those policies, plans and programmes and Sustainability Objectives which are likely to influence the DPD at an early stage. The content of these plans and programmes can also assist in the identification of any conflicting content of plans and programmes in accumulation with the DPD. Local supporting documents have also been included within this list as they will significantly shape policies and decisions in the three authority areas.

It is recognised that no list of plans or programmes can be definitive and as a result this report describes only the key documents which influence the Plan.

Table 1 outlines the key documents, whilst a comprehensive description of these documents together with their relevance to the Plan is provided within Annex A.

Table 1: Key Documents

International Plans and Programmes
European Commission (EC) (2011) A Resource-Efficient Europe – Flagship Initiative Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions.
European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2002)
European Union Water Framework Directive 2000
European Union Nitrates Directive 1991
European Union Noise Directive 2002
European Union Floods Directive 2007
European Union Air Quality Directive 2008 (2008/50/EC) and previous directives (96/62/EC; 99/30/EC; 2000/69/EC & 2002/3/EC)
European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 2009
European Union Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 1992
European Community Biodiversity Strategy to 2020
United Nations Kyoto Protocol
World Commission on Environment and Development 'Our Common Future' 1987
The World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg Summit 2002
Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010
Review of the European Sustainable Development Strategy (2009)
Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice (2003)
SEA Directive 2001
The Industrial Emissions Directive 2010

Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2010 on the energy performance of buildings 2010/31/EU
The Drinking Water Directive 1998
The Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive 1994
EU Seventh Environmental Action Plan (2002-2012)
European Spatial Development Perspective (1999)
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992)
Aarhus Convention (1998)
National Plans and Programmes
National Planning Practice Guidance (2016)
The Localism Act 2011
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
The Housing White Paper (February 2017)
The Future of Transport White Paper 2004
Housing Act (2004)
Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement (July 2007)
Community Infrastructure Levy Guidance (April 2013)
Underground, Under Threat - Groundwater protection: policy and practice (GP3)
Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination – Contaminated Land Report 11 (September 2004)
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
The Education (School Information) (England) (Amendments) Regulations, 2002

Childcare Act, 2006
Flood & Water Management Act 2009
The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007)
Safeguarding Our Soils: A Strategy for England (2009)
Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011)
The National Adaptation Programme – Making the Country Resilient to a Changing Climate (2013)
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012)
National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)
Adapting to Climate Change: Ensuring Progress in Key Sectors (2013)
DECC National Energy Policy Statement EN1 (2011)
DCLG: An Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning (2012)
JNCC/Defra UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2012)
Mainstreaming Sustainable Development (2011)
UK Marine Policy Statement, HM Government (2011)
Electricity Market Reform White Paper 2011
DfT (2013) Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration
DCLG (2011) Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England
DEFRA (2011) Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
DECC (2011) UK Renewable Energy Roadmap (updates setting out progress and changes to the strategy dated 2013 and 2013)
Community Energy Strategy (DECC, 2014)
The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (Environment Agency, 2011)
Waste prevention programme for England: Prevention is better than cure – The role of waste prevention in

moving to a more resource efficient economy (HM Government, 2013)

Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2008)

Water for People and the Environment: Water Resources Strategy for England and Wales (Environment Agency, 2009)

Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2009)

Sub-national Plans and Programmes

Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment – on behalf of EPOA (July 2014)

Looking Back, Moving Forward – Assessing the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex (2006)

Greater Essex Demographic Forecasts Phase 7 (2015)

Essex Transport Strategy: the Local Transport Plan for Essex (2011)

2011 Essex Biodiversity Action Plan

Commissioning School Places in Essex 2016-2021

Essex County Council Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007-2032

Anglian River Basin Management Plan (2015)

Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape plans

Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Statements

Respecting our Past, Embracing our Future: A Strategy for Rural Essex (2016)

ECC Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (September 2009)

The Essex Local Area Agreement – 'Health and Opportunity for the People of Essex' 2008 – 2011 (2010 Refresh)

ECC Development Management Policies (February 2011)

The Essex Strategy 2008 – 2018

Sustainable Drainage Systems Design and Adoption Guide 2012

Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
Essex and Southend-On-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)
Haven Gateway: Programme of Development: A framework for Growth, 2008 – 2017 (2007)
Haven Gateway: Integrated Development Plan (2008)
South East LEP Investment and Funding (March/April 2014)
Anglian Water Business Plan (2015-2020) (2012)
Draft Water Resource Management Plan (2014-2039) (2014)
Combined Essex Catchment Abstraction Management Plan (2013)
Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study: Stage 1 and 2 Reports (2008)
South East LEP Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan (2004)
ECC Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (Revised Edition 2016)
Vision for Essex 2013-2017: Where Innovation Brings Prosperity (2013)
Corporate Outcomes Framework 2014-2018 Essex County Council (2014)
Colchester Draft Surface Water Management Plan (2014)
A12/A120 Route Based Strategy (2013)
Highway Authority's Development Management Policies (2011)
Economic Plan for Essex (2014)
Essex Design Guide (2005)
North Essex Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009)
Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (second phase) (2011)
Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan 2010 – 2015
Local Plans and Programmes

Braintree District Council, Chelmsford City Council, Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council, Objectively Assessed Housing Need Study - Peter Brett Associates (July 2015 and updated 2016)
North Essex Concept Feasibility Study (AECOM) - July 2016
HRA Report for North Essex Authorities Strategic Section 1 for Local Plans (LUC) (including Appropriate Assessment) – May 2017
North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies (2017) SQW and Cambridge Econometrics.
North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study – March 2017
Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006)
Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study (2016)
Technical Groups and Workshops (2016-2017)
North Essex Local Plans (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment (2017)
Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies – February 2017
North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study – March 2017
Colchester Infrastructure Delivery Plan Report - March 2017
Retail and Town Centre Uses Study Colchester Borough Council: Retail Update 2013 (2013)
Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, September 2006)
CBC Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014)
Creative Colchester Strategy & Action Plan (2012)
Safer Colchester Partnership: Strategic Assessment of Crime and Annual Partnership Plan 2012-2013 (2012)
CBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)
CBC Local Air Quality Management Progress Report (2013)
2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) - July 2016

Colchester Borough Council Landscape Strategy (2013)
Colchester Cycling Strategy SPD (2012)
Colchester Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)
Tendring economic development strategy (2013)
Tendring Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013)
TDC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2009)
Tendring Open Space Strategy (October 2009)
Tendring District Historic Characterisation Project, Essex County Council, 2008
Concept Framework Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (2017) DLA

3.3 Baseline Information (Stage A2)

Annex B details the complete Baseline Information profile for the area relevant to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and surrounds.

The following section outlines a summary of the key baseline information relevant to the Garden Community area and therefore the current state of the environment in the area.

3.3.1 Economy

- The area covered by this strategic planning approach comprises a large part of the Haven Gateway, an established partnership area which is identified in a range of existing strategy and investment documents. The Haven Gateway includes the Essex administrative areas of Braintree, Colchester, Maldon and Tendring Councils and extends northwards into parts of Suffolk.
- Braintree and Colchester are the major centres of employment within the broad area. While there are high levels of commuting to London, many residents work and live within the area with significant commuting across borough and district boundaries, reflecting a functional economic geography.
- The area has a mixed economy focused on the service sector, including wholesale and retail, business services, tourism, health and education, alongside manufacturing, logistics and construction. Due to the extensive rural area outside urban settlements, agriculture and its related industries play an important part in the overall economy.
- Tendring District includes Harwich International Port which has developed into a highly efficient, multi-purpose freight and passenger port handling bulk and container ships as well as roll-on,

roll-off ferries and cruise ships. Harwich is one of the major UK ports for ferry and cruise tourism. Harwich is also one of the leading UK freight ports for bulk and container ships.

- The sector employing the most people in Tendring, according to an Economic Development Strategy (2013), was Health which accounted for approximately 17% of jobs, followed by Retail and Education. The Cultural, Visitor and Tourism sector encompasses a range of activities which play an important role in the District's economy. This sector is worth more than £353 million per annum to the economy and is estimated to provide 7,900 jobs across Tendring District. The majority of jobs and businesses in this sector are located in and around Clacton.
- Model based unemployment figures for Tendring District during the period January 2015 – December 2015 show that the unemployment rate was 5.3% which is higher than that for the East of England.
- Colchester has maintained good levels of employment growth over the last two decades with declining industrial employment being offset by a growth in office jobs.
- Colchester registered 92,300 workforce jobs in 2014 representing an increase of 20% over 1991 levels. This increase was higher than in the UK (14.6%) and similar to the East of England (19.6%), but was lower than employment growth recorded across Essex as a whole (27.9%) over the same period.
- The town centre of Colchester serves as a centre not only for the Borough but for a much wider area of North East Essex, with residents of Braintree, Maldon and Tendring districts travelling into the town to work, shop and use its community facilities. The town centre is within easy access of the Garden Community.
- Compared to sub-national and national figures, Tendring district has experienced a lower start up rate and a lower de-registration rate of businesses indicating a slightly less robust local economy. Braintree and Colchester are more in line with the county and national business registration and de-registration rates.
- A North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies (SQW / Cambridge Econometrics 2017) undertaken for the emerging Colchester and Tendring local Plans states that the Garden Community is 'likely to be associated with significant jobs growth... The presumption is that jobs linked to exogenous growth processes will be physically on site (and appropriate provision will need to be made for them). Those linked to homeworking will be physically associated with the homes of residents and therefore also on site; in relation to these jobs, the design of housing will be crucially important. Those related to the consumption of local services may or may not be on site, but all will be reasonably "local"; provision in relation to this component will need to be planned so as to complement, rather than displace, existing local service provision. In terms of the Garden City principle aspiration of 'one job per house', all three NEGCs appear to be "within range". Broadly, Tendring / Colchester Borders does best – which is plausible, given its proximity to a growing and ambitious university.'

3.3.2 Heath

- Participation in sport has seen a reduction in Tendring and Colchester since 2012-13. In addition, obesity in Tendring is more prevalent than the region and the nation. Colchester has lower percentages of both adults and children aged 4-5 classified as obese.
- Life expectancy of residents within Tendring District is lower than the regional and national averages with men living for an average of 78.7 years and women on average living 82.0 years. Colchester has a higher life expectancies for men and women than the national figures, but are both below the regional figures. In general, life expectancy is increasing nationwide.
- The site is in a broad area where there is little access to natural accessible greenspace (ANGSt). There is limited official public access beyond the footpath network.
- There are no existing GP surgeries within the Garden Community area, although there are 6 located within approximately 3 miles from the centre of the site in Elmstead Market, Parsons Heath, Colchester, Wivenhoe and Ardleigh.

3.3.3 Housing

- As life expectancy increases, the age structure is expected to change, with a marked increase in the number and proportion of the population who will be aged 65 and over. The number of one-person households is also expected to increase.
- Colchester delivered 12,644 new homes between 2001/02 and 2014/15 at an average rate of 903 dwellings per year. Given the continuing pressures on the South East housing market, Colchester will need to maintain its good rate of delivery over the next plan period to meet Objectively Assessed Needs, while also ensuring that increasing quantity is matched with high design quality and sustainable construction.
- In 2014/15, 3.8% of the net dwelling completions, which accounts for 10 dwellings, were affordable within Tendring, as opposed to 40.0% in Colchester. This data indicates that affordable housing is an issue, particularly in Tendring and to a lesser extent, in Colchester.
- The average property price in September 2012 in Tendring District was £180,408; this is noticeably lower than average prices in England and Essex. This is significantly lower than the county and national averages.
- Meeting the housing needs in the Districts and Borough is an important issue. The updated SHMA for Braintree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Tendring Councils indicates that the majority of market housing and affordable housing should be 2 and 3 bedroom properties. This trend is replicated when assessing all housing, with 70.3% of housing need across the Districts and Boroughs is 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings.
- Tendring has seen no increase in Gypsy and Traveller provisions since January 2014. Caravan counts in Braintree have increased since January 2014, but with fluctuations in measuring periods between 2014 and 2016 due to not tolerated sites being removed from the statistics, presumably due to eviction or inclusion in the statistics for tolerated sites. A similar trend is apparent in Colchester, with an overall increase in sites for Gypsy and Traveller populations.

3.3.4 Biodiversity

- Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention which have a high degree of protection. They often incorporate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas for Conservation (SACs). In the Plan Area there are a number of Ramsar sites which include Hamford Water, and parts of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries which include coastal areas, estuaries, rivers and lakes/reservoirs. These Ramsar sites are also SPAs.
- SACs are sites of international importance designated under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive). There is 1 SAC in the area: a large coastal area known as Essex Estuaries stretching from Shoeburyness to Jaywick Sands.
- Tendring District has a rich geodiversity which is varied and largely irreplaceable. There are 10 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the District, notified specifically for their geological value. The District is also home to the Stour, Orwell and Colne Estuaries and Hamford Water, SPA and Ramsar sites, designated for the conservation and protection of the habitats of migratory and endangered birds, scarce plants and invertebrates and for the conservation of wetlands and are sites of national and international importance.
- Colchester has a similarly rich biodiversity, including 8 SSSIs, the Colne Estuary SPA, the Blackwater Estuary and Abberton Reservoir SPA.
- There are a number of National Nature Reserves located in the wider area: Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary, Dengie and Hamford Water.
- All 15 SSSIs in Tendring and all 8 sites in Colchester are meeting the target of at least 95% of the SSSI area being brought into favourable condition. Colne Estuary in Tendring and Colchester, Stour Estuary in Tendring and Blackwater Estuary in Colchester are the only SSSIs and not meeting the PSA target for 100% of their area, however the area not in a favourable or favourable recovering condition is small.
- In addition to designated sites, consideration should also be given to non-designated value in regards to ecology on a site-by-site basis in order to protect and enhance species and habitats, including those that are protected. This could include Greenfield sites and areas of habitat considered to enrich appreciably the habitat resource within the context of local areas, such as species-rich hedgerows, municipal parklands or individual veteran trees.
- The HRA of the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring indicates that the site is within the Essex Estuaries SAC and Colne Estuary SPA / Ramsar zones of influence, and further suggests that there could be recreational pressure on the SAC resulting from the scale of development in this area and visitors to the estuary.
- The AA concludes that mitigation is possible regarding the loss of off-site habitats. It states that, 'wintering bird surveys will be required for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community as part of any project level development proposals and masterplanning, to determine the sites individual importance for golden plover and lapwing and inform mitigation proposals. A commitment to mitigation and phasing of Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is required within the Section 1 Strategic Plan dependent on the findings of bird surveys. In the unlikely but possible event that cumulative numbers of SPA birds affected are likely to exceed thresholds of significance (i.e. >1% of the associated European Site), appropriate mitigation in

the form of habitat creation and management in perpetuity, either on-site or through provision of strategic sites for these species elsewhere, will be required. If required, mitigation will need to create and manage suitably located habitat which maximises feeding productivity for these SPA species, and such mitigatory habitat would need to be provided and fully functional prior to development which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.'

- The site area contains a SSSI (Bullock Wood) which is likely to require sensitive consideration in regard to preservation and enhancement.
- The Local Nature Reserves of Salary Brook and Welsh Wood are in close proximity to / within the site.

3.3.5 Landscapes

- In Colchester and the north west of Tendring District is the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covering an area of 90 sq. km, designated for conservation due to its significant landscape value. Made famous by the paintings of Constable and Gainsborough, its traditional grasslands, wildflower meadows and hedgerows provide an opportunity for both residents and visitors to enjoy the peace and beauty of what are among some of England's most precious and vulnerable landscapes. In addition, there are discussions currently underway regarding the possibility of expanding the Dedham Vale AONB westward into the northern part of Braintree District. Proposed by the Stour Valley Partnership, the proposals are supported by Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Colchester Borough Council.
- Natural England's National Character Area Profile: Northern Thames Basin, in which this area lies, indicates that the rural urban fringe should be conserved and enhanced through the spatial planning process and through good design in development.
- There are existing natural landscape and ecological features within the site such as Salary Brook, Welsh Wood, woodland, ancient woodland and a network of intact hedgerows and associated veteran trees, land drains and ditches.
- The topography of the land indicates benefits to the proposals in the form of integrating development into a natural context.

3.3.6 Soil Quality

- Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land is predominantly in the north east of Colchester Borough, with some areas of grade 2 land to the west and north west. The Garden Community site area is predominantly within Grade 1 Agricultural Land (determined 'excellent' by Natural England).
- Tendring has a significant concentration of grade 1 and 2 agricultural land to the north west of the District on the border with Colchester Borough. The majority of the central party of the District is grade 3 land, with small areas of grade 2 running from south west to north east through the centre of Tendring. Coastal areas have lower quality land, with grade 4 land to the south around Colne Point and Holland-on-Sea and grade 4 and 5 land around Harwich and Dovercourt.

3.3.7 Population and Social (including Education and Skills)

- The populations in Tendring and Colchester are predicted to increase over Local Plan Periods, with the highest growth rates in Colchester. The population structure in Colchester is more weighted towards 20-44 year olds. Contrastingly, Tendring has a higher population of people aged over 65.
- Colchester Borough's population has grown by 15.6% between 2001 and 2014 and was estimated to stand at 180,420 people in mid-2014. The borough's growing population is accommodated within a spatial structure defined by the urban area at its centre, surrounded by a rural hinterland with three smaller centres, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe.
- Tendring District is projected to grow by 14.4% (from 2011 Census numbers) to approximately 158,000 by the end of the plan period. Recent decades have seen a trend towards an ageing population in the District and this is projected to continue in the future.
- Regarding general deprivation, of the 326 local authorities within England Tendring ranks within the top 25% for extent and the top 16% for the remaining three measures –local concentration, average score and average rank. Colchester is less deprived, with Colchester ranking 6th in Essex on average.
- In Colchester, pressure on primary school places is forecast to continue in line with considerable housing development in the area.
- Secondary school Year 7 intakes in Colchester are forecast to rise significantly from September 2017 onwards and options are being explored in active collaboration with the schools in Colchester town to provide the additional places required.
- While Colchester is less deprived than Essex as a whole, 2 small areas in Colchester were in the top 10% most deprived in England in 2010, Magnolia in St. Andrew's Ward and St Anne's Estate in St Anne's ward. Sustainable development for the future will require the development of sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.

3.3.8 Air Quality and Noise

- There may be some concerns regarding air quality associated with development in the broad location and resultant traffic movements into Colchester town due to a number of AQMAs.
- There are four Air Quality Management Areas in Colchester, located in the following areas:
 1. 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).
 2. Area 2 - East Street and the adjoining lower end of Ipswich Road.
 3. Area 3 - Harwich Road/St Andrew's Avenue junction.
 4. Area 4 - Lucy Lane North, Stanway; Mersea Road; and Brook Street.
- The Tendring District Council Air Quality Progress Report shows that Tendring District is currently meeting the air quality objectives.

3.3.9 Climatic Factors

- Colchester Borough and Tendring District all consume more energy from non-renewable sources as a percentage of their consumption compared to the East of England as a whole. More than three quarters of Tendring District's 2,532.2GWh energy consumption is from petroleum products and natural gas. For Colchester, the percentage is just below 75% for the same energy sources.
- Industry, domestic and transport each produce roughly 1/3 of the total CO2 emissions within Colchester. The industry and commercial sector produces the smallest amount in both Colchester Borough and Tendring District.
- Registering 38.27% of their consumption deriving from petroleum, Tendring is lower than the percentage for Braintree, Colchester and the East of England. In contrast only 20.6GWh of energy consumed is from renewable bioenergy and waste sources, equating to just 0.81% of energy consumption.
- Regarding CO2 emission reductions, Colchester have a higher percentage than the Essex average at 18.6% respectively. Tendring has one of the lowest reductions in CO2 emissions relative to the 2005 data of all the Districts in Essex at just 11.5%.
- Mean summer precipitation has a 67% likelihood of decreasing by up to 10% across the whole region by 2020 and by 2050 the south of the East of England will see decreases by up to 20%. By 2050 much of the region is expected to see a mean winter precipitation increase of between 10% and 20%.

3.3.10 Transport

- The Great Eastern Main Line (GEML) provides rail services between London Liverpool Street and the East of England, including Witham, Chelmsford, Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea. It also carries freight traffic to and from Harwich International Port, which handles container ships and freight transport to and from the rest of the UK. Harwich is also one of the major UK ports for ferry and cruise departures.
- Transportation provision in Tendring District includes 14 railway stations with connections to Colchester, Chelmsford, Ipswich, Norwich, Stratford and London. The average journey time between Clacton-on-Sea and London Liverpool Street is 1 hour 26 minutes.
- Within Tendring, there are numerous bus routes throughout the District including frequent inter-urban routes linking villages to the larger urban areas of the district and the large town of Colchester in the adjoining borough. The dispersed geography of the District means that there is a reliance on the use of private cars.
- The growing demand for the use of airports, including London Stansted, will create additional associated pressures on road and rail infrastructure. The County Council, along with South East Local Enterprise Partnership, local and national agencies and other organisations, will also need to work collaboratively with the Local Planning Authorities to ensure infrastructure meets demand for enhanced economic growth.
- Colchester Borough's self-containment rate (share of residents who also work within the Borough) was 69% in 2011, with 24,850 employed residents leaving the Borough to work. Of these 25% go to Greater London, 15% to Tendring District, 15% to Braintree District and 10% to

Chelmsford City.

- Tendring and Colchester are above the regional and national averages for households owning 1 or more cars. Despite this, a lower proportion of people use a private car or van to travel to work. Similarly, Colchester has fewer employees travelling to work by car or van, which could be as a result of a higher number of employment opportunities closer to their homes negating the need for travel by car.
- The percentage of households owning 1 car or van within Tendring District at 45.3%, which is slightly higher than national and regional statistics. Colchester is also higher than the regional and national figures at 43.8%.
- The broad area is well located in terms of existing access and the presence of strategic roads and those that permeate the broad area and those eastern parts of Colchester.
- The presence of the Great Eastern Mainline and rail links at Hythe exist as a rapid public transport link to Colchester.
- The existing strategic and local bus networks currently set down and pick-up in close proximity to the site with a bus interchange located at the University campus. Within the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan, provision is made for a dedicated bus corridor to support development in North Colchester; anticipated to be delivered on the back of the redevelopment of the former Severalls Hospital.

3.3.11 Water

- Water management is challenging given the combination of development growth and Essex being one of the driest counties in England. In respect of water quantity a significant portion of the resource is considered to be 'water stressed'; the resource availability status of rivers and aquifers show that they are generally over abstracted; and not self-sufficient in relation to local sources of water supply and needs to import substantial quantities of water to satisfy existing demand.
- Regarding water quality, the Appropriate Assessment of the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring states that, 'the measures provided in the Section 2 Local Plans will also provide sufficient certainty that the overall strategic growth proposed in North Essex as part of the Section 1 for Local Plans will not result in significant adverse effects on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar, Colne Estuary SPA/Ramsar, or Essex Estuaries SAC as a result of changes in water quality.'
- The latest Colchester Water Cycle Study identified issues with a number of smaller ward areas within the Borough. These are:
 1. East Colchester - Wastewater Treatment and Wastewater Infrastructure
 2. Wivenhoe/Rowhedge - Wastewater Treatment and Wastewater Infrastructure
- Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. Salary Brook to the west of the Garden Community site is within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and has a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:
 1. Alteration of river banks and river beds

2. Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish
3. Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment
4. Diffuse pollution from surface water
5. Reduced flow in rivers

3.3.12 Flooding

- The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, but where development is necessary, to ensure that it is safe and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. This is the case at the site's western boundary associated with Salary Brook.

3.3.13 The Historic Environment

- The historic environment should be effectively protected and valued for its own sake, as an irreplaceable record which contributes to our understanding of both the present and the past.
- Archaeological deposits across Colchester range in date from the Palaeolithic, through to structures related to the Cold War. However, it should also be remembered that the EHER records represent only the known deposits with many new sites being identified each year. Archaeological sites (and their setting) constitute a finite, non-renewable resource which is vulnerable to damage.
- Colchester Borough boasts 52 Scheduled Monuments. Tendring District has more than 960 Listed Buildings. The District also benefits from 27 Scheduled Monuments which include above and below ground features, 3 Historic Parks and Gardens and 9 Protected Lanes, preserved for their historic indication of ancient road patterns in the District. The District also contains 20 Conservation Areas.
- According to the Heritage at Risk Register (2016), there are 15 assets listed as being at risk in Tendring.
- The site contains a small number of Listed Buildings which should be preserved

3.3.14 Minerals and Waste

- The majority of local authority collected household waste is sent for recycling, composting or reuse in the Plan Area. Despite this, no non-household local authority collected waste is recycled, composted or re-used.
- The Strategic Area has extensive deposits of sand and gravel. The sand and gravel resources in Essex are significant in national, sub-national and local terms - Essex is one of the largest producers in the UK; most geographically extensive and significantly mixed within the centre and north of Essex – namely the districts of Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester and Tendring.
- There are two sites within Tendring identified as preferred or reserved for primary mineral

extraction of sand and gravel in the allocated Minerals Local Plan (2014). These are Site Nos A20 – Sunnymead, Alresford and B1 – Slough Farm, Ardleigh. The Garden Community area is within a Minerals Safeguarding Area.

3.3.15 Utilities

- Due to the nature and scale of Garden Communities, utility provision does not exist within the site currently.
- There is capacity in the medium pressure gas network in the region, but local low pressure upgrades will be required.

3.3.16 Existing Communities

- The 'red-line boundary' of the site extends the Garden Community area towards Elmstead Market to the south east, however is not in close proximity. The boundary does however extend to Colchester / Greenstead to the east, separated by the Salary Brook nature reserve and river channel.
- A number of existing dwellings associated with farming exist within the site.

3.3.17 Trans-national Implications

This Scoping & Environmental Report explores the state of the environment within the broad area of the Plan; however consideration has since been given to the possibility of trans-national impacts resulting from the scale of growth and those broad locations identified for development.

In view of this, no trans-national effects are deemed likely as a result of the Plan singularly or in combination with the relevant Local Plans of Tendring and Colchester or any other plans and programmes. This is as result of the Section One Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Assessment and associated Appropriate Assessment (AA) (2017) which explores the environmental impacts of the principle of the Garden Community on international and national designations for nature conservation. The AA identifies that although impacts arise as a result of the level of growth resulting from Garden Communities due to recreation, effective mitigation is possible.

3.3.18 Data Limitations

Relevant information is not available for the focused Garden Community area on a particularly detailed basis on all sustainability themes. As a result there are some gaps within the data set. It is believed however that the available information shows a comprehensive view on sustainability within the Garden Community area. New data that becomes available will be incorporated in the SA.

It should be noted that while the baseline will be continually updated throughout the SA process, the information outlined within this report represents a snapshot of the information available at the beginning of November 2017.

3.4 Key Sustainability Issues and Problems and Sustainability Objectives (Stage A3)

The outcome of Stages A1 – A2 in the SA Process is the identification of key sustainability issues and problems facing the Strategic Area which assist in the finalisation of a set of relevant Sustainability Objectives. Issues are also identified from the review of plans and programmes and a strategic analysis of the baseline information.

The appraisal of the Plan will be able to evaluate, in a clear and consistent manner, the nature and degree of impact and whether significant effects are likely to emerge from the Plan's content.

The following table outlines the thought process which has led to the formulation of the Sustainability Objectives for the Plan. The state of the environment in absence of the Plan is derived from the Baseline Information addressed in Annex B accompanying this report, the remit of the Plan in the wider planning policy context, and the wider benefits that can be expected of growth at the scale proposed in accordance with Garden City principles and the North Essex Garden Community Charter.

Table 2: Key Sustainability Issues and Problems

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
Economy	Due to its rural nature the site does not currently accommodate many retail uses. It is however well located to Colchester via public transport means.	Despite emerging policy in regard to ensuring services and facilities are integrated into the Garden Community existing in the form of the Strategic Section One for Tendring and Colchester's Local Plans, the Plan can ensure that sufficient retail and employment premises are integrated into any new community through an effective framework regarding the eventual form of the development. The Plan can ensure that provision can need to be planned to complement, rather than displace, existing local service provision in the town of Colchester. This may not be the case in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.
	There are significant economic 'anchors' in the wider vicinity such as the University and employment provision at the Hythe; however links need to be made to utilise these.		To ensure that new employment complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	The site is close to the established employment centre of Colchester and notable the University of Essex at the site's southern boundary. The site has good access to ports in the east.	The growth of the university of Essex will also provide an opportunity for the Garden Community to capture future associated employment growth. Utilising the existing strengths of existing employment providers and centres is a key opportunity for the Garden Community. The Plan can provide this opportunity, which perhaps could not be expected to be realised through alternative development approaches.	To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.
	Jobs linked to homeworking will be physically associated with the homes of residents and therefore also on site; in relation to these jobs, the design of housing will be crucially important (The North Essex Garden Communities Employment & Demographic Studies (SQW / Cambridge Econometrics 2017)).	The planning of the Garden Community provides a unique opportunity to deliver truly innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies, including but not limited to state of the art telecommunications infrastructure which could provide an ultra-fast broadband service for existing and future residents. This could otherwise not be forthcoming within the Garden Community in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.
Health	Public access to natural greenspace (ANGSt) is an issue within the wider area, although the site borders the Salary Brook nature reserve to the west.	The Plan has the opportunity to suitably include accessible natural green space throughout the design and layout of the Garden Community. This might not be the case in the absence of a plan-led approach, or otherwise not be given due weight in favour of marketable land uses.	To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.
	There are no existing GP surgeries within the Garden Community area, the closest being in the surrounding villages and town of Colchester. Serving specific communities, capacities of these are unlikely to cumulatively service	In facilitating inclusive facilities, the Plan can ensure that a new Garden Community can incorporate premises for a local centre, including doctors' surgeries and sports provision. In the absence of the Plan it can not be certain whether this would be forthcoming	To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	<p>the Garden Community.</p> <p>The proportion of adults participating in 30 minutes, moderate intensity sport has decreased in recent surveys at local, sub-national and national levels.</p>	through more traditional delivery models and a possible lack of liaison with service providers.	maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.
Housing	<p>As life expectancy increases, the age structure is expected to change, with a marked increase in the number and proportion of the population who will be aged 65 and over. The number of one-person households is also expected to increase.</p> <p>The SHMA for Braintree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Tendring Councils indicates that the majority of market housing and affordable housing should be 2 and 3 bedroom properties. This trend is replicated when assessing all housing, with 70.3% of housing need across the Districts is 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings.</p>	<p>The Plan is committed to ensuring varied housing tenures, ensuring affordability and ownership models. This can not be considered as forthcoming through development that is not plan-led, where it is likely that outcomes are sought that are most profitable.</p> <p>A plan-led Garden Community can enable large scale development that is sustainable. The scale of development, established within the Strategic Section One, ensures that a larger amount of affordable units can be delivered without affecting viability. Whereas a higher percentage can not be ensured through the Plan, instead being subject to exploration within the Local Plans the Plan can ensure that affordable units are appropriately located within the development. This can be considered comparatively unlikely to be forthcoming without a plan led approach.</p>	To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	Suitable Gypsy and Traveller accommodation proposals have not been forthcoming through the Local Plan call-for-sites mechanisms of Colchester Borough and Tendring District Councils.	The Section One of Colchester and Tendring's Local Plan includes Policy SP8 which ensures that Garden Community in this location would require accommodation provision of Gypsy and Travellers. The Garden Community Plan can ensure that such provision is located with the interests of the envisaged new community in mind.	To ensure that provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is appropriately located within the Garden Community with regard to access to services and social integration.
Biodiversity	The site area contains a SSSI (Bullock Wood) which is likely to require sensitive consideration in regard to preservation and enhancement.	A plan-led approach to strategic development can ensure that existing features of biodiversity are protected and integrated into the Garden Community's green infrastructure. Comparatively, this is unlikely to be the case through more traditional strategic development approaches.	To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.
	The Local Nature Reserves of Salary Brook and Welsh Wood are in close proximity to / within the site.		
	There are existing natural landscape and ecological features within the site such as Salary Brook, Welsh Wood, woodland, ancient woodland and a network of intact hedgerows and associated veteran trees, land drains and ditches.		
	As identified within the HRA / AA of the Strategic Section One (and Two) of Braintree's emerging Local Plan, a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy will be needed to ensure that the level of growth does not have likely significant effects on Natura 2000	The relationship between areas of biodiversity interest and human activity through recreation are often incompatible in terms of wildlife conservation. A plan led approach can ensure that such management and the identification of land for recreational purposes is ensured.	To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	sites within the wider area.		
Landscape	Natural England's National Character Area Profile: Northern Thames Basin, in which this area lies, indicates that the rural urban fringe should be conserved and enhanced through the spatial planning process and through good design in development. despite this, the topography of the land indicates benefits to the proposals in the form of integrating development into a natural context.	A plan-led Garden Community can ensure that sensitive natural features are integrated, protected and enhanced through a framework approach to design and layout. This is not unique to Garden Communities and can be expected to be ensured through more traditional approaches to development.	To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.
	There are existing natural landscape and ecological features within the site such as Salary Brook, Welsh Wood, woodland, ancient woodland and a network of intact hedgerows and associated veteran trees, land drains and ditches.		
	There are a number of sensitive receptors associated with the surrounding area and large scale development has the potential to impact on the rural character of the small settlements surrounding and within the site.	A plan-led Garden Community, adhering to Garden City principles and the Garden Community Charter, can ensure better integration of development within the open countryside. This would otherwise be unlikely to be the case through more traditional development approaches.	To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.
Soil quality	The Garden Community site area contains Grade 1 Agricultural Land (determined 'excellent' by Natural England) along much of the eastern boundary.	The loss of agricultural land is inevitable through any strategic scale development. In the absence of the Plan, it can be considered that there would be a similar loss of such land.	To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
Education and	In Colchester, pressure on primary school places is forecast to	A plan led approach enables an 'infrastructure first' approach to	To ensure the delivery of new

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
skills	continue in line with considerable housing development in the area. Secondary school Year 7 intakes in Colchester are forecast to rise significantly from September 2017 onwards and options are being explored in active collaboration with the schools in Colchester town to provide the additional places required.	delivering the Garden Community, through effective working with the commissioning authority. It is more likely that a less holistic approach to ensuring adequate school capacity would be forthcoming in the absence of the Plan.	schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.
	Within Tendring, Primary school numbers, as forecast in the Commissioning Schools for Essex document, are set to rise in the five year period 2016-2021, due to rising births and new housing, requiring plans to be developed with local schools to increase the provision in the District.		
Energy consumption	Colchester Borough and Tendring District all consume more energy from non-renewable sources as a percentage of their consumption compared to the East of England as a whole. More than three quarters of Tendring District's 2,532.2GWh energy consumption is from petroleum products and natural gas. For Colchester, the percentage is just below 75% for the same energy sources.	The Garden Community offers a significant opportunity for the utilisation of renewable energy sources to be utilised. The Plan can ensure that renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures are included within the development that would otherwise be unlikely to be integrated in its absence.	To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.
	Regarding CO2 emission reductions, Colchester have a higher percentage than the Essex average at 18.6% respectively. Tendring has one of the lowest reductions in CO2 emissions relative to the 2005 data of all the		

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	Districts in Essex at just 11.5%.		
Transport and Access	Colchester Borough's self-containment rate (share of residents who also work within the Borough) was 69% in 2011, with 24,850 employed residents leaving the Borough to work. Of these 25% go to Greater London, 15% to Tendring District, 15% to Braintree District and 10% to Chelmsford City.	A plan-led approach, together with the delivery model of the Garden Community, can ensure the integration of rapid transit. It is unlikely that this would be ensured through any planning application without such a requirement either physically or through sufficient contributions.	To maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.
	There are highway network efficiency issues on a number of strategic inter-urban routes which are operating at or near to capacity.	It is considered that the Plan can ensure an appropriate level of services and facilities on-site. This can ensure that residents take fewer trips outside the Garden Community for convenience shopping and day to day needs. This can offset traffic implications on existing roads as much as possible. It is thought that without this requirement established within the Plan, planning applications are unlikely to ensure provision to the same level.	To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure safe, sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.
	The area is well located in terms of existing access and the presence of strategic roads and those that permeate the broad area and those eastern parts of Colchester.	Development at the scale proposed can ensure that such issues are overcome and solutions become viable. These are best consulted on and ensured through a plan-led system. This can not be expected in the absence of the Plan	To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	Proportionately more households own 1 car or van within Colchester than the regional and national figures at 43.8%. Braintree has a lower proportion of households owning 1 or more car at 40.3% however this is still above the regional average.	The Plan can ensure a level of car parking, and design in such parking, that is suitable for the number of homes. The requirements are unlikely to be clear and specifically suitable to the wider design requirements of the Garden Community in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.
Sustainable Transport	The percentage of households owning 1 car or van within Tendring District at 45.3%, which is slightly higher than national and regional statistics. Colchester is also higher than the regional and national figures at 43.8%.	A plan-led approach, together with the delivery model of the Garden Community, can ensure the integration of rapid transit within the wider area. It is unlikely that this would be ensured through any planning application without such a requirement either physically or through sufficient contributions.	To maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.
	The presence of the Great Eastern Mainline and rail links at Hythe exist as a rapid public transport link to Colchester. The existing strategic and local bus networks currently set down and pick-up in close proximity to the site with a bus interchange located at the University campus. Within the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan, provision is made for a dedicated bus corridor to support development in North Colchester; anticipated to be delivered on the back of the redevelopment of the former Severalls Hospital.		
Air Quality	There may be some concerns regarding air quality associated with development in the broad location and resultant traffic movements into Colchester town	A plan-led approach, and the delivery model established in the Plan, enables development to be supported by effective sustainable transport means designed to minimise vehicle emissions.	

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	due to a number of AQMAs.	This approach would be unlikely to be forthcoming in the absence of the Plan, which can also ensure the promotion of active modes through significant green infrastructure.	
Water	Opportunities for improving the status of water bodies should be identified as part of development proposals. Typical water body improvements might be creating 'natural' river banks, overcoming barriers to fish movement or providing sustainable drainage systems.	As stated in the Plan, substantial investment in this essential area of infrastructure will be required to facilitate the improvements needed and ensure adequate ongoing maintenance. It is uncertain whether this infrastructure would be forthcoming from development proposals in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.
	The latest Colchester Water Cycle Study identified issues with a number of smaller ward areas within the Borough. Relevant to the Garden Community area These are: 1. East Colchester - Wastewater Treatment and Wastewater Infrastructure 2. Wivenhoe/Rowhedge - Wastewater Treatment and Wastewater Infrastructure		
	Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. Salary Brook to the west of the Garden Community site is within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and has a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause		

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
	<p>deterioration include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Alteration of river banks and river beds 2.Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish 3.Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment 4.Diffuse pollution from surface water 5.Reduced flow in rivers 		
Flood Risk	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, but where development is necessary, to ensure that it is safe and does not increase flood risk elsewhere. Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. This is the case at the site's western boundary associated with Salary Brook.</p>	<p>In the absence of the Plan there is unlikely to be any significant difference in how areas of flood risk are considered within the Garden Community. That said, the design and layout of the Garden Community can ensure that existing water courses are maximised as features of a blue infrastructure interest throughout the site. The delivery of the Garden Community provides an unprecedented opportunity to integrate innovative sustainable urban drainage systems into the design of new development. It is unlikely that this would be the case to the same degree through development proposals in the absence of the Plan.</p>	<p>To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.</p>
The Historic Environment	<p>The site contains a small number of Listed Buildings which should be preserved</p>	<p>In the absence of the Plan, such features would have to be protected through suitable schemes both in regard to designations and their settings. The Plan can further ensure that enhancements to assets are sought where possible.</p>	<p>To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.</p>

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
Utilities	Due to the nature and scale of Garden Communities, utility provision does not exist within the site currently.	The development of a new Garden Community provides significant opportunities to not only provide new infrastructure but also the opportunity to deliver innovative forms of infrastructure and ensure their integration from the outset, reducing and avoiding the need for disruptive retrofitting which could otherwise be the case in the absence of the Plan.	To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband.
	There is capacity in the medium pressure gas network in the region, but local low pressure upgrades will be required.		
	Broadband provision is integral to the Garden Community's target of 'one job per home' through effective home working.		
Existing communities	Numerous farm buildings and other individual dwellings exist within the area.	The proximity of existing villages to the Garden Community opens up opportunities to improve areas between these existing settlements and new development. Existing private farmland, for example, could be opened up as publicly accessible parkland with new green links formed to improve walking and cycling connectivity in the area for both existing and future residents. It can be considered comparably less likely that such a joined up approach to development would be forthcoming in the absence of the Plan and the reliance on Policy SP8 within the LPAs' emerging Local Plans.	To improve areas between existing settlements and new development and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.
	The 'red-line boundary' of the site extends the Garden Community area towards Elmstead Market to the south east, however is not in close proximity. The boundary does however extend to Colchester / Greenstead to the east, separated by the Salary Brook nature reserve and river channel.		
	Due to the nature and scale of Garden Communities, few local facilities exist within the site currently.	Despite emerging policy in regard to ensuring services and facilities are integrated into the Garden Community existing in the form of the Strategic Section One for Tendring and Colchester's Local Plans, the Plan can ensure that sufficient retail and employment premises are integrated	To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social

General theme	Description / Supporting Evidence	State of environment in absence of the plan	Sustainability Objective (SO)
		into any new community through an effective framework regarding the eventual form of the development. The Plan can ensure that provision can need to be planned to complement, rather than displace, existing local service provision in local town centres. This may not be the case in the absence of the Plan.	inclusivity.

The following table explores whether the identified Sustainability Objectives above fall into the three broad categories of sustainability, namely social, environmental and economic themes.

Table 3: The SA Objectives

SA Objective	Economic	Social	Environmental
1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	✓		
2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	✓		
3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	✓		
4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	✓		
5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.		✓	
6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.		✓	
7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities		✓	
8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.		✓	
9) To ensure that provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is appropriately located within the Garden Community with regard to access to services and social integration.		✓	
10) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.		✓	
11) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.		✓	
12) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within		✓	

SA Objective	Economic	Social	Environmental
the site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.			
13) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.		✓	
14) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.		✓	
15) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.			✓
16) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.			✓
17) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.			✓
18) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.			✓
19) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.			✓
20) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.			✓
21) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.			✓
22) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.			✓

3.4.1 The Compatibility of the SA Objectives

A total of 22 SA Objectives have been derived for the appraisal of the Plan. They are based on the scope of the document, policy advice and guidance and to the assessment of the current state of the environment.

It is useful to test the compatibility of SA Objectives against one another in order to highlight any areas where potential conflict or tensions may arise.

It is to be expected that some objectives are not compatible with other objectives thereby indicating that tensions could occur. Objectives which are based around environmental issues sometimes conflict with economic and social objectives, and vice versa.

Areas of potential incompatibility or uncertainty between the objectives relevant to the Plan are explained within the following bullet points:

- **Protecting soil quality and the majority of the economic and social based objectives:**
There can be expected to be unavoidable harm in regard to minimising the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land with all other objectives relevant to build development within the Garden Community. The site is within Grade 1 Agricultural Land, which represents the best and most versatile agricultural land within both Tendring District and Colchester Borough.
- **Sustainable transport and the need to ensure road access and car parking:** The integration of sustainable transport modes and necessary infrastructure, and the promotion of their uptake, can be seen as potentially incompatible with the needs of ensuring appropriate linkages to the existing road network. Similarly, the impacts of poorly designed and insufficient car parking can be significant negative from both design and safety aspects. Although truly sustainable outcomes can be seen to correspond to a modal shift to sustainable transport methods, notions of inclusivity determine that safe and efficient road access need to also be ensured to reflect the baseline of car ownership and the reality that sustainable transport modes can not be considered suitable for all demographics. An effective balance of private and public transport accessibility should be considered the most realistic outcome for the Garden Community.
- **Landscape based objectives with those associated with recreation and wildlife conservation / enhancement:** Although similar in form, it must be noted that the inclusion of recreational land should largely be provided in isolation from those areas that have been identified as contributing to green infrastructure. Similarly, land for purely landscape purposes should be managed in a way that offers either recreational or biodiversity value. The impacts of recreational activity on biodiversity and wildlife conservation can be significantly damaging to habitats.

3.5 The Approach to Assessing the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Plan

3.5.1 Introduction

As previously set out, the Plan will include specific proposals, strategies and detailed policies to inform the delivery of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. At this Issues and Options stage, these proposals, strategies and policies are at an early stage of development but will be refined during the Plan-making process. The final Plan will provide certainty for stakeholders on the type, scale and location of specific land uses including the infrastructure required to accommodate them.

The SA, in line with the scope of the Plan, is required to assess the impacts of the Plan's content. For this purpose, and as required of SA, a broad sustainability framework relevant to the geographical scope of the Garden Community has been devised. The sustainability framework takes the Sustainability Objectives identified previously in this report as a starting point, and elaborates on each objective in turn with a series of criteria or 'key questions' to aid the assessment of the Plan's content in more detail.

3.5.2 The Sustainability Framework for Assessing Options

The following sustainability framework forms the basis of the methods used to evaluate the effects of the Plan. Quantitative analysis is used where available; however a number of assumptions are required in order to make qualitative and comparable judgements to assess options to the same level of detail. It is important that a level playing field is ensured for the assessment of options, with the same level of information being used to assess all options. Assumptions are set out in the relevant sections of this SA in which specific elements of the Plan are appraised.

Table 4: Sustainability Framework for Assessing the Plan

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it ensure the delivery of a range of employment opportunities to support the Community? - Will it tackle employment associated deprivation? - Does it seek to improve existing training and learning facilities and/or create more facilities? - Will the employment opportunities available be mixed to suit a varied employment skills base? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amount of floor space developed for employment, sqm - Level 2 qualifications by working age residents. - Level 4 qualifications and above by working age residents. - Employment status of residents. - Average gross weekly earnings. - Standard Occupational Classification.

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to include a suitable level of convenience shopping? - Does it promote and enhance the viability of existing centres? - Does it seek to locate development within easy public travelling distance to town centres? - Does it seek to improve public transport networks to town centres? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Footfalls in Colchester town centre - Traffic flows
3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it support business innovation, diversification, entrepreneurship and changing economies? - Will it provide complimentary employment to existing major employment areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type and amount of employment uses delivered
4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it seek to locate development in areas of lower soil quality or not in farming use? - Will it ensure that soil quality is not compromised? - Will it support or lead to the remediation of contaminated land, avoiding environmental pollution or exposure of occupiers or neighbouring land uses to unacceptable health risk? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of Grade 2 ALC (Ha). - Contaminated land brought back into beneficial use, hectares
5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it ensure that new green and open space provision is accessible to all? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walking distances to natural greenspace over 800m
6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development and to ensure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will landscapes and features sensitive to development be protected? - Will it lead to coalescence with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of landscape features - Number of proposals permitted contrary to a desire to restrict coalescence

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.	neighbouring settlements?	
7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it ensure a high quality and safe public realm? - Does it seek to preserve PRowS and bridleways? - Does it seek to promote active modes? - Will services and facilities be located in strategic locations within the Garden Community? - Will it provide a mix of leisure and sports pitch provision? - Does it seek to provide facilities for young people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New leisure and sports provision (Sqm) - Loss of bridleways / PRowS - Traffic flows within the Garden Community
8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to provide housing for an ageing population? - Does it ensure a proportion of housing for social rent? - Does it seek to ensure a mix of dwelling types? - Does it seek to include a mix of dwelling sizes? - Does it seek to provide as high a proportion of affordable units as possible / viable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of lifetime homes - Number of homes for social rent - Number of affordable units - Housing mix - Housing size (bedrooms)
9) To ensure that provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is appropriately located within the Garden Community with regard to access to services and social integration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to provide Gypsy and Traveller pitches? - Are Gypsy and Traveller pitches located within easy access of services and facilities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caravan counts on site - Amount of pitch provision
10) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it ensure adequate school places (through expansion / new facilities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes of

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
infrastructure to support the Garden Community.	<p>and early years provision to support growth?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it ensure the required improvements to utilities infrastructure? - Will it ensure the required improvements in capacity to GP services? 	<p>public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional capacity of local schools / incidents of new school applications
11) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it increase and/or improve the availability and usability of sustainable transport modes? - Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation other than private vehicle? - Will it lead to the integration of transport modes? - Will it improve rural public transport? - Does it seek to increase the uptake or viability of walking and cycling as methods of transportation, through new infrastructure or integration? - Will it improve, or not detrimentally affect air quality along the A120? - Does it direct growth away from AQMAs? - Does it seek to improve or avoid increasing traffic flows generally? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of journeys to work by walking and cycling and percentage of journeys to work by public transport - Traffic flows
12) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it contribute positively to reduce social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, services and leisure facilities for all? - Does it seek to concentrate development and facilities where access via sustainable travel is greatest? - Does it seek to minimise congestion at key destinations / areas that witness a large amount of vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number / amount of new homes / employment development completed at ward level within Growth / Regeneration Areas - Percentage of new development within 30 minutes of community facilities (as defined by each authority)

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
	movements at peak times? - Would the scale of development require significant supporting transport infrastructure? - Will it provide a suitable amount of sports, recreational, leisure and open space facilities?	
13) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.	- Does it seek to provide an appropriate level of car parking? - Are parking spaces of a suitable size? - Are the locations of parking spaces suitable?	- Parking violations - Number of parking spaces per dwelling approved.
14) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.	- Does it ensure energy efficiency measures? - Does it seek to reduce building emissions? - Does it seek to integrate renewable sources of energy? - Does it seek to ensure high speed broadband?	- Energy consumption per dwelling - Percentage of energy consumption from renewable sources - Broadband speeds
15) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.	- Will development have a potential impact on a national, international or European designated site (SPA, SAC, Ramsar, SSSI)? - Will it maintain and enhance sites otherwise designated for their nature conservation interest, such as LoWSs? - Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats? - Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to indigenous BAP priority species?	- Impacts (direct and indirect) on designated sites - Amount of development in designated areas - Area of land offset for biodiversity
16) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects	- Will recreational spaces be carefully managed and promoted? - Will habitats be suitably protected and	- Journeys to Natura 2000 sites for recreational uses - Condition of habitats on site

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.	enhanced, either physically or through careful management?	
17) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to create new landscape features on site? - Does it seek to include public art and a high quality public realm? - Does it seek to protect and enhance existing on-site features of a landscape value? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of TPOs
18) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to utilise current conditions and character in the wider landscape? - Will existing features be utilised as part of landscape character of newly created areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presence of indigenous and non-indigenous species through ecological surveys and requirements ant the planning application stage
19) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption? - Will it lead to an increased generation of energy from renewable sources? - Will it encourage greater energy efficiency? - Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources, minimising waste and promoting recycling? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total CO2 emissions - Renewable Energy Installed by Type - Number of zero carbon homes delivered
20) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it lead to no deterioration on the quality of water bodies? - Will water resources and sewerage capacity be able to accommodate growth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of Rivers (number achieving ecological good status) - Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on grounds of water quality

SA Objective	SA Criteria	Potential Indicators
21) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does it seek to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding (fluvial, coastal, surface water)? - Does it seek to avoid increasing flood risk (fluvial, surface water, groundwater) in areas away from initial development? - Does it promote the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and will their integration be viable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood defence grounds - Number of SuDS schemes approved by ECC
22) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will it protect and enhance designations, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas? - Will it have a negative impact on the significance of a designated historic environment asset or its setting? - Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces? - Does it encourage the use of high quality design principles to respect local character? - Will / can any perceived adverse impacts be reduced through adequate mitigation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land - Number of listed buildings demolished, repaired or brought back to use, including locally listed buildings - New Conservation Area Appraisals adopted - Number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens (and percentage at risk) - Area of highly sensitive historic landscape characterisation type(s) which have been altered and their character eroded - Number of major development projects that enhance or detract from the significance of heritage assets or historic landscape character - Percentage of planning applications where archaeological investigations were required prior to approval or mitigation strategies developed or implemented

3.6 The Appraisal of the Plan's Content

The SA of the Tendring Colchester Garden Community Plan appraises the document's thematic content against the Sustainability Objectives (SOs) outlined in the above framework. The aim is to assess the sustainability effects of the document following implementation. The appraisal will look at the secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary effects in accordance with Annex 1 of the SEA Directive, as well as assess alternatives and suggest mitigation measures where appropriate. The findings will be accompanied by an appraisal matrix which will document the effects over time.

The content to be included within the table responds to those 'significant effects' of the element of the Plan subject to appraisal. Appraisals will also look at the following:

- Temporal effects;
- Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic effects;
- The appraisal of Alternatives; and
- Proposed mitigation measures / recommendations.

These, and 'significant effects' are further described in the following sub-sections.

3.6.1 Description of 'Significant Effects'

The strength of impacts can vary dependant on the relevance of the policy content to certain sustainability objectives or themes. Where the policies have been appraised against the Sustainability Objectives the basis for making judgements within the assessment is identified within the following key:

Possible impact	Basis for judgement
++	Strong prospect of there being significant positive impacts
+	Strong prospect of there being minor positive impacts
?	Possibility of either positive or negative impacts, or general uncertainty where there is a lack on current information (to be elaborated in commentary in each instance)
0	No impact
N/A	Not applicable to the scope or context of the appraised content
-	Strong prospect of there being minor negative impacts and mitigation would be possible / issues can be rectified
--	Strong prospect of there being significant negative impacts with mitigation unlikely to be possible (pending further investigation) / further work is needed to explore whether issues can be rectified

Commentary is also included to describe the significant effects of the policy on the sustainability objectives.

3.6.2 Description of ‘Temporal Effects’

The appraisal of the Plan’s content recognises that impacts may vary over time. Three time periods have been used to reflect this and are shown in the appraisal tables as S (short term), M (medium term) and L (long term). For the purpose of the policy elements of the Plan S, M and L depict:

(S) Short term: early stages of the plan period / development of the Garden Community.

(M) Medium Term: middle stages of the plan period / development of the Garden Community.

(L) Long term: latter stages of the plan period (2033) / development of the Garden Community and where relevant beyond.

3.6.3 Description of ‘Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic Effects’

In addition to those effects that may arise indirectly (secondary effects), relationships between different elements of the Plan will be assessed in order to highlight any possible strengthening or weakening of impacts from their implementation together. Cumulative effects respond to impacts occurring directly from two different policies together, and synergistic effects are those that offer a strengthening or worsening of more than one policy that is greater than any individual impact. Additionally, any cumulative impacts with other plans or projects will be highlighted within the appraisal.

3.6.4 Description of ‘Alternatives Considered’

Planning Practice Guidance states that reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in its plan. They must be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The alternatives must be realistic and deliverable.

At this current stage, it is envisaged that further alternatives will be identified and developed during further stages of the Plan and as a result of the (this) Issues and Options consultation. The SA process will refine what constitutes a reasonable alternative at each consultation stage, and assess reasonable alternatives as they emerge, with findings shared with the Local Planning Authorities ahead of Local plan committee meetings for consideration.

3.6.5 Description of ‘Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations’

Negative or uncertain impacts may be highlighted within appraisals. As such, mitigation measures may be needed and these will be highlighted in this section for each policy where relevant. In addition to this, this section will also include any recommendations that are not directly linked to negative or uncertain impacts, but if incorporated may lead to sustainability improvements.

4. The Appraisal of the Plan's Vision and Principles

4.1 Introduction

The following sub-sections respond to an initial appraisal of each element of the Plan. This responds to an appraisal of each part of the document that could give rise to environmental, social or economic effects. In each sub-section, an appraisal of all identified reasonable alternatives, where they exist at this stage, has been included for transparency and robustness. The process behind the identification of each alternative has been included, citing the source of each alternative in each instance. The following elements of the Plan are subject to assessment in this Sustainability Appraisal:

- Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Draft Vision;
- Theme 1: Place and Integration;
- Theme 2: Community; and
- Theme 3: Delivery.

4.2 A Vision for the Garden Community

4.2.1 Context / Justification

A Vision for Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will provide a mandate for its future development. It should be a shared Vision that governs all processes from design through to delivery of the development and indeed management of community assets.

It should create an identity for the new community where residents and business feel like they “belong”. It should foster a collective sense of ownership and pride in the place where people will live, work and spend their leisure time.

The Vision combines and reflects the evidence, community workshops, the Garden Communities Charter and design principles set out above. It is a good starting point from which to develop a more succinct, and shared Vision with which people can fully identify.

The Vision for the Garden Community is as follows:

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Draft Vision

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is an ambitious plan to create an exemplar Garden Community. It will be a beautiful community with a strong sense of identity and belonging.

21st CENTURY COMMUNITY, ROOTED IN ESSEX TRADITIONS

TCBGC will combine the best of traditional Essex residential environments with the expectations of a 21st century lifestyle. It will have low-energy, high performance homes in a rich landscape setting with natural green space directly accessible to every home. It will be well served by sustainable transport modes to encourage travel behaviour change, with a network of Public Rights of Way, streets and greenspaces that will integrate its distinctive neighbourhoods with each other and with neighbouring communities in particular Wivenhoe, Elmstead Market, Greenstead and with Colchester Town.

A NEW COUNTRY PARK

A new Country Park in the valley of the Salary Brook will be the centrepiece of an open space framework that will preserve important habitats – wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows, meadows, etc - and give existing and new residents access to extensive green landscape areas for leisure and recreation. There will be a network of leisure routes to, through and around the Garden Suburb.

NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES, PLANNED FROM THE START

There will be a new District Centre and smaller Local Centres to provide for convenience shopping, healthcare and community services and facilities, and space for businesses, located alongside primary schools and key public transport stops. These will be planned to be convenient to every new home, and, where possible, to serve passing trade. TCBGC will have a range of early years and childcare facilities, primary and secondary schools developed alongside its housing.

ACTIVE MOBILITY – WALKING AND CYCLING

It will be a place where walking and cycling to local destinations – schools, convenience shops, play spaces, places of work – will be as attractive and convenient than getting in the car. Every new home will be within walking distance of local shops and other services that support daily life, supporting health and wellbeing objectives.

ALINGING UNIVERSITY ASPIRATIONS

An extension to the campus of the University of Essex will be planned as part of the new community with opportunities to deliver a mix of uses – academic space, student housing, sports facilities, etc, to complement the district centre. There will be land to expand the

University's Knowledge Hub business park.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR ALL

Good value, frequent, high-quality, reliable public transport will connect the Community to the University, Colchester Town centre, Colchester Station and to the main employment areas, and could link TCBGC to Clacton and Braintree and to other destinations across North Essex. A choice of travel modes, including high quality public transport, will provide households in TCBGC with the opportunity to seek employment in locations across North Essex and beyond.

NEW JOBS ALONGSIDE NEW HOMES

TCBGC will support the economic growth of Colchester Town and the regeneration of towns and villages in Tendring, and provide opportunities for established and new residents to access a wide range of employment opportunities. There will be a variety of jobs available in businesses housed in modern accommodation – in the district centre, in business parks located close to the A120, and in an expanded Knowledge Gateway close to the University, all accessible from new homes by sustainable transport routes. Support will be given to local small and medium sized businesses to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester and Tendring economy. This might also include an element of homeworking.

DEALING WITH STRATEGIC TRAFFIC AND CONGESTION

TCBGC will benefit from good links to the strategic road network, aligned to keep more through-traffic away from where people live but accessible to make journeys over a wide area as convenient as possible.

FUTURE-PROOFING TRANSPORT AND MOBILITY

The timescales over which the Garden Community will grow and develop will need flexibility to incorporate exciting new technologies for future mobility, allowing the emerging neighbourhoods to respond to changes in patterns of travel behaviour which are constantly evolving in parallel with advances in new transport technology.

A NEW, EXCEPTIONAL PLACE

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be an exceptional place to be born, to grow up, to make a career, to raise a family, to retire; to enjoy a rich and fulfilling life.

4.2.2 Significant and Temporal Effects

The following assessment explores whether the plan's Vision is broadly compatible with the Sustainability Objectives that have been specifically devised for the Garden Community area.

Table 5: Compatibility with the Sustainability Objectives: Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Draft Vision

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	✓
	2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	✓
	3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	✓
	4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	X
Commentary	<p>The Plan's Vision adheres to the majority of the 'on-site' requirements of the Garden Community as established within Policy SP8 of Section One of the emerging Local Plans of Tendring and Colchester. The Vision refers to the need for retail (convenience shopping in a District Centre and smaller Local Centres) and employment opportunities within the development. The Vision states that, 'TCBGC will support the economic growth of Colchester Town and the regeneration of towns and villages in Tendring, and provide opportunities for established and new residents to access a wide range of employment opportunities. There will be a variety of jobs available in businesses housed in modern accommodation – in the district centre, in business parks located close to the A120, and in an expanded Knowledge Gateway close to the University, all accessible from new homes by sustainable transport routes. Support will be given to local small and medium sized businesses to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester and Tendring economy. This might also include an element of homeworking.' The Vision does not aspire to minimising the loss of the best and most agricultural land; however this cannot be seen to be influenced through the Plan or indeed the notion of Garden Community at this location or within the wider area.</p>	
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.	✓
	6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.	✓

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
	7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities	✓
	8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.	?
	9) To ensure that provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is appropriately located within the Garden Community with regard to access to services and social integration.	?
	10) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.	✓
	11) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.	✓
	12) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.	✓
	13) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.	?
	14) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.	✓
Commentary	<p>The Vision states that the Garden Community will have a 'rich landscape setting with natural green space directly accessible to every home.' This ensures adherence to Sustainability Objective 5 regarding accessible natural greenspace. This will also encourage and enable transport by active modes, building on the established public transport links in the wider area and ensure that the Garden Community improves areas between existing settlements. Further, the Plan states of public transport, 'Good value, frequent, high-quality, reliable public transport will connect the Community to the University, Colchester Town centre, Colchester Station and to the main employment areas, and could link TCBGC to Clacton and Braintree and to other destinations across North Essex.' This ensures compatibility with Sustainability Objectives 7 and 10. Similarly, compatibility with Sustainability Objective 9 is ensured through the Vision's statement that, 'TCBGC will have a range of early years and childcare facilities, primary and secondary schools developed alongside its housing.' Compatibility is also ensured regarding permeable access (Sustainability Objective 11), through a commitment for the Garden Community to provide good links to the strategic road network, aligned to keep more through-traffic away from where people live but accessible to make journeys</p>	

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
	<p>over a wide area as convenient as possible.</p> <p>Uncertainty surrounds the compatibility of the Vision with those Sustainability Objectives relevant to a housing mix and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision. It is recommended that the Vision could be expanded to include these requirements of the Garden Community as set out in Section One Policy SP8 within the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring. Further uncertainty surrounds innovative utility provision and the inclusion of high-speed broadband at the high level. The Vision also does not address car parking issues, however this cannot be considered a suitable inclusion in an overarching Vision.</p>	
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	15) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.	✓
	16) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.	✓
	17) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.	✓
	18) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.	✓
	19) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.	?
	20) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.	?
	21) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.	?
	22) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.	?
Commentary	<p>Strong compatibility exists between the Vision's content surrounding landscape and existing communities and relevant Sustainability Objectives. The Plan's Vision includes that a new Country Park in the valley of the Salary Brook will be the centrepiece of an open space framework that will preserve important habitats – wetlands, woodlands, hedgerows, meadows, etc. - and give existing and new residents access to extensive green landscape areas for leisure and recreation. There will be a network of leisure routes to, through and around the Garden Suburb.' This will go some way to ensuring that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.</p>	

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Is the Vision compatible with the Sustainability Objectives?
	<p>Uncertainty surrounds the compatibility of the Vision and those Sustainability Objectives regarding renewable energy, water quality, flood risk and the historic environment. Although notionally these objectives can not be viewed as significant issues on site and more aspirational in nature, this is not a specific criticism of the Vision, which should not focus on site constraints at this high level.</p>

4.2.3 Alternatives Considered

The Vision can be seen as a general summary of the content of the Plan. The individual elements of the Vision are elaborated on in more detail within other elements of the document. Alternatives are discussed in more detail within the assessment of these elements, presented as 'themes and principles' later within this SA, commensurate to their individual context.

4.2.4 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

The Plan's Vision and the Sustainability Objectives are largely compatible. The Plan is not compatible with the objective to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land, however this is no criticism of the Plan's Vision and related to the nature of Greenfield development. Uncertainty surrounds the Vision where certain objectives are not specifically covered, such as ensuring a mix of housing types and tenures, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision, utility provision (including high-speed broadband) and it is recommended that these are included within future iterations of the Vision.

4.3 Planning Themes and Principles of the Garden Community

4.3.1 Context / Justification

Section 4 of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Plan contains a number of 'themes' related to Garden Community Charter Principles. Within this SA the content of these 'themes', as outlined in the Plan, are appraised.

The Plan includes a narrative of how each Charter Principle can be met within the Garden Community, physically and in terms of how development can be shaped within the mechanisms of the Plan itself. These narratives form the basis for each thematic appraisal.

4.3.2 Theme 1: Place and Integration

This Section of the Plan relates to issues such as making good places, high quality design, planning for a healthy economy, mobility and access within and around the development, and landscape and biodiversity objectives.

The principles that form the content of this theme are as follows:

THEME 1: PLACE AND INTEGRATION

PRINCIPLE 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Garden Communities will provide a generous amount of green space. They will be set within a multi-functional and integrated natural environment; providing space for nature, making the communities more resilient to climate change; promoting healthy lifestyles, and creating beautiful places to live and work.

PRINCIPLE 2: INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The Garden Communities will be planned around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport system for the north Essex area, which will put walking, cycling and public transit systems at the heart of the development, and be delivered in a timely way to support the communities as they grow.

PRINCIPLE 3: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Garden Communities will seek to provide access to one job per household within the new community or within a short distance by public transport. The employment function will be a key component of creating character and identity and sustainable communities.

PRINCIPLE 4: LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Community inclusiveness and walkable, sociable and vibrant neighbourhoods will be a defining characteristic of the garden communities. A diverse mix of homes responding to existing and future local needs will be provided alongside a range of community services,

including health, education, leisure and recreation, culture and shopping.

PRINCIPLE 5: SMART AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Planned for the 21st century, the Garden Communities will secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters resilient environments and communities; able to respond positively to changing circumstances. Innovation and technology will be embraced to achieve resource efficiency, higher quality of life and healthier lifestyles; creating the conditions for sustainable living.

PRINCIPLE 6: GOOD DESIGN

Through all stages of the planning, design and development of the Garden Communities the highest quality of design and management of the built and public realm will be promoted. Existing local assets will be capitalised to help create distinctive places.

4.3.2.1 Significant, Secondary and Temporal Effects

Table 6: Impact on Sustainability Objectives: Theme 1 – Place and Integration

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	++	++	++
	2	++	++	++
	3	++	++	++
	4	-	-	-
	Commentary	<p>Significant positive impacts are highlighted for Sustainability Objective 1 and 3, where the Plan identifies that new employment space at TCBGC could be provided to accommodate employment space related to commercialising the research and innovation strengths of the University of Essex, renewable and offshore energy, smart technology, port-related activities, health and care, tourism and leisure and logistics.</p> <p>Positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objective 2 and a need for convenience retail provision to support the new community. The Plan acknowledges that the Garden Community will need to establish neighbourhoods where everything is within easy walking distance, planned around connected centres, which provide a mix of homes, jobs and services set within attractive and green environments. The formulation of a District Centre and a number of local centres will ensure that impacts on the retail and comparison shopping offer of Colchester Town Centre are not compromised and significantly boosted, particularly in the east Colchester Town regeneration area.</p> <p>Negative impacts have been highlighted for the loss of Grade 1 Agricultural Land, which</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
		represents the highest grade soils within the Districts of both Tendring and Colchester. Despite this, impacts can not be highlighted as significant on the balance of sustainability implications and benefits of a Garden Community in this location and the additional economic benefits of its location in close proximity to Colchester Town Centre, the University of Essex and strategic ports to the east.		
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	++	++	++
	6	++	++	++
	7	++	++	++
	8	++	++	++
	9	?	?	?
	10	++	++	++
	11	++	++	++
	12	++	++	++
	13	?	?	?
	14	+	+	+
	Commentary	<p>There will be significant positive impacts regarding accessible natural green space through requirements for open space to be integrated throughout the Garden Community and also the integration of major new Country Park. Additionally, the Plan successfully seeks to ensure sports pitches, recreation and play areas and informal space for free play and recreation for all ages. As a result, additional positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 7 regarding accessibility to facilities in so far as is relevant to this specific theme.</p> <p>There will be significant positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 6 regarding coalescence in response to the new community, through Theme 1, addressing the relationship with existing communities close to and within its boundaries, stating that care will be needed in new development to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent settlements and on the wider landscape.</p> <p>There will be significant positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 8, regarding the provision of a mix of house types and tenures. The Plan states that, 'TCBGC will provide for a mix of dwelling sizes, tenures and types including provision for self-build and custom-built homes, lifetime homes and affordable and starter homes, driven by local needs, including how this may change over time. This strategy will help to achieve lively, sociable and diverse neighbourhoods, giving single people, couples, families, retirees and elderly people the chance</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
	<p>play a full part in the life of TCBGC.' This can be seen to go beyond what the market can be expected to provide, however the Plan could elaborate in future iterations how these different types of housing (including Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision) could be integrated within the wider design of the Garden Community, in addition to affordable units, to ensure social inclusivity.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objectives 10 and 7 regarding the provision of schools and other supporting infrastructure, services and facilities. Charter Principle 4 of the Plan states that, 'Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will have a District Centre that will be the heart of the Garden Community. It will likely contain the highest development density with a mix of employment, shopping, secondary school, cultural and amenity facilities, together with the main public transport interchange. These uses will be interspersed with new homes, typically of higher density than elsewhere in the Garden Communities. Local centres will contain a smaller range of local services including primary schools, nurseries, health services, day-to-day convenience shopping and cafés.'</p> <p>The Plan's Principle 2 recognises the importance of ensuring the highest level of strategic connectivity with the wider transport system. The Plan includes that the new Garden Community should make full provision for active travel (walking and cycling) and sustainable travel (public transport) so that each accounts for 70% of all trips. The Plan identifies that this could represent a Rapid Transit service to Colchester on dedicated routes with new park & ride, a new link road from the A133 to a new junction on the A120, with the potential to also connect to the B1027 and B1028 to provide a new connection to the strategic road network without the need to go through Colchester, good connections to the University of Essex a key node for new transport infrastructure, and enhanced cycle links to central Colchester and to other nearby communities. This will ensure significant positive impacts regarding Sustainability Objectives 11 and 12.</p> <p>Charter Principle 5 identifies that the use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure linked to renewable energy generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. It is unsure whether this element of the Plan is suitable in response to the baseline data of car ownership in the wider area and the need for the development of 'specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land' as identified in the emerging Colchester and Braintree Local Plan Policy SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex. As such, uncertain impacts are identified at this stage.</p> <p>Charter Principle 5 will ensure minor positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 14, regarding innovative utility provision. This Principle includes 'Smart Infrastructure' requirements, which include cutting edge digital communications, Smart Energy systems to deliver sustainable energy and capacity and adaptability for technological change. Despite this, future iterations of the Plan could include specific mention of the requirements of day to day utility provision on site, aside from those related to energy efficiency, power and digital communications.</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	15	++	++	++
	16	+	+	+
	17	++	++	++
	18	++	++	++
	19	++	++	++
	20	?	?	?
	21	+	+	+
	22	?	?	?
	Commentary	<p>Significant positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 16, where the Plan states that, 'Habitats along the valleys and corridors of the Salary Brook and Sixpenny Brook include woodland, including Ancient Woodland, species-rich grassland and wetland habitats and should be retained and enhanced. The same should apply to the Nationally Important Bullock Wood.' Additionally, land to the southwest of the site creates a separation between Colchester and Wivenhoe that should be retained. Reference is similarly made to sustainable drainage systems, affording positive impacts. Regarding a desire to ensure that recreational activity does not affect wildlife conservation minor positive impacts are highlighted at this stage. Although the issue is not specifically identified in the Plan, Principle 1 alludes to the need for separate and more 'purpose designed' open spaces within the Garden Community. This will need to be carefully managed however to ensure no possible compromise of the status of habitats through recreational activity. Minor positive impacts have been identified at this stage, where the issue can be viewed as more a management criterion.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts are also identified for all landscape and coalescence based objectives. The Plan states that, 'The concept of Garden Communities places great emphasis on the landscape framework and the availability of high-quality, accessible green space near to homes and community facilities. The strategy for these new Garden Communities is to draw upon natural assets and features within the site to generate high standards of design. It requires an approach that sets development within a strong framework of internal green space and surrounding buffer areas that separate the new development from existing communities.'</p> <p>There will be positive impacts associated with renewable energy and energy efficiency (Sustainability Objective 19) though Principle 5, in particular the Smart Infrastructure principles that state that future work will endeavour ensure that the Garden Community makes space for heat and power energy generation centres and hubs, maximises efficiency at the household and business level, with on-site generation, and a mixed portfolio of energy technologies to</p>		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
	<p>avoid dependence on any one energy solution.</p> <p>Uncertain impacts have been identified regarding Sustainability Objective 20, ensuring that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development, in the absence of direct mention of the potential effects of development on existing water courses of the Salary Brook in Theme 1. Nevertheless, indirect positive implications can be expected through the enhancement and active management of the area as a Country Park.</p> <p>Although only minimal Listed Buildings are present within the site, the Plan does not include notions of enhancing the historic environment. Uncertain impacts have been highlighted for Sustainability Objective 22 at this stage and it is recommended that the relationship between new built development and these assets and their settings is recognised and elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan, with enhancement sought.</p>		

4.3.2.2 Alternatives Considered

The Theme at this stage relates to practical ways in which the Garden Community could meet the requirements of related Garden Community Charter principles. As such, it would be premature to indicate which measures should and would be more suitable for integration on site at this early stage in the plan-making process and prior to any formal public consultation. In the absence of any firm details within the Plan, no alternative approaches can be identified for appraisal at this stage.

4.3.2.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

- The Plan could elaborate in future iterations how these different types of housing (including Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision) could be integrated within the wider design of the Garden Community, in addition to affordable units, to ensure social inclusivity.
- Charter Principle 5 identifies that the use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure linked to renewable energy generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. It is unsure whether this element of the Plan is suitable in response to the baseline data of car ownership in the wider area and the need for the development of 'specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land' as identified in the emerging Colchester and Braintree Local Plan Policy SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex. It is recommended that this be included within future iterations of the Plan.
- Future iterations of the Plan could include specific mention of the requirements of day to day utility provision on site, aside from those related to energy efficiency, power and digital communications.
- Although the issue is not specifically identified in the Plan, Principle 1 alludes to the need for separate and more 'purpose designed' open spaces within the Garden Community. This will need to be carefully managed however to ensure no possible compromise of the status of habitats through recreational activity.

- Regarding ensuring that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development, there is no direct mention of the potential effects of development on existing water courses of the Salary Brook. It is recommended that this is elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan.
- Although only minimal Listed Buildings are present within the site, the Plan does not include notions of enhancing the historic environment. It is recommended that the relationship between new built development and these assets and their settings is recognised and elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan, with enhancement sought where possible.

4.3.3 Theme 2: Community

This Section of the Plan relates to issues such as creating identity in a new community, engaging with future residents and businesses, existing and surrounding communities and local and public bodies and ownership and maintenance of community assets.

The principles that form the content of this theme are as follows:

THEME 2: COMMUNITY

PRINCIPLE 7: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Garden Communities are a locally-led initiative, and their development will be shaped through engaging existing communities and emerging new communities; residents will be empowered to contribute to shaping the future of North Essex.

PRINCIPLE 8: ACTIVE LOCAL STEWARDSHIP

The Garden Communities will be developed and managed in perpetuity with the direct involvement of their residents and businesses; residents will be directly engaged in the long term management and stewardship, fostering a shared sense of ownership and identity.

4.3.3.1 Significant, Secondary and Temporal Effects

Table 7: Impact on Sustainability Objectives: Theme 2 - Community

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	0	0	0
	2	0	0	0
	3	0	0	0
	4	0	0	0
	Commentary	There will be no impacts on the economic Sustainability Objectives as a direct result of this Theme.		
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	+	+	+
	6	0	0	0
	7	+	+	+
	8	0	0	0

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
13	0	0	0
14	0	0	0
Commentary	There will be positive implications regarding those Sustainability Objectives related to open space management and ensuring an appropriate and desirable level of services and facilities, through effective community engagement and active stewardship once the Garden Community has been delivered.		
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	15	+	+
	16	+	+
	17	+	+
	18	0	0
	19	0	0
	20	0	0
	21	+	+
	22	0	0
	Commentary	The Plan asks a consultation question within Charter Principle 8 that asks consideration of the best way to manage community assets such as parks, sports pitches, allotments, community buildings and schools. This can also ensure positive impacts related to the maintenance of habitats, green and blue infrastructure (including indirectly those created through SuDS) and ensuring these are protected alongside recreational areas, and landscape features.	

4.3.3.2 Alternatives Considered

The Theme at this stage relates to practical ways in which the Garden Community could meet the requirements of related Garden Community Charter principles. As such, it would be premature to indicate which measures should and would be more suitable for integration on site at this early stage in the plan-making process and prior to any formal public consultation. In the absence of any firm details within the Plan, no alternative approaches can be identified for appraisal at this stage.

4.3.3.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

4.3.4 Theme 3: Delivery

This Section of the Plan relates to issues such as leadership, partnership and phasing and delivery of homes together with jobs; education, leisure and community facilities; and transport and utilities infrastructure.

The principles that form the content of this theme are as follows:

THEME 3: DELIVERY

PRINCIPLE 9: STRONG CORPORATE AND POLITICAL PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

The Councils of North Essex will collaborate to provide clear vision for the garden communities and commitment to their long term success. Central to this will be a commitment to high quality place-making, timely infrastructure provision, and achieving a steady pace of housing and employment delivery.

PRINCIPLE 10: INNOVATIVE DELIVERY STRUCTURE

The Garden Communities will be delivered through a genuine and pro-active partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward is shared and community empowerment enabled.

4.3.4.1 Significant, Secondary and Temporal Effects

Table 8: Impact on Sustainability Objectives: Theme 3 - Delivery

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	+	+	+
	2	+	+	+
	3	+	+	+
	4	0	0	0
	Commentary	Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the economic Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes.		

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Impacts		
		Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	+	+	+
	6	+	+	+
	7	+	+	+
	8	+	+	+
	9	?	?	?
	10	+	+	+
	11	+	+	+
	12	+	+	+
	13	+	+	+
	14	+	+	+
	Commentary	Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the social Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes. Uncertain impacts are identified for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision, where mention of this requirement is currently absent from the Plan.		
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	15	+	+	+
	16	+	+	+
	17	+	+	+
	18	+	+	+
	19	+	+	+
	20	+	+	+

Sustainability Objectives (SO)	Impacts		
	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
21	+	+	+
22	+	+	+
Commentary	Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the environmental Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a ‘...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.’ With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council’s aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes. Uncertain impacts regarding Sustainability Objective 9 reflect the absence of provision elsewhere in the Plan’s Themes.		

4.3.4.2 Alternatives Considered

The Theme at this stage relates to practical ways in which the Garden Community could meet the requirements of related Garden Community Charter principles. As such, it would be premature to indicate which measures should and would be more suitable for integration on site at this early stage in the plan-making process and prior to any formal public consultation. In the absence of any firm details within the Plan, no alternative approaches can be identified for appraisal at this stage.

It should be noted however that the Strategic Section One for Tendring and Colchester’s emerging Local Plans establishes and assesses alternatives relevant to the principle of the Garden Community delivery model in comparison to more traditional approaches to growth.

4.3.4.3 Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

5. The Plan's Development Concept Option

5.1 The Identification of Options for Assessment

The Plan states that, 'The area of land that could accommodate a new Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders has been refined from options presented in the "Options and Evaluation" work undertaken by AECOM in July 2016 and influenced by stakeholder consultation with local community representatives in November 2016 and April 2017, as well as an understanding of the issues and the interrelationship between them which include:

- identification of clear and defensible boundaries (water courses, roads, woodland belts);
- appreciation of distance and separation of communities – (physical, visual, perceived);
- relationship to existing settlements;
- nature of land that will perform the role of a "green buffer" which will define an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated that remains distinct from other existing settlements;
- planning policy protection (how might this land be protected "in perpetuity" from built development whilst allowing complementary activities that support both the new community and existing communities?).'

The capacity range of the Garden Community identified in the draft joint Strategic Section One Local Plan Policy SP8 is 7,000 - 9,000 homes. The Plan adds that 'the boundaries of development will be further refined in the Development Plan Document that follows the exploration of Issues and Options.' Additionally, the Plan states that, 'there are, of course, factors that could limit the number of homes that can be built and the locations where they can be built. Some development constraints are flexible and can be accommodated through appropriate design and some are fixed. But all options will include choices, choices that lead to compromises, often between important but competing objectives.'

Broad boundary options relevant to the Garden Community were explored within the SA of the Section One of Tendring and Colchester's Local Plans. Development Concept options have not been developed within the Plan relevant to these or any additional different boundary options and as such, alternative options do not exist to the same level of detail as the current Development Concept. For this reason, reasonable alternatives are not identifiable at this stage.

Nevertheless, this does not limit the exploration of different alternatives relevant to the Plan's content at future stages of the plan-making process. A second Regulation 18 consultation on 'Preferred Options' allows the Councils to develop or explore other options that emerge as a result of this Issues and Options consultation. Should any reasonable alternatives be identified in this manner, these will be assessed as they emerge with findings fed back to the plan-makers. The appraisal of any alternative approaches will be presented in the second Regulation 18 consultation on 'Preferred Options' Sustainability Appraisal in line with the requirements of national policy and the SEA Directive.

5.2 What has Sustainability Appraisals involved at this point?

Sustainability Appraisal work undertaken on the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring Councils forms a good starting point to base the assessment of the Garden Community within the Plan. The SA of the Strategic Section One of the Local Plans of Braintree District, Colchester Borough and Tendring District Councils, appraises the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The Section One SA assessed a number of options relevant to the Garden Community. These included options related to:

- A Southern Land Focus
- Land between the A133 to Colchester – Ipswich rail line
- A North to South wrap

That SA also explored a number of alternative Garden Community options across a wider strategic area. Therefore the scope of that appraisal was broader and sustainability objectives were devised to be relevant to assess options across the strategic area on a level playing field. Also, the boundaries for the options were only broadly identified, and further work has been undertaken to determine 'red line' boundaries for the options.

The appraisal of the Garden Community within the Local Plan had a different context. Within the Section One Local Plan, broad areas were assessed within the Local Plan context, using broad sustainability criteria relevant to Garden City principles where relevant and in consideration of broad constraints relevant to sustainability. This approach would consider the sustainability of Garden Communities as broad locations and ensure that the most sustainable locations are progressed to the benefit of the area's specific needs.

Garden Communities are by nature large Greenfield sites that can maximise sustainability benefits over a wide area. The Local Plan SAs used assumptions that their scale can seek effective mitigation and enhancements where smaller sites can not. To that extent, 'constraints' were actually considered 'benefits' for many sustainability factors and a pragmatic approach was taken to ensure both a fair appraisal and also in order to identify different impacts between options for comparison purposes.

5.3 The Appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept Option

5.3.1 Introduction

Site specific issues at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community need to be re-addressed commensurate to the level of detail and focus of the Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders. The scoping requirements of the SA are set out in earlier sections of this report, and have been devised to explore the sustainability issues that are relevant to the Garden Community only.

5.3.2 The Appraisal of the Development Concept Option

This sub-section assesses the Garden Community Development Concept content and boundary that has been explored within the Plan against the Sustainability Objectives identified earlier this report. The assessment focuses on quantitative impacts where possible, with a limit on the use of qualitative judgements and assumptions in order to provide a snapshot of the sustainability of the Option 'on the ground'. Nevertheless, some qualitative conclusions / professional judgements are suitable to include to aid the appraisal of some of the more aspirational Sustainability Objectives at this early stage. The appraisal explores the form of the completed Development Concept as it is included within the Plan at this early stage in the plan-making process.

A more qualitative assumption based appraisal, filling in the gaps of those unaddressed Sustainability Objectives at this stage, is likely to follow in future iterations of this SA. At this stage, the conclusions section of this SA provides a 'whole plan' overview regarding adherence to the Sustainability Objectives, exploring whether these gaps are adequately covered or addressed through the Plan's thematic content and consideration of Garden Community Charter Principles.

5.3.2.1 Sustainability Objective 1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to new employment uses:

- Broad distance / access to strategic road and rail network
- Distribution / access in regard to new residential areas

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	The Development Concept has been assessed as having significant positive impacts on this Sustainability Objective. The employment areas included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to residential development, and all have good strategic access to strategic road links. Aside from those concentrated areas of employment in the north west of the site and the south east, a number of mixed use areas are distributed throughout the site commensurate to spinal routes through the site.

5.3.2.2 Sustainability Objective 2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to existing employment links:

- Broad distance to Colchester town centre

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	The Development Option has been assessed as having significant positive impacts due to the inclusion of a number of mixed use locations, which can be expected to include convenience shopping services within the Garden Community. In addition, the Development Concept presents good links to the wider town of Colchester, including regeneration areas in the east of the town and at the Hythe. Despite these positive impacts, the Development Concept could highlight a possible location of the District Centre discussed within the wider Plan.

5.3.2.3 Sustainability Objective 3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to existing employment links:

- Broad distances to employment centres

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	The Garden Community is in close proximity to employment in the town of Colchester and the University of Essex and is accessible to regionally important employment hubs and London Stansted Airport wider afield via strategic road links. In addition, the location of employment land in the south east of the Garden Community adheres to maximising the potential links between these existing employment hubs in the local area. The proximity of existing, and suitable integration, of public transport opportunities is explored in the assessment of options against Sustainability Objective 10. The Development Concept has been assessed as having significantly positive impacts at this stage.

5.3.2.4 Sustainability Objective 4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to soil quality:

- Agricultural Land Classification
- Potential contamination issues

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	-
Commentary	The Garden Community is within Grade 1 Agricultural Land which is classified as excellent and as such, negative impacts have been identified. Negative impacts are not significant however due to balance of employment benefits in the local area and the impacts associated with the Development Concept in maximising these strengths. In addition, the built form of the Garden Community as presented seeks a concentration of development in central areas, ensuring that large areas of land remain undeveloped, which minimises the loss of agricultural land. The negative impacts highlighted in this assessment are not a criticism of the plan or the principle of the Garden Community and is more associated with the nature and notion of development of this scale within the two districts. At this early stage, contamination issues have not been identified specifically for parcels of land associated with former land uses; however it should be noted that there are not any identified land uses on site that have been identified as being identified as potential contaminants. In any eventuality, the scale of the Garden Community can ensure that remediation is ensured and that contaminated land is brought back into use with positive outcomes.

5.3.2.5 Sustainability Objective 5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to the provision of accessible natural green space:

- The extent of open space within the Options
- The location of open space within the Options and accessibility to residential areas

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	+
Commentary	The Development Concept has been identified as having positive impacts on the provision and location of new accessible natural green space within the Garden Community. The Development Concept includes significant networks of green space commensurate to the requirements and notion of Garden Communities. At this early stage, impacts are not significant where only broad layouts are required to be identified. It is considered that the identification of accessible natural green space, in the form of identified areas for specific functions and the relationship between such areas is not necessary to be identified at this stage and will be better integrated into the Garden Community following public consultation and compliance with Charter Principles 7 (community engagement) and 8 (active local stewardship). A re-assessment within the SA process, and any possible sub-options should they be

	The Current Development Concept
	identified through consultation / engagement, will likely be required to accompany future iterations of the Plan.

5.3.2.6 Sustainability Objective 6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to landscape:

- Landscape Character Areas – sensitivity to change
- Possible coalescence with neighbouring settlements
- Presence of existing dwellings on site

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	Regarding coalescence, the Development Concept does not result in urban encroachment on existing settlements. In this regard, there is adherence to the Garden City Principle of ensuring a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl. Regarding with existing buildings on site, the primary loss is to those few far buildings associated with Blossomwood Farm and Allen's Farm, which are included within the Concept's developed area. Overall, significantly positive impacts are identified.

5.3.2.7 Sustainability Objective 7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to new services and facilities and accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities:

- Distribution / access of neighbourhood / local centres and employment areas in regard to new residential areas.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	The Development Concept has been assessed as having significant positive impacts on this Sustainability Objective. The employment areas, new mixed use areas and schools included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to areas of residential development, and all have good internal access to road links and green infrastructure / active modes of transportation. Additionally, Key Rapid Transit nodes complemented by a series of local transport interchanges supporting the integration of public transport with cycling / walking. This network would promote the principles of walkable community catchments, and serve key community facilities.

5.3.2.8 Sustainability Objective 8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.9 Sustainability Objective 9) To ensure that provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is appropriately located within the Garden Community with regard to access to services and social integration.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.10 Sustainability Objective 10) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.11 Sustainability Objective 11) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to public transport modes:

- Distribution / access of MRT and public transport routes / stops in regard to new residential areas and rail links.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	The distribution and accessibility of MRT and public transport routes / stops in regard to new residential areas and rail links can be seen to ensure significant positive impacts. The Development Concept includes the integration of a mass rapid transit system as a principal route through Garden Community, providing a service connecting the employment areas in the north (co-located with Park-and-Ride provision) and the mixed-use centres. Outside the site it could connect Colchester Town and its stations with the University and Knowledge Gateway providing opportunities for rail-based services to deliver frequent and reliable journeys to rail stations, which, over time, could be expanded as part of a wider Rapid Transit network that extends across the urban area of Colchester. There will also be public transport corridors to include enhanced bus connections beyond the development site, to the University, and to Colchester and its railway stations.

5.3.2.12 Sustainability Objective 12) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site, minimising the impacts of separation associated with the Great Eastern Main Line and A-roads on site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to access within the site:

- Permeability on site
- Severance due to the A12 and rail line

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	The direct access of the Garden Community to the A133 can be considered advantageous in terms of connectivity in the wider context. The Development Concept states that 'a new junction on the A120 will provide a highway link to the A133 and access to TCBGC. The link road would form a development edge.' It adds that 'junctions at either end of the new link road would allow traffic travelling into Colchester access to new Park-and-Ride facilities at the northern and southern ends of the link road'. The Development Concept otherwise provides numerous primary road linkages to ensure accessibility within the Garden Community (including to existing roads) and includes a Rapid Transit Route that is well located in regard to the indicative residential areas.

5.3.2.13 Sustainability Objective 13) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.14 Sustainability Objective 14) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.15 Sustainability Objective 15) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to biodiversity:

- Direct impact on Natura 2000 sites
- The presence of SSSIs
- Presence of Local Wildlife Sites
- Presence of priority habitats on site

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	+
Commentary	The Garden Community area contains a SSSI (Bullock Wood) and the Local Nature Reserves of Salary Brook and Welsh Wood are in close proximity to / within the site. There are additionally existing natural landscape and ecological features within the site such as Salary Brook, Welsh Wood, woodland, ancient woodland and a network of intact hedgerows and associated veteran trees, land drains and ditches. The Development Concept seeks to integrate these into the Garden Community as part of the wider green infrastructure network.

5.3.2.16 Sustainability Objective 16) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to ensuring that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area:

- Wider potential impacts on Natura 2000 sites and measures to mitigate Section One HRA / AA findings

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	?
Commentary	Habitat creation may be a requirement of the Garden Community in light of the HRA of the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring, which indicates that the site is within the Essex Estuaries SAC and Colne Estuary SPA / Ramsar zones of influence. A subsequent AA further highlighted the possibility that impacts on wintering birds could lead to the requirement for mitigation in the form of habitat creation and management in perpetuity, either on-site or through provision of strategic sites for these species elsewhere. It is possible that the Development Concept will need to be amended to factor in this mitigation once suitable measures are known pending the publication of Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS). As such, uncertain impacts are highlighted at this stage.

5.3.2.17 Sustainability Objective 17) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to landscape features:

- Presence of priority habitats and known features of landscape value on site.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	++
Commentary	Natural England's National Character Area Profile: Northern Thames Basin, in which this area lies, indicates that the rural urban fringe should be conserved and enhanced through the spatial planning process and through good design in development. There are additionally existing natural landscape and ecological features within the site such as Salary Brook, Welsh Wood, woodland, ancient woodland and a network of intact hedgerows and associated veteran trees, land drains and ditches. Despite this, the topography of the land indicates benefits to the proposals in the form of integrating development into a natural context. The Salary Brook is identified as coastal and floodplain grazing marsh and the area to the immediate east along this river stretch is identified as Ancient & Semi-Natural / Replanted Woodland (predominantly associated with Churn Wood). These landscape features are all within undeveloped areas within the Development Concept. As such, significant positive impacts are highlighted.

5.3.2.18 Sustainability Objective 18) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective at this stage and pending further detail. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal through newly created and compatible on-site features, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.19 Sustainability Objective 19) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.

No assessment of the Development Concept options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective. In addition to being considered a more 'policy based' requirement of any proposal through newly created and compatible on-site features, any impacts associated with opportunities would be indistinguishable between the options.

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	0
Commentary	No assessment of the options has been made regarding this Sustainability Objective.

5.3.2.20 Sustainability Objective 20) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to water quality:

- Impacts on flows
- The presence of water bodies on site
- Groundwater Protection Zones
- Water quality of water courses in and in proximity of the site

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	?/+
Commentary	<p>The Development Concept has been identified as having the potential to impact on flows entering the Salary Brook. Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Salary Brook has a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:</p> <p>1. Alteration of river banks and river beds</p>

	The Current Development Concept
	2. Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish 3. Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment 4. Diffuse pollution from surface water 5. Reduced flow in rivers In the case of the Salary Brook water course, the location of the Brook is located to the Garden Community's western boundary. The Development Concept identifies a significant belt of amenity open space within this area with no built development in close proximity. As a result, uncertain to positive impacts are highlighted at this stage.

5.3.2.21 Sustainability Objective 21) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to fluvial flood risk:

- Presence of waterbodies and land within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	+
Commentary	Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. The surrounding area of Salary Brook has land within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. No development is proposed for this specific area. A water body exists at the location of the former quarry at Allen's Farm. The Development Concept identifies residential development at this site; however potential exists to integrate this into the development as a landscape feature. Further assessment will be required regarding surface water flood risk once more detailed concepts are developed. Overall, positive impacts have been identified.

5.3.2.22 Sustainability Objective 22) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.

The SA explores the following issues on the site in regard to the historic environment:

- Presence of heritage assets
- Impact on heritage assets and their settings (subject to further investigation / assessment once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan)

	The Current Development Concept
Impacts	+
Commentary	Listed Buildings are present within the site, although these are predominantly located within areas identified for open space in the western part of the Garden Community. Additionally however, a Listed Building exists at Allen's Farm, however further assessment will be needed once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan and in consideration of the asset based on its individual sensitivities. Overall however, positive impacts are identified at this stage.

5.3.3 Mitigation Measures & Recommendations

No mitigation measures have been identified at this stage commensurate to the level of detail of the Plan and the acknowledgement that the Development Concepts presented are indicative and subject to public consultation and wider engagement. Nevertheless, a series of further recommendations are made for inclusion in future Plan iterations. These are:

- The Development Concept could highlight a possible location for the District Centre discussed within the wider Plan.
- It is considered that the identification of accessible natural green space and recreation and leisure, in the form of identified areas for specific functions is not necessary to be identified at this stage and will be better integrated into the Garden Community following public consultation and compliance with Charter Principles 7 (community engagement) and 8 (active local stewardship). Nevertheless, a re-assessment within the SA process, and any possible sub-options should they be identified through consultation / engagement, will likely be required to accompany future iterations of the Plan.
- Habitat creation may be a requirement of the Garden Community in light of the HRA of the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring, which indicates that the site is within the Essex Estuaries SAC and Colne Estuary SPA / Ramsar zones of influence. A subsequent AA further highlighted the possibility that impacts on wintering birds could lead to the requirement for mitigation in the form of habitat creation and management in perpetuity, either on-site or through provision of strategic sites for these species elsewhere. It is possible that the Development Concept will need to be amended to factor in this mitigation once suitable measures are known pending the publication of Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS).
- The Development Concept has been identified as having the potential to impact on flows

entering the Salary Brook. Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Salary Brook has a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:

1. Alteration of river banks and river beds
 2. Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish
 3. Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment
 4. Diffuse pollution from surface water
 5. Reduced flow in rivers
- A water body exists at the location of the former quarry at Allen's Farm. The Development Concept identifies residential development at this site; however potential exists to integrate this into the development as a landscape feature. Further assessment will be required regarding surface water flood risk once more detailed concepts are developed.
 - Further assessment of impacts on Listed Buildings and their settings will be needed once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan and in consideration of the asset based on its individual sensitivities.

6. Non-Technical Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 The Plan's Themes and Principles

6.1.1 Key Points from the Assessment of the Plan's Themes and Principles

The following table sets out the impacts identified through the appraisal of the Plan's Themes and Principles.

Table 9: Summary of Impacts of the Plan's Themes and Principles

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Theme 1: Place and Integration	Theme 2: Community	Theme 3: Delivery
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1	++	0	+
	2	++	0	+
	3	++	0	+
	4	-	0	0
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5	++	+	+
	6	++	0	+
	7	++	+	+
	8	++	0	+
	9	?	0	?
	10	++	0	+
	11	++	0	+
	12	++	0	+
	13	?	0	+

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		Theme 1: Place and Integration	Theme 2: Community	Theme 3: Delivery
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	14	+	0	+
	15	++	+	+
	16	+	+	+
	17	++	+	+
	18	++	0	+
	19	++	0	+
	20	?	0	+
	21	+	+	+
	22	?	0	+

The following key points can be made from the appraisal of the Plan's Themes and Principles:

- Significant positive impacts are highlighted for Sustainability Objective 1 and 3, where the Plan identifies that new employment space at TCBGC could be provided to accommodate employment space related to commercialising the research and innovation strengths of the University of Essex, renewable and offshore energy, smart technology, port-related activities, health and care, tourism and leisure and logistics.
- Positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objective 2 and a need for convenience retail provision to support the new community. The formulation of a District Centre and a number of local centres will ensure that impacts on the retail and comparison shopping offer of Colchester Town Centre are not compromised and significantly boosted, particularly in the east Colchester Town regeneration area.
- Negative impacts have been highlighted for the loss of Grade 1 Agricultural Land, which represents the highest grade soils within the Districts of both Tendring and Colchester. Despite this, impacts can not be highlighted as significant on the balance of sustainability implications and benefits of a Garden Community in this location and the additional economic benefits of its location in close proximity to Colchester Town Centre, the University of Essex and strategic ports to the east.
- There will be significant positive impacts regarding accessible natural green space through requirements for open space to be integrated throughout the Garden Community and also the integration of major new Country Park.
- There will be significant positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 6 regarding coalescence in

response to the new community, through Theme 1, addressing the relationship with existing communities close to and within its boundaries, stating that care will be needed in new development to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent settlements and on the wider landscape.

- There will be significant positive impacts on Sustainability Objective 8, regarding the provision of a mix of house types and tenures.
- Significant positive impacts have been highlighted regarding Sustainability Objectives 10 and 7 regarding the provision of schools and other supporting infrastructure, services and facilities.
- The Plan's Principle 2 recognises the importance of ensuring the highest level of strategic connectivity with the wider transport system. The Plan includes that the new Garden Community should make full provision for active travel (walking and cycling) and sustainable travel (public transport) so that each accounts for 70% of all trips.
- Significant positive impacts have been identified for Sustainability Objective 16, where the Plan states that, 'Habitats along the valleys and corridors of the Salary Brook and Sixpenny Brook include woodland, including Ancient Woodland, species-rich grassland and wetland habitats and should be retained and enhanced. The same should apply to the Nationally Important Bullock Wood.'
- Significant positive impacts are also identified for all landscape and coalescence based objectives. The Plan states that, 'The concept of Garden Communities... requires an approach that sets development within a strong framework of internal green space and surrounding buffer areas that separate the new development from existing communities.'
- There will be positive impacts associated with renewable energy and energy efficiency (Sustainability Objective 19) though Principle 5, in particular the Smart Infrastructure principles.
- There will be positive implications regarding those Sustainability Objectives related to open space management and ensuring an appropriate and desirable level of services and facilities, through effective community engagement and active stewardship once the Garden Community has been delivered.
- The Plan asks a consultation question within Charter Principle 8 that asks consideration of the best way to manage community assets such as parks, sports pitches, allotments, community buildings and schools. This can also ensure positive impacts related to the maintenance of habitats, green and blue infrastructure (including indirectly those created through SuDS) and ensuring these are protected alongside recreational areas, and landscape features.
- Theme 3 will ensure, indirectly, that the majority of the Sustainability Objectives will be met with positive outcomes. The Plan states that there is a '...desire of the public sector, represented by the partnership of four local Councils and representing the interests of the wider North Essex communities, to play a full and active role in the development of the three Garden Communities, and to participate in both the risks and the rewards of development, securing benefits for the wider communities.' With a preference for the formation of local Development Corporations to prepare masterplans and other guidance, the Plan and Council's aspire to offer truly sustainable outcomes.

6.1.2 Mitigation Measures and Recommendations regarding the Plan's Vision, Themes and Principles

The following key points can be made from the appraisal of the Plan's Vision, Themes and Principles:

- Uncertainty surrounds the Vision where certain objectives are not specifically covered, such as ensuring a mix of housing types and tenures, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision, utility provision (including high-speed broadband) and it is recommended that these are included within future iterations of the Vision. It is recommended that these are included.
- The Plan could elaborate in future iterations how these different types of housing (including Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision) could be integrated within the wider design of the Garden Community, in addition to affordable units, to ensure social inclusivity.
- Charter Principle 5 identifies that the use of Smart Vehicles would make full provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure linked to renewable energy generation while Smart Car-Sharing would use technology to make cars available for occasional use and would help manage Smart Parking. It is unsure whether this element of the Plan is suitable in response to the baseline data of car ownership in the wider area and the need for the development of 'specific garden community parking approaches and standards that help promote the use of sustainable transport and make efficient use of land' as identified in the emerging Colchester and Braintree Local Plan Policy SP7 - Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex. It is recommended that this be included within future iterations of the Plan.
- Future iterations of the Plan could include specific mention of the requirements of day to day utility provision on site, aside from those related to energy efficiency, power and digital communications.
- Although the issue is not specifically identified in the Plan, Principle 1 alludes to the need for separate and more 'purpose designed' open spaces within the Garden Community. This will need to be carefully managed however to ensure no possible compromise of the status of habitats through recreational activity.
- Regarding ensuring that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development, there is no direct mention of the potential effects of development on existing water courses of the Salary Brook. It is recommended that this is elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan.
- Although only minimal Listed Buildings are present within the site, the Plan does not include notions of enhancing the historic environment. It is recommended that the relationship between new built development and these assets and their settings is recognised and elaborated on in future iterations of the Plan, with enhancement sought where possible.

6.2 The Plan's Development Concept Option

6.2.1 Key Points from the Assessment of the Plan's Development Concept Option

The following table sets out the impacts identified through the appraisal of the Plan's Development Concept option.

Table 10: Summary of Impacts of the Plan's Development Concept Option

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		The Current Development Concept
ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES	1) To ensure that new employment and complimentary uses are suitably provided and located within the Garden Community.	++
	2) To ensure that new retail space is suitably provided and located within the Garden Community, with no subsequent harm to the retail function of Colchester town centre.	++
	3) To maximise existing linkages and strengths in the local economy.	++
	4) To minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	-
SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	5) To ensure sufficient accessible natural green space throughout the Garden Community to benefit the new community and the surrounding rural areas.	+
	6) To improve areas between existing settlements and new development and to ensure that there is no coalescence with existing settlements.	++
	7) To ensure that a range of services and facilities are included and suitably located within the Garden Community to maximise social inclusivity and to ensure sustainable land use patterns that maximise accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities	++
	8) To ensure a mix of housing types and tenures with as high a proportion of affordable units as possible.	0
	9) To ensure that provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is appropriately located within the Garden Community with regard to access to services and social integration.	0
	10) To ensure the delivery of new schools and other infrastructure to support the Garden Community.	0

Sustainability Objectives (SO)		The Current Development Concept
	11) To ensure suitable public transport improvements and maximise sustainable transport modes on site, minimise vehicle emissions, and to ensure effective links to existing off-site public transport services and interchanges.	++
	12) To ensure suitable and permeable access to and within the site and to ensure appropriate linkages to the existing road network.	++
	13) To ensure an appropriate level of car parking.	0
	14) To ensure suitable and innovative utility provision, including high-speed and broadband and to ensure the design of new development is capable of maximising innovative forms of emerging utility-related technologies.	0
ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES	15) To protect and enhance existing features of biodiversity through green corridors and ensure links between new habitats within the Garden Community and those that exist over a wider area.	+
	16) To ensure that recreational activity does not have negative effects on wildlife conservation and protection in the wider area.	?
	17) To ensure the protection, enhancement and creation of features of a landscape value throughout the Garden Community.	++
	18) To ensure that the Garden Community is integrated into the existing rural landscape.	0
	19) To embrace sustainable forms of energy production and distribution.	0
	20) To ensure that there is no deterioration in water quality as a result of development.	?/+
	21) To ensure that there is no increase in fluvial or surface water flood risk as a result of development, with positive outcomes sought in regards to biodiversity gain and blue infrastructure networks through SuDS.	+
	22) To protect, and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings both above and below ground.	+

The following key points can be made from the appraisal of the Plan's Development Concept Option:

- The employment areas included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to residential development, and all have good strategic access to strategic road links. Aside from those concentrated areas of employment in the north west of the site and the south east, a number of mixed use areas are distributed throughout the site commensurate to spinal

routes through the site.

- The Development Concept has been assessed as having significant positive impacts due to the inclusion of a number of mixed use locations, which can be expected to include convenience shopping services within the Garden Community. In addition, the Development Concept presents good links to the wider town of Colchester, including regeneration areas in the east of the town and at the Hythe. Despite these positive impacts, the Development Concept could highlight a possible location of the District Centre discussed within the wider Plan.
- The Garden Community is in close proximity to employment in the town of Colchester and the University of Essex and is accessible to regionally important employment hubs and London Stansted Airport wider afield via strategic road links. In addition, the location of employment land in the south east of the Garden Community adheres to maximising the potential links between these existing employment hubs in the local area.
- The Garden Community is within Grade 1 Agricultural Land which is classified as excellent and as such, negative impacts have been identified. Negative impacts are not significant however due to balance of employment benefits in the local area and the impacts associated with the Development Concept in maximising these strengths.
- The Development Concept has been identified as having positive impacts on the provision and location of new accessible natural green space within the Garden Community. The Development Concept includes significant networks of green space commensurate to the requirements and notion of Garden Communities.
- The Development Concept does not result in urban encroachment on existing settlements. In this regard, there is adherence to the Garden City Principle of ensuring a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl.
- Employment areas, new mixed use areas and schools included within the Development Concept can be seen to be in close proximity to areas of residential development, and all have good internal access to road links and green infrastructure / active modes of transportation.
- The Development Concept includes the integration of a mass rapid transit system as a principal route through Garden Community, providing a service connecting the employment areas in the north (co-located with Park-and-Ride provision) and the mixed-use centres. Outside the site it could connect Colchester Town and its stations with the University and Knowledge Gateway providing opportunities for rail-based services to deliver frequent and reliable journeys to rail stations.
- The direct access of the Garden Community to the A133 can be considered advantageous in terms of connectivity in the wider context.
- The Garden Community area contains a SSSI (Bullock Wood) and the Local Nature Reserves of Salary Brook and Welsh Wood are in close proximity to / within the site. There are additionally existing natural landscape and ecological features within the site such as Salary Brook, Welsh Wood, woodland, ancient woodland and a network of intact hedgerows and associated veteran trees, land drains and ditches. The Development Concept seeks to integrate these into the Garden Community as part of the wider green infrastructure network.
- The topography of the land indicates benefits to the proposals in the form of integrating

development into a natural context. The Salary Brook is identified as coastal and floodplain grazing marsh and the area to the immediate east along this river stretch is identified as Ancient & Semi-Natural / Replanted Woodland (predominantly associated with Churn Wood). These landscape features are all within undeveloped areas within the Development Concept.

- Significant levels of flood risk have been identified along river stretches. The surrounding area of the Salary Brook has land which is in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. No development is proposed for this specific area.

6.2.2 Mitigation Measures and Recommendations regarding the Plan's Development Concept Option

No mitigation measures have been identified at this stage commensurate to the level of detail of the Plan and the acknowledgement that the Development Concepts presented are indicative and subject to public consultation and wider engagement. Nevertheless, a series of further recommendations are made for inclusion in future Plan iterations. These are:

- The Development Concept could highlight a possible location for the District Centre discussed within the wider Plan.
- It is considered that the identification of accessible natural green space and recreation and leisure, in the form of identified areas for specific functions is not necessary to be identified at this stage and will be better integrated into the Garden Community following public consultation and compliance with Charter Principles 7 (community engagement) and 8 (active local stewardship). Nevertheless, a re-assessment within the SA process, and any possible sub-options should they be identified through consultation / engagement, will likely be required to accompany future iterations of the Plan.
- Habitat creation may be a requirement of the Garden Community in light of the HRA of the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring, which indicates that the site is within the Essex Estuaries SAC and Colne Estuary SPA / Ramsar zones of influence. A subsequent AA further highlighted the possibility that impacts on wintering birds could lead to the requirement for mitigation in the form of habitat creation and management in perpetuity, either on-site or through provision of strategic sites for these species elsewhere. It is possible that the Development Concept will need to be amended to factor in this mitigation once suitable measures are known pending the publication of Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS).
- The Development Concept has been identified as having the potential to impact on flows entering the Salary Brook. Water bodies altered by human activity may be classified as Heavily Modified (HMWB) or Artificial (AWB) and have an objective to achieve 'good potential'. The Salary Brook has a 'moderate' overall status. Pressures from development that could cause deterioration include:
 1. Alteration of river banks and river beds
 2. Barriers that restrict movement of, for example, fish
 3. Cumulative impacts in a particular catchment
 4. Diffuse pollution from surface water

5. Reduced flow in rivers

- A water body exists at the location of the former quarry at Allen's Farm. The Development Concept identifies residential development at this site; however potential exists to integrate this into the development as a landscape feature. Further assessment will be required regarding surface water flood risk once more detailed concepts are developed.
- Further assessment of impacts on Listed Buildings and their settings will be needed once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan and in consideration of the asset based on its individual sensitivities.

6.3 Key Impacts of the Plan as a Whole

The Plan includes a series of Themes and Principles that can negate or seek to mitigate some of those on-site impacts that have been identified in the appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept option.

The assessment of the Plan's Development Concept has been undertaken from a 'policy off' point of view; impacts are identified without any consideration of the Plan's thematic content or principles at present. This section explores those instances where impacts can be negated or mitigated through the Plan as a whole at this stage.

It should be acknowledged however that the Plan is reflective of work undertaken to date, and some elements of site specifics will be more appropriately addressed within future stages of the Plan.

Issue identified in the appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept	Is the issue addressed in the Plan's Themes and Principles?
Accessible natural green space, in the form of identified areas for specific functions (such as parkland, recreation etc.) and the relationship between such areas and general wildlife conservation.	The impacts regarding the relationship between different areas of open space, specifically between newly created habitats and recreation are partly considered within the Plan. The Plan states that, 'The provision of recreation facilities within the new Garden Community, including generous amounts of open space will help reduce the potential impact that additional residential uses will have on protected habitats in the area.'
Habitat creation may be a requirement of the Garden Community in light of the HRA of the emerging Local Plans of Colchester and Tendring, which indicates that the site is within the Essex Estuaries SAC and Colne Estuary SPA / Ramsar zones of influence.	These impacts are considered within the Plan. the Plan states that, 'The provision of recreation facilities within the new Garden Community, including generous amounts of open space and a dedicated County Park, will help reduce the potential impact that additional residential uses will have on protected habitats in the

Issue identified in the appraisal of the Garden Community Development Concept	Is the issue addressed in the Plan's Themes and Principles?
	area.
The Garden Community has been identified as having the potential to impact on flows entering the Salary Brook and water quality.	The specific considerations of the Garden Community and the water quality of existing river channels on site are not specifically considered within the Plan.
The potential for surface water flooding	The Plan states that, 'The green spaces in the landscape framework can accommodate the following functions: SUDS/ drainage and watercourses.'
Further assessment of impacts on Listed Buildings and their settings will be needed once more detailed proposals have been identified within the Plan and in consideration of the asset based on its individual sensitivities.	The importance of the historic environment is partly considered within the Plan although perhaps not in consideration of the protection and enhancement of assets as an irreplaceable resource. The Plan states, that, 'the design and layout should respond positively to the historic environment which creates opportunities for developing distinctiveness and interesting places.'

7. Next Steps

7.1 Consultation

This Scoping and Environmental Report will be subject to consultation alongside the Plan for Tendring Colchester Borders. There are three statutory consultees or ‘environmental authorities’ that are required to be consulted for all Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment documents. These are:

- The Environment Agency;
- Natural England; and
- Historic England.

In addition to these, consultation will seek to engage the wider community in order to encompass comprehensive public engagement. Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council may additionally wish to invite comments from focussed groups, relevant stakeholders and interested parties. The detailed arrangements for consultation are to be determined by the two Local Planning Essex Authorities. The environmental authorities and public are to be given ‘an early and effective opportunity’ within appropriate time-frames to express their opinion. This includes the specific notification of the consultation documents and timeframes to those persons or bodies on the ‘consultation databases’ of the two Local Planning Authorities.

PLEASE NOTE:

All comments on the content of this Scoping & Environmental Report should be sent to each authority’s online portal in line with the consultation arrangements of each Local Planning Authority. Where consultation periods differ between each authority, the following links may need to be checked once consultation periods are live.

Comments should be focused on the detail of this SA that pertains to land use implications or issues relevant to each local authority area.

Please check the following links for more information, and direction to relevant consultation portals:

Regarding Tendring District Council:

<http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/consultation>

Regarding Colchester Borough Council:

<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/planningconsult>



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November 2017



6th November 2017

Report of	Assistant Director Policy & Corporate	Author	Karen Syrett ☎ 01206 506477
Title	Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places: consultation proposals		
Wards affected	Not applicable		

This report concerns the publication of a consultation document which sets out a number of proposals to reform the planning system to increase the supply of new homes and ‘increase local authority capacity to manage growth.’

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 Members are asked to consider the content of the Consultation Paper and agree a response to be submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government.
- 1.2 The agreed response will be signed off by the Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture prior to submission in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

2. Reasons for Decision(s)

- 2.1 The consultation provides an opportunity for the Council to comment on emerging national policy. There are significant implications for the Council if implemented, not least the uplift in housing need targets.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 Not to respond to the consultation.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Earlier this year the Government published ‘Fixing our Broken Housing Market’ (the Housing White Paper). This set out proposals to tackle the housing crisis and reforms to planning to help achieve these objectives. The White Paper also said there would be further consultation on specific issues and in mid-September, the government set out its proposals to address housing need. There are nine key elements to the current consultation which are summarised below. Those with more significance for Colchester are then dealt with in more detail;

1. The consultation document sets out the government’s proposals to simplify the process for assessing local housing need using a standard methodology. The new methodology would use household growth projections as the baseline for local housing need, before adding a multiplier for less affordable areas (defined as those in which house prices are more than four times average earnings). The proposed model also includes a cap designed to limit the level of any increase. The proposed formula would mean that local housing need figures would rise by an average of 35 per cent in more than 150 local authority areas. In Colchester the annual housing target would rise from 920 units to 1095 – an increase of 19.02%.

2. The consultation proposes that the new standardised method would apply "immediately" from 31 March 2018 where plans are more than five years old, or if new plans have not been submitted to the secretary of state on or before that date. If a local plan is submitted before this date, or is at examination, then authorities can continue with their current approach. Plans adopted in the last five years should use the standardised method when next reviewing or updating the plan. It is intended to submit the Colchester Local Plan later this month so the current figure of 920 units a year would apply if this submission date is achieved.
3. The consultation document sets out the government's ambition to publish a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in Spring 2018. "This will ensure that we not only plan for the right homes in the right places, but that we turn existing and future planning permissions quickly into homes through reforms such as the Housing Delivery Test," the document says.
4. There is a move to strengthen cross-boundary planning and Councils will have to produce a "statement of common ground" with neighbouring authorities within 12 months of the publication of the government's changes to the NPPF in order to "improve how local authorities work together to meet housing and other needs across boundaries". According to the document, the government intends to set out in the revised NPPF "that all local planning authorities should produce a statement of common ground" which should set out the cross-boundary matters, including the housing need for the area, distribution and proposals for meeting any shortfalls".
5. The consultation contains proposals intended to make viability assessments "simpler, quicker and more transparent", using a standardised methodology. National policy will change to make clear that applications that meet viability requirements set out in local planning policies "should be assumed to be viable". The document says that the government proposes to make clear in the NPPF that where policy requirements "have been tested for their viability, the issue should not usually need to be tested again at the planning application stage".
6. Councils with up-to-date local plans could be expected to provide neighbourhood planning groups with a housing need figure for their plan areas, while councils without an up-to-date local plan could use a "simple formula-based approach" to supply such a figure, the consultation document proposes. It proposes to make clear in planning guidance that authorities may provide specific housing need data for neighbourhood plan areas "by making a reasoned judgement based on the settlement strategy and housing allocations in their plan, so long as the local plan provides a sufficiently up-to-date basis to do so". It adds that, where a local plan is out-of-date, the government is to set out in guidance "a simple formula-based approach which apportions the overall housing need figure for the relevant local authority area/s, based on the latest figures calculated under the new standard approach ... to the neighbourhood planning area". In Colchester a similar approach has already been used to agree housing numbers for neighbourhood plans in a number of areas.
7. The consultation says that the government intends to bring forward regulations to enable authorities to increase planning application fees by 20% "at the earliest opportunity". The consultation also seeks views on the "most appropriate criteria" to be applied to enable a proposed additional 20% planning fee increase for authorities who are delivering the homes their communities need. This proposal restates the commitment made in the White Paper which was due to be introduced in July 2017 but subsequently postponed.
8. The government proposes to amend national planning policy so that local planning authorities "should set out in their plans how they will monitor, report on and publicise funding secured through section 106 agreements, ..." According to the consultation, while there is a requirement to record each section 106 agreement on the planning register, there is no legal requirement for local planning authorities to publish summary data from those agreements, or to monitor and report on whether these benefits have been received and spent.

9. The government published alongside the consultation a document listing areas of greatest housing need. The publication of the document follows a commitment in the February housing white paper to register the ownership of all publicly held land in the areas of greatest housing need by 2020, with the rest to follow by 2025. The consultation document says: "This information can be taken into account alongside other considerations, including land constraints, to assist plan makers in finding sites suitable for housing development." Colchester is not listed but Tendring and Maldon are.

4.2 Assessing Housing Need

The Government are seeking to simplify the process for assessing housing need. The proposals envisage a three-stage calculation, which uses the official projections of household growth for a local authority as a baseline (provided by the Office for National Statistics). The most recent official projections should be used, with the household growth calculated for the period over which the plan is being made. The Government proposes that the demographic baseline should be the annual average household growth over a 10 year period. Given the Government's expectation that plans are reviewed every five years, using average household growth over this period will ensure effective planning over the preparation and duration of the plan. Household projections should therefore be regarded as the minimum local housing need figure.

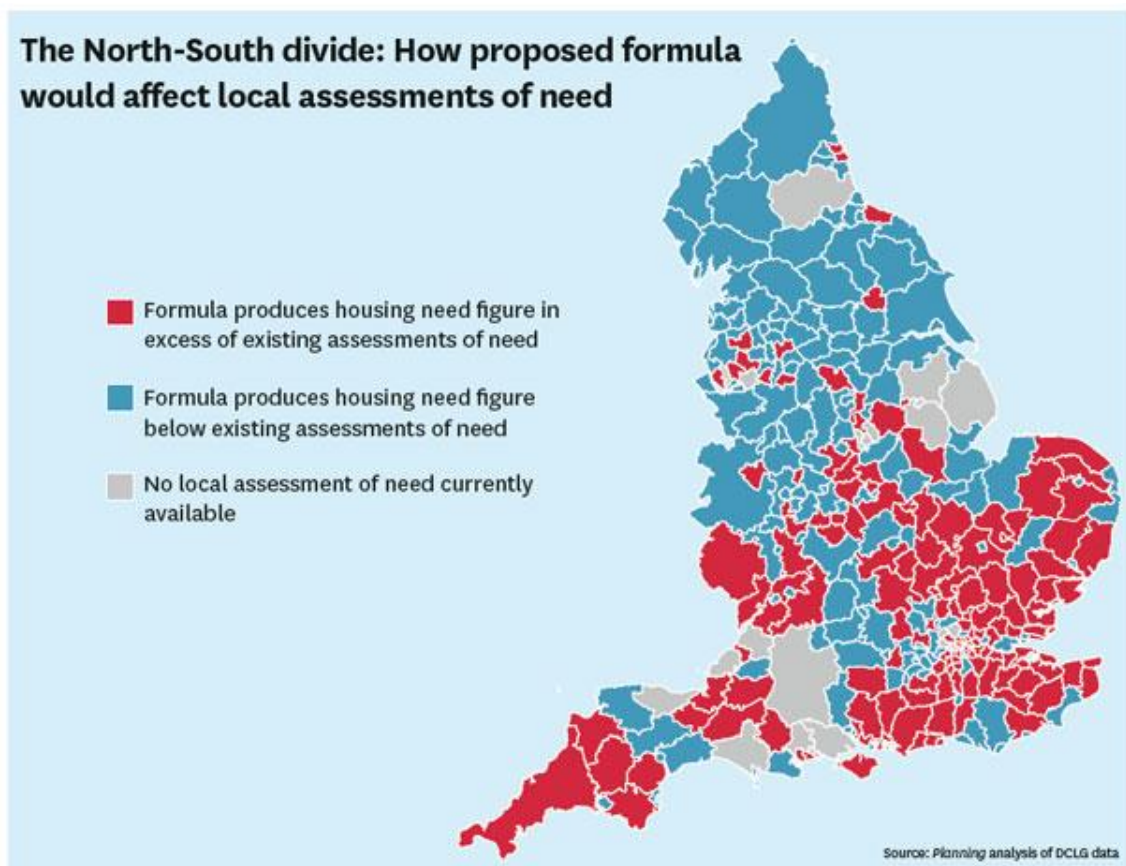
- 4.3 That figure is then adjusted according to local housing affordability. It is considered that median affordability ratios, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at a local authority level, provide the best basis for adjusting household projections. The affordability ratios compare median house prices (based on all houses sold on the open market in a given year in a local authority) to median earnings (based on full-time earnings for those working in the LA area). It is proposed that as the next step in the standard method, plan makers should use the workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio from the most recent year for which data is available.
- 4.4 As the Housing White Paper noted, England needs net additions in the region of 225,000 to 275,000 units per year. To get a total housing need close to this figure, the modelling proposes that each 1 per cent increase in the ratio of house prices to earnings above four results in a quarter of a per cent increase in need above projected household growth. The Government considers that this will achieve the overall level of delivery that most external commentators believe is needed, while ensuring it is delivered in the places where affordability is worst. The overall housing need figure is therefore as follows:

$$\text{Local Housing Need} = (1 + \text{adjustment factor}) \times \text{projected household growth}$$

- 4.5 The following examples are provided for an area with a projected household growth of 100 a year. It would have an annual need of:
- 100 if average house prices were four times local average earnings
 - 125 if average houses prices were eight times local average earnings
 - 150 if average house prices were twelve times local average earnings.
- 4.6 The third stage is a cap, limiting increases in objectively assessed need (OAN) according to the current status of the local plan in each authority as follows:
- a) for those authorities that have adopted their local plan in the last five years, the new annual local housing need figure should be capped at 40 per cent above the annual requirement figure currently set out in their local plan; or
 - b) for those authorities that do not have an up-to-date local plan (i.e. one that was adopted over five years ago), it is proposed that the new annual local housing need figure should be capped at 40 per cent above whichever is higher of the projected household growth for their area over the plan period (using ONS household

projections), or the annual housing requirement figure currently set out in their local plan.

- 4.7 Using the proposed methodology results in an increase in the annual housing target for Colchester Borough from 920 per year to 1095 – an increase of 19.02%. The table and map attached as Appendix 1 set out some local comparators. In total, 156 authorities will see an increase in their OAN.
- 4.8 Unveiling the proposals, Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, said that the proposed formula would deliver an "honest, open, consistent approach to assessing local housing need". But the proposed formula has an enormous impact on the numbers for many authorities, particularly in expensive areas of London and the South East. Several London and Home Counties authorities will see their OAN figures rise by 40 per cent, and the increase would be a lot greater if it was not for the cap. The average increase for authorities experiencing an uplift will be 35 per cent. Meanwhile, authorities in some deprived areas face big falls in OAN - with Barrow-in-Furness having, for example, a predicted need that would fall from 133 homes per year to zero.
- 4.9 The changes are showing a clear north-south divide as the diagram below illustrates. The formula's impact on assessed need will be most drastic in London. It raises the capital's assessed need from the 49,000 in the current London Plan to 72,000. But the London Plan's capacity numbers are constrained by availability of sites to 42,000 anyway, suggesting a significant uplift here is unrealistic without a relaxation of green belt policy that both the government and London's mayor oppose. The implications of such an uplift could therefore spread out from the capital.



4.10 Implementation

Local planning authorities, when calculating their local housing need, should always use the most up-to-date data available. The household projections are updated every two years in the summer (the latest set were published in July 2016 and based on 2014 data),

and the house price to earnings ratios are published annually in March. This means that the local housing need figure will not remain static throughout the plan preparation process.

- 4.11 It is being proposed that local planning authorities should be able to rely on the evidence used to justify their local housing need for a period of two years from the date on which they submit their plan. During this period it will mean that the local housing need assessment is not rendered out of date if changes to the household projections or affordability ratios are published while the plan is being examined. However, what is not clear is what happens after the two year period if the national projections change. Will the local plan be considered up to date regardless of changes for a period of 5 years from adoption or will local authorities still be subject to speculative proposals made on the basis of a lack of supply when considered against a revised household projection or affordability ratio?
- 4.12 What is clear, is that Colchester should proceed to submit its new Local Plan with a housing need figure of 920 units a year. Any delay to submission could result in a higher target being required and additional sites needing to be identified. The consultation proposes that the new formula applies to all plans submitted after 31 March 2018.
- 4.13 The expectation is that local planning authorities will adopt the proposed method when assessing housing need. It is recognised however, there may be compelling circumstances not to adopt the proposed approach. These will need to be properly justified, and will be subject to examination. Support will be given in principle to authorities proposing higher targets based on economic justification. However, there will be very limited grounds for adopting an alternative method which results in a lower need. The reasons for doing so will be tested rigorously by the Planning Inspector through examination of the plan. The Council needs to make clear in its response that any new methodology should take account of previous housebuilding rates and that it should not be penalised for maintaining housing delivery over recent years when others have failed to do so.
- 4.14 Statement of Common Ground

The Government do not believe that the Duty to co-operate is working and the Housing White Paper set out a plan for more effective joint working where planning issues go beyond individual authorities through a statement of common ground, setting out how they intend to work together to meet housing needs that cut across authority boundaries.

- 4.15 The duty to co-operate, introduced through the Localism Act 2011, requires local planning authorities and certain public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of plan preparation in the context of strategic cross-boundary matters. Such matters include planning for housing need across a housing market area or developing integrated infrastructure. Compliance with the duty is tested at the examination of the development plan.
- 4.16 To support more effective joint working where planning issues need to be addressed by more than one local planning authority, it is intended to set out in the National Planning Policy Framework that all local planning authorities should produce a statement of common ground. The objectives of the policy are to encourage all local planning authorities, regardless of their stage in plan-making, to co-operate effectively and seek agreement on strategic cross-boundary issues, and help local planning authorities demonstrate evidence of co-operation.
- 4.17 To meet these objectives, it is proposed that every local planning authority produce a statement of common ground over the housing market area or other agreed geographical

area where justified and appropriate. It is proposed that the statement will set out the cross-boundary matters, including the housing need for the area, distribution and proposals for meeting any shortfalls. In setting out the strategic cross-boundary issues, the statement will record where agreement has, and has not been reached.

- 4.18 It is proposed that all local planning authorities should have a statement of common ground in place within twelve months following the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework. However, in order to ensure greater certainty at an early stage of the process, it will be expected that local planning authorities have an outline statement in place within six months following publication of the revised Framework. The statement of common ground should be regularly updated throughout the plan-making process. The expectation is that as a minimum the statement should be reviewed, and if necessary updated, when authorities reach certain key regulatory milestones in the plan-making process.
- 4.19 The statement of common ground provides a vehicle to set out where strategic cross-boundary infrastructure is required to unlock more land for housing. Where there are strategic cross-boundary infrastructures matters, local planning authorities will be expected to set out how they intend to resolve them and show that they have agreement with the relevant bodies. It is proposed therefore that the statement of common ground, once in place, should be submitted as supplementary evidence of effective co-operation between authorities when applying for strategic infrastructure investment.

4.20 Planning for a Mix of Housing Needs

It is important that local planning authorities do not just plan for the right number of homes, but also the different size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in their area. The identification of such need is currently often carried out as part of the strategic housing market assessment. However, the proposed new approach for assessing local housing need, will require updates to existing planning guidance on how to plan for different types of homes and this will be published alongside a revised National Planning Policy Framework. No details are provided.

4.21 Neighbourhood Planning

The Housing White Paper proposed to amend national policy so that local planning authorities are expected to provide neighbourhood planning groups with a housing need figure, where this is needed to allow progress to be made with neighbourhood planning. The Government propose to make clear in planning guidance that authorities may do this by making a reasoned judgement based on the settlement strategy and housing allocations in their plan, so long as the local plan provides a sufficiently up-to-date basis to do so (including situations where an emerging local plan is close to adoption). Where this happens, it is not expected that the resulting housing figure will have to be tested during the neighbourhood plan's production, as it will be derived from the strategy in the local plan and must be in general conformity with its strategic priorities.

- 4.22 Where the local plan is out-of-date and cannot be relied on as a basis for allocating housing figures, the Government are proposing to set out in guidance a simple formula-based approach which apportions the overall housing need figure for the relevant local authority area, based on the latest figures calculated under the new standard approach (once, and assuming, it is introduced), to the neighbourhood planning area. The proposed formula is simply to take the population of the neighbourhood planning area and calculate what percentage it is of the overall population in the local planning authority area. The housing need figure in the neighbourhood planning area would then be that percentage of the local planning authority's housing need.

4.23 Viability Assessment

The Government highlight in the paper that viability considerations can be lengthy, complex and often viewed with suspicion. To ensure there is a robust basis for assessing viability at the plan-making stage – and to lessen the need for this to be revisited when planning applications come forward – it is proposed to amend national planning policy to set out additional expectations for plans.

4.24 Local planning authorities should set out the types and thresholds for affordable housing contributions required; the infrastructure needed to deliver the plan; and expectations for how these will be funded and the contributions developers will be expected to make. This would make clear how the key strategic priorities that need to be planned for are to be delivered. Until the detail is known it is difficult to see what actual changes are proposed. The Council already sets out affordable housing policy and infrastructure requirements and is expected to have a robust evidence base to substantiate this. Policies in the Local plan also include information on contributions expected from developers.

4.25 In cases where viability assessment is still needed in the course of determining planning applications, the consultation paper proposes that the process must become more open, transparent and easily understood. A standard methodology is proposed but no details are provided; instead DCLG are seeking evidence and views.

4.26 Prematurity

As a further way of encouraging local authorities to get plans in place, the Government intend to set out the circumstances when a planning application may be refused on the grounds of prematurity in the National Planning Policy Framework, rather than in guidance (where they are currently). The prematurity guidance is designed to prevent emerging plans, where they are at an advanced stage of production, from being undermined by proposals that are allowed before the plan can be finalised. This would help provide stability and certainty in situations where confidence in the plan-making process might otherwise be weakened.

4.27 Benefits

There are clearly some benefits associated with the proposals and in principle a simple approach to calculating housing need should be welcomed. This is likely to result in financial savings on evidence base as the simple methodology uses data sets that are in the public domain. The concern is whether the methodology is too simplistic.

4.28 Providing the methodology is adhered to by Planning Inspectors at both planning appeals and local plan examinations, there should also be time and cost savings from a reduction in lengthy and complex arguments about the Objectively Assessed Need.

4.29 Another benefit is the proposal to make viability assessments simpler and more transparent.

4.30 The council should also welcome the revisions to guidance/policy on prematurity. However, success will rely on implementation by planning inspectors.

4.31 Commentary

A range of industry experts have commented on the consultation and some of their thoughts are set out below;

1. Roger Hephher, director of consultancy Hephher Grincell, said this might drive authorities to consider garden villages or towns. "Many authorities are otherwise going to struggle to find the additional land, and will become vulnerable on appeal," he said.
2. Catriona Riddell, strategic planning specialist at the Planning Officers Society, which represents senior local authority planning officers, said: "There are definitely planners at authorities out there with a 40 per cent increase that have their head in their hands. They can't even meet the current estimated need...The more the numbers go up, the more there's going to be a backlash. The idea that if you simply increase housing numbers in an area it becomes more affordable is rubbish."
3. Matthew Spry, senior director at consultancy Lichfields, said: "Previously the system allowed government to be one step removed from the process of creating the housing number. Now the government's fingerprints will be all over the number."
4. Mark Sitch, senior partner at consultancy Barton Willmore, said the formula is too crude and needs to take into account employment growth. "It's got so simplified it perhaps undermines the original intention. There is a question whether politically it can be delivered."
5. The District Council Network comments that "To deliver additional housing growth, district councils must be given greater fiscal freedom and incentives to truly unlock their potential. We continue to call on government to ensure that the New Homes Bonus incentivises all housing growth by removing the baseline threshold, unlocking planning permissions that are not being delivered, increasing the time available to spend Right to Buy receipts, allowing Districts to retain 100 per cent of Right to Buy receipts to build new homes and to lift the borrowing cap for the Housing Revenue Account.
"The DCN has long called for an increase in planning permission fees and we therefore welcome the Government's recommitment to increasing planning fees by 20 per cent, which must now be agreed by Parliament at the earliest opportunity. We also welcome the potential for a further 20 per cent increase going forward."

5. Proposals

- 5.1 A series of questions are set out in the Consultation Paper which are reproduced in Appendix 2. A draft response to each is included, informed by a discussion which took place at the Cabinet meeting on 11th October. Members are asked to consider the draft response and suggest revisions if appropriate.
- 5.2 The final Council response will form the basis of a Portfolio Holder Report in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The Government is undertaking the consultation which runs until the 9th November 2017.

7. Publicity Considerations

- 7.1 The consultation is already generating publicity at a national level and it is expected it will also be of interest locally.

8. Standard References

- 8.1 There are no particular references to the strategic plan or financial; equality, diversity and human rights; community safety; health and safety or risk management implications.

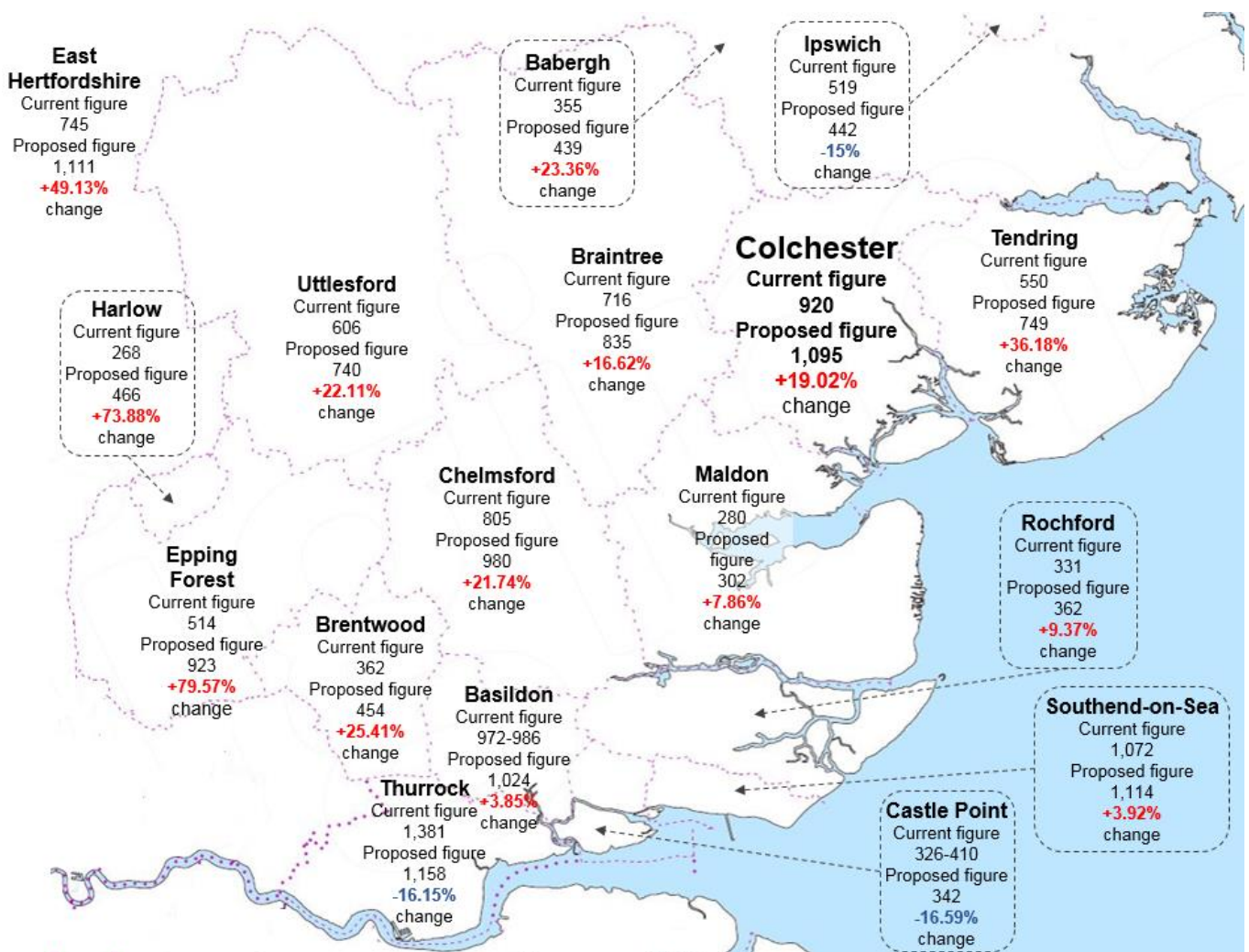
Appendices

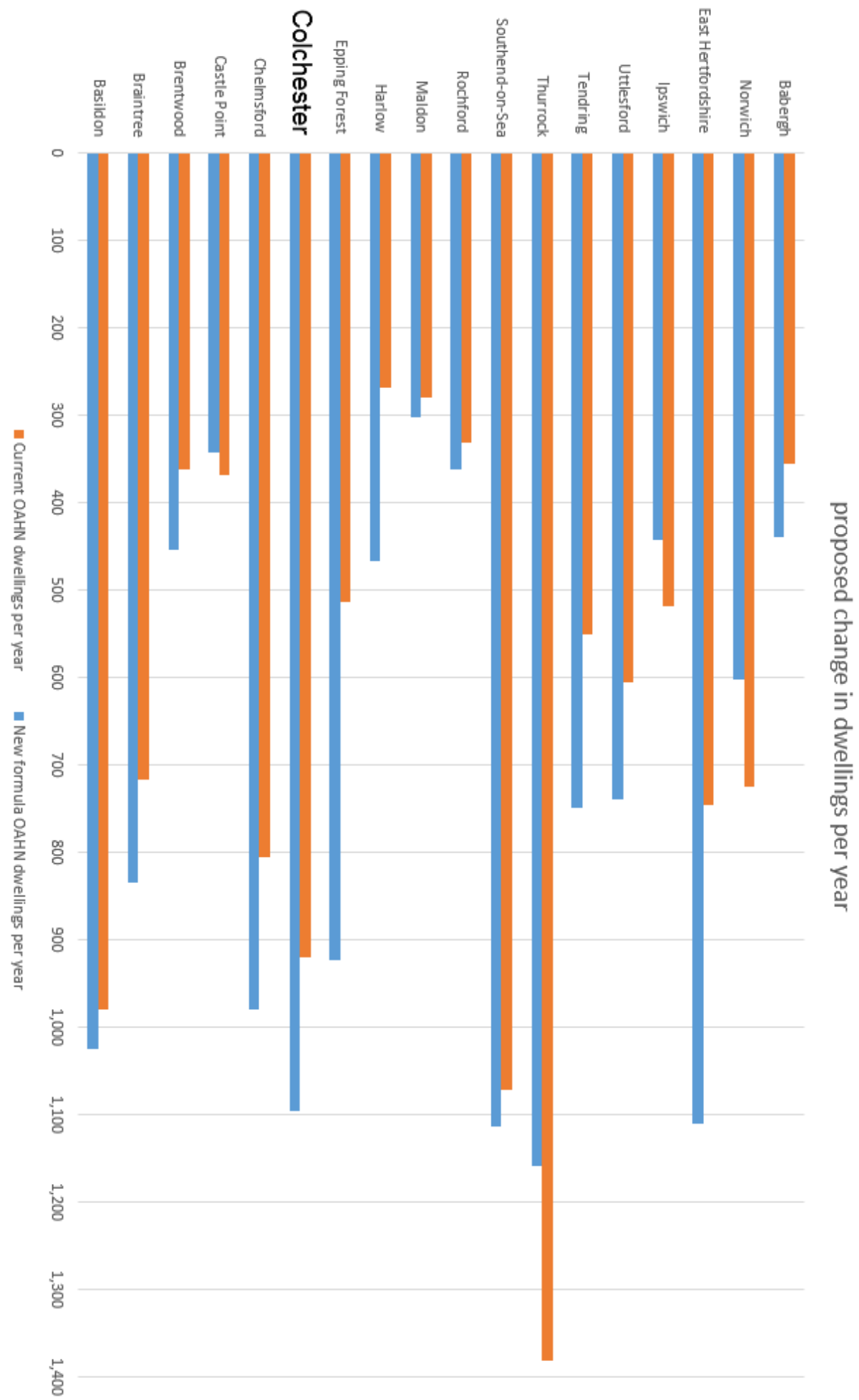
1. Comparison Map and Table
2. Consultation Questions

Background Papers

1. Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/644955/Planning_for_Homes_consultation_document.pdf
2. Housing Need Consultation Data

Appendix 1





Appendix 2

Consultation Questions

Question 1 (a)

Do you agree with the proposed standard approach to assessing local housing need? If not, what alternative approach or other factors should be considered?

In principle Colchester Borough Council (CBC) is supportive of a straightforward, standardised methodology for calculating objectively assessed housing need. There are however serious concerns that the methodology proposed is too simplistic and results in targets that simply cannot be met. Local authorities such as Colchester, seem to be penalised for delivering consistently high levels of housebuilding in the past. Those areas which have failed to deliver seem to be rewarded by lower targets. There is a concern that recent levels of housebuilding have affected migration – either large developments drawing in extra migrants or too few homes being built suppressing migration.

There are also concerns that a national formula may never take into account all local constraints. Where there are overriding environmental or infrastructure constraints these must be taken into account in the plan making process.

There should be a recognition that housebuilding in areas of high growth needs to be matched by infrastructure provision up front. This is likely to require forward funding by Government.

Local Plans need to look forward at least 15 years from the date of adoption, but the consultation document makes no mention of how housing need should be considered for years 11+.

The methodology results in a north-south divide and this Council wonders what message this sends out. Billions of pounds are being invested in the Northern Powerhouse but will the investment in the economy and infrastructure be justified if household growth declines?

Question 1(b)

How can information on local housing need be made more transparent?

This information should be published by the Government annually on a national basis, at the same date each year, in a similar format to the ‘housing needs consultation data table’ which was published alongside the Government’s current consultation. This certainty would allow all involved in the consideration of housing needs numbers to understand when the updated numbers will be published each year, and plan accordingly.

Information should be visual as well as numeric; the use of interactive maps would aid accessibility, rather than a spreadsheet only approach. The use of visual indicators will also show how local authorities are meeting their identified local housing need year on year.

Local planning authorities already publish annual Authority Monitoring Reports, for which there could be a nationally consistent approach to provide information on local housing need.

Question 2

Do you agree with the proposal that an assessment of local housing need should be able to be relied upon for a period of two years from the date a plan is submitted?

No. The Council considers that it is very important that this point is “fixed” at an earlier stage in the plan-making process. Otherwise there is the danger that, if updated needs information is published shortly prior to the submission date, many councils will fear a challenge to the housing needs numbers if they press on with the “old” numbers. Councils should be able to “freeze” the

basic OAN number once they have published the Regulation 18 consultation. This would aid in reducing the time period between Regulation 18 to Regulation 19 consultation, and subsequent submission, examination and adoption.

Councils should also be able to rely upon an assessment of housing need for a longer period. This will ensure that there is greater certainty for all involved in the plan-making process as to the number of homes that are required. The figure should be fixed for a period of 5 years which would be consistent with the expected lifetime of the Local Plan. If the figure is subject to change earlier, many LPA's will be challenged by speculative developers who promote sites through planning applications rather than the plan making system. This can result in resources being transferred from the Local Plan to dealing with site specific appeals which has knock on effects for strategic borough wide planning and delay production of the Local Plan

Question 3

Do you agree that we should amend national planning policy so that a sound plan should identify local housing needs using a clear and justified method?

Yes although it is unclear how this proposal is any different to what is currently contained in national policy.

Question 4

Do you agree with our approach in circumstances when plan makers deviate from the proposed method, including the level of scrutiny we expect from the Planning Inspectors?

Yes, the Council agrees with this proposal, in particular the assumption that a higher level of growth than OAN should be assumed to be sound by an Inspector. It is also agreed that for a standard methodology to work it needs to be applied consistently and exceptions should indeed be very limited.

Question 5(a)

Do you agree that the Secretary of State should have discretion to defer the period for using the baseline for some local planning authorities? If so, how best could this be achieved, what minimum requirements should be in place before the Secretary of State may exercise this discretion, and for how long should such deferral be permitted?

The Council welcomes the recognition afforded to local planning authorities who are collaborating on ambitious proposals for new homes and that these plans may take longer to bring forward. The intention to retain some discretion to be able to give additional time before the baseline applies where there is significant progress made on bringing forward a joint plan for housing is welcomed. The deferral should be based on the scale and complexity of development proposed and demonstration that progress is being made on the Local Plan i.e. adherence to milestones in the Local Development Scheme. In circumstances where the local planning authority is seeking to deliver large scale new settlements where lead in times are longer, significant upfront infrastructure investment is required, and new and innovative delivery mechanisms need to be explored and agreed, this complexity needs to be understood and considered in any decision by the Secretary of State.

Question 5(b)

Do you consider that authorities that have an adopted joint local plan, or which are covered by an adopted spatial development strategy, should be able to assess their five year land supply and/or be measured for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test, across the area as a whole?

This should be discretionary to ensure all local authorities are meeting their targets and maintaining an adequate supply of land. A successful council should not be penalised because another within the housing market area is not delivering. This might be particularly relevant where Councils have a joint strategic element to their plan but also a borough wide section, i.e. North Essex.

Question 5 (c)

Do you consider that authorities that are not able to use the new method for calculating local housing need should be able to use an existing or an emerging local plan figure for housing need for the purposes of calculating five year land supply and to be measured for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test?

No comment – this applies predominantly to National Parks and Urban Development Corporations.

Question 6

Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements for introducing the standard approach for calculating local housing need?

Yes. This seems to strike an appropriate balance.

Question 7(a)

Do you agree with the proposed administrative arrangements for preparing the statement of common ground?

Yes. However, whilst Housing Market Areas (HMAs) are the logical geography over which a SofCG should be first considered, there may well be other strategic planning matters that go beyond these areas (major roads and rail links, for example), so it will be important to ensure that meaningful engagement happens with consultees in adjoining HMAs. Paragraph 73 refers to the need for statutory consultees to engage effectively in the plan-making process. This is critically important, and it is vital that there are additional powers to require some of these, particularly health and Network Rail, to engage more effectively than has sometimes been the case hitherto.

Question 7(b)

How do you consider a statement of common ground should be implemented in areas where there is a Mayor with strategic plan-making powers?

N/A

Question 7(c)

Do you consider there to be a role for directly elected Mayors without strategic plan-making powers, in the production of a statement of common ground?

N/A

Question 8

Do you agree that the proposed content and timescales for publication of the statement of common ground are appropriate and will support more effective co-operation on strategic cross-boundary planning matters?

The Council agrees with the requirements for 6 months but is of the opinion that agreement on distribution of housing numbers over a wider area may take more than 12 months if new evidence is required to inform discussion and decision making.

Question 9(a)

Do you agree with the proposal to amend the tests of soundness to include that:

- i) plans should be prepared based on a strategy informed by agreements over the wider area; and**
- ii) plans should be based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities, which are evidenced in the statement of common ground?**

The Council are concerned that this proposal will add a layer of complexity to the plan making and examination process. As identified in the document, there is already a requirement to comply with the duty to co-operate which some LA's are failing. A more onerous requirement can only exacerbate the problems now faced. Delays agreeing the Statement of Common Ground could delay the plan-making process.

Question 9(b)

Do you agree to the proposed transitional arrangements for amending the tests of soundness to ensure effective co-operation?

Yes – if implemented.

Question 10(a)

Do you have any suggestions on how to streamline the process for identifying the housing need for individual groups and what evidence could be used to help plan to meet the needs of particular groups?

The Council cannot identify any way of streamlining this important area of evidence. Whilst the market can be used to determine a certain amount of housing types, other evidence is required to supplement and address harder to reach groups.

In addition to existing evidence based studies use should be made of Council housing registers which identify priority housing needs within an area. To help deliver these priority needs and to deliver additional housing growth, district councils must be given greater fiscal freedom and incentives to truly unlock their potential. Along with the District Council Network we continue to call on government to increase the time available to spend Right to Buy receipts, to allow Districts to retain 100 per cent of Right to Buy receipts to build new homes and to lift the borrowing cap for the Housing Revenue Account.

Question 10(b)

Do you agree that the current definition of older people within the National Planning Policy Framework is still fit-for-purpose?

The Council would welcome a review of the definition of older people along with a review of use classes. We would question how useful is the term "retirement age"? In welfare terms (i.e. the age at which a person can receive a state pension) the age is increasing year on year. How meaningful is it when it can cover a span of 30-40 years? Is the definition in the NPPF fit for purpose when housing for older people does not fit into traditional planning definitions (partly because of the wide spectrum of models and the use classes not being clear as to where these models fit). Distinctions between C2 and C3 are becoming increasingly blurred and this in turn impacts on CIL, S106 and affordable housing discussions and contributions. Standard definitions, a review of the use classes and policy expectations would be helpful.

Question 11(a)

Should a local plan set out the housing need for designated neighbourhood planning areas and parished areas within the area?

Yes – some local authorities are already doing this (including Colchester Borough) but only where a Parish Council/Neighbourhood Plan Group has said they intend to allocate sites within their Neighbourhood Plan. The numbers are agreed and the Local Plan includes the figure for each parish. Policy also makes clear that if the Neighbourhood Plan does not proceed for any reason, responsibility for plan making will revert back to the LPA. In some instances broad

directions of growth are shown on Policy Maps to ensure housing delivery is not adversely impacted.

Question 11(b)

Do you agree with the proposal for a formula-based approach to apportion housing need to neighbourhood plan bodies in circumstances where the local plan cannot be relied on as a basis for calculating housing need?

Any housing need number for an emerging Neighbourhood Plan area or parish should use the most up to date evidence. If the standard methodology is introduced the approach of using this to inform Neighbourhood Plans would seem appropriate. This would then be the “starting point” for the parish’s housing need, and would form the basis for discussion and agreement between the parish and district/borough council taking into account local constraints.

Question 12

Do you agree that local plans should identify the infrastructure and affordable housing needed, how these will be funded and the contributions developers will be expected to make?

Yes. This should be current practice and is often shown in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) supporting the Local Plan, or a schedule in the Local Plan itself showing essential infrastructure to support growth. This is current practice with Essex authorities and supported by the County Council.

Developers need to understand the needs and priorities of a local planning authority to enable and deliver infrastructure schemes and affordable housing. They need to be able to consider the issues and costs of the practical delivery of the proposed scheme for example access roads together with the wider community needs including schools and open space for an acceptable scheme.

Developers must be able to understand how provision will be funded and importantly their role and contribution to be able to “work up” a viable compliant scheme. Developers and Registered Providers need to understand the LPA’s preferences and priorities to be able to deliver affordable housing in terms of size and type, tenure, rent levels and special needs including elderly persons and learning difficulties.

Question 13

In reviewing guidance on testing plans and policies for viability, what amendments could be made to improve current practice?

To understand and make an informed judgement relating to individual viability assessments, local planning authorities must be able to refer to costs of similar schemes to ensure reasonable assumptions are being made. Local planning authorities should also have an organised formal method of collecting and using information to apply to viability assessments.

The Planning Inspectorate should apply the delivery test at the Local Plan Examination with greater rigour to gain assurance from promoters that each site is viable and can be delivered with required infrastructure.

An agreement between the local planning authority and the site/promoters when tabled as part of the supporting evidence to the Planning Inspector should have weight once the Local Plan has been adopted, and this period should be at least 5 years from the time the Local Plan is adopted. After this time, where a difference is identified as a viability challenge this will need to be evidenced and validated at the cost of the applicant.

Question 14

Do you agree that where policy requirements have been tested for their viability, the issue should not usually need to be tested again at the planning application stage?

Yes. Developers that acknowledge and meet the policy requirements should not be subject to viability assessment as their scheme is policy compliant. To do so incurs additional cost and time delay for both parties. However, developers must understand that permissions granted on the basis of a policy compliant scheme are not flexible and any future request to vary or alter the original Section 106 terms are unlikely to be accepted.

Question 15

How can Government ensure that infrastructure providers, including housing associations, are engaged throughout the process, including in circumstances where a viability assessment may be required?

There must be a requirement for infrastructure providers to engage in the Local Plan process. If infrastructure providers have failed to engage then they should not be permitted to object to a plan, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

A critical concern expressed by residents is health provision. Recent and continued restructuring in the NHS has meant engagement by the Council has not been continuous, or consistent. There should be a requirement that the Strategic Transformation Plans must take account and align with Local Plan growth to ensure stable and long term planning and funding for health infrastructure.

Question 16

What factors should we take into account in updating guidance to encourage viability assessments to be simpler, quicker and more transparent, for example through a standardised report or summary format?

Whilst the Council welcome the proposal to make viability assessments simpler and quicker, there is a concern that it could result in gaps which developers can exploit. Viability assessments are likely to contain commercially sensitive information and developers will be reluctant to share information of this nature in the public domain, which may be used by developers to reduce their contributions. In looking to update guidance, the following should be taken into account;

- Section 106 Heads of Terms and development viability (where this is likely to be a consideration) should be discussed at 'pre-application stage';
- An expectation that proposals submitted should be designed in a form that accords with Local Plan policies and associated guidance;
- Viability assessments should reflect the PPG on viability as well as any individual local planning authority guidance relating to methodology and inputs. This would usually be found in the validation checklist;
- Viability evidence must be robustly justified and appraisal assumptions benchmarked against publicly available data sources

Question 17(a)

Do you agree that local planning authorities should set out in plans how they will monitor and report on planning agreements to help ensure that communities can easily understand what infrastructure and affordable housing has been secured and delivered through developer contributions?

Yes – the Council already does this. Any further requirements should be proportional.

Question 17(b)

What factors should we take into account in preparing guidance on a standard approach to monitoring and reporting planning obligations?

Resources – time and cost against desired outcome.

Question 17(c)

How can local planning authorities and applicants work together to better publicise infrastructure and affordable housing secured through new development once development has commenced, or at other stages of the process?

For developments over 10 dwellings, hoardings for a site should clearly include information on what contributions they have made. This should be done at the developers cost.

Question 18(a)

Do you agree that a further 20 per cent fee increase should be applied to those local planning authorities who are delivering the homes their communities need? What should be the criteria to measure this?

‘Delivery’ needs to be defined and can be measured in a number of ways, for example either through the delivery of a sound/adopted Local Plan (setting out housing numbers) and monitoring thereafter to ensure targets are being delivered. ‘Delivery’ in respect of planning applications should mean those applications that are approved rather than delivered. Resources are required for the determination of planning applications and LPA’s should not be penalised if developers then fail to bring sites forward.

There may also be instances where timescales for the determination of planning applications and delivery of a decision is delayed through no fault of the local planning authority. The Government needs to be mindful not to penalise where delayed decision making (if defined as ‘non-delivery’) does not lie with local planning authority.

Question 18(b)

Do you think there are more appropriate circumstances when a local planning authority should be able to charge the further 20 per cent? If so, do you have views on how these circumstances could work in practice?

No

Question 18(c)

Should any additional fee increase be applied nationally once all local planning authorities meet the required criteria, or only to individual authorities who meet them?

Additional fee increases should be applied individually to authorities as and when they meet the delivery criteria. If an additional fee increase is to be applied nationally once all local planning authorities meet the criteria, it could penalise those that have met the criteria some of which may have budgeted to invest additional sums into their planning service. Incentives for individual authorities should therefore be offered, thereby leaving the decision, and incentive to improved performance, with the individual authority.

Question 18(d)

Are there any other issues we should consider in developing a framework for this additional fee increase?

Yes. Any fee increase should be ‘ring fenced’ to the planning department/service – and not necessarily just to the development management service especially if delivery criteria are also defined in plan-making.

Question 19

Having regard to the measures we have already identified in the housing White Paper, are there any other actions that could increase build out rates?

New Town Development Corporations

We strongly support the creation of new locally accountable New Town Development Corporations (NTDCs). To meet our housing ambitions, we realise that we need to think differently and new towns – very specifically Garden Communities with high standards of design and a focus on creating sustainable new communities – have a key role to play in North Essex.

The North Essex Garden Communities (NEGC) local authorities are already talking with Government about the details of how NTDCs will assist us. In particular, the legislation around NTDCs should:

- Place the local authorities in the position of the Secretary of State to the maximum possible degree, including decisions on the appointment of board members, the approval of overall plans and overall accountability for performance; and
- Allow for them to operate across more than one site as long as the sites are closely related in terms of the objectives and policies that would govern their development and the local authorities were willing to accept such an arrangement.

These streamlined planning procedures should also give regard to:

- sufficient resources to ensure LDOs are prepared appropriately and positive community involvement takes place;
- use of masterplans and design codes; and
- new garden towns and villages requiring infrastructure up-front therefore Government need to align their investment programmes to support the growth of new strategic settlements eg. A12, and A120 upgrades.

**EXTRACT OF THE CABINET MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD
ON 11 OCTOBER 2017**

206. Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places

The Assistant Director Policy and Corporate submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Willetts attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet. The consultation paper proposed a standardised method for calculating housing need. Most residents of Colchester would be disturbed by the 19% rise in Colchester's housing allocation that had resulted. The impact of the formula proposed in the consultation paper was that those areas that already experienced rapid growth would receive more housing. Colchester had already seen a period of rapid growth in housing numbers without a commensurate increase in infrastructure. The administration was not using New Homes Bonus to support infrastructure and there were issues with the delivery of health services and transport infrastructure. The response to the consultation should stress that Colchester had delivered its fair share of housing growth, and that the target of 920 houses per annum should remain. Colchester should be seen as an exception and that there should be no more house building until infrastructure was delivered.

Councillor Smith, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that the provision of health services was a matter for the Government and transport infrastructure was for Essex County Council. The Council's ability to deliver infrastructure and housing was constrained by government policies. An argument that Colchester was a special case was likely to be unsuccessful.

Councillor Scott attended and with the consent of the Chairman addressed the Cabinet. The proposals were not right for the country as a whole as they would exacerbate the north- south divide, nor were they right for Colchester. The Local Plan had been carefully crafted and the imposition of further housing would create chaos with the Local Plan. Local control of where houses were built would be lost. Confirmation was also sought as when Wivenhoe would be able to sign off its Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, planning enforcement needed to be more robust and better resourced.

Councillor Smith acknowledged Councillor Scott's concerns and that it was possible under the proposals that each parished area may have a housing target imposed on it by central government. Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained that the examination of the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan should take place in the next four months, and before the examination of the Local Plan.

Councillor Bourne, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, explained that the Local Plan process was robust and the imposition an extra 190 homes per annum would cause great difficulties. To cease house building until further infrastructure was in place ignored the needs of those on housing waiting list. Further housing needed to be built but it needed to be of the appropriate tenure. The comments of the District Council Network were supported. The government should give councils the fiscal freedom to build council houses. Not only would this provide additional housing for

those in need, but would also reduce the amount paid in housing benefit to private landlords.

Councillor Smith also endorsed the comments of the District Council Network. The Council could build 50 council houses in Colchester if allowed to do so. The increase in the proposed housing numbers from the allocation in the Local Plan was unsustainable, particularly without investment in infrastructure. The imposition of arbitrary targets made it difficult for local authorities to plan sensibly. The formula for calculating housing need proposed in the consultation paper was based on the purchase price of properties, but took no account of rental values.

Councillor T. Young, Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture, indicated that the Council would respond robustly to the consultation. The Local Plan had been submitted this week and if it was declared sound the extra housing allocations set out in the paper would not be imposed. This showed the benefit of ensuring decisions on the Local Plan were not delayed. The proposals did not reflect government initiatives to shift some of the economic strain from the south of England to the north. A full response to all the questions would be sent based on the views of the Cabinet and stressing that decisions on housing and infrastructure were best taken at a local level.

RESOLVED that:-

(a) A response to the “Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places” consultation paper be sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government, based on the views expressed by Cabinet.

(b) The draft response be subject to change following discussion at the Local Plan Committee on 6 November and authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture to agree the response prior to submission to the Department of Communities and Local Government.

REASONS

The consultation provides an opportunity for the Council to comment on emerging national policy. There are significant implications for the Council if implemented, not least the uplift in housing need targets.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Not to respond to the consultation.