

12 June 2017

Report of	Head of Commercial Services	Author	Laura Chase 282473 Karen Syrett 506477
Title	Publication Draft Local Plan		
Wards affected	All		

The Local Plan Committee is asked to agree the content of the Publication Draft Colchester Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal for consultation and subsequent submission to the Government.

1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 To approve the content of the Publication Draft Local Plan and accompanying Sustainability Appraisals of Sections 1 and 2 (attached as Appendices to this report).
- 1.2 To agree to carry out a 6 week period of public consultation on the Publication Draft Local Plan, in order that representations can be made by members of the public.
- 1.3 To agree to publish and make available the Sustainability Appraisal of Sections 1 and 2 to inform consultation and engagement on the Publication Draft Local Plan and the Sustainability Appraisals.
- 1.4 To authorise the subsequent submission of the document to the Secretary of State for examination.
- 1.5 To authorise the Place Strategy Manager to make minor revisions to the document prior to publication for consultation and/or prior to submission.

2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 To enable the Publication Draft Local Plan to be published for public consultation.
- 2.2 To undertake public consultation in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.
- 2.3 To allow effective public engagement in the review of the sustainability and environmental effects of the Publication Draft Local Plan.
- 2.4 To ensure the Council's adopted local plan framework for the Borough reflects national policy and provides a robust basis for decisions on future planning applications.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The alternative options to the spatial strategy proposed in the Publication Draft Local Plan have been reviewed in the Sustainability Appraisals. The reasonable alternatives have been considered, and assessed as part of that process.
- 3.2 An alternative to the proposed consultation and submission of the Publication Draft Local Plan would be not to proceed at this time. The alternative of not proceeding with a new Local Plan would leave the Council in a vulnerable position going forward with no clear steer for the future growth and development of the Borough. It would result in existing policy becoming outdated and not in accordance with national policy requirements. The Council may not be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land and could be subject to more speculative planning applications. There could also be issues under the Duty to Co-operate requirement.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Background – Local Plan Development

The currently adopted Local Plan for Colchester consists of the Core Strategy, first adopted in 2008, along with the Development Policies and Site Allocations, adopted in 2010. In order to keep the plan up to date, and in line with Government guidance, a Focused Review resulting in revisions to selected Core Strategy and Development Policies was adopted in July 2014.

- 4.2 As a first stage in the development of a new Local Plan, the Council carried out an Issues and Options consultation in January/February 2015. The Issues and Options document considered 6 strategic growth options involving 3 potential sites for sustainable new settlements to the West, East and North of Colchester.
- 4.3 At the same time as the Issues and Options consultation, the Council invited landowners and developers to put forward potential sites for development. This process, known as a 'Call for Sites', repeated a similar exercise undertaken in the summer of 2014. The Council considered the suitability of the sites proposed through the two Call for Sites exercises. The submissions received inform part of the evidence base to demonstrate the potential supply of land available to accommodate the growth requirements of the Borough. This work has been carried out in co-operation with neighbouring councils and Essex County Council to ensure the Duty to Cooperate was met and to facilitate exploration of cross-boundary planning options, including Garden Communities.
- 4.4 This initial work was consolidated into a Preferred Options consultation held in June-July 2016 which set out the Council's preferred spatial strategy, planning policies and allocations as justified by its evidence base and Sustainability Appraisal for both Sections, incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (this integrated appraisal is referred to as the Sustainability Appraisal). The 6 options for growth outlined in the Issues and Options were refined into one preferred option involving:
 - a) a continuing focus on urban Colchester
 - b) small scale development in identified 'Sustainable Settlements'; and
 - c) development of two new Garden Communities to the east and west of Colchester.

The preferred spatial strategy reflected the outcome of draft Sustainability Appraisal work on Sections 1 and 2, the overall evidence base, deliverability considerations, the availability of sites, and an overall evaluation of the combination of allocations and policies that would produce the most sustainable pattern of growth. The preferred Spatial Strategy evolved from firstly, consideration of the individual characteristics and capacity of different parts of the Borough and secondly, consideration of the overall linkages and functionality of settlements within the area and the best ways of enhancing their sustainability. It was concluded that new settlement options were only acceptable if promoted as Garden Communities given that communities built on Garden Community principles would be able to address requirements for infrastructure and community stewardship as part of meeting the requirement for housing and employment land. The selection of three sites spread across the three authorities reflected consensus between the authorities on an equitable and sustainable division of growth to meet identified need.

- 4.5 The Local Plan has to be justified to meet the soundness test as explained in paragraph 182 of the NPPF. This means that it should be the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives. Working in co-operation with Braintree DC and Tendring DC, it has been agreed that the most appropriate long term strategy for North Essex is to meet housing need in three new garden communities. Having regard to the Sustainability Appraisal and other factors, it is considered that new communities to the west of Braintree, between Colchester and Braintree and the east of Colchester is most appropriate.
- 4.6 The discounting of the North Colchester site for a Garden Community was based on the negative environmental impacts of a large Garden Community on an area of significant landscape and environmental value. Additionally, the deliverability and sustainability of Garden Communities was considered to be best served by their location in two distinct areas of the Borough as opposed to adjacent communities at East and North Colchester.
- 4.7 The Preferred Options plan was divided into two sections comprising firstly, strategic policies including Garden Communities proposals prepared jointly with Braintree District Council and Tendring District Council (Section 1) and secondly local policies and allocations for Colchester Borough (Section 2). The Preferred Options consultation, which consulted on both Section 1 and Section 2 elements, attracted 3102 representations from 1539 respondents. This compares to a total of 649 responses from individuals and organisations at the Issues and Options stage in 2015. The December 2016 Local Plan Committee received a report on the Preferred Options consultation which summarised key issues and responses.
- 4.8 While the format and content on the Publication Draft plan largely replicates that of the Preferred Options, changes have been made in response to Preferred Options consultation responses. The December 2016 consultation report highlighted many of these changes. Changes also reflect evolving policy guidance, evidence base findings, and improvements to clarity.
- 4.9 The timetable for Local Plan work is being tracked through the publication of a periodically updated Local Development Scheme (LDS), last reviewed by this Committee in February 2017. The LDS provides the timetable for delivery of all Local Plan documents, including the programmed date for adoption of a new Local Plan of September 2018. The LDS includes this referral to Committee in May with public consultation scheduled for June and July 2017.

- 4.10 **Sustainability Appraisal** – Local Plan preparation has included preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for both sections. The Non-Technical Summary of Sections 1 and 2 of the Sustainability Appraisal is included as an appendix to this report and the full SAs will be available on the Council's website. The joint sustainability appraisal of the Section 1 plan prepared jointly with Braintree and Tendring has been prepared by Essex County Council Place Services. The Section 1 SA considers the overall sustainability and cumulative effect of the strategic planning proposals jointly made by Braintree, Colchester and Tendring, including in particular Garden Communities along with suggested mitigation measures as appropriate.
- 4.11 The Section 2 SA assesses the likely significant environmental implications of every policy and site allocation in Section 2 of the Local Plan, and the consequence of reasonable alternatives. It has tested various options to ensure that the Local Plan policies will contribute towards achieving sustainable development. The SA has suggested mitigation measures, which have been incorporated into policies.
- 4.12 **Evidence Base:** Both the strategic Section 1 and the Colchester specific allocations and policies in Section 2 are based on a comprehensive evidence base covering a wide range of topics including the following, carried out jointly with other authorities where required and available on the Council's website:
- Objectively Assessed Housing Need Report – July 2015, Nov. 2016 update
 - Further OAN topic report – Alignment of Employment Land and Floorspace with OAN – May 2017
 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment – December 2015
 - Strategic Land Availability Assessment – June 2016, updated August 2016
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan – May 2017
 - Concept Feasibility Study for Garden Communities – June 2016
 - North Essex Garden Communities Employment and Demographic Study – May 2017
 - Section 1 Viability Study – May 2017
 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment – July 2014, updated October 2014, Colchester update May 2017
 - Employment Land Needs Assessment – January 2015
 - Employment Land Trajectory – May 2017
 - Colchester Retail and Town Centre Study – December 2016
 - Travel to Work Patterns – September 2015
 - Green Infrastructure Strategy – October 2011
 - Indoor Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies – July 2015
 - Water Cycle Study – December 2016
 - Local Wildlife Study- February 2016
 - Transport Modelling – June 2016 and September 2016 update
 - Protected Lanes Report – December 2015
 - Settlement Boundary Review – July 2016, updated May 2017
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – April 2017

The following work has informed development of the plan and will be finalised for the public consultation on the Publication Draft Plan. Interim findings have been attached as appendices to this report.

- Summary of emerging Whole Plan Viability Study findings
- Draft conclusions from Colchester's Local Plan (Section 1 and Section 2) Appropriate Assessments.

The evidence base will continue to be developed and documents will continue to be made available.

4.13 Publication Draft Plan

The Publication Draft Local Plan is the product of a transparent and evidence-based process in line with national regulations and guidance. It is now proposed to consult on this version of the plan for a six-week period to run from 16 June to 28 July to gather views from the public and stakeholders.

Braintree District Council and Tendring District Council will consult on their own Local Plans on the same dates. Section 1 of the Local Plan is common to all three plans. The views gathered will be submitted to Government for examination alongside the plan, Sustainability Appraisal, and supporting evidence base. There will be two examinations in public involved in plan adoption. The strategic element of the Local Plan (Section 1) common to Braintree, Colchester and Tendring Local Plans will be examined jointly. Assuming that the examiner is able to confirm that, in principle, Section 1 is sound then there will be separate examinations of each Local Plan's unique policies (as contained in Section 2 of each Local Plan).

- 4.14 The following paragraphs summarise key elements of the Publication Draft Plan. Significant changes made following the previous Preferred Options version of the plan are highlighted at the end of each section.
- 4.15 **Section 1** - Section 1 of the Local Plan provides detail about high level allocations and policies to be included in the three Local Plans prepared by Braintree, Colchester and Tendring Councils. Section 1 sets the strategic approach to the authorities will take to meet the objectively assessed need for development land. Its main purposes are to:
- Articulate a spatial portrait of the combined area, including its main settlements and strategic infrastructure, as a framework for accommodating future planned growth;
 - Provide a strategic vision for how planned growth in North Essex will be realised;
 - Set strategic objectives and policies for key growth topics;
 - Set out the numbers of additional homes and jobs across the area that will be needed over the period to 2033. The choices made, particularly in relation to the location of garden communities, will also set the framework for development well beyond the plan period; and
 - Highlight the key strategic growth locations across the area and the necessary new or upgraded infrastructure to support this growth.
- 4.16 The strategic housing policy SP3 reflects the evidence base work carried out by the three authorities to establish Objectively Assessed Need and to translate this into balanced provision of land to meet identified need, with a figure of 920 houses a year established for Colchester. The policy provides for an adjustment mechanism for division of housing numbers between authorities.
- 4.17 The strategic employment policy SP4 addresses the objective of creating a sustainable balance within the three authorities between jobs and the available labour force through population growth. The East of England Forecasting Model 2016 work predicts that Colchester will create 928 jobs/year through the plan period to 2033.
- 4.18 Up-front provision of infrastructure is a fundamental principle of the Local Plan, and the infrastructure policy SP5 requires that 'development must be supported by provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified to serve the needs arising from new

development'. It goes on to list the key transport, education, health and broadband infrastructure requirements for the strategic area.

- 4.19 The policy on place-shaping principles (SP6) establishes high standards for urban and architectural design to underpin all new development. It sets the context for the Garden Communities policies SP7-10 which establish their guiding principles and identify the broad locations of Garden Communities to the east and west of Colchester, as well as one to the west of Braintree. Local Development vehicles are being recommended by officers as a way of meeting need which, by being locally driven, will ensure that infrastructure, facilities and services will be put in place when they are needed and that seek to ensure that land is released for housing, employment, retail and other uses. The plan states: '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.' The Councils are confident that a Local Development Vehicle model is viable and can deliver successful and sustainable garden communities, but will continue to explore other ways of achieving the vision that offer similar levels of confidence that the right quality of development will be delivered at the right time.
- 4.20 Agreement on the general principles underpinning Garden Communities is intended to be followed by separate Strategic Growth Development Plan Documents for each community which will be developed jointly by the relevant authorities and reported to this committee at each stage prior to formal consultation and ultimately submission.
- 4.21 **Changes made for the Publication Draft version** – No significant changes were made to the jointly developed part of the plan (i.e. Section 1) between Preferred Options and Publication Draft stages. Those changes made jointly by the three authorities and Essex County Council relate primarily to providing greater clarity and any minor modifications required to reflect updated evidence and process. The three authorities met with a Planning Inspector in April 2017 to hear his feedback on the plans. He did not raise any substantive issues of soundness, but did provide guidance on the expectations for the two-part examination of the plan and noted scope for more explanation on the background to policies. On process issues, he stated that the approach to plan making is for the authorities to determine, but that examination of the shared Section 1 would be followed by separate Section 2 examinations once there is confidence that Section 1 is sound and/or after main modifications have been proposed. He confirmed that if boundaries for the Garden Communities cannot be identified fully, then identifying the broad location is acceptable. He advised that the two elements of the plan should be referred to as 'sections' rather than 'parts'. The Spatial Strategy, formerly policy SP6, has now been moved to the front of the plan to reflect its importance and has become Policy SP2.
- 4.22 **Section 2** – Section 2 provides the specific policies and allocations for Colchester Borough as summarised in the sections below followed by key changes.
- 4.23 Vision and Spatial Strategy: Section 2 first outlines the overall vision and Spatial Strategy for Colchester, including the aspiration that in 2033 Colchester will be 'an active and welcoming town with its rich and prestigious heritage treasured and showcased for all to enjoy'. The Spatial Strategy directs development towards the most sustainable locations and provides for supporting facilities and infrastructure to create sustainable local communities. As noted above, the spatial strategy includes the option to pursue Garden

Communities which was agreed jointly with the adjacent authorities of Braintree and Tendring due to the value of providing consolidated sites according with Garden Community principles.

- 4.24 Strategic Policies: The plan includes five strategic policies to detail the spatial strategy (SG1) and to direct overall development of housing (SG2), economic growth (SG3), and infrastructure and developer contributions (SG4). Strategic policies also include guidance and support for Neighbourhood Plans (SG5).
- 4.25 Policy SG1 (Colchester's Spatial Strategy) provides for a settlement hierarchy ranking areas of the Borough in order of their sustainability merits and the size, function and services provided in each area. This Spatial Hierarchy focuses growth on the urban area of Colchester, with the Town Centre at its heart, reflecting its position as the main location for jobs, housing, services, and transport. The town centre sits above other parts of urban Colchester, and separate policies are provided later in the plan for the surrounding East, North, South and West areas of urban Colchester. Sequentially, the next tier of preferred growth includes Garden Communities covered in Section 1 which straddle boundaries with adjacent authorities and will provide new sustainable communities which will continue to grow beyond the plan period. The second tier also includes proportionate growth in existing Sustainable Settlements within the Borough, including 15 large villages and the 3 District Centres of Tiptree, West Mersea, and Wivenhoe. In the remaining Other Villages and Countryside areas of Colchester, the Council will limit new development to appropriate new infill developments; development on previously developed land; or extensions, restorations or alterations to existing building within the defined village limits. New development in the open countryside will only be permitted on an exceptional basis to preserve its rural character.
- 4.26 The Council will need to meet an Objectively Assessed Housing Need of 920 units a year over the plan period. Policy SG2 provides the allocations for different areas of the Borough to meet this need, with new development focused on the urban area of Colchester, new Garden Communities to the east and west of Colchester, as well as existing Sustainable Settlements within the borough. The number of new dwellings for each area follows on from firstly, the broad distribution established by the Spatial Strategy and secondly, the analysis of capacity, deliverability, suitability and proportionality carried out by the Council through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment and the Sustainability Appraisal. Table SG2 demonstrates that the Council has identified a 16 year supply (14,720). Table SG2 details the allocations for different parts of the Borough:

Settlements and Key Development Areas		Existing commitments (2017-2033)	New Allocations (2017-2033)	Policy reference
Colchester Urban Area		5,261	2,018	TC3, NC3, SC1, SC2 EC3, WC4
Stanway		1,137	1,106	WC2
Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community		0	1,250	Part 1 SP7 and SP8
Colchester / Braintree Borders Garden Community		0	1,350	Part 1 SP7 and SP9
Sustainable Settlements	Abberton and Langenhoe	812	55	SS1-16
	Boxted		36	
	Chappel and Wakes Colne		30	
	Copford and Copford Green		120	
	Eight Ash Green		150	
	Fordham		20	
	Great Horkesley		93	
	Great Tey		40	
	Langham		80	
	Layer de la Haye		50	
	Marks Tey		0	
	Rowhedge		40	
	Tiptree		600	
	West Bergholt		120	
	West Mersea		200	
	Wivenhoe		250	
Extra Care Housing (Self Contained)		0	260	260
Total		7,210	7,868	15,078

Source: CBC Housing Trajectory May 2017.

- 4.27 Policy SG3 provides the policy and allocations to support economic growth in the Borough. This includes allocations to address the estimated potential need for between 22 - 55.8ha additional B use employment land as well as scope for further alternative economic uses in other use classes to provide flexibility in the provision of floorspace to support new jobs.

- 4.28 Policy SG4 addresses the key issue of provision of infrastructure to support new development. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been prepared to provide detail on infrastructure requirements, phasing, delivery partners and funding. The IDP uses the range of studies and information on a range of topics already contained in the Council's Evidence Base and listed in para 4.4 above and provides context and evidence for the constraints and infrastructure requirements contained in the allocations listed in the Preferred Options.
- 4.29 Policy SG5 identifies the Centre Hierarchy for Colchester which puts the Town Centre at the top, followed by District Centres, which provide an important role serving the day-to-day needs of their local populations as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas across and beyond the Borough, but not at a level comparable with Colchester Town Centre. The final level of the hierarchy for town centre uses is the Local Centre, which meet local needs and serve a small catchment area.
- 4.30 Policy SG6, Town Uses, requires that proposals for town centre uses that are not within a defined centre and are not in accordance with the Local Plan will need to demonstrate that a sequential approach has been undertaken to site selection in line with the Centres Hierarchy in SG5. The policy requires that retail proposals will need to be carried out over specified levels to avoid negative impacts on the Town Centre.

4.31 **Changes made to the Publication Draft version –**

Housing allocation changes: The Publication Draft version of the Table SG2 reflects the comprehensive review of allocations made following the Preferred Options consultation which has taken account of the overall spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy; consultation responses to the Preferred Options; further consultation with Parish/Town Councils and stakeholders; further site assessment work; and updates to the evidence base. Discussion of particular sites added or deleted follows in the section on Place policies below.

Changes to the Centres Hierarchy for Colchester: The Preferred Options version of the plan did not give a place in the centres hierarchy for District and Local Centres previously found in the adopted Core Strategy. This position has now been altered and is based on advice contained in the Council's Retail Study. This recommended that the Council adopt a three-tier hierarchy of centres, ie Town Centre at the top followed by District Centres and Local Centres. The Retail Study provides the evidence base behind the designation of Tollgate, Peartree Road, Turner Rise and Highwoods as District Centres, and the Council has carried out further analysis to support the designation of smaller Local Centres which need to be of a scale to be more than a small parade of shops.

Infrastructure: Consolidation of policies on infrastructure and developer contributions: The two policies in the Preferred Options, one on infrastructure and one on developer contributions, have now been consolidated into one policy in light of the overlap between the two topics.

- 4.32 Environmental Assets Policies: The Environmental Assets section of the plan provides policies on the protection and enhancement of the Borough's natural environment and green infrastructure, ensuring continuing safeguarding in particular of the Borough's countryside and Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There is a Green Infrastructure Policy which provides for the development of new green infrastructure including a Green Orbital surrounding the urban area of Colchester. The section also

includes a pollution and contamination policy to ensure development addresses and mitigates those issues.

- 4.33 This section also includes a Climate Change Policy. Policy CC1 addresses climate change and the move to a low carbon future for Colchester. The Climate Change policy provides that the Council will plan for new development in locations and ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adopt the principles set out in the energy hierarchy and provide resilience to the impacts of a changing climate.

4.34 **Changes made to Publication Draft version –**

Pollution and Contamination policy: A new policy has been added on Pollution and Contamination to ensure the issues are given sufficient prominence and to clarify the ways in which planning should bolster other relevant legislation governing pollution avoidance and mitigation.

- 4.35 Place Policies: The policies and text contained within this section set out allocations and policies for specific parts of the Borough and explain how these align with the Plan's overall spatial strategy and policy objectives. The organisation of the section reflects the plan's spatial hierarchy, meaning that allocations and policies for the Town Centre and the surrounding urban area of Colchester come first, and then are followed by allocations and policies for Garden Communities and each Sustainable Settlement (existing Rural District Centres and larger villages). All allocations include information on the particular requirements of each site and specify particular requirements that must be met before planning permission could be granted.

- 4.36 Urban Colchester policies and allocations: This section divides the urban area of Colchester into five broad geographic areas (Central, East, North, South and West) in line with the plan's place-based approach. Policy TC1 provides further guidance on the mechanisms for maintaining Colchester Town Centre's pre-eminent position through support for proposals that positively contribute towards creating an attractive, vibrant and safe Town Centre that offers a diverse mix of uses and extend the time when the Town Centre is active, subject to their impact on local amenity. Policy TC2 sets out the requirements to maintain retail uses within identified Primary and Secondary frontages in the Town Centre.

- 4.37 The Knowledge Gateway/University; Severalls/Northern Gateway; and Stanway have been given specific policies to address their unique strategic economic growth position within the Borough (Policies EC1, NC1 and WC1).

- 4.38 Some parts of Colchester have been a focus for regeneration and development over a number of years, with significant progress and delivery evident in some areas such as the Garrison and North Colchester. Other areas will continue to be a focus for regeneration and enhancement delivered via a range of mixed use, commercial, social and residential opportunities. These areas, including the Hythe (EC2), North Station (NC2) and the Zoo (WC3) have been designated as Special Policy Areas to provide a clear context against which to promote opportunities for appropriate growth and expansion, enhanced public realm and connectivity.

- 4.39 Site allocations along with specific policy considerations for other parts of the urban area of Colchester are contained in policies TC3, NC3, EC3, WC2 and WC4.

4.40 Changes made to Publication Draft version –

Addition of a generic policy on infrastructure and mitigation requirements: The Preferred Options version of the plan repeated a number of requirements for each allocation made, but given that many requirements are generic, it was considered that one policy could summarise the infrastructure and mitigation measures that would be expected to apply to all new developments. These include:

- Adequate wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure
- Appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage measures
- Proportionate mitigation for area-wide transport issues
- Exploration for potential archaeological significance followed as required by further investigation and preservation/recording.
- Section 106 contributions as relevant.
- Suitable design and screening/landscaping to minimise any negative impact on the surrounding landscape.
- Safe pedestrian access to and from the sites to services and facilities.

Additionally, further information has been included on specific infrastructure requirements for individual allocations as it has become available through preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and related highways modelling work.

Addition of transport policies for each area of urban Colchester: Policies have been added to sections for the Town Centre and East, West, North and South Colchester to reflect the particular needs in each area for specific improvements to the road network as well as walking, cycling, and public transport improvement; travel planning; and the promotion of sustainable travel.

Retail Frontage requirements: Revisions to TC2 Retail Frontages to reflect recommendations from the Retail Study to require at least 70% retail use on each Primary Street Frontage within the Primary Shopping area and 50% on Secondary Street Frontages.

Stanway commercial policy and allocations: Policy for Stanway commercial areas has been revised to reflect the overall changes made to the Centre Hierarchy and to provide a flexible approach to future commercial development in the area in the context of uncertainty over the outcome of the Tollgate appeal for new retail development. The Council's Retail Study concludes that Tollgate does not require substantial new retail development to ensure its vitality and viability over the plan period, but its role as a District Centre could be supported through the introduction of new services and/or community facilities. An additional residential allocation has been added to the area to further compliment the mix of uses at Tollgate.

Revised allocations:

TC3 -Britannia Car Park – increase in capacity from 100 to 150 to reflect potential for high density town centre development, inclusion of a requirement to have neutral effect on Town Centre parking

NC1 – Northern Gateway, Rugby Club. Development of the Rugby Club site will now be provided for approximately 340 new dwellings. 150 dwellings were included in the Preferred Options. The revised total includes an additional area of land adjoining the Rugby Club at Oxley Parker Drive, to provide housing for 40 units, together with enhanced quality public open space which is required to be planned comprehensively with the

adjoining site at the Rugby Club. Additionally, within the residential allocation, 260 units of Extra Care accommodation are expected to be delivered.

NC3 – Braiswick. The site 'Land north of Achnacone Drive', previously allocated for 30 units, is no longer included. Two sites previously considered separately, land at St. Botolph's Farm and land south of Colchester Golf Club, are now shown as one allocation for up to 70 dwellings which will need to be planned comprehensively, particularly in respect of access arrangements which will need to be directly off the B1508.

SC2 – Middlewick Ranges. The proposed allocation on land owned by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) provides for approximately 1000 new houses. The DIO proposed an allocation of 2000 dwellings, however while the site is sustainably located, there are a number of constraints at the site which will restrict the final number of dwellings that can be delivered at this location. This includes the fact that Middlewick Ranges is a designated Local Wildlife Site and a well-used recreational area. A number of environmental, archaeological, transport and ecological surveys will accordingly be required. These survey should be commissioned as soon as possible to help determine final housing numbers and define the most suitable developable areas.

WC2 – Stanway residential sites. New residential allocations for Stanway include the redesignation of the former Sainsbury's site from employment to residential, if the retail proposal for the site does not succeed at appeal. It is proposed that the site could accommodate up to 200 units in addition to ground floor small scale service and community uses to support the role of the District Centre. Land north of London Road is proposed for up to 630 dwellings along with a new primary school with co-located early years and childcare nursery places. Design and layout of the development would need to minimise the impacts of noise from the A12. A comprehensively planned highways access would be required which takes into account adjoining residential allocations, including a new allocation to the southwest of the site for provision of up to 26 almshouses for affordable housing for the Rosemary Almshouses.

- 4.41 Other locations, policies and allocations – Policies SS1-SS18 provide allocations and guidance for the 15 large villages and 3 Rural District Centres which together are categorised as 'Sustainable Settlements'. The growth provided for in these settlements is considered appropriate to the size of the settlement; local landscape character; other local constraints; identified need; and the availability of infrastructure and suitable development sites. A generic policy is provided for smaller villages and the countryside given the limits placed on development in those areas.

4.42 **Changes made to Publication Draft version-**

Revised residential allocations and policy wording

SS1 – Deletion of land at Ashpark House Peldon Road for up to 5 dwellings; provision of 50 rather than 25 dwellings at land to the west of Peldon Road along with a new drop-off/pick-up point at Langenhoe Primary School; and inclusion of land to the east of Peldon Road for 5 dwellings.

Deletion of the site for up to 15 dwellings on land east of Birch Street (SS2 in the Preferred Options) on the basis that Birch is no longer ranked as a Sustainable Settlement.

Deletion of the three sites in Dedham Heath (SS6 in the Preferred Options). The central area of Dedham is considered to be a Sustainable Settlement, however, Dedham Heath is no longer ranked as part of that Sustainable Settlement and further residential development there, within the AONB is not supported.

SS8 Great Tey – Reduction of the allocation of the Brook Road site from 17 to 10 units; allocation of a new site on land off Greenfield Drive for 30 new dwellings and open space. Great Tey Parish Council may embark on a Neighbourhood Plan, in which case they would provide the detail for the allocations. The December 2016 Local Plan Committee report indicated that a total of 57 units would be likely to be required, comprising 17 units at Brook Road and 40 units at the new site Greenfield Drive. Following this report, a Council officer attended a public meeting in Great Tey as requested by the Parish Council to provide information on the plan making process including how the site had been evaluated and would be considered in future. The Council received 33 letters of opposition in principle to development on Greenfield Drive subsequent to the meeting. The current proposal for 40 units retains both sites, but does give the village a lower delivery figure than initially proposed in the December 2016 report. A subsequent meeting was held with the Parish Council who are considering whether to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.

SS9 Langham – Change to the overall housing numbers from 125 to 80 dwellings. The School Road allocations are down from a previous total of 115 to 70 as follows: site to the east of the Powerplus site to accommodate 40 dwellings plus a car park for the school; site to the west of the Powerplus site to accommodate 30 dwellings plus an extension to the adjacent recreation ground.

SS12 Layer de la Haye – Reduction in the allocated site from 50 to 35 units. This is expected to facilitate a rural exception site on adjacent land.

SS11 – Marks Tey – Modifications to reflect the evolving role of the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to the Garden Community proposal, including designation of the Anderson's site as a Local Employment site rather than as a site to be covered by the Neighbourhood Plan.

SS12 Rowhedge – Deletion of the 60 unit Battleswick Farm site and allocation of a site at the former Rowhedge Business Park for 40 dwellings and land to accommodate new health services to be agreed with the North Essex Care Commissioning Group.

SS15a West Mersea – Reduction in the Dawes Lane site from 150 to 100. Reduction in the Brierley Paddocks site from 200 to 100.

4.43 Development Management Policies: The 22 development management policies included in the Preferred Options document are intended to provide detail guiding the development management (planning application) process. They set out how development will be managed to ensure that it contributes towards the vision and objectives, via the strategic framework put in place by the policies contained in Part 1 and those covering Sustainable Growth, Climate Change, Environmental Assets and Places in Part 2. The Committee considered 11 of these policies at its April meeting. These policies have now been revised to reflect Committee comment and are included along with a further 14 policies, covering the following topics:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Community Facilities
- New Education Provision
- Sports Provision
- Tourism, Leisure and Culture
- Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside
- Agricultural Development and Diversification
- Affordable Housing
- Development Density

- Housing Diversity
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation
- Housing Standards
- Domestic Development
- Rural Workers
- Design and Amenity
- Historic Environment
- Open Space
- Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour
- Sustainable Access to Development
- Parking
- Flood Risk and Water Management
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- Renewable Energy, Water, Waste and Recycling.

4.44 Revisions to the Publication Draft version -

Affordable Housing target – The affordable housing target has been increased from 20% to 30% on the basis that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment provides evidence for the need for that amount, and new work carried out for the Whole Plan Viability Assessment establishes that 30% is broadly viable in the current economic climate. Draft work from the Whole Plan Viability study is attached as an appendix to this report to provide background on this point. Further work is being carried out in relation to the appropriate level and mix of affordable housing in the Garden Communities.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Publication Draft Local Plan be approved for publication in line with regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 5.2 The next stage in the Plan process will be to carry out Publication Draft consultation for a six-week period to run from 16 June – 28 July 2017. During this consultation the local authority will publish and make available the documents it proposes to submit to the Secretary of State for examination. These include:
 - the Proposed Local Plan document
 - the Sustainability Appraisals in respect of Sections 1 and 2.
- 5.3 Following this consultation stage, the Council must prepare a summary of the representations made. This will form part of the submission to Government. In addition to the Local Plan and consultation summary, the Council will also submit to Government the Sustainability Appraisals, and the full range of supporting evidence base documents.

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 is being carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Sections 18, 19 and 35) and entails publication of the document and associated evidence on the Council's website, notification to stakeholders, and ensuring the availability of hard copies of the documents at the Council office and the main Library.

The Sustainability Appraisals will also be available. They should inform public views on the local plan and provide an opportunity for consultation and engagement.

- 7.2 Consultation and engagement is programmed for a six-week period in line with Government regulations on Local Plan consultations, to run from 16 June to 28 July 2017.
- 7.3 The Council has programmed the following drop-in sessions to provide information on the Submission consultation and engagement:
- 17th June – 10am – 2pm – Stanway Village Hall
 - 23rd June 10am – 2pm – Colchester High Street Market stall
 - 24th June – 10am – 2pm Greenstead Community Centre
 - 27th June - 4 – 8pm - Great Tey Village Hall
 - 3rd July – 4 – 8pm – Abberton and Langenhoe Village Hall
 - 6th July 4 – 8pm – Langham Community Centre
 - 8th July – 10am – 2pm MICA Centre, West Mersea
 - 12th July 4pm – 8pm – Abbots Road Community Centre
- 7.4 Prior to submission of a plan to Government for examination the Council is required to prepare a report describing the consultation carried out at each phase of the Local Plan document development process.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There is a cost involved in undertaking consultation, both in terms of the human resource cost and the expenditure associated with the production of publicity material and copies of the consultation documents. Further resources will be required to prepare the report summarising the outcomes of the consultation. Sufficient resources are available for this work.
- 8.2 There will be further resources required at the examination stage: the Planning Inspectorate charges for the examination and there will be a need to appoint a programme officer to co-ordinate the examination. Planning officer time will need to be dedicated to supporting the promotion of the plan through examination process, In addition, consultants may need to be appointed to support specialist evidence base documents which underpin the plan.

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](#) or go to the Colchester Borough Council website www.colchester.gov.uk and follow the pathway from the homepage: Your Council > How the Council works > Equality and Diversity > EqualityImpact Assessments > Commercial Services > Planning Policy > Local Plan.
- 9.2 There are no particular Human Rights implications.

10. Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 Adoption of a new Local Plan will support development that should enhance community safety through good design and provision of appropriate community facilities and infrastructure.

11. Health and Safety Implications

- 11.1 Adoption of a new Local Plan will support development that should enhance health and safety through design and provision of appropriate community facilities and infrastructure.

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1 Development and adoption of a Local Plan will help ensure that planning decisions are based on the most sustainable and deliverable options available for the Borough, thereby minimising the risk of inappropriate development and strengthening the Council's position in planning appeals.