

2 August 2021

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Shelley Blackaby 508635
Title	Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document Update		
Wards affected	All		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is for Members' information and provides an update on the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.2 A broad programme of engagement is planned over the coming months. This will include a survey, workshops, community drop ins and interactive engagement website tools. Feedback from the engagement will feed into the development of the masterplan and DPD.
- 1.3 Latimer has been announced as the Lead Developer who will be working with Mersea Homes to develop the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. Latimer is the development arm of Clarion Housing Group, the UK's largest provider of affordable housing.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 No decision is required since the report is for information only.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 The report provides an update on the ongoing project and no decision is required.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The option of not updating Members was rejected given the importance of Members needing to understand the latest position on Local Plan issues.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 Members are aware that the Planning Policy Team are working with Officers from Tendring District Council and Essex County Council on a Development Plan Document (DPD) to guide development for the Tendring Colchester Borders (TCB) Garden Community. The adopted Section 1 Local Plan states that no planning consent for development forming part of the garden community will be granted until the DPD has been adopted.
- 5.2 In June, the Local Plan Committee received an update on progress with the DPD. Prior+Partners have been appointed to prepare a masterplan for the TCB Garden Community, which will form part of the DPD. A baseline report is currently being prepared.
- 5.3 The baseline report will set out the planning policy context, provide a wider site and character analysis and provide a thematic site analysis. Site-focused identification and analysis of the principle characteristics will be included which will capture the condition of the site as it currently stands, with respect to the following themes:
- Land ownership breakdown;
 - Physical landscape profile including its topography, landscape character areas, key views, ecology and geology;
 - Heritage assets and archaeological remains;
 - Surface, ground and foul water flooding risk and drainage;
 - Utilities infrastructure present within and utilities servicing of the site including water supply, electricity, gas and telecommunications;
 - Transport infrastructure present within the site including roads, cycling and pedestrian routes, as well as public transport currently servicing the site.
- 5.4 Following the preparation of the baseline report, the next stage of the masterplanning work is developing the vision, which will be done as part of the broad programme of engagement. As advised in June, work is also underway on the evidence base for the DPD.

Engagement

- 5.5 Members were advised in February and June 2021 of the publication of the Consultation and Engagement Strategy (December 2020), the establishment of a dedicated website to provide a central source of information on the Garden Community, an interactive engagement website and the establishment of a Community Liaison Group.
- 5.6 The Community Liaison Group have since met with Prior+Partners to discuss what a masterplan is and to discuss good design. A workshop was held in which the group discussed their hopes and fears for the garden community. This discussion will help inform the forthcoming wider engagement survey, which will help shape the vision for the garden community. Some members of the Community Liaison Group have also walked around the broad area. In August, Officers will meet with the Community Liaison Group to talk about what a DPD is and the purpose of the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Draft consultation.
- 5.7 The Communications Manager and Officers are currently finalising the programme of engagement, which will take place over the next few months. There will be a broad programme of engagement with stakeholders and the public. This will include a survey (which will be drafted based on engagement to date and the local knowledge of the Community Liaison Group), virtual workshops, community drop ins and street interviews. As requested by members in June, a virtual workshop will be held for the Local Plan

Committee (LPC). The final programme of engagement and LPC workshop date will be circulated, once finalised.

- 5.8 The engagement website includes tools allowing all to engage on an ongoing basis. Two tools on the engagement website have recently closed: 'Three Words', in which people were asked to provide three words that are important to them, and 'Vision of the Future'. Words that were raised most frequently were wildlife/ nature/ habitats/ biodiversity and family. Only three stories were submitted as part of the 'Vision of the Future' tool and these all refer to the natural environment.
- 5.9 'Give us Your Ideas' is another tool on the engagement website. This welcomes ideas on anything and everything. At the time of writing this report, 76 ideas had been submitted covering a wide range of themes. Some examples of ideas submitted include: a lido, a height restriction on buildings, rainwater capture, energy efficient buildings, nature connectivity and walking and cycling routes. There is the ability to like, and comment on, submitted ideas too.
- 5.10 New tools recently launched on the engagement website are 'Send a Pic' and 'Pin Your Thoughts'. The 'Send a Pic' tool asks people to upload photos, based on themes, that will be key to what kind of place we want the Garden Community to become. The themes are based on the National Model Design Code and ideas submitted to date and are:
- movement and connections
 - long lasting and sustainable
 - nature and community spaces
 - buildings and places
 - character and identity.

'Pin Your Thoughts' asks people to drop a pin on an interactive map to identify assets, opportunities to enhance something already within the local area, and issues that could be addressed as part of the garden community. An explanation to accompany each pin and photos can be added too.

- 5.11 A schools project has also been launched in partnership with Signals Media and the Essex Children's University. This is open to children currently in year 5 and can be undertaken at home or in school. It is supported by online lessons and a teachers pack. The competition asks children to animate, draw or create a 3D model of their ideal home, neighbourhood or a fun place to visit in the future. Children are asked to imagine themselves in the future and think about what they would like to see, and to think about what a future 10 year old may like. Prizes include individual prizes for the winning children and coding workshops for the winning children's classes.

Lead Developer

- 5.12 On 22 July, Latimer was announced as the Lead Developer who will be working with Mersea Homes to develop the TCB Garden Community. Latimer is the development arm of Clarion Housing Group, the UK's largest provider of affordable housing, with over 125,000 homes and more than 350,000 residents across the country. The profits from Latimer schemes are reinvested into Clarion Housing Group to build more affordable homes, improve and maintain existing homes and support communities through the Group's charitable foundation, Clarion Futures. Members, including the Leaders, from the Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council, the Chief Executive's from the Council and Tendring District Council and Director of Sustainable Growth from Essex County Council met with senior representatives from Mersea Homes and Clarion Housing Group on 22 July.

National Model Design Code

- 5.13 The TCBGC is one of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) National Model Design Code (NMDC) programme pilots. The purpose of the NMDC is to provide detailed guidance on production of local design codes and guides. The TCBGC is testing the following aspects of the draft NMDC: Stage 1A: Scoping, Stage 1B: Baseline, Stage 2A: Design Vision and Stage 2B: Coding Plan. On 30 June 2021, the Council's submitted an interim report to MHCLG. This is attached for information.
- 5.14 The interim report followed the structure set by MHCLG and focussed on lessons learnt to date. By the end of the six-month testing period, the Councils expect to have prepared a Baseline Synthesis including opportunities and constraints mapping, a draft vision statement and a summary scoping document that can provide a position on the design approach to inform future site specific masterplanning (in lieu of a coding plan). Updates on this as it progresses will be reported to LPC.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

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

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

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 All themes in the Strategic Plan are relevant, in particular: Delivering homes for people who need them. 'Create new communities and adopt a new Local Plan that delivers jobs, homes and the infrastructure to meet the borough's future needs' is a priority under this theme and the Garden Community DPD is referred to.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 Consultation on the Local Plan is governed by a comprehensive consultation programme as set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and reflecting national regulations. Consultation and engagement for the TCB Garden Community is included in the Consultation and Engagement Strategy (December 2020).

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Council ensures a coordinated and proactive approach to press releases on Local Plan issues given their high level of importance for guiding the future of the Borough and consequential high level of press attention. The Programme Team for the TCB Garden Community includes a cross council project Communications Manager.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 Staffing, consultation/engagement and evidence base consultant resources for Local Plan work are provided in the Council's budget. Costs for the preparation of the Tendring Colchester Borders Development Plan Document are being shared with Tendring District Council.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Local Plan policies provide a basis for future development that is intended to support the health, wellbeing and community safety of Borough residents.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 No direct implications.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 Development of policies to guide future development in the Borough is intended to reduce the risk of inappropriate development. It will provide consistent advice to landowners, developers, officers, Councillors and members of the public.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 14.2 The Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan recognises that the Garden Community provides opportunities to become an exemplar of sustainable building and carbon neutrality.