

# Colchester City Council Preferred Options Local Plan

Regulation 18 Consultation

2025



**Colchester**  
Local Plan Review



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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Colchester is a diverse and growing City, with a vibrant centre, attractive villages and important distinctive landscapes. The Local Plan addresses the challenges of population growth and change, the climate emergency, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable and active travel opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.
- 1.2 The Local Plan sets out a vision, strategy, and policies for planning and delivery across the City including the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the City up to 2041.
- 1.3 The production of the Local Plan represents years of work, starting with extensive technical evidence, iterative themed public engagement, negotiation and co-operation from many partners and stakeholders including statutory consultees, developers, councillors and local residents.

## **Local Plan: The Process**

- 1.4 The City cannot be planned in isolation. The Local Plan has been developed in the context of a range of other plans and strategies operating at the national, county, and local levels.

## **National Planning Guidance**

- 1.5 The Local Plan must reflect the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This has several updates since it was first published in 2012. The NPPF published in December 2023 is the version which is relevant to this Plan. Further national guidance on planning policies is provided in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which applies to both plan making and decision taking. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce planning policies for the City. The policies must comply with national planning policy unless there is overwhelming evidence to demonstrate why this is not the case. The government sets out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF that the planning system should achieve sustainable development by achieving three overarching objectives:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure; and

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and



c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

### **County Level Plans**

1.6 The following County level plans provide a relevant background to the Local Plan.

#### **Essex Minerals Local Plan**

1.7 Essex County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) for Colchester, and is responsible for preparing planning policies, and also for assessing applications for mineral development. The Essex Minerals Local Plan (MLP) (2014) is a statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the Colchester Local Plan. The role of the MLP is to identify sites for the extraction of sufficient quantities of mineral within Essex to facilitate development over the plan period (2014-2029). A MLP Review has commenced to replace the current Plan.

1.8 There are active quarry sites in Colchester as well as currently unworked sand and gravel and brick clay deposits which are subject to a Minerals Safeguarding policy within the MLP. The safeguarding policy requires the MPA – Essex County Council – to be consulted on development proposals covering 5 hectares or more within the sand and gravel minerals safeguarding area and greater than one dwelling for the brick clay safeguarded area. The Minerals Safeguarding Areas which apply within Colchester are highlighted on the relevant policies maps. Refer to the [Essex Mineral Local Plan](#) for information about potential Minerals Safeguarding Areas in parts of Colchester outside the scope of the Local Plan Policies Maps. Regard should be had to the requirements of the Minerals Local Plan where a development falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. Qualifying applications will be required to be accompanied by a Minerals Resource Assessment unless excluded by safeguarding policy.

1.9 The MLP also designates Mineral Consultation Areas at a distance of 250 metres around active quarries, mineral infrastructure and mineral deposits permitted for extraction. The MPA will be required to be consulted on all non-mineral related development within these areas, and all applications will require a Minerals Infrastructure Impact Assessment unless excluded by safeguarding policy.

#### **Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan**

1.10 Essex County Council is also the Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for Colchester, and is responsible for preparing planning policies, and also for assessing applications for waste development. The Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017) (WLP) is a statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the Colchester Local Plan. The role of the WLP is to identify sites for waste management to facilitate sustainable development over its Plan period.

1.11 The WLP sets out how Essex and Southend-on-Sea aim to manage waste and also seeks to deal with waste more sustainably, encouraging recycling and reducing reliance on landfill as well as safeguarding waste facilities. All applications within

250m of existing, permitted and allocated waste facilities are required to be submitted with a Waste Infrastructure Impact Assessment unless excluded by safeguarding policy.

### **Essex Local Transport Plan**

- 1.12 The Local Transport Act 2008 requires Essex County Council to develop a Local Transport Plan (LTP) that provides the overarching strategy and policy framework for transport across Essex, outlining the council's vision and focusing on key themes and outcomes to manage, operate and improve transportation networks and services. This requirement is addressed by the Essex Transport Strategy that was formally adopted by ECC in 2011.
- 1.13 Given policy evolution since the adoption of LTP3, due consideration should be given to more recent documents such as Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral and the Transport East Transport Strategy, to ensure that greater emphasis is placed upon sustainable development, the provision and use of sustainable transport, and the decarbonisation of the transport network.
- 1.14 ECC has commenced the process that will see the Essex Transport Strategy replaced by a new LTP to be published shortly. The strategic framework for LTP4 was consulted during summer 2024 and includes three outcome focussed themes:
- supporting people, health, wellbeing and independence
  - creating sustainable places and communities
  - connecting people and businesses

LTP4 will also contain a suite of Implementation Plans that will bring the Colchester Future Transport Strategy within the formal structure of the LTP.

- 1.15 Transport East is the Sub Regional National Transport Body for the East of England and has an adopted Transport Strategy. The strategy is aligned with the Essex LTP and is seeking to deliver four priorities:
- creating a net zero carbon transport network
  - connecting our growing towns and cities
  - energising our coastal and rural communities
  - unlocking global gateways.

### **Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**

- 1.16 Introduced in the Environment Act 2021, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is a statutory requirement. It is part of Nature Recovery Network (NRN), which is made up of 48 Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The primary purpose of the Essex LNRS is to find locations for the creation or improvement of habitat. It aims to identify the locations most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. Essex County Council are the Responsible Authority for delivering the LNRS for Greater Essex. The Essex LNRS will outline agreed biodiversity priorities for nature recovery in the county. It will also outline a series of proposed actions, known as potential measures, to achieve these priorities. The Essex LNRS will propose where actions could be carried out that will connect and expand existing spaces for nature.

- 1.17 Other strategies and guidance documents have a bearing on planning policy in Colchester and cover education, housing, and key infrastructure considerations such as early years and childcare, schools, social care and sustainable drainage. Separately, work is also undertaken jointly across Essex on a range of policy matters including on climate change, health and wellbeing and economic development, and as appropriate has been used to inform this plan.

### **City Strategies**

- 1.18 The Local Plan brings together the spatial elements of a number of key City strategies and provides a focus for future development.

### **Recycling and Waste Strategy for Colchester 2025-2040**

- 1.19 This Strategy outlines Colchester's plans to improve the way we manage waste over the next 15 years. It sets out the vision and aims of the Council in reducing waste, improving recycling and providing a simple-to-use service for our residents and businesses.

### **Three Year Plan 2023-2026: A City fit for the Future**

- 1.20 The strategy emphasises sustainability, inclusivity and innovation aiming to position Colchester as a thriving forward looking city where people want to live, work and visit.

### **Colchester Economic Development Strategy 2022 - 2025**

- 1.21 This strategy aims to position Colchester as a dynamic and sustainable city, balancing economic growth with social inclusivity and environmental responsibility.

### **Housing Strategy 2022-27**

- 1.22 This strategy was developed by the Housing Strategy Partnership, including Colchester City Council and its partners, sets out a vision where all residents have access to safe and affordable homes that promote health and equality within sustainable communities.

### **Environmental Sustainability Strategy**

- 1.23 This strategy brings together in one strategic document the issues around climate change; fuel poverty; depleting resources; energy security; as well as the environmental management of our own buildings, services and operations.

### **Colchester Future Transport Strategy (2022)**

- 1.24 This strategy was prepared in partnership with Essex County Council as the Highway Authority and sets out the overall approach to current transport issues and opportunities. It provides a strategy to improve health and wellbeing and tackle climate issues at the centre of transport planning and the projects and initiatives undertaken. The strategy will assist in supporting future allocation and bidding for funding for transport projects in the city and will be incorporated into the Implementation Plan as part of LTP4.

### **Duty to Co-operate**

- 1.25 In preparing the Local Plan, the Council co-operates with a range of other bodies to ensure a co-ordinated approach in the development of its policies in line with national guidance, in the context of strategic cross-boundary matters. These bodies include Essex County Council, the neighbouring districts of Braintree, Tendring, Maldon and Babergh and Mid Suffolk, together with infrastructure providers including agencies responsible for transport, health and the environment.

### **Evidence Base**

- 1.26 Policy development goes hand in hand with the development of an evidence base of research and information. The Evidence Base contains documents from local, county and national levels. National guidance is not listed to avoid repetition, given that the Local Plan has been produced in accordance with the NPPF. The evidence gathered from the documents covering topics including housing, economy, natural and built environment, net zero carbon buildings, transport, infrastructure and site-specific matters where relevant, has been employed in the formulation of the spatial strategy and policies. Evidence is kept under review and updated where necessary. This is a draft plan and as such evidence is not yet complete and will continue to evolve as work progresses on the plan. For example, in support of this Preferred Options plan, a stage 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was carried out. A stage 2 HIA will be required to support the submission plan. All of the evidence base can be viewed on the Council's website.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

- 1.27 Policy development has been carried out in the light of a Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Sustainability Appraisal tests the sustainability of the Plan options throughout the plan preparation process. It does this by considering how different policy choices perform against a range of sustainability objectives and assessment criteria. For example, it looks at whether policies or allocations would provide new jobs, make efficient use of land and help to improve health and wellbeing. The Sustainability Appraisal also helps to identify measures that could help to minimise any negative impacts identified and maximise the sustainability of the Local Plan. A Sustainability Appraisal report is published alongside the Plan.

### **Habitat Regulations Assessment**

- 1.28 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been carried out and is published alongside the Plan. HRA refers to the several distinct stages of assessment which must be undertaken in accordance with the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(as amended\)](#). All plans and projects (including planning applications) which are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the conservation management of a habitat site, require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects (screening). Where the potential for likely significant effects cannot be excluded, the Council must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site, in view the site's

conservation objectives. The competent authority may agree to the plan or project only after having ruled out adverse effects on the integrity of the habitats site. Where an adverse effect on site integrity cannot be ruled out, and where there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project can only proceed if there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest and if the necessary compensatory measures can be secured.

### **Development Plan**

1.29 The Development Plan Documents for Colchester will comprise:

- The Colchester City Local Plan setting out the overarching spatial vision for development of the City to 2041; strategic policies; detailed site allocations for housing and employment growth; and criteria based non-strategic policies. The Local Plan provides the planning framework for the other Documents listed below.
- Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (Development Plan Document). A Joint Local Plan (Development Plan Document) with Tendring District Council which allocates land and includes policies for the design and development of a Garden Community on the Colchester-Tendring border. The DPD provides relevant policy guidance, and sets out policies for the management of development, against which planning applications for the development and use of land will be considered.
- Neighbourhood Plans when adopted/made for different areas of Colchester will form part of the Development Plan and will guide new development in their areas.
- The Essex Minerals Local Plan and Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan, prepared by the County Council, apply to minerals and waste development matters.
- Tiptree Jam Factory DPD 2013.

1.30 The Local Plan is accompanied by a number of other planning documents that provide further guidance and information:

- Policies Maps which show where Local Plan policies apply to specific locations.
- Local Development Scheme (LDS) – this lists and describes all planning policy documents and the timetable for preparing them.
- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – sets out how we will consult the public in preparing planning policies.
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – set out in more detail how some of the Local Plan's policies will be applied.
- Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) - provides an annual summary of key statistics that monitor the effectiveness of the Local Plan.

### **Preferred Options Plan**

1.31 This is the Council's draft Local Plan 2041 or the 'Preferred Options'. It is published for a 6-week period of public consultation in accordance with Regulation 18 of the

Town and Country Planning Regulations. All comments received within the consultation period will be considered and, where appropriate, changes will be made to the draft plan.

- 1.32 In this draft, a description of the purpose of the policy follows each of the draft policies along with details of the alternatives considered. Full details of the likely environmental, economic and social effects of each policy are included in the Sustainability Appraisal report, which is published in support of the draft Local Plan. The Local Plan is supported by an evidence base, which will continue to be updated as the plan progresses. All evidence base documents are available to view on the Council's website.

## 2. Vision and approach to Local Plan

### **Approach to the Local Plan**

- 2.1 Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to include in their Local Plans “policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority’s area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change”.
- 2.2 The way places are planned, designed and built can have a significant influence over health and wellbeing. All development should be designed to provide opportunities for healthy lifestyles and contribute to the creation of healthier and inclusive communities and help to reduce health inequalities for people of all ages and abilities through placemaking. The Council will continue to work with partners and health providers to improve and promote healthier and active lifestyles for our residents and communities. Health and wellbeing outcomes are embedded throughout the policies in the Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Local Plan is holistic and integrated, it addresses the climate emergency, biodiversity and the environment, health and wellbeing and the cost of living crisis. All policies individually and cumulatively (the overall Local Plan) have been considered in this context.
- 2.4 The Environment Act 2021 puts the duty to enhance biodiversity into law. The Act establishes a strengthened biodiversity duty on public authorities, which states that public authorities must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- 2.5 Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, nature recovery and addressing the climate emergency are not stand-alone topics, they are intertwined and embedded in all aspects of planning. A key purpose of the new Local Plan to 2041 has been to enhance Colchester’s green network and waterways and incorporate the numerous themes of the ‘planning for a better environment’ agenda, such as air quality, biodiversity net gain, climate change adaptation and mitigation and net zero, flooding and coastal erosion, green and blue infrastructure, greenspace provision, Habitat Regulations, Local Nature Recovery Strategy, natural capital and environmental net gain, protected sites and species and water quality and resources.
- 2.6 The effects of climate change are already being experienced – more storms and heavy rainfall coupled with water stress, heatwaves and higher temperatures. It is right that the Local Plan includes policy requirements for net zero homes and buildings, and climate change adaptation.
- 2.7 Essex is the most water stressed county in the country. The situation is expected to get worse due to climate change, population growth and the need to restore, protect and enhance the natural environment. Although Essex is one of the driest places in the country, there are also areas at very high flood risk from the sea, rivers and rainfall. In addition to this, Essex water quality is below the national average as a

result of storm overflows discharging sewage into the water supply; pollution from fertilisers and poor livestock management; and runoff from construction and traffic.

- 2.8 The climate emergency and ecological emergency are closely related. As the climate changes, nature changes. The State of Nature Report 2023 says that the UK, like most other countries worldwide, has seen significant loss of its plants, animals and fungi. The UK is now one of the most nature-depleted countries on Earth. Across the UK, species studied have declined on average by 19% since 1970, nearly one in six species are threatened with extinction from Great Britain, and 151 of 10,008 species assessed have already become extinct since 1500.
- 2.9 The Local Plan has been prepared alongside the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which has provided evidence of the actions to reverse the current path of decline and bring about a recovery for nature. The LNRS identifies locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment.
- 2.10 The Essex LNRS explains that 'Essex, like the whole of the UK, has suffered extreme biodiversity loss in the last 50 years, with many habitats and species now vulnerable or seriously threatened. Once common species in our county such as Turtle Doves, European Eels and Hedgehogs are now seriously depleted and at risk. Habitats are now left largely fragmented and isolated, causing significant declines in biodiversity and ecological quality. Human life, too, is affected by these changes.' The Local Plan 2041 aims to play a role in recovering nature throughout Colchester.
- 2.11 Nature contributes much value through natural capital. Ecosystem services provide a regulating, provisioning and cultural role. In the long term, the economic costs of not addressing the climate emergency and biodiversity loss, will be higher through loss of natural capital than the costs of addressing them now.
- 2.12 The Essex Climate Action Commission recognise that the natural world is our best ally in reversing climate change – it is key to absorbing and storing carbon. Risks from already changing weather systems: more flooding, over-heating, soil degradation, subsidence and water shortage can be tackled by making space for open spaces and nurturing our natural world. Through declaring a climate emergency, it has become a priority of Colchester City Council to spur urgent action to reduce our carbon footprint and promote sustainable urban environments and economies. This priority is incorporated throughout the Local Plan.
- 2.13 The green network is important for many reasons. The Essex LNRS includes a target to double the amount of natural greenspace in Essex. There is scientific research that demonstrates the positive impact that nature has on mental health and wellbeing. The green network (or open spaces) and waterways have long been recognised as an essential component of resilient, healthy and sustainable communities - communities that respond to the climate emergency, promote health and wellbeing and protect and help nature to recover.
- 2.14 Over the next 15 years, the City will face many challenges, such as population growth and change, the climate emergency, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable and active travel opportunities. The Local Plan seeks to



address these challenges to deliver the level of growth required to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life. Colchester's Local Housing Needs Assessment (September 2024) confirms that it is necessary to use the Standard Methodology for calculating housing need. The updated method results in a need to plan for 1,300 new homes per year. This equates to 20,800 new homes over the plan period 2025 to 2041. A key challenge for the Local Plan is ensuring that enough land is allocated for residential uses to accommodate the predicted level of housing growth over the plan period. Colchester has a very good track record of regenerating previously developed land within its urban area and as a result the City has a limited and diminishing supply of brownfield sites that can contribute to accommodating new growth. Growth needs to be directed to the most sustainable locations, without adverse impacts on the environment and community and social infrastructure.

- 2.15 The NPPF provides overarching guidance on the Government's development aims and describes the Government's vision for building a strong, competitive economy. It emphasises that Local Plans and Employment Needs Assessments should present robust evidence to support clearly defined designations and allocations of land for employment uses. It sets out a series of recommendations which policymakers should follow to help create conditions in which businesses can invest. The Employment Land Needs Assessment demonstrates that Colchester is particularly connected with two other local authority areas: Braintree and Tendring. This is based on housing and property market areas, connectivity via the road and rail network, economic governance partnerships, and the local authorities representing key locations in relation to worker flows. By 2041, Colchester is expected to see an overall population increase of 17.3%, driven primarily by a rise in the 65 and over age group, driving an ageing population.
- 2.16 Additionally, there is expected to be growth in the working-age population, outpacing regional and national rates. This growth could increase labour supply, stimulate local businesses, and boost productivity as well as support infrastructure development, attract investment, and expand the pool of skilled workers. The ELNA looks at supply and demand based on the needs identified. The outcome of the comparison between employment land demand and available supply, based on the current portfolio of sites / allocations across the district, indicates that taking into account pipeline sites, there is insufficient supply available to meet projected demand in Colchester district over the plan period. Planning for additional employment land is therefore required, adding additional flexibility as not developments in the planning pipeline may not come forward as envisaged or be developed in different quantities by use class than has been consented. The Employment Study demand assessment estimates that there is a net additional demand for 41.7ha of employment land across Colchester over the plan period.
- 2.17 Implementation of the Local Plan will make significant contributions towards mitigating the challenges Colchester faces. Addressing the climate emergency, enabling nature recovery, and delivering healthy homes will help create a better environment and promote health and wellbeing - providing all policy requirements are implemented. The Local Plan is holistic – all policies are inter-related and together will make the biggest positive impact. Health and wellbeing and improving

quality of life will be woven throughout the Local Plan and considered as part of all proposals in Colchester. Through implementation of the Local Plan, healthy, vibrant and diverse places will be created that protect and enhance Colchester's special and diverse natural environment. Partnerships between the Council and other organisations and working with developers and the public will enable more positive outcomes. The approach taken in the Local Plan responds directly to the growing demands linked to the creating a better environment agenda enabling delivery on climate change, health and wellbeing, improving quality of life and biodiversity requirements as well as delivering growth requirements in a way which has planning for a better environment at the heart – a Local Plan that will benefit people, place and the planet.

## **Vision**

2.18 The purpose of the vision is to demonstrate the focus and direction of the Local Plan. The vision is important as a means of setting the wider context and detailing the Council's key aims and priorities over the plan period. The Vision, themes and objectives have been informed by outcomes of wide stakeholder engagement. They describe the future the Plan is seeking to create building on the strengths and opportunities identified. It is ambitious yet achievable.

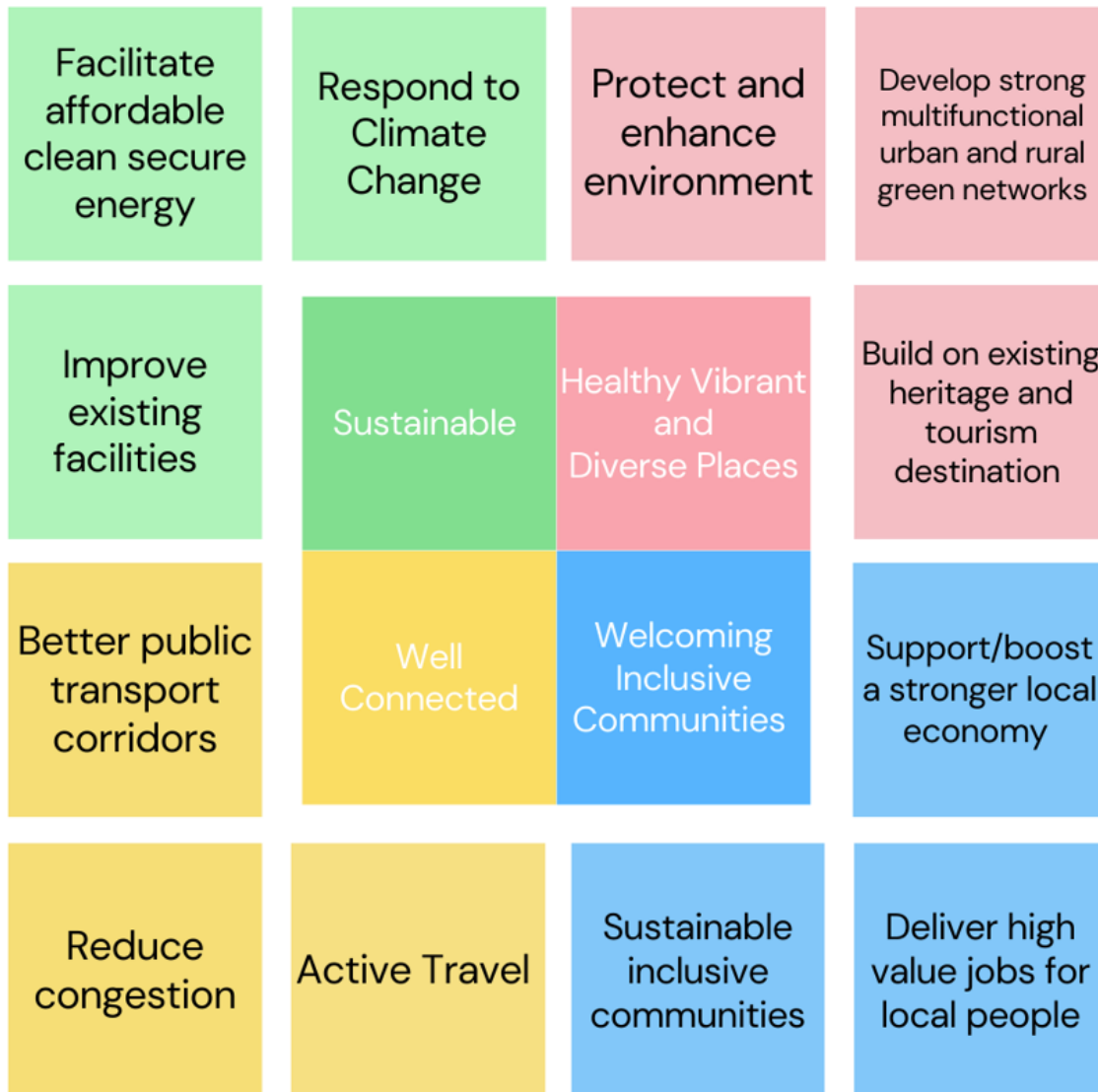
2.19 The vision for the Colchester Local Plan is:

**Growth in Colchester is inevitable and brings with it change and opportunity. The Local Plan will embrace growth opportunities to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the changing population and future generations. In doing so it will improve the quality of life for our communities, create a better environment and contribute to healthy lifestyles, by maximising the opportunities provided through well connected green networks. The Plan will also preserve and enhance Colchester's identity defined by its special diverse natural environment, green networks and waterways, prestigious heritage, varied arts and culture, and welcoming inclusive, vibrant and healthy communities.**

2.20 This will be achieved through provision of new open spaces, biodiversity net gain and the creation of wildlife corridors to create better connections between habitats. Colchester will have a real sense of community and be welcoming and inclusive - a destination of choice. Sustainable and inclusive communities will be created with a focus on diversity of place and valuing what is unique to Colchester – the countryside, coast and city. Communities will have a varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households; and a range of jobs, including careers, that support a strong local economy and reduce the need for residents to commute outside of Colchester. Colchester's distinctive arts, culture, heritage and tourism will improve the quality of life for residents, foster life-long learning and boost the local economy. There will be enhanced public transport corridors and routes and an increase in active travel, which will create better connections between places, reduce congestion, provide more travel choices and encourage active lifestyles. Infrastructure will be future proofed and delivered where

it is needed. Infrastructure will be innovative and able to respond to changes such as climate change.

2.21 The Local Plan takes inspiration from early engagement with a range of stakeholders identifying what is unique about Colchester and embraces the bold new approaches that will help achieve this vision. There are four themes, which are supported by objectives. The following visual and bullet points shows the interaction between the themes and objectives of the Local Plan vision. The themes are in the centre of the visual with the objectives surrounding them.



### Themes and Objectives

#### **Healthy, vibrant and diverse places**

- Protect, maintain and enhance the distinct character, heritage identity and setting of Colchester city.
- Protect stretches of undeveloped countryside, enhance the quality of natural environment creating net gains to biodiversity.
- Encourage the redevelopment of brownfield land.

- Support Colchester's tourism role through the provision of additional high-quality facilities.

### **Sustainable**

- Improve existing facilities, sustainable infrastructure, green water, wastewater, roads and schools.
- Access to high quality healthcare that is deliverable and where needed.
- Facilitate affordable clean secure energy through the delivery of sustainable energy to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensure development helps Colchester to adapt and increase its resilience to the effects of climate change.
- Support the reduction of waste in line with the waste management hierarchy.

### **Welcoming inclusive communities**

- Deliver high value jobs for local people and support a stronger local economy
- Focus on art culture, heritage and tourism.
- Deliver high quality public realm and enhance infrastructure to attract inward investment.
- Varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households.

### **Well-connected**

- Better public transport corridors to reduce congestion and increase active travel making cycling and walking more attractive.
- Create communities which reduce the need to travel, particularly by car for most of their daily needs

### 3. Strategic Policies

3.1 In accordance with the NPPF paragraph 20, this plan includes Strategic Policies which set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for:

- a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

3.2 Strategic Policies provide an overview that applies across the whole area, responding to the requirements of the NPPF and supported by more detailed topic and location specific policies. In addition, neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area. For the purposes of neighbourhood planning these are the strategic policies which will apply as required by the NPPF. The relevant place policies will also apply to any neighbourhood plan prepared.

## **Policy ST1: Health and Wellbeing**

The way places are planned, designed and built can have a significant influence over health and wellbeing.

All development should be designed to provide opportunities for healthy lifestyles and contribute to the creation of healthier and inclusive communities and help to reduce health inequalities for people of all ages and abilities through placemaking.

The Council will continue to work with partners and health providers to improve and promote healthier and active lifestyles for our residents and communities.

Health and wellbeing outcomes are embedded throughout the policies in the Plan. To achieve healthy and inclusive communities, all new development should:

- a) Promote healthy neighbourhood design, providing opportunities for healthy lifestyles for all by creating well-designed, safe and accessible places.
- b) Provide healthy and affordable homes that meet the needs of the community.
- c) Provide easy access to natural environments including green and blue infrastructure and open spaces.
- d) Promote active and sustainable environments and encourage active travel.
- e) Promote a healthy food environment.
- f) Provide access for all to health facilities and services, a range of employment opportunities, and sport and recreation facilities.
- g) Seek environmental improvements, minimising exposure to potential sources of environmental harm including pollutants and noise and improving air quality.
- h) Minimise, manage and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

In addition, and where appropriate, new development should support the provision of healthcare infrastructure to accommodate needs, in accessible locations, in line with the requirements outlined in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and set out in site allocation policies.

A Health Impact Assessment will be required for all residential development in excess of 50 units or non-residential development in excess of 1,000sqm and hot food takeaways and fast food outlets in accordance with Policy PC1, in order to demonstrate that the development would have an acceptable impact on health and wellbeing. The Council will require Health Impact Assessments to be prepared having regard to the most up to date advice and best practice for such assessments. The purpose of the Health Impact Assessment will be to identify the potential health consequences of a proposal.

The assessment should include recommendations on how positive health benefits can be maximised and how negative impacts on health and inequalities can be avoided or mitigated. Where a development has a significant adverse impact on health and wellbeing, the Council will require applicants to provide for the mitigation of such impacts. Developments which will have an unacceptable significant adverse impact on health and wellbeing which cannot be mitigated, or that fail to offer reasonable provisions, will not be permitted.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.3 The purpose of this strategic policy is to ensure that all proposals support the health and wellbeing of all our communities. In line with the NPPF, the policy aims to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, enabling and supporting healthy lives and reducing health inequalities.
- 3.4 The policy acknowledges the interconnection between health and wellbeing and the climate, the environment, and place-making and design. Healthy lifestyles can be supported and improved through high quality inclusive design and planning, providing healthy homes, increasing inclusivity and providing access to local services; encouraging access to natural environments and encouraging active travel to enable communities to be physically active; and promoting access to healthy food.
- 3.5 To ensure healthy and wellbeing is supported, promoted and improved through new development, and any impacts on health are identified, a Health Impact Assessment will be required in line with current best practice advice.

### **Alternative**

- 3.6 The alternative is to not include a policy on this subject matter and rely on the NPPF. However, national policy does not provide any local context or address the interconnection with other relevant policies in this Local Plan.

## **Policy ST2: Environment and the Green Network and Waterways**

All proposals must conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, including the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional, and local importance. The Council will safeguard the landscape character of Colchester as defined by the area's existing biodiversity, geology, green network and waterways, history, and archaeology. The Council will support the use of Natural England's Environmental Benefits from Nature tool.

Proposals must have regard to delivering the aims and objectives of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) or any relevant successor documents. Proposals for habitat creation, enhancement and BNG should have regard to the Colchester City Strategic Biodiversity Assessment.

Strategic areas that present the best opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement aimed at improving biodiversity are shown on the policies maps as 'strategic biodiversity areas'. These strategic biodiversity areas will be protected, and support will be given to strengthening and enhancing connections between habitats to improve their contribution to the biodiversity network.

All major residential development proposals must have a Green Network and Waterways Plan (which could form part of the Design and Access Statement) setting out how the development meets the Council's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles. The Plan should include details of the timescale for the implementation of each aspect of the Plan within that phase of development and details of the quality standard of construction and maintenance.

Open spaces should be incorporated into other strategies and plans for the site, such as surface water management strategies, landscape, utilities, and biodiversity net gain to coordinate delivery, management and maintenance.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.7 The purpose of this strategic policy is to ensure that all proposals conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment and that major residential proposals deliver contextually responsive, high quality open spaces. The key purpose of this strategic policy and indeed all policies in the Environment chapter, is to respond to the creating a better environment agenda by halting overall biodiversity loss, supporting healthy well-functioning ecosystems, and supporting and establishing coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.
- 3.8 Planning reforms, the Environment Act, and the Environmental Improvement Plan, provide significant opportunities for planning to play a key role in creating a better environment for future generations. Responding to the increasing environmental agenda in plan making requires a coherent and streamlined approach which complements the complex environmental agenda requiring integrated, coordinated approaches to achieve multifunctional benefits from the use of land.



- 3.9 Nature in Essex has suffered significantly over the last century, and continues to suffer, from species loss, habitat loss and increased habitat erosion and fragmentation. There are multiple causes to this loss and increased isolation of habitats across the landscape, including land use change, invasive species, pollution, overexploitation and climate change. It is crucial that nature recovery is at the centre of future action for the environment, to create new habitats and recover and enhance space for nature that has been lost or degraded.
- 3.10 The Council is a 'Supporting Authority' in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The role of LNRS' is to provide a county-wide, practical solution to driving action for nature recovery on the ground. The primary purpose of the Essex LNRS is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment. The Council has had regard to the Essex LNRS throughout plan preparation.
- 3.11 The presence of clusters of designated sites and, in some cases, older landscapes that aren't designated but that have the potential to make a significant contribution to biodiversity, has been used to identify areas of significance for the conservation of biodiversity. These strategic biodiversity areas present the best opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement aimed at improving biodiversity. Each of the strategic biodiversity areas has an inherent degree of coherence and connectivity.
- 3.12 Enhancing ecological connections as a priority is aimed at improving the robustness of species populations by increasing gene flow between nearby populations, allowing colonisation of new sites, and facilitating re-colonisation of sites where populations may be lost by adverse impacts. With climate change impacting on environmental conditions in a profound way, these connections also offer a chance for species to find somewhere better suited to their needs if necessary.
- 3.13 Such connections also serve to improve the general ecological condition of the wider landscape, serving as a reservoir of biodiversity that can then permeate the whole landscape, including those areas of residential development to which they are connected.
- 3.14 Protecting, strengthening and enhancing habitats and corridors within the strategic biodiversity areas can be achieved through broadening connections and improving the condition of the habitats, as well as creating more links with nearby LoWS through the design of green infrastructure and mitigation habitats within development sites as well as through compensation measures and biodiversity net gain in the wider landscape.
- 3.15 The Local Plan evidence base includes evidence that is relevant to this strategic policy and the environment and sustainability policies that follow, such as the Habitats Regulations Assessment, Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study, Landscape Character Assessment, and Colchester's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles.

### **Alternative**

- 3.16 This alternative is to not require a green network and waterways plan and for proposals to follow the business-as-usual approach with a consequential continuity

of outcomes for ecology. However, this would fail to address the planning for a better environment agenda.

## **The Spatial Strategy**

- 3.17 The spatial strategy sets out the place-based approach for how growth will be guided across Colchester to 2041. This provides the framework for how the housing and employment needs will be met through allocations in the Local Plan, taking into account the unique characteristics of areas across the City.
- 3.18 The settlement hierarchy forms part of the spatial strategy. Growth will be allocated in accordance with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy. This recognises the relationship between the Urban Area of Colchester, growth and opportunity areas within and outside of the urban area (Marks Tey and TCBGC) and the larger settlements of, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. This also recognises the role that other settlements play in creating diverse places across Colchester, as well as the importance of the countryside that should be protected
- 3.19 In the first instance, development is directed to the City centre and the urban area of Colchester. This will enable greater use of brownfield sites to be realised and developments of a higher density. This approach is reflected in the NPPF.
- 3.20 The next tier in the settlement hierarchy is growth and opportunity areas. A number of sites are allocated for residential, employment / mixed use development within the urban area of the City. The Hythe which has seen significant changes over the years, notably through recently approved and built student accommodation is identified as an opportunity area where there are opportunities here for wider regeneration. This area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area. Magdalen Street where regeneration could help deliver a new and improved gateway to the City Centre is also identified as an opportunity. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. This tier in the hierarchy also includes the University of Essex, Knowledge Gateway and north Colchester.
- 3.21 Marks Tey is also identified in this tier as a growth area, recognising its potential opportunities for strategic scale growth and potential for improvements to infrastructure and placemaking. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, support the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support development at the scale promoted. Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is established and defined in a separate Development Planning Document. It continues to form an integral part of how this area of North Essex will develop up to 2041 and beyond. In recognition of the contribution it will make to towards the supply in this plan period for Colchester it is defined as a growth area in the hierarchy.
- 3.22 Key transport corridors across Colchester have also been identified for their function and connectivity and potential to support growth. The role of larger settlements outside of the urban area is also recognised. These larger settlements have the most facilities, services and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. As such, it is proposed to group, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea as the next tier within the hierarchy as large

settlements. Growth in these settlements not only reflects their size but also considers the opportunities and constraints that apply to each location.

3.23 Creating a distinction between the large, medium and small settlements enables small scale development, which has been identified as a desire in some of the small settlements through engagement undertaken as part of the Issues and Options. The settlement hierarchy identifies medium and small settlements where growth is allocated appropriate to the size of the settlement and its constraints. Growth is not directed to all of the smaller settlements as appropriate land for growth was not identified for every small settlement.

3.24 The spatial strategy also reflects sustainable development principles underpinned by the NPPF which seeks to ensure all development meets the three dimensions of sustainable development; social, economic and environmental sustainability. All development will need to be in accordance with the spatial strategy and should meet the three dimensions of sustainable development.

3.25 The key diagram illustrates the spatial strategy for this Plan.

### **Policy ST3: Spatial Strategy**

The Plan makes provision for growth and supporting infrastructure across the Colchester area to 2041. A sufficient number of homes have been provided in the plan to meet the overall housing requirement to 2041 as set out in Policy ST5.

Growth is directed across Colchester starting with the most sustainable and accessible locations in the urban area or close to, transport corridors and existing centres, where there tends to be a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services and travel choices for future communities.

Additionally, an appropriate level of growth is allocated within the large, medium and some small settlements, based on the opportunities and constraints of each settlement and informed by the wider evidence base. This can help support the long-term viability of services and facilities, which may otherwise be lost.

The growth needs of Colchester are balanced against the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and heritage. The highest areas of sensitivity are receiving the lowest levels of growth in this Local Plan. This approach also ensures that existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and role by avoiding harmful coalescence between them and through conserving their setting. New development will be required to respect the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserve or enhance the historic environment and biodiversity to safeguard the character of the City.

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) and other large-scale developments will deliver substantial growth, enabling significant community benefits to be realised. Opportunities for growth along key transport corridors, particularly with access to the rail network are favoured subject to sufficient capacity on the network and/or appropriate mitigation to support any enhancement required.

The re-use of previously developed land and developments of higher densities (particularly in the Urban Area of Colchester) will be supported where this enables a more efficient use of land. Opportunity areas are therefore identified at the Hythe and Magdalen Street.

The primary focus for growth is made through the allocations identified in this Local Plan, together with the existing commitments and TCBGC as set out in Policy ST5. Allocations are made in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out below. The settlement hierarchy groups areas across Colchester based on their sustainability merits, size, function, opportunities and the services provided in each locality.

## Settlement Hierarchy

<p><b>Colchester Urban Area</b> including City Centre</p>
<p><b>Growth and Opportunity Areas</b>          Hythe Opportunity Areas          Magdalen Street Opportunity Area          Marks Tey Growth Area          Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Growth Area</p>
<p><b>Large Settlements</b>          Tiptree          West Mersea          Wivenhoe</p>
<p><b>Medium Settlements</b>          Abberton and Langenhoe          Boxted          Chappel and Wakes Colne          Copford          Dedham and Dedham Heath          Eight Ash Green          Fordham          Great Horkesley          Great Tey          Langham          Layer de la Haye          Rowhedge          West Bergholt</p>
<p><b>Small Settlements</b>          Aldham          Birch and Layer Breton          Copford Green          Easthorpe          East Mersea          Fingringhoe          Great Wigborough          Little Horkesley          Messing          Mount Bures          Peldon          Salcott          Wormingford</p>
<p><b>Countryside</b></p>

## KEY DIAGRAM



- Colchester City Council Boundary Area
- Colchester Urban Area
- Growth Areas
- Large Settlements
- Medium Settlements
- Small Settlements
- Ancient Woodland
- Major Roads
- Rail Line
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area
- SSSI
- Waterways and Coastal Waters
- Dedham Vale National Landscapes

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.26 The NPPF requires Strategic Policies in Local Plans to set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places. Strategic Policies are required to provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward to address needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption for sustainable development. The Strategy must provide for social and economic needs, sufficient strategic and local infrastructure, whilst balancing the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, and address climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
- 3.27 The Spatial Strategy sets out the approach for how Colchester will develop to 2041. This informs where sites will be allocated for housing and economic growth, and where areas will be safeguarded and protected in this Preferred Options Local Plan.

### **Alternative**

3.28 The alternative spatial options considered were:

- Continuing existing Spatial Strategy
- New Garden Community
- Garden Suburbs
- Intensification in the City Centre
- Transport Corridors
- Hubs and Spokes
- Environment Led

3.29 The preferred spatial strategy draws together the positives from as many of the spatial options as possible, while ensuring the growth needs of Colchester are met. These include:

- Focus on the existing urban area and intensification where appropriate largely within growth and opportunity areas;
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors;
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure;
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments



## **Policy ST4: Development in the Countryside**

**The Council will consider the requirement for new development within the countryside to meet identified development needs in accordance with Colchester's spatial strategy while supporting the vitality of rural communities. This will be balanced against ensuring development does not have an adverse impact on the different roles and relationships between settlements and their separate identities, valued landscapes, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and visual amenity.**

**The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised and assessed, and development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.**

**Proposals must consider the role the landscape plays as an open buffer between settlements or areas of a settlement, and the resulting sense of separation and distinctive identity.**

**Within valued landscapes, development will only be permitted where it would not impact adversely and would protect and enhance the factors that contribute to valued landscapes.**

**Proposals for sustainable rural businesses will be supported if they are of an appropriate scale, meet a local employment need, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding countryside where they are being proposed.**

**Where residential proposals are located outside defined settlement boundaries, there should be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the defined settlement in the first instance. Residential proposals in the countryside should conserve and enhance the character, quality and tranquillity of the landscape, and it must be proven that they will protect and reinforce the rural character of the areas where a development is proposed. Proposals will need to demonstrate that the scheme respects the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserves or enhances the historic environment and biodiversity. Opportunities to maximise access to sustainable modes of travel for future residents must be demonstrated.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.30 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Settlement boundaries are an essential tool for the management of development and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by preventing the encroachment of development into the countryside, protecting rural character. The spatial strategy (Policy ST3) directs development to the most sustainable locations across Colchester.

- 3.31 Areas outside of settlement boundaries are defined as 'Countryside'. Within the countryside, there are a number of very small villages and hamlets and isolated clusters of dwellings which lack any community facilities or access to services or public transport and rely on nearby larger settlements to meet their daily needs. It is essential that development is restricted in the countryside to protect landscape, character, quality and tranquillity.
- 3.32 Development within the countryside will accordingly be limited to activities that either require a rural location or help sustain a rural community and local economy and which help protect the rural character of the areas where a development is being delivered.
- 3.33 The NPPF includes examples of exceptions whereby proposals for isolated dwellings in the countryside may be acceptable. The Council's interpretation of 'isolated' are sites that are physically isolated relative to existing settlements, and sites that are functionally isolated relative to services and facilities.

**Alternative**

- 3.34 The alternative is to rely on national policy and guidance or the spatial strategy and housing allocations policies.

## **Provision for Homes and Jobs**

- 3.35 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that a key objective of the Government is to boost the supply of homes. It stresses the importance of providing a sufficient amount and variety of land which can come forward where it is needed. In accordance with Paragraph 62 of the NPPF the Council commissioned a Local Housing Needs Assessment which used the standard method as set out in national planning practice guidance (December 2024), to consider the overall need for housing in Colchester. This identifies the need for different types of homes, and needs of different groups within the local community. The Council has engaged with Tendring District throughout the plan making process as it shares a housing market area.
- 3.36 The Local Housing Needs Assessment September 2024 confirms that using the Standard Methodology for calculating housing need, there is a need for 1300 new homes per year. This equates to 20,800 new homes over the plan period to 2041. In accordance with the NPPF December 2024, this is a mandatory target which must be planned for.
- 3.37 In the last financial year (April 2023 to March 2024) 1,098 new homes were delivered in Colchester. There are also a number of sites that have already been granted planning permission or are committed and supported by with evidence to support their early delivery. These are forecast to deliver 6,117 new homes in the plan period as outlined in Policy ST5.
- 3.38 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will deliver circa 7,500 new homes in the longer term. A total of 3,400 new homes will be delivered up to 2041, with the number of new homes to be divided equally between Tendring and Colchester. As a result, 1,700 new homes from the Garden Community will make a contribution to the housing needs of Colchester within the plan period.
- 3.39 Based on past delivery records, windfall sites will also make an important contribution to Colchester's housing need. Windfall sites are defined as sites that are not allocated in the Local Plan. Assessing past contributions from windfall sites in Colchester, has demonstrated that an average of 238 homes per annum have been delivered on windfall sites (from 2014/15 to 2023/24). As a result, a windfall allowance of 200 new homes a year for the later 11 years of the plan period is considered a robust and justified contribution to the overall housing supply. 2,200 homes are anticipated to be delivered through windfall sites by 2041
- 3.40 Taking all the above into account, during the remainder of the plan period, the Council need to plan for a minimum of 11,089 new homes in order to meet the housing needs for Colchester.
- 3.41 Colchester has an excellent track record of housing delivery. Since 2001/02 it has overseen the delivery of over 21,000 new homes at an average rate of 940 new homes per year. Over the previous plan period to date (2017 – 2024) the Council exceeded its cumulative housing target by almost 500 dwellings. Therefore, at the beginning of the new plan period the Council is not in a position where it needs to make up any previous shortfall in housing delivery.

- 3.42 The methodology for planning for employment growth is less rigid than that for housing, although the NPPF requires plans to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic development uses over the Local Plan period
- 3.43 The Employment Land needs assessment has considered the approach, existing supply and demand to arrive at a need of 41.7 hectares of employment land up to 2041. This is based on the preferred scenario (Labour Supply) which is based on population projections, linked to housing growth projections, it represents an approach which seeks to maximise the opportunities for the economically active population in the Local Authority Area. This represents the most optimistic scenario for employment growth to align with wider corporate objectives for economic growth.
- 3.44 The Employment Study identifies key sectors likely to influence demand for employment space over the plan period including the digital, creative and tech and financial and business service sectors, and key sectors likely to influence demand for industrial space include advanced manufacturing, construction, transport and logistics and green energy. Proposals which support these sectors will particularly be encouraged in line with the requirements of the Policy and are set out in the relevant Place Policy.

### **Policy ST5: Colchester’s Housing Need**

**The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 20,800 new homes in Colchester City between 2025 and 2041.**

**The annual housing requirement for Colchester is 1,300, as identified by the Standard Methodology.**

**TableST5.1: Housing Supply**

<b>Housing Supply as at 31st December 2024</b>	<b>Net New Homes</b>
<b>Existing Commitments (sites with planning permission)</b>	<b>6,117</b>
<b>Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community</b>	<b>1,700</b>
<b>Windfall Allowance</b>	<b>2,200</b>
<b>Local Plan Allocations</b>	<b>11,089</b>
<b>TOTAL SUPPLY</b>	<b>21,106</b>

**The Council will maintain a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable sites to provide for at least five years’ worth of housing on a rolling basis, plus an appropriate buffer in accordance with national policy.**

**The overall distribution of new housing across Colchester is guided by Spatial Strategy (Policy ST3).**

**TABLE ST5.2 Local Plan Housing Allocations**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of New Homes</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Brittania Car Park	100	PP1
Vineyard Gate	100	PP2
Runwald St Car Park	40	PP3
Braiswick	30	PP4
Land at Chesterwell	50	PP5
Land at Colchester Station	250	PP6
Land off Bakers Lane	100	PP7
Land off Lakelands Crescent	5	PP8
Northeast Colchester	2,000	PP9
Land South of Berechurch Hall Road	875	PP10
Europit Site	40	PP11
Land at Roberston Van Hire Site	6	PP12
146 Magdalen Street Site	15	PP13
Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site	200	PP14
Hawkins Road	50	PP15
Coal Yard site	50	PP16
King Edward Quay Opportunity Area	200	OA1
Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area	150	OA2
Magdalen Street Opportunity Area	100	OA3
Land south of A12 & Marks Tey Village	1,500	PP17
Land North of A120, Marks Tey	1,000	PP18
Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree	600	PP19
Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree	30	PP20
Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree	10	PP21
Former Telephone Exchange, Station Road, Tiptree	5	PP22
Land East of Dawes Lane, West Mersea	300	PP23
Land Northwest of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe	175	PP24
View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe	50	PP25
Land North of Boxted Straight Road	150	PP26
Swan Grove, Chappel	35	PP27

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of New Homes</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne	200	PP28
Land East of School Road, Copford	300	PP29
Land South of Long Road, Dedham	15	PP30
Land North of Halstead Road East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green	180	PP31
Land North of Halstead Road West of Fiddlers Wood, Eight Ash Green	250	PP32
Land East of Plummers, Fordham	25	PP33
Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley	400	PP34
The Old School, Great Horkesley	13	PP35
Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey	125	PP36
Land North of Park Lane, Langham	900	PP37
Land opposite Wick Road, Langham	10	PP38
Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye	10	PP39
Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye	60	PP40
Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge	50	PP41
Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt	50	PP42
Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt	100	PP43
Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt	100	PP44
Land off New Road, Aldham	15	PP45
Land at Birch Green, Birch	15	PP46
Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe	5	PP47
Kelvedon Road, Messing	25	PP48
Land at St Ives Road, Peldon	25	PP49
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,089</b>	

### **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.45 To plan for Colchester's housing need, the Council needs to ensure enough land is allocated for residential uses to accommodate the predicted level of housing growth over the plan period. The land required to accommodate this housing growth is known as the housing land supply. The NPPF requires policies to identify sufficient sites to deliver the required housing supply over the plan period. The housing land supply comprises existing commitments and new allocations.
- 3.46 Through the previous Local Plan, the principle of development of a Garden Community on the Tendring and Colchester border was established. Colchester City Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council have worked together to prepare a Development Plan Document which provides a framework to guide the development of the Garden Community. Circa 7,500 new homes will be delivered at the Garden Community, with delivery through the plan period contributing to Colchester's supply.
- 3.47 Existing commitments are residential sites with planning permission or where the granting of planning permission is considered to be imminent. Many of these sites, were allocated for residential use in the current Adopted Local Plan. Existing commitments also includes allocations from made Neighbourhood Plans
- 3.48 Due to historic trends of windfall within the City, the Council will be applying a windfall allowance in line with paragraph 71 of the NPPF. The Council's criteria for a site to be considered windfall is that it should not form part of a current allocation. There is no one approach to a windfall allowance methodology, but it is reasonable to consider past windfall rates as a basis for the expectation of the levels of windfall that will come forward in the future. This approach is widely used and can aid in considering the likely windfall that will come forward in the future.
- 3.49 Allocations are sites which are proposed for residential uses as part of the preparation of this Draft Local Plan. Colchester has a very good track record of regenerating previously developed land within its urban area and as a result the City has a limited and diminishing supply of brownfield sites that can contribute to accommodating new growth. Accordingly, allocations within this Draft Local Plan include a high level of new greenfield sites. These sites have been subject to thorough assessment to determine their sustainability and suitability for residential uses. The same assessment has been undertaken for allocations in the current Adopted Local Plan which have not yet been implemented. All proposed allocations have also been subject to discussions with stakeholders to ensure sites have been selected based on their availability, achievability and deliverability. It will be important as the plan progresses to ensure all allocations are developable, viable, suitable and available and can deliver policy compliant schemes.
- 3.50 The **Place Policies** in this Draft Local Plan provide detail on specific new allocations along with further information on infrastructure improvements and mitigation measures required to address site constraints and opportunities at each location. Allocations will provide approximately 11089 new homes. All allocations are set out in their respective Place Policies.

3.51 Ensuring the quality of new housing development is of equal importance to ensuring its quantity. The Council will actively work with landowners, planning agents and housebuilders to bring forward those allocated sites that accord with the overall spatial strategy and relevant policies in the Plan.

**Alternative**

An alternative to this policy approach is the provision of a more dispersed pattern of new development. This option would spread the impact of new development more widely across Colchester but would be unlikely to secure key infrastructure, which is required to support sustainable growth and could therefore be expected to result in higher overall levels of growth in villages and within existing communities, highway congestion and restricted infrastructure. The distribution reflects the spatial strategy which considered a number of alternatives.



## **Policy ST6: Colchester's Employment Needs**

The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 41.7 ha of employment land in Colchester City to meet the projected demand up to 2041. Employment uses will be provided on a range of sites to ensure jobs are accessible to new and existing communities across Colchester.

**Table ST6.1: Local Plan Employment Provision**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Employment Land (approx. ha)</b>	<b>Policy Reference</b>
Land north of Axial Way, Northern Gateway, North Colchester	2.3ha	OA4
Colchester Business Park	2.4ha	PEP1
Knowledge Gateway	4.5ha	PEP2
Land South of Tollgate West	3.7ha	PEP3
Maldon Road	0.7ha	PEP4
Land south of A12 Marks Tey	16ha	PEP5
Anderson's Site, Marks Tey	3.2ha	PEP6
Highlands Nursery, Tiptree	1.1ha	PEP7
Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree	4.7ha	PEP8
Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green	0.8ha	PEP9
Lodge Lane, Langham	1ha	PEP10
Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt	2.1ha	PEP11
Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre	0.9ha	PEP12
Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community	3.5ha	ST9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.9ha</b>	

**Proposals for new employment uses within the existing and defined employment areas will be supported. Employment uses for the purposes of this policy are defined as Use Classes E(g), B2, and B8. Alternative economic class uses may contribute to the provision of jobs providing flexibility and securing delivery of additional jobs. Suitable alternative economic uses will be supported within existing and defined areas where they are in accordance with all relevant policies in the plan, including impact assessments where these alternative uses are for town centre uses and the threshold applies.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.52 The NPPF states that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. They should support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Decisions should also allow an area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses, and address any challenges in the future. Planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. The NPPF states that Councils should identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic development uses over the Local Plan period.
- 3.53 To plan for Colchester's employment needs, the Council needs to ensure that enough land is allocated, and sufficient policy approaches adopted to deliver sustainable economic growth across Colchester. The Colchester Employment Land Needs Assessment (2024) provides an assessment of the balance of supply and demand in the context of changing employment needs, trends and challenges. The Employment Study demand assessment estimates that there is a net additional demand for 41.7ha of employment land across Colchester over the plan period.
- 3.54 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that land is allocated and safeguarded for employment purposes that meet the needs of Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 as defined by the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended), in sustainable locations and in line with recommendations set out in the Colchester Employment Land Needs Assessment. The policy identifies land that, in addition to existing approved permissions within the planning pipeline, will meet the projected demand for additional good quality, well-located employment sites. Some of these sites are employment allocations that have been carried forward from the adopted Local Plan or allocations contained in adopted Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.55 The Place Employment Policies in this Draft Local Plan provide detail on specific new allocations along with further information on infrastructure improvements and mitigation measures required to address site constraints and opportunities at each location. An Employment and Skills Plan will be required in line with ECC guidance. This must be prepared collaboratively with the Council and relevant stakeholders.
- 3.56 In addition to land allocated for employment uses as set out in Table ST6.1, employment uses will also be delivered through opportunity areas and mixed use and larger residential allocations as set out in the relevant Place Policy.
- 3.57 Existing fit for purpose employment sites are protected for employment uses through other policies in the plan including Policy E1.
- 3.58 Further detail on employment provision in the Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community can be found in Policy ST9.

### **Alternative**

3.59 The alternative is to not allocate employment land in the plan or allocate other sites for employment uses. However, the NPPF requires Councils to identify a future supply of land for employment uses over the Local Plan period and this is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative. The sites identified have been assessed and represent land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic uses and which will contribute to employment supply.

## **Policy ST7: Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation**

All development must be supported by the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified as being needed to serve the needs arising from the development. Permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient and appropriate infrastructure capacity to support the development or that such capacity will be delivered by the proposal. It must further be demonstrated that all necessary infrastructure will be delivered at an appropriate time to meet the requirements of the development, and that such capacity will prove sustainable over time in physical and financial terms.

Where a development proposal requires additional infrastructure capacity to be deemed acceptable, mitigation measures must be agreed with the Council and the appropriate infrastructure provider. Such measures may include:

- a) Financial contributions towards new or expanded facilities and the maintenance thereof;
- b) on-site provision of new facilities (which may include building works);
- c) off-site capacity improvement works; and/or
- d) the provision of land.

Developers will be expected to contribute towards the delivery of relevant infrastructure as required and supported by up-to-date evidence from appropriate sources including the Infrastructure Audit Delivery Plan (IADP) and any subsequent updated evidence, along with information from local sources including parish and town councils. Developers will be required to either make direct provision or to contribute towards the provision of local and strategic infrastructure required by the development, either alone or cumulatively with other development.

This policy will apply to all development proposals. Location specific infrastructure requirements are also contained within the relevant site allocation policies.

New streets should seek to be built to adoptable design standards in adherence with current guidance and standards. Where streets are not built to an adoptable standard, there must be a substantive place making benefit.

At the time of adoption, every allocation will be considered to be viable, based on information provided to the Council. Where an applicant/developer is seeking an exception to this policy later in the plan period, it will only be considered whereby:

- a) A fully transparent open book viability assessment has proven that full mitigation cannot be afforded, allowing only for the minimum level of developer profit and landowner receipt necessary for the development to proceed; and
- b) It is proven that the public benefit of the development proceeding without full mitigation outweighs the collective harm; and
- c) Full and thorough investigation has been undertaken to find innovative solutions to issues and all possible steps have been taken to minimise the residual level of unmitigated impacts; and
- d) Obligations are entered into by the developer that provide for appropriate mitigation in the event that viability improves prior to

**completion of the development. In such cases the Council may seek a staged review of the viability of a scheme with the aim of achieving policy compliance over time. This may include securing a review mechanism by legal agreement specifying trigger points for undertaking a review such as later phases of a scheme or reserved matters applications.**

**The Council will consider introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and will implement such for areas and/or development types where a viable charging schedule would best mitigate the impacts of growth. Section 106 will remain the appropriate mechanism for securing land and works, affordable housing and financial contributions where a sum for the necessary infrastructure is not secured via CIL.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.60 The sustainable delivery of new homes and jobs needs to be supported by the provision of appropriate new and upgraded infrastructure, including transport, community facilities and utilities. New development can place additional demand on existing infrastructure. Therefore, new development proposals must contribute to improvements in infrastructure to cater for the additional needs that they generate.
- 3.61 The NPPF requires that all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to 'align growth and infrastructure'. The NPPF requires that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design of places and make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and green infrastructure. It also requires that plans should set out the contributions expected from development, including infrastructure.
- 3.62 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that provision of infrastructure is aligned with growth. The policy identifies infrastructure necessary to serve new development during the Plan period. Site allocation policies in the plan will identify essential site-specific infrastructure relevant to the allocation.
- 3.63 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is being prepared to inform and support the Local Plan. This has been developed with infrastructure service providers and partner organisations to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary. The IDP will sit alongside the Plan and provide specific detail on the main items of infrastructure required, when they are likely to be required, and who will provide them. The IDP will be supplemented by updated evidence over the lifetime of the plan which will inform the infrastructure to be provided in relation to individual developments.
- 3.64 The broad categories of necessary infrastructure included in the IDP include:

- Social Infrastructure (Education, Early Years and Childcare, Sport and Leisure, Open Spaces, Green Infrastructure, Community Facilities, Primary Healthcare, Emergency Services, Health Services)
- Transport Infrastructure (Active Travel, Public Transport, Roads, Electric Vehicle infrastructure)
- Utilities, Waste and Water (Utilities, Telecommunications, Water, Wastewater, Flood Defence, Surface Water Management, Water Resource Management)

3.65 The Council will seek contributions from developers to fund new facilities and improvements to existing infrastructure and the environment where it is necessary to mitigate the impact of new development. Local communities should be involved in the setting of policies for contributions expected from new development and it is expected that policies in the Place section of this Plan will reflect that. The Local Plan has been informed by evidence of infrastructure and affordable housing need, and a proportionate assessment of viability that considers all relevant policies, and local and national standards. Accordingly, allocations will be made based on evidence that they are viable.

3.66 Planning obligations will be made through section 106 agreements and section 278 agreements. Contributions may also be made through the Community Infrastructure Levy (if adopted), which applies a standard charge to developers to fund supporting infrastructure such as transport, schools, community facilities and health facilities,

3.67 The Council continues to work with relevant government departments, infrastructure providers, developers and other partners to determine and facilitate the delivery of the wide range of infrastructure required to support development.

### **Alternative**

3.68 The alternative is to not include a policy on this subject matter and rely on the NPPF. However, national policy does not provide any local context, and this would risk required infrastructure improvements not being delivered.

## **Policy ST8: Place Shaping Principles**

All new development must meet high standards of urban and architectural design. Development frameworks, masterplans, design codes, and other design guidance documents will be prepared in consultation with stakeholders where they are needed to support this objective. Any adopted design documents must be taken into account.

All new development should reflect the following placemaking principles, where relevant:

- a) Protecting and enhancing the natural environment, ensuring that development is sustainable and minimises adverse impacts on biodiversity as well as incorporating biodiversity enhancement and net gain.
- b) Provide an integrated and connected green network of biodiverse public open spaces and waterways, thereby helping to alleviate recreational pressure on designated nature conservation sites.
- c) Support adaptation measures to address the impacts of climate change and ensure development is resilient to a changing climate.
- d) Include measures to address water efficiency and provision of appropriate water supply, wastewater and flood mitigation measures including the use of open space to provide biodiversity rich sustainable drainage solutions.
- e) Respond positively to local character and context to preserve and enhance the quality of existing places and their environs.
- f) Provide buildings that reinforce local distinctiveness and exhibit individual architectural quality within well-considered public and private realms.
- g) Protect and enhance assets of historical and natural value.
- h) Create well-connected places that prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport services above use of the private car, providing opportunities for easy access to most daily needs without a car in a reasonable time. Where vehicular access is required, this must be provided with regard to highway safety and efficiency standards.
- i) Provide a mix of land uses, services and densities with well-defined public and private spaces to create sustainable well-designed neighbourhoods.
- j) Enhance the public realm through additional landscaping, street furniture and other distinctive features that help to create a sense of place.
- k) locate development in close proximity to existing and proposed public transport interchanges/connections, including the potential for Rapid Transit System and ensuring public transport is a convenient way of moving within a development, providing access to destinations further afield. This may include the potential for bus priority routes

- l) Provide streets and shared spaces that are accessible, overlooked and active and promote inclusive access and safety.**
- m) Include parking facilities that are well integrated as part of the overall design and are adaptable if levels of private car ownership fall.**
- n) Protect the amenity of existing and future residents and users with regard to noise, vibration, smell, light pollution, loss of light, overshadowing and overlooking.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.69 This placemaking policy is designed to guide the development of Colchester into a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community. It emphasises the importance of creating spaces that enhance social interaction, support local economies, and respect the unique character, natural environment and heritage of Colchester.
- 3.70 The vision is to cultivate well-designed, connected, and resilient communities throughout Colchester that promote wellbeing, inclusivity, and sustainability while reflecting the area's rich heritage and natural environment.

#### **Alternative**

- 3.71 The alternative is to rely on the National Design Guide and/or the Essex Design Guide.



## **Policy ST9: The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community**

**Land identified in the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document and shown on the Policies Map is allocated for the development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.**

**The Development Plan Document (DPD) (adoption anticipated Spring 2025) allocates and protects land for the following uses:**

- a) delivery of circa 7,500 new homes with a range of shops, jobs, services and community facilities, including education and early years and childcare;**
- b) a new 'Salary Brook Country Park' incorporating land and woodland at and around the Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve in Colchester;**
- c) a 'Wivenhoe Strategic Green Gap' incorporating land north of Brightlingsea Road and west of Elmstead Road;**
- d) an 'Elmstead Strategic Green Gap' east of the new A120-A133 Link Road;**
- e) a Sports and Leisure Park to serve the local community and for the expansion of sports facilities for the University of Essex;**
- f) approximately 25 Hectares of employment land in the form of a new Business Park and a 'Knowledge-Based Employment' site;**
- g) provision for the Rapid Transit System;**
- h) an 18-pitch Gypsy and Traveller Site of; and**
- i) a Park and Choose Facility.**

**Proposals for development within the Site Allocation Boundary (as defined by the DPD Policies Map) will be determined in line with the policies and requirements set out in the Development Plan Document which itself will be the subject of a five-yearly review.**

**Decisions on planning applications for the Garden Community will be made by a Joint Committee containing representatives of Colchester City Council, Tendring District, Council and Essex County Council. Any proposed development within the Site Allocation Boundary that might prejudice the delivery or integrity of the Garden Community will be refused.**

**Within the Local Plan period up to 2041, the Garden Community is expected to deliver approximately 3400 of the total 7,500 homes – with development continuing longer-term, beyond 2041, to completion. For this Local Plan period up to 2041, market and affordable housing delivery and employment land delivery from the Garden Community, irrespective of its actual location, will be distributed equally between Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council for the purposes of meeting respective housing and employment land requirements. Delivery of employment provision will also contribute to the supply for each of the Authorities requirements. The delivery of 18 pitches for**

**Gypsies and Travellers will also count equally, 9 pitches each, towards Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council's respective requirements.**

**If, after taking into account its share of delivery from the Garden Community, if either of the authorities has a shortfall in delivery against the housing or Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirement for its area, it will need to make up the shortfall within its own area. It may not use the other authority's share of delivery from the Garden Community to make up the shortfall.**

**Throughout the delivery of the Garden Community, Colchester City Council, Tendring District Council, and Essex County Council will continue to work together with developers and transport providers to maximise the potential opportunities and the reach of the Rapid Transit System and associated transport provision to serve communities in Colchester and Tendring.**

**Policies SP8 and SP9 of the North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Section One Plan (Adopted February 2021) appended to this Plan will be saved and continue to apply to the Garden Community where appropriate. All other policies are replaced.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 3.72 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be developed over the next thirty or so years. This community will eventually feature circa 7,500 homes, as well as employment spaces to accommodate new businesses and jobs.
- 3.73 The community will include all the services and facilities that people will need, including new nurseries, primary and secondary schools, health facilities, and community facilities, including sports and leisure. It will need to be carefully designed to fit in to the existing landscape, protecting the things that are important, whilst also providing new and improved green spaces, parks and areas for play.
- 3.74 The principal of the Garden Community is established through the Section 1 Local Plan and more detailed policies on the design and development of the Garden Community are included in the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document. This policy provides a summary of what will be included in the Garden Community and reference to housing numbers and the decision-making process.

#### **Alternative**

- 3.75 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on the Development Plan Document.

## 4. Environment

- 4.1 Colchester's countryside and coastline is extremely diverse and important in terms of its natural and historic environment, including biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. The natural environment contributes to what is unique and special about Colchester. The countryside provides the attractive landscape setting that defines and characterises the villages and rural communities of Colchester. The countryside and coastal areas also provide important agricultural, tourism and recreational opportunities that support local economies and communities.
- 4.2 The policies in this chapter seek to protect Colchester's important natural and historic environment and go further than protection through requirements and support for enhancement and net gain. Additionally, they seek to ensure protection and management of water resources and the quality and the land and environment. These policies will contribute towards the theme in the vision of healthy, vibrant and diverse places by protecting, maintaining and enhancing the distinct character, heritage identity and setting of Colchester city and protecting stretches of undeveloped countryside, enhancing the quality of the natural environment creating net gains to biodiversity.
- 4.3 These policies are supported by the government's Environmental Improvement Plan and the creating a better environment agenda, which has been taken as the approach to the Local Plan; NPPF protection for the natural and historic environment; the draft Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the evidence base including the Colchester Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study, Colchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Stage 1 Heritage Impact Assessment.

## **Policy EN1: Nature Conservation Designated Sites**

**Development proposals that have adverse effects on the integrity of habitats sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest, either alone or in-combination, will not be supported.**

**Contributions will be secured from qualifying residential development, within the Zones of Influence as defined in the adopted Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS, or brand name Bird Aware Essex Coast), towards avoidance and mitigation measures identified in the adopted strategy and any updates to the strategy.**

**Reference to Bird Aware Essex Coast must be included on any signage or interpretation that relates to a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) required in accordance with the Habitat Regulations Assessment. Signage and interpretation boards should explain the natural features of the open space and include places to rest within and throughout the SANG.**

**Nature-based welcome packs will be required for new homeowners for schemes of 100 or more dwellings.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.4 The purpose of the policy is to protect designated nature conservation sites. The policy recognises and reflects the hierarchy of sites in accordance with the NPPF, which states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils and requires Plans to distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites. Compliance with the Essex Coast RAMS is included to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations.

#### **Alternative**

- 4.5 The alternative is to rely on protection through legislation, including the Habitats Regulations, and not include the policy. However, given the importance of nature conservation sites it is appropriate to include the policy.

## **Policy EN2: Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Environmental Net Gain**

All development proposals must deliver a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) in accordance with legislation. Proposals for habitat creation, enhancement and BNG should have regard to the Colchester City Strategic Biodiversity Assessment.

All opportunities must be taken to maximise the delivery of onsite BNG. Alternative measures to delivering BNG should only be considered appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the required level of BNG cannot be achieved within the site.

The sites listed in this policy and shown on the policies maps are the Council's preferred offsite BNG sites. These sites will deliver the best gains for biodiversity and include a range of habitat types. The strategic significance of these sites is high. Where offsite BNG units are required to meet the minimum 10% BNG where 10% BNG cannot be delivered onsite, the Council recommends that applicants purchase units from the following strategic offsite BNG sites where available:

- **Abbotts Hall, Great Wigborough**
- **Maydays Farm, Haycocks Lane, West Mersea**
- **Chipping Farm, Copford**
- **Brook Meadows, Tiptree**

The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) contains strategic opportunity maps, which show the habitats and locations which have been identified as having 'strategic significance'. Only the LNRS strategic opportunities and the BNG sites listed in this policy can be assigned a score of 'high' in the strategic significance category in the Biodiversity Metric.

The Council will support development proposals that go beyond BNG and seek to demonstrate environmental net gain.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.6 The purpose of the policy is to encourage onsite BNG in the first instance and where this cannot be achieved, recommend purchasing units from the offsite BNG sites with strategic significance for biodiversity. The policy is clear on the habitats that can be assigned a score of 'high' in the strategic significance category in the Biodiversity Metric. The Biodiversity Protection and BNG Study (2024), part of the Local Plan evidence base, concluded that the potential BNG sites listed in the policy, all have a high strategic ranking. These sites, which were all submitted by landowners to the BNG call for sites, are the Council's preferred sites for offsite BNG and the sites the Council will recommend that applicants purchase units from where offsite units are required, once they are registered.
- 4.7 Abbotts Hall is a proposal from Essex Wildlife Trust. Proposed habitats include lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ponds, medium distinctiveness scrub, individual trees, species rich native hedgerow, grassland and ditches, saltmarsh. The creation of a BNG habitat bank at Abbotts Hall will contribute to the Trust's wider ambitions to rewild the site and establish a nature reserve, which will be open to the public in 2026. The site is strategically significantly, adjacent to SSSI and connected to other

coastal nature conservation sites including Old Hall Marshes and Copt Hall. There are opportunities for extensive habitat creation on formerly cultivated fields including grassland, wetland and woodland. Habitat creation measures should integrate with adjacent and nearby internationally designated sites and locally relevant species priorities, such as Nightingale and Turtle Dove.

- 4.8 Natural England consider that Maydays Farm would provide an excellent opportunity to create valuable habitat for wading birds and enhance habitat connectivity. The site is in a strategic location, adjacent to the Colne Estuary SSSI. The land is entirely below 5m AOD and adjacent to the Pyefleet Channel making it suitable for the creation of grazing marsh and associated freshwater habitats. It would also be suitable for the creation of intertidal habitats, although they are currently outside the remit of BNG.
- 4.9 Habitats at Chipping Farm currently include arable, hedgerows, ponds, woodland, scrub. Enhancement of existing habitats may be possible. The site is adjacent to LoWS Co35. Ground conditions may be suitable for the creation of a wide range of habitats within a landscape scale mosaic, including acid grassland. Existing woodlands on and adjacent to the site could be extended and buffered.
- 4.10 Brook Meadows is a LoWS and part of Inworth Grange Pits. This site has a recognised value as grassland habitat, but has not been managed favourably for nature conservation, with willow scrub invading. Regular management to control willow growth and improve the condition and diversity for the grassland would generate a gain for biodiversity. The site is wet in places and acidic, which should be reflected in site management plans.
- 4.11 Applicants should explore the best opportunities in the immediate proximity as a first option for achieving BNG, or any other environmental obligations. Depending on the location, that might be creating new green infrastructure, buffering an adjacent LoWS, enhancing a nearby LoWS or green space, planting street trees, or incorporating biodiverse roofs or other onsite measures. Consideration should be given to where the best gains can be achieved in each case and what measures would provide the most added value to the existing biodiversity resource of the area around the site.
- 4.12 Environmental net gain is supported and encouraged. Environmental net gain goes further than biodiversity net gain and results in gains to ecosystem services, which are services provided by the natural environment that benefit people. E.g. food, fibre and fuel provision, cultural services, regulation of the climate, the purification of air and water, flood protection, soil formation and nutrient cycling. Natural England has developed an Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool, which builds on the BNG Metric to measure environmental gain.

### **Alternative**

- 4.13 The alternative is not to include a policy on BNG as it is a mandatory requirement and not recommend that applicants purchase offsite units from the strategic offsite

BNG sites listed in the policy, which evidence shows will result in the best gains for biodiversity.

### **Policy EN3: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

Development proposals where the principal objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests will be supported in principle providing appropriate ecological evidence supports these actions, and the proposals are expected to conserve or enhance biodiversity.

For all proposals, development will only be supported where it:

- a) In the case of major applications, is submitted with a completed Essex biodiversity validation checklist; and
- b) Is supported with appropriate ecological surveys by a suitably qualified person where necessary. Where a preliminary ecological appraisal indicates that further surveys are required to support a planning application, the results of all such surveys and associated details of necessary mitigation measures need to be submitted prior to determination; and
- c) In cases where there is reason to suspect the presence of a protected species (and impact to), or Species/Habitats of Principal Importance, or locally important Species/Habitats, applications should be accompanied by an ecological survey, carried out at the appropriate time of year and taking into account appropriate weather conditions, assessing their presence and, if present, the proposal must be sensitive to, and make provision for their needs; and
- d) Demonstrates that, in the design of the proposal, the mitigation hierarchy has been followed with respect to ecological impacts. Where impacts on habitats and species cannot be avoided, a clear explanation of why alternative sites are not feasible and what proposed mitigation measures are necessary to address all likely significant effects; and
- e) Incorporates and maximises opportunities for the preservation, restoration, enhancement, connectivity and creation of a mosaic of habitats in accordance with the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and
- f) Demonstrates that significant harm to brownfield sites of high biodiversity value is avoided and fragmentation of habitats is minimised; and
- g) Incorporates biodiversity enhancement measures (in addition to mandatory biodiversity net gain) such as the creating space for nature design principles included in the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document; and
- h) Focuses habitat creation and enhancement measures on the habitats that are already present in the area and retaining existing communities and species populations that have been recognised as having significance; and
- i) Where development is proposed adjacent to, or including, a LoWS, the creation of new habitat to buffer it should be a priority of design and masterplanning.

Proposals for development that would cause significant direct or indirect adverse harm to nationally designated sites or other designated areas,



protected species, Habitats and Species of Principal Importance and local importance, will not be permitted unless:

- a) They cannot be located on alternative sites that would cause less harm; and
- b) The benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impacts on the features of the site and the wider network of natural habitats; and
- c) Satisfactory mitigation, or as a last resort, compensation measures are provided.

The Council will take a precautionary approach where insufficient information is provided about avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures and will require that this information is submitted prior to determination. Mitigation and compensation measures will be secured through planning conditions/obligations where necessary.

A Construction Environment Management Plan, which includes details of all necessary ecological mitigation measures including protection of retained habitats and requirements for ecological supervision during works on site using a suitably experienced Ecological Clerk of Works, will be required by condition where necessary.

Where external expertise is required to review and validate ecological survey reports, applicants may be requested to reimburse the Council, arrangements will be discussed at the pre-application stage and may be secured through a Planning Performance Agreement.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.14 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the biodiversity value of all sites is understood and that applications are supported by appropriate ecological surveys which clearly identify likely impacts and any required mitigation and compensation measures. The policy recognises the importance of all sites, including local wildlife sites, and habitats and species of national (Priority habitats and species) and local importance. The policy requires that the mitigation hierarchy is followed, which is good practice. Biodiversity protection is a duty that public bodies, developers, landowners and society generally all share. The [Royal Society](#) states that “Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life on earth, including humans. Without a wide range of animals, plants and microorganisms, we cannot have the healthy ecosystems that we rely on to provide us with the air we breathe and the food we eat. And people also value nature itself.”

### **Alternative**

- 4.15 The alternative is to rely on protection through legislation and not include the policy. However, given the importance of biodiversity it is appropriate to include the policy.

## **Policy EN4: Irreplaceable Habitats**

**Proposals that would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats [as defined in The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024] will not be permitted unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy, to the satisfaction of the Council, exists.**

**Proposals predicted to result in adverse impacts upon irreplaceable habitats must be accompanied by detailed survey information and clear evidence to support the exceptional reasons that justify such a loss. The compensation strategy must include contribution to the enhancement and management of the habitat.**

**Proposals close to ancient woodland must include a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage. Where surveys show that other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, a larger buffer zone will be required.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.16 The purpose of the policy is to ensure the protection of irreplaceable habitats and that any loss is only allowed in exceptional circumstances and that where loss occurs, compensation is provided in accordance with NPPF paragraph 186(c), which states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused. Ancient woodland and veteran trees serve as a rich cultural record of past management practices. A buffer zone around ancient woodland is important to avoid root damage. In some cases, such as where air pollution from a significant increase in traffic may adversely affect ancient woodland, a larger buffer zone may be appropriate.
- 4.17 The Woodland Trust wrote to all local planning authority Chief Executives in March 2024 to highlight current and new legal and policy obligations to protect ancient woodland and veteran trees from the threat of development. Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable resource of great importance for its wildlife, soils, recreation, cultural value, historical and archaeological significance, and the contribution it makes to our diverse landscapes. It is a scarce and threatened resource, covering only 2.5% of England's land area, and has a high level of protection in planning policy.

#### **Alternative**

- 4.18 The alternative is to rely on protection through legislation and not include the policy. However, given the importance of irreplaceable habitats it is appropriate to include the policy.

## **Policy EN5: New and Existing Trees**

**Proposals for major development must consider the opportunities for new tree planting, including street trees, alongside and in addition to the requirement for an increase in tree canopy cover. Proposals should consider planting trees that, upon maturity, would be of a scale and form that have the potential to form positive focal points or a landmark.**

**Where new trees are proposed, consideration must be given to the possible conflict between new trees and built form and be compatible with highway considerations and parking areas. Tree species must reflect local conditions and management objectives of the specific site. The maintenance of new trees must be included within any landscape management plan and landscape maintenance schedule for the site for an agreed period of time to ensure establishment.**

**All new development should incorporate existing trees. Proposals should ensure that existing trees are not damaged and are retained wherever possible. Consideration must be given to the potential for future pressure to prune or fell existing trees and the design of development must mitigate this.**

**Tree survey information must be submitted with all planning applications where trees are present on site. The tree survey information must include protection, mitigation and management measures.**

**In some instances, trees can cause damage to property or infrastructure requiring significant pruning or even removal. In these cases, a fair and balanced judgement will be made based on the suitability and benefits of retaining a tree against the potential risks it may pose.**

**Where the loss of trees is essential to allow for appropriate development an appropriate species and number of replacement trees must be provided. Any replacement trees should be provided as close as possible to the new development and should be supported by a suitable management and maintenance scheme.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.19 Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that existing trees are protected, with consideration given to potential for future pressure to prune or fell, and that opportunities are taken to plant new trees. The policy is in accordance with NPPF paragraph 136, which states: 'planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.' Whilst the Local Plan includes a policy requirement to increase tree canopy cover, the focus of this policy is on planting new street trees, including trees that could become a focal point or landmark.

4.20 It is important to consider the maintenance issues associated with street tree planting and the need to work with highways officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users consistent with NPPF, paragraph 136. Regard should be had to the Essex Design Guide: [Highways Technical Manual - Planting in sight splays](#).

### **Alternative**

4.21 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on the protection of trees through the biodiversity policy and the planting of new trees through the requirement for an increase in tree canopy cover. However, this policy provides a focus on street trees and the role trees have as positive focal points or landmarks.

## **Policy EN6: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment**

**Development that will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a listed building, conservation area, historic park or garden or important archaeological remains, locally significant buildings, non-heritage assets (including the setting of heritage assets) will only be permitted in wholly exceptional circumstances where the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss. Where development will lead to less than substantial harm this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Public benefits should clearly outweigh the harm in cases of substantial harm, this includes considering factors such as the optimisation of the assets viable use and the public interest in development. If development leads to less than substantial harm, this needs to be balanced against the public benefits of the proposal, focusing on the quality and public need of those benefits.**

**Development affecting the historic environment should conserve and enhance the significance of the heritage asset and any features of specific historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest. There should be importance attributed to preserving the setting of the heritage assets acknowledging the relationship between the asset and its surroundings. In all cases there will be an expectation that any new development will enhance the historic environment or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset unless there are no identifiable opportunities available.**

**Within designated Conservation Areas, proposals must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area in accordance with the statutory duty to consider these aspects under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Development should complement the form, materials, and architectural style of existing buildings and spaces. Demolition of unlisted buildings or structures within a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the building or structure harms or contributes little to the character or appearance of the area. In all cases, detailed justification, including an assessment of alternatives, will be required. Applicants for proposals within Conservation Areas should engage with the local community and stakeholders, including local historical societies, to ensure that the local significance of the area is recognised and respected in any proposed development.**

**The adaptive reuse of heritage assets, including listed buildings, non-designated heritage assets, and buildings within Conservation Areas, is encouraged, provided that the proposed changes do not harm the significance of the asset. The preservation of key features, materials, and architectural elements should be a priority, and any alterations should be sympathetic to the asset's character.**

**In assessing proposals for development affecting heritage assets, consideration will be given to the broader public benefits that the development may bring, including providing access to heritage sites, educational**

**opportunities, and enhancing public understanding of Colchester's historic environment.**

**All development proposals should promote the adaptive reuse of buildings and the role of heritage in sustainable development (such as retrofitting for energy efficiency or considering climate change in heritage management). Heritage Impact Assessments will be required for proposals related to or impacting on the setting of heritage assets so that sufficient information is provided to understand the significance of the heritage assets and to assess the impacts of development on historic assets, together with any proposed mitigation measures.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.22 The Council will conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment recognising the positive contribution made to the character and distinctiveness of Colchester through the diversity and quality of heritage assets. This includes wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.
- 4.23 Colchester's importance as a historic City warrants a policy detailing and reinforcing the need to conserve and enhance the historic environment. The policy focuses on the protection and preservation of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, as outlined in the Council's Local List, which includes 715 recorded heritage assets. The goal is to prevent or minimise harm to these assets and to assess any potential harm in relation to the loss of their significance. In cases where harm is deemed unavoidable, efforts should be made to retain some element of significance. Additionally, the Council may refer to the NPPF when deciding whether an asset qualifies as a non-designated heritage asset for the purposes of a planning application.
- 4.24 The Council will promote heritage partnership agreements where appropriate, to support the long-term management and conservation of heritage assets, particularly those 'at risk' or in need of significant investment.
- 4.25 The Council will work proactively to identify heritage assets at risk of decay or neglect and will support initiatives aimed at securing their long-term survival. This may include offering advice on repair, restoration, or funding opportunities, in collaboration with heritage bodies such as Historic England.
- 4.26 In instances where existing features have a negative impact on the historic environment, as identified through character appraisals (or other method of identification of historic assets), the Council will request the removal of the features that undermine the historic environment as part of any proposed development. The Council will request the provision of creative and accessible interpretations of heritage assets impacted by development.
- 4.27 There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation in situ of nationally important archaeological remains (whether scheduled or not). The more important

the asset, the greater the weight will be for preservation in situ. In accordance with national legislation, preservation of remains may require the refusal of development that could be detrimental.

**Alternative**

4.28 The alternative is to rely on legislation and the NPPF and not include a policy. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to outline a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment within their Local Plans. Failing to include a policy that provides a strategic approach would not be a viable alternative, as it would create inconsistency with the NPPF.

## **Policy EN7: Archaeology**

**All development proposals that may affect archaeological sites or areas of archaeological potential must include a desktop study and, where necessary, an archaeological field evaluation to assess the impact on below-ground heritage assets. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) will be required to outline the methodology for archaeological investigation, excavation, or preservation in situ, as appropriate.**

**In cases where archaeological remains are likely to be impacted, the preferred approach is to preserve the remains in situ. However, where this is not feasible, appropriate recording and excavation will be required before any development can proceed. Results of such investigations should be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) and made publicly available.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.29 As with the Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment policy, the purpose of this policy is to conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment – specifically archaeological sites or areas, recognising the positive contribution made to the character and distinctiveness of Colchester.
- 4.30 The NPPF states that ‘where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation’ (paragraph 207).

#### **Alternative**

- 4.31 The alternative is to include this in the Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment policy rather than having a stand-alone archaeology policy.



## **Policy EN8: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

Development should be directed away from land at risk of flooding in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Planning permission will only be granted where it has been demonstrated that:

- a) the site will remain safe from all types of flooding throughout the lifetime of the development; and
- b) flood risk will not increase on or off site as a result of the development.

Proposals that include measures to enhance the flood resilience of new or renovated buildings will be encouraged, particularly in areas with a history of local flooding.

Where buildings have been demolished within the functional floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) for a significant length of time (i.e. over a year), the land should be reverted back to functional floodplain and consequently, development should be avoided within these areas. Where a building(s) is already located in the functional floodplain, any proposals to regenerate or replace such building(s) must not increase the building footprint any greater than the existing footprint.

The Colchester Surface Water Management Plan identifies Critical Drainage Areas. New developments within Critical Drainage Areas will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of flood mitigation options via CIL/S106 contributions, as identified in the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan (and its successor). This is to reduce or mitigate the risk of flooding to existing properties located within the Critical Drainage Area and to accommodate the drainage needs of new developments.

Where a site specific flood risk assessment is required in accordance with national policy this should be prepared in accordance with the Colchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. A Sustainable Drainage Strategy should also be submitted as part of a planning application where a site specific flood risk assessment is required. Any Sustainable Drainage Strategy should be developed having regard to the latest guidance including the CIRIA SuDS Manual, Essex County Council SuDS Design Guide, Essex County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy and Colchester's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles (and their successors).

Where sites are at risk of groundwater flooding, construction phase groundwater monitoring during periods of high groundwater (October – March) should be included in the Flood Risk Assessment to inform the design and any mitigation measures, unless adequate justification can be provided by the applicant to exempt the proposed development from this requirement.

All new development will be required to incorporate water management measures to reduce surface water run-off and adverse impact to water quality, to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Nature-based solutions are a priority for flood and water management. Surface water should be managed in accordance with the drainage hierarchy and be managed close to its source, at the surface and mimic natural drainage as much as possible. All development proposals should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and consider:

- a) **Natural flood management at a catchment scale, including watercourses and coastal areas;**
- b) **Existing drainage features such as ditches and ponds to be retained and incorporated into developments proposals where possible;**
- c) **Developments close to rivers should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment;**
- d) **Prioritisation for soft landscaped features;**
- e) **Inclusion of grey and rain water reuse systems such as green roofs and water butts;**
- f) **Inclusion of multifunctional Sustainable Drainage Systems that enhance biodiversity and provide aesthetic and amenity value, and safe public access;**
- g) **Inclusion of permeable paving for driveways, paths and roads;**
- h) **The management and maintenance of all Sustainable Drainage Systems for the lifetime of the development including responsibility and that these remain economically proportionate.**

**Sustainable Drainage Systems should be designed to be multifunctional, however this should not undermine their function, and these features should not be considered as making a site's entire contribution for open space as required by Policy GN1.**

**Development must conserve and enhance the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments. Proposals that open up culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable, will be supported.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.32 The overall aims of this policy are to steer development to land with the lowest risk from flooding and ensure its safety of the lifetime of the development. The policy is also seeking to ensure Sustainable Drainage Systems are designed and implemented to enable the management of surface water flood risk through nature based solutions which can also create and enhance green infrastructure.
- 4.33 The Colchester Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (January 2025), provided an overview of the risk of flooding from all sources across the Local Plan area, taking into account the impacts of climate change and land use changes. The Assessment also identifies opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of floodings and a range of measures that could be considered as part of development to manage and mitigate flood risk.
- 4.34 The Colchester Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) identifies 12 Critical Drainage Areas across Colchester. These delineate the areas where the impact of surface water flooding is expected to be greatest within Colchester. It is acknowledged that Critical Drainage Areas do not account for all the areas that could be affected by surface water flooding. It is therefore important that the policy seeks to reduce the risk from surface water flooding throughout the whole of the Local Plan area.

- 4.35 The Water Strategy for Essex 2024 outlines the current water challenges faced in Essex including future demand, access and provision of water resources, water quality, impacts from climate change including flood risk and water scarcity. The strategy identifies 30 actions that will contribute to addressing the water issues in Essex over the next five years, relating to the themes of reducing demand, change land use and developing alternative supply.
- 4.36 The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to manage water run-off is an important tool in minimising flooding by increasing the provision of permeable surfaces in an area that allow water to seep gradually into the ground, rather than running directly into a drainage network, reducing the risk of overloading the system. Sustainable Drainage Systems can also improve water quality by enabling water treatment before water reaches its final outfall.
- 4.37 The design of Sustainable Drainage Systems should consider the Drainage Hierarchy, which seeks to manage water via infiltration in the first instance, with connection to a sewer being the last resort. New developments should look for ways to harvest rainwater for re-use and move away from the use of foul and combined sewers to discharge surface water.
- 4.38 The design of a Sustainable Drainage System should be considered early in the plan making process to enable the greatest benefits to be sought. Developers should enter into early discussions with the Environment Agency and Essex County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority). This should also include consideration of maintenance and long term adoption responsibilities.
- 4.39 Conserving and enhancing the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments, and opening up culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable, will support ecological improvements and create assets that are of benefit to local community, such as for recreation.

### **Alternatives**

- 4.40 The alternatives are to rely on national policy and guidance or retain the previous Local Plan Policies DM23 and DM24. However, this new policy is considered to be clearer than the adopted Local Plan policies.

## **Policy EN9: Pollution and Contaminated Land**

**Proposals will be supported that do not result in an unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the environment, general amenity, or existing uses due to the potential of air pollution, light pollution, noise nuisance, surface / ground water sources or land pollution. High quality open spaces that meet the Council's Guiding Principles for the green network and waterways must be incorporated into development proposals to minimise environmental impacts and contribute to improved environmental quality through the consideration of the selection of species (e.g. trees) and planting design to address air quality, soil erosion, noise and light pollution.**

**Proposals that include outdoor lighting must follow best practice design principles to reduce light pollution and its impact on dark skies. Where a Lighting Plan is submitted in support of an application, it should contain information to show how the lighting is justified, what luminaires are used and where, how it complies with relevant standards and how it considers wider landscape and wildlife considerations.**

**Proposals for developments within designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) or where development within a nearby locality may impact on an AQMA are required, firstly, to be located in such a way as to reduce emissions overall, and secondly to reduce the direct impacts of those developments. Applicants shall, prepare and submit with their application a relevant assessment, taking into account guidance current at the time of the application, which must be to the satisfaction of the Council. Permission will only be granted where the Council is satisfied that after selection of appropriate mitigation the development will not have an unacceptable significant adverse impact on air quality and health and wellbeing.**

**Development proposals on or adjacent / in close proximity to contaminated land, or where there is reason to suspect contamination, must include a contamination risk assessment of the extent of contamination and any possible risks. Where necessary this should provide any additional environmental protection and mitigation measures, such as landfill gas and leachate migration management, post remediation and management regimes for former landfill sites. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that there is no likely risk to health or the environment due to contamination. Where planning permission is granted, conditions may be imposed requiring the execution of any necessary remedial works. Where a site is affected by land contamination, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner, who will be required to carry out the above. After remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being designated as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 4.41 Land and air pollution are subject to regulatory controls under Environmental Health Legislation including the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Pollution Prevention Act 1999 and the Environment Act 1995. There is some overlap with planning in considering proposals for new development, with the need to ensure that in granting planning permission for something it does not create any unacceptable pollution, or worsen an existing issue, and where necessary implements mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the problem.
- 4.42 Paragraph 187(e) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: 'preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans'. Criteria (f) states: 'remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'. Paragraph 201 recognises that the focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions.

### **Alternative**

- 4.43 The alternative is to not include this policy and rely on legislation and the NPPF.

## 5. Green Network and Waterways

- 5.1 Green and blue infrastructure is the term frequently used in planning to describe the green network and waterways. However, green and blue infrastructure is not always understood by the public and so the Local Plan uses the term green network and waterways. To be clear, this encompasses the definition of green infrastructure in the NPPF, which is: *“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.”*
- 5.2 This chapter includes policies on open space. The definition of open space is wide ranging. The national planning practice guidance for open space, sports and recreation facilities states that open space includes all open space of public value and can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks. Open space can have an ecological and recreational value as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development.
- 5.3 The green network and waterways are multifunctional and has many benefits across planning. The policies in this chapter will contribute towards all the themes in the vision and promote health and wellbeing. Policies will contribute towards creating healthy, vibrant and diverse places; climate change resilience and adaptation; the creation of welcoming, inclusive communities with high quality public realm; and the creation of well connected communities with reduced congestion and an increase in active travel.
- 5.4 Various Council teams have worked together to create Guiding Principles for Colchester City’s green network and waterways, which are reflected in this chapter. The Guiding Principles were developed through an audit of the city’s green network and waterways baseline; public engagement on the condition of the green network and waterways and opportunities to improve the network; and a review of Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Principles, Essex County Council’s Green Infrastructure Standards, the objectives of the Colchester Woodland and Biodiversity Project and open space and playing pitch strategies.

## **Policy GN1: Open Space and Green Network and Waterways Principles**

Major residential development proposals must demonstrate, in a Green Network and Waterways Plan, that new multifunctional open space(s) of a minimum size of 10% of the gross site area is included in the proposals and must meet any relevant criteria in site allocations policies, be informed by an appraisal of local context and have regard to the following guiding principles for open spaces:

- a) Are multifunctional and help to create greener, beautiful, healthier, and more prosperous neighbourhoods, with a thriving nature network;
- b) support sustainable drainage and help places adapt to climate change;
- c) Address gaps in provision to create a coherent green network;
- d) Connect as a living network for people and nature across multiple scales from the wider landscape to more local and neighbourhood scales;
- e) Include a varied mix of types and sizes that can provide a range of functions and benefits and, where appropriate, include street trees, shrubs, planters, green roofs and walls, small green spaces between buildings, gardens, 'play on the way' features/trails and the building blocks as described in the National Model Design Guide<sup>1</sup> ;
- f) Enable people to experience and connect with nature, and seek to offer access to good quality parks, green spaces, recreational, walking and cycling routes that are inclusive, safe, welcoming, well-managed, accessible and encourage active travel;
- g) Are designed to be accessible and inclusive to a wide range of ages and abilities appropriate to the nature and status of the site;
- h) Respond to the area's character so that it contributes to the conservation, enhancement and/or restoration of the historic environment and landscapes and creates new high-quality landscapes and a strong place identity to which local people feel connected;
- i) Demonstrate how the green space will be managed, maintained and monitored for a minimum of 30 years.

Where residential allocations are identified to provide for 'Enhanced Open Space' as indicated in the Place Policies (and shown on the Policies Map), substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include at least one area of strategic open space and multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space.

### **Justification**

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<sup>1</sup> sustainable drainage systems, green and blue roofs, green walls, rain gardens, swales, features for species, trees in hard landscapes, street furniture and utility structures, traffic-free routes, allotments, orchards, private domestic gardens, green spaces (including parks and burial grounds), more natural spaces (including woodlands, grassland, scrub, and hedgerows), heritage features and the historic environment, blue spaces (including wetlands)

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.5 Open spaces are important for the health and wellbeing of communities and can deliver wider benefits such as benefits for nature and supporting efforts to address climate change. The purpose of the policy is to ensure the delivery of high-quality multifunctional open spaces that deliver multiple benefits and complies with the Council's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles (2024). The requirement for major applications to submit a Green Network and Waterways Plan will demonstrate compliance with this policy and other relevant policies. There are plentiful green and open spaces and waterways throughout Colchester with linkages, corridors, and connections between them. There are opportunities through the Council's various workstreams, including the Local Plan, and work of the Parks and Open Spaces team, to improve linkages, corridors and connections and follow Lawton's principles of bigger, better, more, and better connected.
- 5.6 The vision in Colchester's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles is that Colchester's special and diverse green network and waterways will form a coherent, high quality network providing connections for people and for wildlife. Colchester's green network will be multifunctional and provide benefits for nature, health and wellbeing, prosperity, water management and climate resilience. The existing network will be protected, developed, and enhanced and gaps in provision will be addressed. The Council will work to improve what we have where we can, to ensure that Colchester remains a sustainable, thriving, and greener city for future generations. Colchester is a unique place with a rich heritage and diverse environment and character that includes the city, countryside, and coast. The green network and waterways enables Colchester to be a healthy, vibrant, green and diverse place where people can live active lifestyles.

### **Alternative**

- 5.7 The alternative is to rely on Natural England's Green Infrastructure Principles and Standards (which are reflected in the policy) rather than producing a local vision, character description and set of guiding principles for Colchester's green network and waterways. These principles and the Essex GI Principles (endorsed by NE) are reflected in the policy and the Council has developed a vision and guiding principles specific to Colchester.



## **Policy GN2: Strategic Green Spaces and Nature Recovery**

**The Council will support the delivery of large scale strategic open spaces, habitat creation and restoration of wildlife rich habitats that delivers the strategic opportunities outlined in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The Council will work with landowners and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the Essex LNRS.**

**All proposals should have regard to achieving the Essex LNRS principles for restoring and enhancing biodiverse and well-functioning ecological networks designed to deliver multiple benefits based on identified need and contribute towards creating and restoring habitats in strategic opportunity areas.**

**Proposals for a Roman River corridor nature recovery area, as shown on the policies map, will be supported. Any proposals within this area that are not principally related to nature recovery must demonstrate that they will not prevent nature recovery coming forward in the Strategic Opportunity Areas identified in the Essex LNRS and how they will contribute to delivering habitat creation in accordance with the Essex LNRS.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.8 The purpose of the policy is to support the delivery of the Essex LNRS and encourage delivery of the strategic opportunity areas. Nature in Essex has suffered significantly over the last century, and continues to suffer, from species loss, habitat loss and increased habitat fragmentation. It is crucial that nature recovery is at the centre of future action for the environment, to create new habitats and recover and enhance space for nature that has been lost or degraded. The role of LNRS is to provide a county-wide, practical solution to driving action for nature recovery on the ground. The primary purpose of the LNRS is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment.
- 5.9 The LNRS includes areas of particular importance for biodiversity, which includes national conservation sites; local nature reserves; and other areas of particular importance for biodiversity. The key for nature recovery, and the essence of the LNRS, is to provide more space for nature and ensure it is better connected – ‘bigger, better and more joined up’, as Professor John Lawton has called it. The LNRS contains opportunity maps, showing where and how to deliver the Lawton principles for our most important habitats. The strategic creation opportunity maps highlight the top locations for nature recovery, indicating where efforts will be most beneficial for nature and the wider environment.
- 5.10 The Roman River corridor nature recovery area is specifically referred to in the policy and shown on the policies map. This area is identified in the draft Essex LNRS as a strategic opportunity area for woodland, grassland, freshwater standing water and freshwater river buffers. A proposal for a multi-parish nature green space / local nature recovery corridor was submitted to the Council by Aldham, Great Tey and Marks Tey Parish Councils as part of the Green Network and Waterways engagement. The corridor includes mature hedgerows and trees, pastureland,

floodplain, a reservoir and some arable land. Much of the Roman River is followed by a public right of way. Just to the north of the river is the 'Gainsborough Line', also a linear habitat, with trees the length of it. Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI, local wildlife sites and ancient woodland are located within the proposed corridor. Marks Tey's Neighbourhood Plan includes a 'green corridor' which brings in the Roman River.

### **Alternative**

- 5.11 The alternative is to not include reference to the Essex LNRS. However, the LNRS is an important spatial plan for nature recovery and this policy is a mechanism of incorporating it into the Local Plan.

### **Policy GN3: Local Green Spaces**

The following areas, which are shown on the policies map, are designated as Local Green Space. These are green spaces that are demonstrably special to the local community and hold a particular local significance.

- a) Land at Middlewick Ranges
- b) Mount Bures village green

Local Green Spaces are also designated in neighbourhood plans and are shown on the policies map.

Proposals for development within Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances and considered against policies for the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.12 The purpose of the policy is to designate green spaces of particular importance to communities as Local Green Space and comply with the requirements of NPPF paragraph 107. This affords a higher level of protection consistent with that for Green Belt (NPPF paragraph 108). It also draws attention to the local green spaces designated in some of Colchester's adopted neighbourhood plans

#### **Alternative**

- 5.13 The alternative is not to designate Local Green Spaces and not to refer to those Local Green Spaces that are designated through made neighbourhood plans. However, Local Green Spaces provide an additional level of protection for open spaces which are identified as being appropriate for these sites.

## **Policy GN4: Tree Canopy Cover**

**A Tree Canopy Cover Assessment will be required for all major applications. Development proposals should seek, where appropriate, to increase the level of canopy cover on site by a minimum of 10%.**

**For sites where the baseline canopy cover is below 10% of the total site area, applicants must secure a minimum canopy coverage of 10% across the site area.**

**New and existing trees must be incorporated into new developments and new streets should be tree lined.**

**Applicants must demonstrate that tree species and planting locations must be selected to enhance biodiversity, support ecosystem services, address environmental challenges, and be compatible with highway considerations.**

**Tree species must reflect local conditions and management objectives of the specific site. Native planting should be used but consideration given to the inclusion of some non-native non-invasive species that could be suited to changing, warmer conditions.**

**The maintenance of new trees must be included within any landscape management plan and landscape maintenance schedule for the site for an agreed period of time to ensure establishment.**

**In circumstances where any of these requirements is not possible or desirable, compensatory provision should be identified and secured through a legal obligation. Compensatory provision will need to be discussed with the case officer on a case-by-case basis and could include provision of an additional or larger open space or tree planting elsewhere.**

**The Council will support proposals that create pocket forests (also called Miyawaki forests) by planting native trees and shrubs together, to create a compact, biodiversity rich, and ultra-dense environment, where appropriate.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.14 The purpose of the policy is to secure an increase in tree canopy cover across Colchester. The importance of vegetation in towns and urban areas is long recognised; it provides shade, evaporative cooling, rainwater interception. It has an influence on other items such as air quality, energy use, biodiversity, and the reduction of the urban heat island effect. It also has positive impacts on human health and mental wellbeing.
- 5.15 The principal objective of the tree canopy cover assessment is to help understand the urban forest resource, specifically the amount of tree canopy that exists on an individual site at present. Canopy cover assessments provide a more accurate representation than simply counting the number of trees. Represented as a percentage of the area in total it is then much more accurate to show changes in the cover (increase or decrease).

## **Alternative**

5.16 The alternative is to require a higher level of tree canopy cover – 20%. The study, *The Canopy Cover of England’s Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being*, carried out in 2017, concluded that an average tree canopy cover of 20% should be set as the minimum standard for most UK towns and cities.

## **Policy GN5: Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace**

**Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) must be provided where the Habitat Regulations Assessment identifies a need for it to provide alternative greenspace to divert visitors from visiting sensitive sites such as the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC).**

**All SANGs that are required must meet the Natural England standard of 8 hectares per 1,000 head of new population and must comply with the latest Natural England SANG guidance.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.17 The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the provision of SANG follows Natural England's guidance and meets the Natural England standard of 8 hectares per 1000 head of new population. The role of SANG is to provide alternative green space to divert visitors from visiting habitats sites. SANG are intended to provide avoidance measures for the potential impact of residential development on habitats sites by preventing an increase in visitor pressure. The effectiveness of SANG as mitigation will depend upon the location and design.
- 5.18 Natural England has created SANG guidance for the Thames Basin Heaths Planning Zone, which is applicable to SANGs for other habitats sites. The policy requires compliance with this guidance and any future SANG guidance.

#### **Alternative**

- 5.19 The alternative is to include detailed criteria for the provision of SANGs rather than refer to the latest Natural England guidance. However, reference to the latest guidance ensures the policy remains up to date throughout the plan period.

## **Policy GN6: Retention of Open Space**

**The Council will retain, protect and enhance existing open spaces and secure additional open spaces where deficiencies are identified.**

**Development, including change of use, of any existing or proposed open space (regardless of whether it is in private or public ownership), including allotments, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:**

- a) Alternative and improved provision will be created in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users; and**
- b) The proposal would not result in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green network or to the character of the area in general.**

**Development proposals resulting in a loss of open space must additionally demonstrate that:**

- c) There is an identified excess provision within the catchment of the facility and no likely shortfall is expected within the plan period; or**
- d) Alternative and improved provision will be supplied in a location well related to the functional requirements of the relocated use and its existing and future users and will be delivered within an acceptable timeframe to be agreed with the Council.**

**In all cases, development will not be permitted that would result in any deficiencies in open space requirements or increase existing deficiencies in the area either at the time of the proposal or be likely to result in a shortfall within the plan period.**

**Additionally, development that would result in the loss of any small incidental areas of open space, not specifically identified on the policies map but which contribute to amenity value and the character of existing residential neighbourhoods, and any registered common, heathland or village green or which contribute to Colchester's green network will not be permitted.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 5.20 The purpose of the policy is to ensure the protection of existing and proposed open spaces. The policy sets out the criteria that must be met for proposals that would result in the loss of open space, consistent with paragraph 104 of the NPPF. The NPPF defines open space as 'any open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity'.

## **Alternative**

5.21 The alternative is to rely on the more strategic policies in this section and the NPPF and not include a policy that includes criteria regarding loss of open space. However, it is considered that the detail in this policy is needed to be clear on how proposals involving the loss of open space will be considered.



## 6. Landscape and Coast

- 6.1 This chapter on Landscape and Coast outlines the importance of preserving and enhancing the natural environment, focusing on the landscapes and coastal zones that play a pivotal role in Colchester's ecological heritage and the wellbeing of our residents. These spaces not only provide vital habitats for wildlife and support biodiversity, but also serve as areas for recreation, relaxation, and connection with nature. By safeguarding these areas, we aim to maintain a balanced relationship between development and environmental stewardship, ensuring that Colchester's landscapes and coasts continue to enrich the lives of current and future generations while contributing to a sustainable, thriving community.
- 6.2 Colchester's landscapes and coastline is extremely diverse and important in terms of its natural and historic environment, including biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. The policies in this chapter aim to manage growth sustainably and ensure that the inherent character and qualities of the landscape can continue to be appreciated, guiding positive change that conserves, protects, enhances, restores, or creates local character.
- 6.3 Understanding the character of place and evaluating an area's defining characteristics is a key component in achieving the policy aims and ensuring that any change or development does not undermine features that are valued or characteristics in a particular landscape. The Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (November 2024) is a comprehensive and up to date strategic-scale landscape evidence base to assist in the planning process. The LCA can be used to consider landscape character when considering any type of change and provides a framework for landscape studies, sensitivity assessments and baseline evidence for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments. This includes opportunities for conserving existing character and strengthening and enhancing character, as well as opportunities to create new character. The study focuses entirely on rural and urban-fringe landscape and does not include the principal urban conurbations of Colchester, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea.

## **Policy LC1: Landscape**

All proposals and associated land use change or land management must demonstrate that they are informed by, and are sympathetic to, the landscape character and qualities of the locality. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is required for all major applications and must be prepared in accordance with Landscape Institute guidelines.

In considering development proposals, the Council will take every opportunity to reinforce, restore, conserve, strengthen or enhance, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which development is proposed, as well as opportunities to create new character.

Development must comply with all the following criteria:

- a) Development must safeguard or strengthen tranquillity, features and patterns that contribute to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area, protect rural openness and sense of place and protect natural landscape features where they make a contribution to the historic environment.
- b) The scale, design, materials and landscaping measures are appropriate and would lead to an enhancement of the character of the landscape.
- c) Proposals must consider ecological and geological features, identifying areas suitable for habitat creation, and incorporate measures in the landscape plan with details of management and maintenance.

All development should take into account the sensitivity of the particular landscape to accommodate change. Development, or associated land use change or land management, which does not significantly adversely affect the landscape character of an area, will normally be allowed. Development must have regard to the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment 2024 to identify the character areas and features of the affected landscape. Development must take into account the general guidelines and landscape character area specific guidelines.

The Council considers that landscape character areas with 'high' inherent value and sensitivity as per Appendix A of the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment 2024, are valued landscapes. Development within valued landscapes will only be permitted where it would protect and enhance the characteristics that contribute towards its character.

Development should avoid reduction of and encourage traditional farming practices (including traditional orchards), retaining and enhancing sense of place whilst recognising the need to adapt to and mitigate against the effects of climate change.

Development on Land classified as Agricultural Grade 1 (except for renewable energy projects) will not be permitted unless a landscape strategy, which would compensate for the loss or harm, is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 6.4 The purpose of the policy is to guide development that is sympathetic to local character and the qualities of the landscape.
- 6.5 The Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (November 2024) provides a comprehensive and up to date strategic-scale landscape evidence base to assist in the planning process. The document can be used to consider landscape character when considering any type of change and provides a framework for landscape studies, sensitivity assessments and baseline evidence for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments. This includes opportunities for conserving existing character and strengthening and enhancing character, as well as opportunities to create new character. The study focuses entirely on rural and urban-fringe landscape and does not include the principal urban conurbations of Colchester, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea.
- 6.6 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states: 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes', The Council considers areas identified in Appendix A of the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment 2024 to be Valued Landscapes.

### **Alternative**

- 6.7 The alternative is to refer to landscape and the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment in the strategic environment policy and rely on legislation and good practice and not include this policy. However, this policy adds detail which will assist in protecting landscape character.

## **Policy LC2: Dedham Vale National Landscape**

**Development will only be supported within or on land within the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape that:**

- a) Makes a positive contribution to the purpose, natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape; and**
- b) Does not adversely affect the tranquillity and the National Landscapes good quality night/dark skies, taking account of guidance in The Dedham Vale National Landscape Lighting Design Guide 2023; and,**
- c) Does not adversely affect the character, quality views within, into and out of the National Landscape, and distinctiveness of the National Landscape or threaten public enjoyment of these areas, including by increased motorised vehicle movement; and**
- d) Supports the wider environmental, social and economic objectives as set out in the Management Plan 2021 -2026 for the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley (and successor management plans).**
- e) Furthers the purpose of the National Landscape as per the legal test.**

**Applications for major development within or in close proximity to the boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape will be refused unless in exceptional circumstances it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest, and this outweighs other material considerations.**

**Where exceptional development is suitable, landscape enhancements, mitigation or compensation measures must be provided. The Council will seek opportunities to mitigate the impact of features identified as having adverse impacts. Residual impacts may be offset by other mitigation within the National Landscape or contributions to the Stour Valley Environment Fund.**

**Proposals in or near the National Landscape must underground new infrastructure associated with electricity schemes or communication equipment to help protect the landscape qualities.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

6.8 National Landscapes (previously Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the natural beauty of the finest landscapes in England and Wales are conserved and enhanced. The purpose of this policy is to conserve and enhance the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

6.9 In December 2023, a new duty came into force in Section 245 of the 'Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023' stating that 'relevant authorities must seek to further the purposes' of the designated landscape. This overrides and strengthens the previous duty to 'have regard' to the purposes.

6.10 The Dedham Vale National Landscape has been designated for its national importance in terms of landscape quality, biodiversity and cultural heritage and is

further enhanced through its close association with the works of artist John Constable. The quality of the landscape is defined by its natural beauty and special qualities and the integration of the man-made elements within it, and the primary aim of the designation is to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the national landscape. Potential impacts on the National Landscape will be considered in relation to their individual or cumulative, adverse impact on the landscape. As a typically rural landscape, the skies above are of regional importance to residents within and surrounding the landscape. It is important to protect skies that could qualify for International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) accreditation at a later date.

### **Alternative**

- 6.11 The alternative is to rely on legislation, good practice and the Management Plan 2021 -2026 for the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley and not include this policy. However, this would not be consistent with the increased duty on all relevant authorities to 'further the purpose' of the National Landscape.

### **Policy LC3: Coastal Areas**

Planning proposals within Colchester's coastal, estuarine, intertidal and tidal environment, will need to accord with the South East Inshore Marine Plan (June 2021) and successor documents.

Within the Coastal Protection Belt, an integrated approach to coastal management will be promoted and development (with the exception of householder applications) will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that it:

- a) Requires a coastal location due to the nature of the use and is located within the developed area of the coast; and
- b) Is a land use type that is appropriate to the Flood Zone, will be safe from flooding and coastal erosion over its planned lifetime and will not have an unacceptable impact on coastal change; and
- c) Will be compatible with the surroundings in terms of use, location, scale and design, and not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape and seascape character of the coast, nature conservation designations, heritage assets, and maritime uses; and
- d) Will deliver or sustain social and economic sustainability benefits considered important to the wellbeing of the coastal communities; and
- e) Will not hinder access to and the maintenance of the King Charles III England Coast Path.

**Houseboats:** Proposals for new moorings for permanent residential houseboats will not be permitted in coastal areas, including Coast Road West Mersea, because of their landscape and environmental impact on designated habitats sites. Houseboat proposals for new moorings on historical vacant sites or houseboats of historical maritime significance, may be acceptable, subject to an installation method statement being submitted which avoids impacts to designated habitats (such as saltmarsh, mudflats and oyster beds) and which satisfy all other policy criteria. Applications for infrastructure to support existing houseboats including jetties, sheds, platforms and fences and for replacement houseboats or houseboat alterations considered to result in material alterations will be considered on the basis of their scale and impact on surrounding amenity, environment and landscape.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 6.12 The purpose of this policy is to protect Colchester's rural and undeveloped coastline from inappropriate development that would adversely affect its rural, undeveloped and open character and irreplaceable assets and help protect the character of the Coastal Protection Belt by preventing urban sprawl into the more open and undeveloped stretches of Colchester's coastline. The policy recognises exceptions where development requires a coastal location or is needed to help sustain the socio-economic base of the coastal area or serves the needs of the local coastal community.

6.13 Colchester's coastline lies within the plan area of the South East (Inshore) Marine Plan<sup>2</sup> developed by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) (June 2021). The South East Marine Plan introduces a more integrated approach to management, ensuring that the right activities happen in the right place and in the right way within the marine environment. The South East Marine Plan will help to enhance and protect the marine environment and achieve sustainable economic growth while respecting local communities both within and adjacent to the marine plan area.

6.14 The vision for the south east marine plan area in 2041 is:

'The south east marine plan area is distinctive for being a substantial maritime gateway to the world with locally and nationally important ports that are thriving. Prosperous ports, together with associated industries and shipping sectors, are contributing to the long-term economic growth and prosperity of the UK and south east coastal communities. The tidal rivers in the south east have been optimised for short sea shipping. The Tidal Thames facilitates more sustainable passenger and freight transport than before with improved access, infrastructure, local employment and air quality, benefitting the Greater Thames area. The valuable cultural heritage, environmental assets and seascape of the densely populated areas of the south east are more appreciated and resilient than ever before, including to the impacts of climate change and coastal change. The important role that marine and estuarine environments and their biodiversity play in mitigating climate change is realised. A profitable, sustainable fisheries sector is thriving in the south east. Decisions made in the south east marine plan area apply an ecosystem approach and natural capital framework. The environment is in a better state than before, and Good Environmental Status is achieved. Biodiversity is conserved, enhanced and restored through applying well-established principles of biodiversity gain and delivery of a well-managed, ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas. The South East Marine Plan promotes good governance and has solved challenges and conflicts in the crowded marine plan area through enabling plan-led decisions, taking account of cumulative effects and coordinating the co-existence of activities. Awareness of the marine plan and connectivity with the large number of consenting regimes and local planning authorities is high, especially in the densely populated London and Greater Thames Estuary area.'

### **Alternative**

6.15 The alternative is not to include a coastal areas policy and rely solely on the South East Marine Plan. However, the policy refers to the coastal protection belt and provides policy for the consideration of houseboat proposals.

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<sup>2</sup>[South East Inshore Marine Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 7. Net Zero Homes and Buildings, Renewable Energy and Water

- 7.1 Essex County Council has developed recommended planning policy for Local Planning Authorities in Greater Essex to embed in their Local Plans (and other associated planning documents) to ensure that all new homes and buildings achieve a consistent, clearly defined, net zero carbon (in operation) standard that aligns with local and national climate targets and delivers high quality, healthy, energy efficient, climate resilient homes and buildings; and tackle embodied carbon emissions from new build development.
- 7.2 These two recommended policies are included in this chapter. The policies are supported by evidence produced for Essex and provides the basis for a consistent policy approach towards Net Zero Carbon in operation for residential and non-residential development across Essex.
- 7.3 The evidence base defines net zero carbon development in a way which delivers net zero immediately, aligns with our climate targets, and reflects the approach taken by front runner authorities in England and leading industry-led initiatives. Building to the recommended net zero carbon (in operation) standard in Essex is shown in the evidence to be technically feasible, financially viable and legally justified.
- 7.4 This chapter also includes policies on wastewater and water supply and renewable energy, which reflect best practice and the findings of the Colchester Water Cycle Study.
- 7.5 This chapter will contribute towards the Sustainable theme of the vision by requiring greater standards for sustainable infrastructure and wastewater; facilitating affordable clean secure energy through the delivery of sustainable energy to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and ensuring development helps Colchester to adapt and increase its resilience to the effects of climate change. Policies will create healthier homes and reduce fuel poverty, which are important considerations for health and wellbeing.



## **Policy NZ1: Net Zero Carbon Development (in operation)**

### **A) New build development (residential and non-residential)**

All new buildings must be designed and built to be Net Zero Carbon in operation. They must be ultra-low energy buildings, fossil fuel free, and generate renewable energy on-site to at least match predicted annual energy use.

All new buildings (1 dwelling and above for residential; 100m<sup>2</sup> floorspace and above for non-residential) are required to comply with requirements 1 to 5 as set out below:

#### **1. Requirement 1: Space heating demand limits**

- a) Residential buildings (apart from bungalows) and non-residential buildings must achieve a space heating demand of 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA (gross internal floor area)/year or less.
- b) Bungalows must achieve a space heating demand of 20 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year or less.

#### **2. Requirement 2: Fossil fuel free**

- a) No new buildings shall be connected to the gas grid; and
- b) Fossil fuels must not be used on-site to provide space heating, domestic hot water or cooking.

#### **3. Requirement 3: Energy Use Intensity (EUI) limits**

- a) Residential buildings (Use Class C3 and C4) must achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of no more than 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr.
- b) The following non-residential buildings must achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of no more than the following (where technically feasible) by building type or nearest equivalent:
  - Offices – 70 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year
  - Schools – 65 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year
  - Light Industrial – 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year
- a) For other residential and non-residential buildings, that are not covered by a) and b) above, applicants should report their energy use intensity but are not required to comply with a certain limit.

#### **4. Requirement 4: On-site renewable energy generation**

Renewable energy must be generated on-site for all new developments by whichever of the following results in the greater amount of rooftop solar PV energy (electricity) generation:

- a) The amount of energy generated in a year should match or exceed the predicted annual energy use of the building, i.e. Renewable energy generation (kWh/m<sup>2</sup> /year) = or > predicted annual energy use (kWh/m<sup>2</sup> /year)\*; or
- b) the amount of energy generated in a year is:
  - at least 80 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> building footprint per year\* for all building types; and

- at least 120 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> building footprint per year\* for industrial buildings.

\*For development proposals where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that meeting Requirement 4 is not technically feasible then renewable energy generation on-site should be maximised and the residual amount of renewable energy generation (equivalent to the shortfall in meeting the annual energy use of the building in kWh/year) must be offset by a financial contribution (to cover the administration, purchasing and installation of a solar PV renewable energy (electricity) system elsewhere in the plan area or county, which is able to generate a similar amount of energy) and be paid into the Council's offset fund.

The offset price is set at £1.35 per kWh or the most recent updated version and the contribution shall be calculated at the time of planning application determination.

#### 5. Requirement 5: As-built performance confirmation and in-use monitoring

- All developments must submit as-built performance information at completion and prior to occupation; and
- In-use energy monitoring is required on a minimum of 10% of dwellings for development proposals of 100 dwellings or more, for the first 5 years of operation.

#### Alternative routes to meeting policy requirements

Proposals that are built and certified to the Passivhaus Classic or higher PassivHaus standard are deemed to have met Requirements 1 and 3. Requirements 2, 4 and 5 must also be met to achieve policy compliance.

B) Extensions and Conversions Applications for residential extensions and conversions affecting existing buildings (but excluding Listed Buildings) are encouraged to meet the minimum standards approach fabric specifications set out in the table below and maximise renewable energy generation where practical and feasible.

Table 2 – Minimum Standards Approach Fabric Specifications (Domestic)

Residential Developments		Block of Flats Low Rise	Terrace / Semi- Detached House	Bungalow
Fabric	Floor U-value	0.08 – 0.10	0.08 – 0.10	0.08 – 0.10
	External Wall U-value	0.10 – 0.14	0.10 – 0.13	0.09 – 0.12
	Roof U-value	0.09 - 0.11	0.09 - 0.11	0.09 - 0.10
	Windows U-value	0.80 – 0.90	0.80 – 0.90	0.80 – 0.90
	Windows G-value	0.45 – 0.55	0.45 – 0.55	0.45 – 0.55
	External doors U-value	-	0.90 - 1.2	0.90 - 1.2
	Thermal bridging	0.04 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	0.04 W/m <sup>2</sup> K	0.04 W/m <sup>2</sup> K
	Air permeability	<1 ach	<1 ach	<1 ach

Source: Report 2: Essex Net Zero Policy – Policy Summary, Evidence and Validation Requirements (July 2023)

(Note that Table 2 is the source reference.)

#### Justification

## **Purpose of the policy**

- 7.6 The Building Regulations 2021 (including the proposed Future Homes Standard 2025) do not adequately address operational or embodied carbon emissions from new development. For example, operational carbon emissions come from two categories of energy use – regulated and unregulated. About 50% of a building’s total operational energy use comes from ‘unregulated’ uses, however Building Regulations does not address these uses. Furthermore, Building Regulations currently does not address embodied carbon emissions.
- 7.7 It therefore falls to the planning system to ensure new development addresses carbon emissions in operation (including those from both regulated and unregulated energy uses) and embodied carbon emissions, in a way that aligns with local and national climate targets and mitigates and adapts to climate change. This is supported through primary legislation and national policy which require local plans to include policies to secure development that mitigates and adapts to climate change. This will enable Councils to take a proactive approach to climate change which is in line with the objectives and provisions, and hence legally binding targets, of the Climate Change Act (NPPF, para 162, Footnote 61).
- 7.8 This policy and the embodied carbon policy that follows, were drafted by the Climate and Planning Unit (CaPU) at Essex County Council in collaboration with the Essex Authorities through the Essex Planning Officers Association. It is based on extensive [evidence](#) available that supports the development of ‘net zero’ planning policies in local plans in Essex. The evidence produced for Essex provides the basis for a consistent policy approach across Essex towards Net Zero Carbon in operation for residential and non-residential development.
- 7.9 The evidence base defines net zero carbon development in a way which delivers net zero (in operation) immediately, aligns with climate targets, and reflects the approach taken by frontrunner authorities in England and leading industry-led initiatives.
- 7.10 Building to the recommended net zero carbon (in operation) standard in Essex is shown in the evidence to be technically feasible, financially viable and legally justified. A new main document and a supporting document suggesting how Essex Net Zero specifications might be produced are now available. These have been produced to assist with the delivery of achieving net zero homes according to the Essex Net Zero Policy Position and can be found within the Essex Design Guide, [here](#).

## **Alternative**

- 7.11 The alternative is to rely on Building Regulations for minimum standards [which do not achieve truly net zero carbon and energy development (in operation)] and to not include the Essex Net Zero Policy developed collaboratively by the Essex Authorities led by the Climate and Planning Unit (at Essex County Council) through the Essex Planning Officers Association.

## **Policy NZ2: Net Zero Carbon Development – embodied carbon**

All development proposals must demonstrate the measures taken to minimise embodied carbon (subject to meeting Policy NZ1 requirements first) and how circular economy principles have been embedded into the design. In doing so:

- a) Priority should be given to re-using, renovating or retrofitting existing buildings and/or structures on a site and demolition will only be acceptable where justified to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- b) Proposals for all new residential and non-residential buildings must demonstrate that upfront embodied carbon\* has been considered and reduced as far as possible through good design and material efficiency.
- c) New major developments, major retrofits and rebuild developments are required to achieve the following set limits for upfront embodied carbon and this should be demonstrated through an embodied carbon assessment using a nationally recognised methodology:
  - Low rise residential (up to 11m):  $\leq 500$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA\*\*);
  - Mid and high rise residential (over 11m) -  $\leq 500$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) or follow NZCBS\*\*\* limits when available;
  - Non-domestic buildings: offices  $\leq 600$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA); education  $\leq 500$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA); and retail  $\leq 550$  kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) or follow NZCBS limits when available; and
  - For building services, meet the global warming potential refrigerant limits set out in NZCBS when available.

*\*Upfront Embodied Carbon = emissions associated with the Building Life Cycle Stages A1-A5 and RIBA stages 2/3, 4 and 6)*

*\*\*GIA = Gross internal floor area*

*\*\*\*NZCBS = UK Net Zero Carbon Building Standards (pilot launched September 2024).*

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

7.12 Embodied carbon accounts for a significant proportion of a buildings' whole life carbon and addressing embodied carbon is important to meet local and national climate targets. Currently, embodied carbon is not covered by Building Regulations and there is no government policy requiring the assessment or control of embodied carbon emissions from buildings. The Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) reported to Parliament in 2022 on this issue. The EAC highlighted that as a result, no progress has been made in reducing these emissions within the built environment. They go on to advise that the UK is slipping behind comparator countries in Europe

in monitoring and controlling the embodied carbon in construction and that if this continues the UK will not meet net zero or its carbon budgets.

7.13 Councils are mandating Whole Life-Cycle Carbon (WLC) assessments of their own accord through the planning system. The EAC reported that evidence so far shows that the policy is achievable and is working, with few barriers to its introduction (EAC Report, Paragraph 73). The EAC encourages Councils to include embodied carbon assessments in their Local Plans ahead of the introduction of national planning requirements.

7.14 The Embodied Carbon Policy Study for Essex, published in June 2024 is available to view [here](#). The study provides the technical evidence base and cost analysis to support a recommended policy approach towards minimising carbon emissions that are embodied in the materials and construction of new homes and buildings.

### **Alternative**

7.15 The alternative is not to include any requirements for reducing the embodied carbon emissions from new development. However, this would fail to take into account the evidence in the Embodied Carbon Policy Study for Essex.

## **Policy NZ3: Wastewater and Water Supply**

The Council will work with Anglian Water, Affinity Water, the Environment Agency and developers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the water supply and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development.

Where necessary, improvements to water supply infrastructure, wastewater treatment and off-site drainage should be made ahead of the occupation of dwellings to ensure compliance with environmental legislation.

To achieve greater water efficiencies and support demand management, all new buildings must include water efficiency measures. Residential development will be required to meet the water efficiency standard of 80 litres per person per day. Proposals should submit a water efficiency calculator report to demonstrate compliance and include clear evidence on the approach to water conservation.

Residential proposals of 100 dwellings or more will be required to demonstrate that a full range of options to significantly reduce reliance on potable water demand, including water efficiency, rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling, has been fully explored and incorporated into the scheme.

Major non-residential development that requires significant non-domestic water use will be required to prepare a Water Resources Assessment and undertake early discussions with Anglian Water Services to ascertain water availability and feasibility of the scheme and demonstrate innovative solutions to reduce water demands.

Proposals within the catchments of the following Water Recycling Centres: Dedham, Fingringhoe, Great Tey, Langham and West Bergholt must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre (WRC) is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate phasing triggers to support development to be agreed.

Development within the Colchester WRC drainage catchment must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.

Development within the drainage catchments of Copford, Tiptree and West Bergholt WRCs must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.

Land is allocated as an extension to Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 7.16 It is important for the Council to work with water companies, the Environment Agency and developers to ensure sufficient capacity and provision of an adequate water supply and foul drainage and wastewater treatment to deliver sustainable and resilient communities, whilst leaving water in the environment to support nature recovery. This will be particularly important as water supplies continue to be threatened by climate change and pressures from continuing growth and to ensure

compliance with the requirement of the Environment Act and Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations. The extension to Colchester Water Recycling Centre will be important in providing increased capacity to treat wastewater demand as a result of growth within the Local Plan.

- 7.17 The WCS has found that in the catchments of the following WRCs Colchester, Copford, Tiptree and West Bergholt, additional connections to sewer systems which have existing capacity would result in sewer flooding risk or sewer overflow spill frequencies. Additional surface water into these sewer networks could exacerbate either of these issues. This can be addressed through potential solutions improving water efficiency targets to help extend capacity, phasing of development to align with future potential investment plans may also be appropriate to help with this issue over the plan period.
- 7.18 Development within the Colchester WRC drainage catchment must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option. Copford, Tiptree and West Bergholt WRCs have separated sewer systems (separate foul and surface water sewers). Development in these WRC drainage catchments must not be permitted to discharge surface water to the foul sewer network. Criteria covering this has been added to relevant Place policies.

#### **Alternative**

- 7.19 An alternative is not to require a higher water efficiency standard. However, evidence in the Water Cycle Study indicates that this standard is required to enable capacity at Water Recycling Centres over the plan period.

## **Policy NZ4: Renewable Energy**

Planning applications for renewable energy schemes in appropriate locations will be supported by the Council in principle. It is accepted that this may result in the loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.

All applications for renewable energy schemes should be located and designed in such a way to minimise increases in ambient noise levels. Landscape and visual impacts should be mitigated through good design, careful siting and layout and landscaping measures. Schemes should be considered in relation to impacts upon the historic environment. Transport Assessments covering the construction, operation and decommissioning of any wind farm or solar farm proposal will be required and should be produced at the pre-application stage so acceptability can be determined and mitigation measures identified. A condition will be attached to planning consents for wind turbines and solar farm proposals to ensure that the site is restored when the turbines or panels are taken out of service.

The mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Statement, required for large scale renewable energy schemes, must be incorporated into the design of the scheme or secured via condition.

To maximise environmental benefits, the Council encourages all solar farm proposals to deliver biodiversity net gain of at least 50% and an increase in tree canopy cover of at least 50%.

**Community Led Energy:** The positive benefits of community energy schemes will be a material consideration in assessing renewable energy development proposals. The preference is for schemes that are led by and directly meet the needs of local communities, in line with the hierarchy and project attributes below:

- a) Project part or fully owned by a local community group or social enterprise;
- b) Local community members have a governance stake in the project or organisation e.g. with voting rights.

The Council's Sustainability Checklist should be completed and submitted with all major planning applications to explain and evidence how the proposal complies with Local Plan policies and guidance that seek to improve the environmental sustainability of new development.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 7.20 Renewable energy schemes play a major role in reducing carbon emissions across the city, contributing to the climate emergency and supporting the sustainable development objectives in the NPPF, and will be supported in principle. Whilst the climate emergency declaration of net zero emissions by 2030 relates to the Council as an organisation, the Council in declaring a climate emergency in July 2019,



acknowledged that urgent action is needed to limit the environmental impacts produced by the climate crisis.

7.21 Sustainability lies at the heart of planning (Sections 2 and 14 NPPF). The sustainability checklist will be used as a tool to provide an overview of how a scheme addresses different aspects of sustainability, although each application will be assessed on its own merit, taking account of local circumstances. The checklist does not replace other application submission requirements but aims to provide an overarching framework to help facilitate the assessment of different, often overlapping, strands of sustainability.

### **Alternative**

7.22 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on other policies when assessing renewable energy proposals such as transport and landscape policies. However, this policy adds further detail.

## 8. Homes

- 8.1 This chapter on Homes addresses the need for a balanced approach to meet the housing requirements of Colchester's growing community, in line with the NPPF. The aim is to create vibrant, inclusive neighbourhoods that support both the health and wellbeing of individuals and the long-term sustainability of the area, providing a range of high-quality, healthy homes that meet the diverse needs of residents.
- 8.2 The government sets housing targets for all local authorities to meet the national demand for additional homes. The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment 2024 has been used to inform the Local Plan policies and considers the overall need for housing in the city, as well as the need for different types of homes and the needs of different groups within the local community.
- 8.3 All housing developments in Colchester should be inclusive and accommodate a diverse range of households and housing need to create mixed communities. Housing developments must provide a range of housing types that can accommodate a range of different households, including families, single persons, older persons, those with care and/or supported needs, students, service families, gypsy and travellers, those wishing to build their own home and low-income households.
- 8.4 There is an important relationship between housing diversity, density and the accessibility of the location. City Centre locations, for example, are highly accessible and can support high density flats, but they also need to accommodate a range of household sizes. Suburban locations have moderate access and should accommodate a range of housing types and household sizes. Rural locations have low accessibility and will suit lower density development but should also still provide for small and low-income households.
- 8.5 The need for affordable housing is high across Colchester, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region and nationally. The Council expects affordable housing to be delivered on site as part of the development proposal. Only in exceptional circumstances will delivery off site or a financial contribution be accepted.

## **Policy H1: Housing Mix**

**New residential developments should assist in the creation of sustainable and inclusive communities by providing an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and tenure.**

**Residential development proposals will be supported where the housing mix is informed by the:**

- a) **Needs identified in the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment as set out below:**

	Market	Affordable Home Ownership	Affordable Housing (rented)	
			General Needs	Older Persons
<b>1 bedroom</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>2 bedroom</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>3 bedroom</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>33%</b>	
<b>4 bedroom</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	

- b) **existing housing stock in the local area and character of the local area to avoid over concentration of a single size of homes where this would undermine the achievement of creating mixed and balanced communities.**

**Where an alternative housing mix is proposed, it must be evidenced why this is considered a more appropriate mix. Viability will only be considered as a reason to vary the housing mix, where a planning application is supported by a viability assessment and independently assessed and agreed by the Council.**

**Neighbourhood Plans may set out a different approach to housing type and mix specific to the local area, where this is clearly demonstrated and supported by evidence.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

8.6 The NPPF sets out the need to provide an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment has identified the need for a different housing mix dependent upon tenure. This takes into account future demographic changes, household changes and the ageing population. Regarding the affordable housing sector, regard has also been had to the current mix of housing by tenure and size requirements as identified on the Housing Register.

8.7 Overall, there is a particular need for 2 bedroom accommodation with varying proportions of 1, 3 and 4+ bedroom homes. For general rented affordable housing there is a clear need for a range of different sizes of homes.

8.8 The Council acknowledge that evidence is continually updated, and where there is more up to date evidence than the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment – September 2024 which has informed the housing mix set out in Policy H1, this updated evidence will be considered when provided to support a planning application on a case-by-case basis.

8.9 Where a Viability Assessment is submitted to vary the housing mix, in accordance with the NPPF, all viability assessments will be made publicly available via the Council's planning portal as part of the documents submitted in support of a planning application. The assessment will be scrutinised by the Council's approved viability assessor, at a cost to be borne by the applicant, and form part of the decision-making process in accordance with national planning policy and guidance.

**Alternative**

8.10 The current Adopted Local Plan does not include a policy on housing mix. It is considered necessary to ensure residential development proposals reflect local needs. The alternative is to rely on national policy; however, this does not address the local needs identified in the latest Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment.

## **Policy H2: Affordable Housing**

The Council is committed to improving housing affordability in Colchester.

30% of new dwellings should be provided as affordable housing for developments of:

- a) 10 or more dwellings or a site area of 0.5 ha or more in urban areas;
- b) 5 dwellings or more in designated rural areas.

Affordable dwellings should be delivered on site. In exceptional circumstances, off site provision or a financial contribution in lieu may be accepted. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Where it is considered that a site forms part of a larger development area, affordable housing will be apportioned with reference to the site area as a whole.

The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment identifies a clear and acute need for social and affordable rented housing, this should be prioritised where delivery does not prejudice the overall delivery of affordable homes.

Proposals should be designed tenure blind, demonstrating no distinctly different design characteristics between affordable and market homes. To promote social cohesion, affordable housing provision should not dominate an area, road or building across the development.

In exceptional circumstances where high development costs undermine the viability of housing delivery, developers will be expected to demonstrate an alternative affordable housing provision.

For sites where an alternative level of affordable housing is proposed below the requirement, it will need to be supported by evidence in the form of a viability appraisal. In such cases the Council may seek a review of the viability of a scheme with the aim of achieving policy compliance over time. This may include securing a review mechanism by legal agreement specifying trigger points for undertaking a review such as later phases of a scheme or reserved matters applications with the aim of achieving policy compliance and improving the affordable housing contributions.

95% of affordable housing should meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standards (or its successor) and 5% of affordable homes to be Part M4 (3)(2)(b) wheelchair user standards (or its successor).

### **Rural Exception Sites**

Affordable housing development in villages will be supported on rural exception sites where:

- a) adjacent or continuous to village settlement boundaries or where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities,
- b) meeting a local need that is evidenced by an approved Local Housing Needs Survey by the relevant Town or Parish Council on behalf of their residents.

**A proportion of market housing which facilitates the provision of significant additional affordable housing may be appropriate on rural exception sites. Information to demonstrate that the market housing is essential to cross-subsidise the delivery of the affordable housing and that the development would not be viable without this cross-subsidy will be required.**

**At the scheme level, the number of open market units on the rural exception site will be strictly limited to only the number of units required to facilitate the provision of significant affordable housing units on a rural exception site. The number of affordable units and total floorspace on a site should always be greater than the number of open market units or floorspace. The actual number will be determined on local circumstances, evidence of local need and the overall viability of the scheme.**

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 8.11 The need for affordable housing is high across Colchester, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region and nationally.
- 8.12 The Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) has identified that the provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue. The report has identified a need for 941 affordable homes per annum. (Based on the Standard method using 1290pa). This could increase slightly in light of increased annual target of 1300pa.
- 8.13 The whole plan Viability Assessment supports a target of 30% affordable housing in new developments.
- 8.14 The Council expects affordable housing to be delivered on site as part of the development proposal. Only in exceptional circumstances will delivery off site or a financial contribution be accepted. Further details about the delivery of affordable housing is contained in the LHNA and Supplementary Planning Document.
- 8.15 In instances where the level of affordable housing to be provided is disputed or challenged, the Council will expect developers to meet the Council's reasonable costs associated with viability appraisals. A review mechanism may be required in such cases in accordance with the National Planning Policy Guidance. Review mechanisms are not a tool to protect a return to the developer, but to strengthen local authorities' ability to seek compliance with relevant policies over the lifetime of the project.
- 8.16 In instances where the provision of affordable housing is supported by the delivery of some open market units on a rural exception site, it will be essential to ensure that the number of open market units never dominates a particular scheme. In determining the number of open market units required to facilitate the delivery of affordable units, the Council will expect applicants to demonstrate viability calculations starting with 100% affordable housing. The same calculations should then be applied with the introduction of one open market unit at a time until a point is reached where the delivery of the rural exception site becomes viable. The number

of open market units on a rural exception site should be less than the number of affordable units delivered.

### **Alternatives**

- 8.17 The alternatives are to retain Policy DM8 from the Adopted Local Plan or to rely on national policy which expects Local Plans to specify the type of affordable housing required. Neither are considered sufficient to address the affordable housing needs of Colchester.

### **Policy H3: Student Accommodation**

**Planning permission will be granted for purpose-built student accommodation where the proposal:**

- a) meets an identified need evidenced to the satisfaction of the Council;**
- b) provides a mix of cluster flats and studios;**
- c) is located in and around the University with access to public transport;**
- d) will not result in an excessive concentration of student accommodation in any one locality;**
- e) provides adequate amenity space.**

**A management and maintenance plan must be prepared for multi- occupancy buildings and implemented via planning conditions to ensure the future maintenance of the building and external spaces.**

**Purpose Built Student Accommodation should be designed flexibly to enable conversion to other residential uses, in the event that the need for student accommodation does not materialise.**



#### **Policy H4: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

Where planning permission is required for HMOs, proposals will be supported where:

- a) there is no adverse impact to the local character and amenity including to existing neighbours through excessive noise and disturbance;
- b) provide adequate amenity space;
- c) provide adequate refuse storage and services;
- d) provide an appropriate level of vehicle and cycle parking informed by the Essex Parking Guidance;
- e) the proposal will not result in HMOs disproportionately dominating an area which significantly alters the existing character; and
- f) the proposal is designed in accordance with the National Described Space Standards.

A management and maintenance plan to be prepared for multi- occupancy buildings and implemented via planning conditions to ensure the future maintenance of the building and external spaces.

## **Policy H5: Specialist Housing including Housing for an Aging Population**

The Council will support proposals for specialist and supported housing which includes the following:

- a) residential care homes,
- b) nursing homes
- c) extra care housing (as defined by C2 Use Class),
- d) retirement living or sheltered housing (housing with support)
- e) Supported living for people with disabilities or mental health needs);
- f) Other housing for people with care needs (as defined as C3(b) Use Class and other vulnerable people.

New development proposals for specialist and supported housing will be supported where:

- a) this is meeting an identified need (supported by evidence including the Local Housing Needs Assessment and Essex County Council Housing Lin Study);
- b) located within settlements;
- c) close to local facilities;
- d) are accessible by public transport where appropriate;
- e) integrate with the existing community;
- f) provide adequate amenity space;
- g) it can be demonstrated that the development has been designed to provide the most appropriate type and level of support to its intended residents;
- h) there is support from the relevant public services and agencies required to support the housing provision; and
- i) a business case demonstrates the long term viability of the business, where specific care needs are provided.

All proposals within the Colchester Urban Area for 500 dwellings or more, are expected to include a mix of housing to meet a range of needs. This should include housing for support (sheltered/retirement housing), housing with care or nursing and residential care homes.

Neighbourhood Plans should continue to identify opportunities for meeting specialist and supported housing needs and for accessible and adaptable general needs housing within the local communities.

The Council will also support development proposals for hospices through expansion of existing sites or development of new sites that are located within settlements.

80% of dwellings (in all tenures) should meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4 (2) accessible and adaptable standards and 5% of all new market homes and 10% of all affordable homes should meet Building Regulations 2015 Part M4(3).

**Proposals to convert from the C3 to C2 use class, will only be supported where it is demonstrated this will not result in unacceptable or adverse harm to local amenity.**

## **Policy H6: Self and Custom Build**

**The Council will support proposals for self and custom build housing, to meet demand as indicated by registrations on the Council's self build register.**

**Development proposals of 150 dwellings or more, should provide serviced plots to deliver at least 2% of the total number of dwellings on site as self build or custom build homes, provided the Council's self build register identifies a need at the time an application is submitted. All plots must meet the definition of a serviced plot as per national policy.**

**Serviced Plots should be made available to households on the Self-Build Register for a period of 12 months. If after that time, plots have not been purchased or reserved by those on the Self Build Register, they may either remain on the open market as self-build or be built out as market housing.**

**The Council will also consider opportunities for self and custom build dwellings as part of development proposals on Council owned land.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of policies H3, H4, H5 and H6**

- 8.18 The Council will seek to secure a range of different housing types and tenures on developments across Colchester in order to create inclusive and sustainable communities. Housing developments should provide a mix of housing types to suit a range of different households as identified in the Local Housing Needs Assessment September 2024.
- 8.19 A specific housing needs assessment must be provided as part of any planning application to demonstrate the proposal is meeting an identified need.
- 8.20 Where a proposal is meeting a specific housing need, a planning condition or legal agreement will be imposed to secure this.
- 8.21 The University of Essex ambition is to grow the university to 20,000 students by 2028 and 30,000 students by 2035. Given the current pipeline provision of student accommodation through Halls of Residence (on campus), purpose built student accommodation and HMOs in Colchester, there are sufficient bedspaces available to meet the identified need to 2028.
- 8.22 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document set out the expectations for new homes within the Garden Community, including student accommodation. This will ensure the future ambitions of the University of Essex to 2035 will be met. Therefore there is no unmet need for student accommodation during the plan period.
- 8.23 A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 household but share facilities such as a bathroom and kitchen. This can also be referred to a house share.

- 8.24 The Council estimates there are approximately 2,000 HMOs across Colchester. These are an important housing type to offer choice to renters and provide an affordable option, particularly for students.
- 8.25 National policy is clear that the Government want more people to have the opportunity to build their own homes. Self and custom build projects are a way of achieving this. The Self and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to grant sufficient planning permissions to meet the demand identified on the Council's Self Build Register.
- 8.26 The NPPF defines an older person as people over or approaching retirement age whose housing needs can include accessible, adaptable general housing to retirement and specialist housing for those with support or care needs.
- 8.27 With an aging population, the overarching aim is for people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. However, it is acknowledged that there may come a time when additional or specific needs can no longer be accommodated within a traditional setting. The Council is therefore supportive of development proposals which provide additional care needs and support.
- 8.28 The Local Housing Needs Assessment has identified the following specific housing needs for older and disabled persons in the plan period:
- 1,600 housing units with support (sheltered/retirement housing)
  - 1,000 housing units with care
  - 850 nursing and residential care bedspaces
  - 800 dwellings for wheelchair users (meeting building standard M4(3)).
- 8.29 When determining applications for specialist housing proposals, the Council will have regard to the latest available evidence on need including the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment and Essex County Council's Housing LIN Research on Specialist and Supported Housing and Accommodation Needs and Assessment. Additional information to consider includes the Essex County Council Developers Guide to Infrastructure Contributions for specific local and design requirements by cohorts of specialist and supported housing and market provision statements to establish the current level of provision.

### **Alternative**

- 8.30 The alternative is to set specific allocations for every type of specialist housing. This would increase levels of certainty that provision is made but would not allow for sufficient flexibility for categories such as housing for an aging population or self and custom build that could be provided in a range of and locations.

## **Policy H7: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The Council will identify sites to meet the established needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.

There is an overall need for 15 pitches up to 2041, this includes 6 pitches for households who meet the planning definition and 9 pitches for undetermined households.

**Table H7.1: Gypsy and Travellers Housing Need 2024 to 2041**

	Year			
	2024 to 2028	2029 to 2033	2034 to 2038	2039 to 2041
Number of pitches	5	3	2	5

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will provide a total of 18 pitches which will count equally (9 pitches respectively) towards Tendring and Colchester's need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.

The remaining need of 6 pitches to 2041 will be met through:

- Expansion of the existing site at Severalls Lane. The existing site has successfully operated since 2012 and is considered a sustainable location for small scale expansion.
- Strategic allocations to be finalised through masterplanning.

In the event that delivery of the pitches as outlined above is delayed, proposals for new gypsy and travellers and travelling Showpeople sites will be considered on a case by case basis.

Proposals for new gypsy and travellers and travelling Showpeople sites will be supported where:

- a) meet an identified need;
- b) located within close proximity to existing settlements;
- c) located outside areas at high risk of flooding;
- d) provide access to a range of services such as shops, education, health and community facilities;
- e) provide adequate space for vehicles on site;
- f) have suitable and safe highways access;
- g) ensure the amenity of the Gypsy and Traveller community and the settled community is managed appropriately;
- h) have appropriate and sufficient drainage, water supply and other necessary utility services; and
- i) provides a connection to a main sewer system unless it is impractical to achieve.

Planning permission will be refused for the change of use of all Gypsy and Traveller sites or Travelling Showpeople pitches identified in the Gypsy and

**Traveller Accommodation Assessment unless acceptable replacement accommodation can be provided, or it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer required to meet any identified needs.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 8.31 The overarching aim of the National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites is to ensure fair and equal treatment of the travelling community, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way of life while respecting the interests of the settled community. As part of this, the Council is required to proactively plan to meet the housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the District.
- 8.32 The Colchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment sets out the overall need of 15 pitches to 2041. Policy H7 identifies how these needs will be met across the plan area and plan period.
- 8.33 No current need has been identified for accommodation for travelling showpeople, however any need that arises over the life of the plan will also be addressed using the criteria based policy approach. There is also a need for 5 pitches for those who do not meet the planning definition of a Gypsy and Traveller, the criteria based policy approach will also be used in this instance.

#### **Alternative**

- 8.34 There is no alternative policy approach as providing for the housing needs of specific groups including gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople is required by national policy.

## **Policy H8: Rural Workers Dwellings**

### **Permanent Rural Workers Dwellings**

Planning permission will be granted for new rural workers' dwellings as part of existing businesses where all of the following criteria are met:

- a) Evidence is provided to show that there is an essential functional need for a permanent dwelling;
- b) The need is related to a full-time worker who is primarily employed in a rural based business and a temporary rural workers dwelling has previously been granted or evidence is provided to justify why a temporary rural workers dwelling has not been required;
- c) The proposed dwelling is sensitively designed, landscaped and located to fit in with its surroundings and of a scale that reflects its functional role to support the rural business;
- d) The business has been established for at least 3 years, has been profitable for at least one of them, is financially viable and is likely to remain so in the future;
- e) The functional need cannot be met by another suitable and available dwelling;
- f) Evidence is provided to show the reuse, extension or conversion of an existing building on site has been considered; and
- g) The proposed development is not located in a high flood risk area.

### **Temporary Rural Workers Dwellings**

Where a new dwelling is essential to support a new business, temporary accommodation in the form of a caravan/mobile home will be supported for a period of up to three years where all the following information is provided:

- a) Evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the business;
- b) Demonstration that the business can sustain a full time worker;
- c) Evidence that the proposed business has been planned on a sound financial basis. The evidence should include a business plan of at least 3 years duration;
- d) Evidence to show that there is an essential functional need for a rural worker dwelling;
- e) The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling, reuse, extension or conversion on an existing building on site or any other existing accommodation in the local area; and
- f) The proposed temporary accommodation is not located in a high flood risk area.

If permission for temporary accommodation is granted, permission for a permanent dwelling is unlikely to be granted within 3 years. If after 3 years, a permanent dwelling is approved, the temporary dwelling must be removed from the site.

Conditions will be attached to all permissions granted for new rural workers dwellings (permanent or temporary) to remove permitted development rights



**and restrict the occupancy to that required for the rural business concerned or other agricultural/rural uses nearby.**

### **Existing Rural Workers Dwellings**

**Where a rural workers dwelling is no longer needed to support a rural business, applications to remove the occupancy restrictions will need to submit evidence demonstrating that an essential functional need no longer exists for the property and is unlikely to in the foreseeable future. The applicant will be expected to provide evidence demonstrating that:**

- a) The property has been continuously marketed for rent and sale for at least 12 months to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and advertised in that period at a price reflecting the occupancy condition**
- b) confirmation of a lack of interest from marketing efforts; and**
- c) The property has been offered both for sale and to rent on the same basis to all farmers, horticulturalists and other rural businesses where a dwelling may be justified in the locality (i.e. having holdings within a two mile radius of the dwelling).**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 8.35 The NPPF states that one of the few circumstances where a new dwelling within the countryside may be justified is where there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
- 8.36 While the Council's preference is for such workers to live in nearby settlements or suitable existing dwellings to avoid new and potentially intrusive development in the countryside, it acknowledges that there will be some instances where the nature and demands of certain rural businesses will make it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, their place of work. Such a need however must be essential to the successful operation of the rural business.
- 8.37 Given the restrictions on the delivery of new dwellings in the countryside, the scale and design of any proposals for rural workers' dwellings should reflect their countryside location and their function as housing for a rural worker. While many people work in rural areas e.g. in offices, schools, workshops, garages and garden centres, it is unlikely that they will have an essential need to live permanently at or near their place of work. Being employed in a rural location is not considered sufficient justification to qualify as a rural worker with an essential housing need.
- 8.38 Changes in the scale and character of agricultural and forestry businesses have the potential to affect the longer-term requirement for dwellings in the countryside particularly where these had an "agricultural worker occupancy" condition attached when planning permission was granted. In such cases, the Local Planning Authority recognises that it would fulfil no purpose to keep such dwellings vacant, or that existing occupiers should be obliged to remain in occupation simply by virtue of a planning condition that has outlived its usefulness.

8.39 Nevertheless, the Council will expect applications for the removal of an occupancy condition to demonstrate convincingly that there is no long-term need for an agricultural dwelling in the locality. Such dwellings could be used by other agricultural and rural workers seeking accommodation within the wider surrounding area, therefore it will need to be demonstrated to the Council that the dwelling tied to an occupancy condition has been effectively marketed to likely interested parties in the area concerned, over a period of time, and that no genuine interest has been shown regarding the purchase or rental of the dwelling for a rural worker with an essential need to live in the local community. The Council will make a judgement on the adequacy of the marketing exercise on a case-by-case basis.

**Alternative**

8.40 The alternative is to not include a policy on this subject matter. However, national policy only refers to rural workers dwellings at a very high level and does not provide any local context to when a rural workers dwelling will be supported or when an existing dwelling is no longer a need for a rural worker.

## 9. Economy

- 9.1 National Planning Policy requires significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. It requires planning policies to address potential barriers to investment and identify strategic sites for development which meet anticipated needs over the plan period. Policies are also required to support a prosperous rural economy. The NPPF requires planning policies to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities.
- 9.2 This chapter covers a range of policies to enable Colchester to meet economic opportunities and challenges to 2041 and beyond and contribute towards the creation of mixed, balanced and sustainable communities. Policies cover Protection of Employment Land, Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside, Agricultural Development and Diversification, Retail and Centres and land safeguarded for the potential expansion of Colchester Zoo. The overall employment need for Colchester for the plan period is set out in Policy ST6 in Chapter 3.
- 9.3 The policies in this chapter reflect local circumstances and are based on evidence gathered in the Employment Study (2024) and the Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study (November 2024).
- 9.4 The policies in this chapter will contribute to the themes of the vision of ‘Welcoming inclusive communities’ and ‘Healthy Vibrant and Diverse Places’ by delivering high value jobs for local people, protecting and maintaining the distinct character, identity and setting of Colchester city and supporting Colchester’s tourism role through the provision of additional high-quality facilities.

## **Policy E1: Protection of Employment**

Land and premises currently in employment use, and employment provision as defined on the policies maps and listed in policy ST6, will be safeguarded primarily for class E(g), B2 and B8 Use Classes where appropriate to provide, protect and enhance employment provision in a range of locations across the Colchester area to enable balanced job and housing growth. Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment or change of use for non-Class B or Class E(g) uses where:

- a) it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site concerned being used for Class B2, B8 or E(g) class purposes. Evidence of marketing of the site / premises for at least 12 months will need to be submitted with the planning application which demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Council, that genuine attempts to sell / let the site / premises for employment use and no alternative business / occupier has been found; and
- b) the supply, availability and variety of B or E(g) use class employment land is sufficient to meet identified needs for Colchester; and
- c) it can be demonstrated that the alternative use cannot be reasonably located elsewhere within the area it serves; and
- d) the proposal does not generate potential conflict with the existing proposed B or E(g) class uses / activities on the site; and
- e) the use will not give rise to unacceptable traffic generation, noise, smells or vehicle parking; and
- f) The proposal provides the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth and support the continued operation of existing employment uses within the economic area.

**Opportunities to enhance and renew more dated buildings within employment areas, will be supported when proposals are promoted for improvements to existing operations or for new operations where the use and scale is appropriate and they comply with other relevant policies in the plan.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

9.5 The NPPF requires significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

9.6 Evidence in the Colchester Employment Study (2024) recommends safeguarding existing suitable employment sites to ensure there is a ready supply of premises and that the vacant land and intensification opportunities can potentially be realised. The Employment Study recognises however that protecting employment land requires a

flexible approach that considers the merits of each individual site, and which use it is best suited for.

- 9.7 The changes to the Use Classes Order in 2020 replaced the former class B1 with a new commercial, business and service use class E. This combines a variety of uses into a single use class. Class B2 and class B8 remained unchanged. These changes, along with others to permitted development rights allow more flexibility between the uses. Article 4 directions may be appropriate where it is necessary to restrict permitted development to protect the loss of offices in key locations.
- 9.8 The purpose of this policy is to protect and enhance employment land and premises in Colchester. The loss of employment land could adversely affect the Council's ability to meet its identified employment needs. Employment uses for the purposes of this policy are defined as Use Classes E(g), B2, and B8. Proposals which are not Class E(g), B2 and B8 uses will need to be accompanied by evidence to demonstrate there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for those uses. The evidence required will depend on the scale of the proposal.
- 9.9 The Employment Study recommends that the Council support occupiers and landlords in addressing the retrofitting challenge to enable existing employment space to meet energy efficiency standards above those met by the existing stock.
- 9.10 This policy supports sustainable economic growth and balanced development by:
- Prioritising the retention of land and premises for employment purposes to meet current and future economic needs, ensuring a balanced approach to job creation and housing growth.
  - Promoting the renewal and improvement of older employment sites to support modern business needs and maximise their economic potential.
  - Allowing redevelopment or alternative uses of employment land where it is demonstrated that the site is no longer viable for employment purposes and there is no adverse impact on the supply, availability, or variety of employment land.
  - Ensuring that new or alternative uses of employment land do not conflict with existing or proposed employment uses, or cause adverse effects such as traffic congestion, noise, or environmental harm.
  - Facilitating economic development in a way that aligns with the needs of local communities and the overall goals of the Colchester area.
- 9.11 This policy aims to strike a balance between protecting vital employment land and accommodating necessary change, ensuring that Colchester's economic and community needs are met in a sustainable and dynamic way.

### **Alternative**

- 9.12 The alternative is to not include a policy to protect employment land. However, safeguarding sufficient and viable employment land is considered vital to supporting economic growth in Colchester. This is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy E2: Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside**

The Council will protect existing and proposed Employment Areas in rural Colchester that provide an economic function both on allocated sites shown on the policies maps and at other rural locations that provide a similar function.

Sites and premises currently used or allocated for employment purposes in rural parts of Colchester will be safeguarded for appropriate economic uses to ensure local residents have access to local job opportunities to reduce the need to travel. Proposals for alternative uses will be supported where they comply with other relevant policies in the plan.

Within allocated rural Employment Areas and on rural sites providing an economic function, the following uses are considered appropriate in principle:

- a) Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions- E(g)(i); Research and development of products or processes -E(g)(ii); Industrial processes - E(g)(iii), general industrial (B2), storage and distribution (B8);
- b) Repair and storage of vehicles and vehicle parts, including cars, boats and caravans; and
- c) Other employment-generating uses, such as those related to rural recreation and tourism, which meet local needs and/or promote rural enterprise.

The following additional considerations will also be taken into account where relevant:

### **(A) Conversion and re-use of existing rural buildings:**

Proposals for acceptable uses will only be supported where the building is capable of re-use without significant rebuilding, and the building is deemed to be desirable for retention. In the case of former agricultural or forestry buildings of recent construction (less than 10 years), it will also need to be demonstrated that the original need for the building was genuine and that it is no longer required for agricultural or forestry purposes.

### **(B) Extension of existing rural employment buildings:**

Proposals for extensions will be supported where they are demonstrated to be beneficial to the operation of an established business. All extensions shall be accommodated satisfactorily in terms of design, scale and appearance within the existing employment site boundary.

### **(C) Replacement rural employment buildings:**

Replacement buildings will only be supported where the existing development is visually intrusive or otherwise inappropriate in its context and a substantial improvement in the landscape and surroundings will be secured through replacement. New buildings should be of sympathetic design and not significantly increase the scale, height and built form of

the original building. There is a presumption that heritage assets will be retained rather than replaced.

**(D) New rural employment buildings:**

Proposals will be supported where they are of an acceptable scale and meet a local employment need and a business need has been adequately demonstrated. The applicant will need to submit evidence, with the planning application, which demonstrates that there are no appropriate existing buildings, or employment land available in the locality of site/area. Proposals must minimise negative environmental impacts and harmonise with the local character and surrounding countryside where they are being proposed.

**(E) Expansion of an existing business:**

Proposals to expand an existing employment use into the countryside will be supported where there is no space for the required use on the existing site, the need has been adequately demonstrated, and the proposals are essential to the operation of an established business on the site. Consideration must be given to the relocation of the business to available land within an allocated or established Employment Area with available suitable vacant land.

In all cases, any new development will be expected to have adequate landscape mitigation to compensate for any additional impact upon the surrounding countryside.

Proposals in close proximity to a habitats site must demonstrate through HRA screening that the scheme will not lead to likely significant effects to the integrity of the habitats site. Where this cannot be ruled out a full appropriate assessment will be required to be undertaken. Additionally, any planning application within 400 metres of a habitats site must provide mechanisms to prevent the introduction of invasive species.

## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.13 The NPPF requires that planning policies support a prosperous rural economy by enabling sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings.
- 9.14 The Employment Study (2024) recommends that the Council should support flexibility in the rural economy to respond to opportunities to re-use or adapt land and buildings no longer in productive agricultural use.
- 9.15 The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote employment in rural Colchester, ensuring their role in supporting the local economy and providing job opportunities for residents. By protecting existing and proposed employment sites, the policy aims to:

- Encourage sustainable economic activity by preserving land and premises designated for employment purposes in rural areas.
- Provide local job opportunities to rural residents, minimising the necessity for travel and contributing to a balanced, sustainable rural economy.
- Identify and support specific employment-generating activities including office functions, industrial processes, vehicle repair, and rural enterprise that are appropriate for rural contexts.
- Ensure that any new, converted, extended, or replaced buildings for employment use are designed and scaled to harmonise with the rural character, minimise environmental impact, and align with the principles of sustainability.
- Incorporate adequate safeguards to protect local landscapes, biodiversity, and heritage assets, ensuring that new developments enhance, rather than detract from, the rural environment.
- Support the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new rural employment buildings, provided they address demonstrated business needs, lack viable alternatives, and meet high environmental and design standards.

9.16 This policy emphasises the dual objectives of economic growth and environmental stewardship, creating a framework that supports rural enterprise while preserving Colchester's rural character and natural heritage.

#### **Alternative**

9.17 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on national policy. However, national policy only refers to supporting a prosperous rural economy at a high level and does not provide any local context to considerations that should be considered. Therefore, this is not considered a reasonable alternative.



### **Policy E3: Agricultural Development and Diversification**

The Council will support and encourage appropriate farm diversification proposals where they help support the rural economy, are compatible with the rural environment and help to sustain the existing agricultural enterprise without the need for subdivision of the holding or separate enterprises unrelated to the existing agricultural use.

All proposals must be accompanied by a satisfactory diversification plan according to the scale of proposals, which describes how it will assist in retaining the viability of the farm and how it links with any other short or long-term business plans for the farm.

Proposals for farm shops as part of a farm diversification scheme must identify the products produced on site or locally and demonstrate that the location of farm-based retailing is necessary to assure farm income where their needs cannot be met within a nearby settlement or district or local centre.

Proposals, that are likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of habitats sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or the Dedham Vale National Landscape will not be supported.

Proposals, apart from those for renewable energy generation, that have a materially negative impact or reduce the availability of Grade 1 or Grade 2 land for food growing use will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there is a justified need and a landscape strategy, which would compensate for the loss or harm, is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development

Proposals for farm diversification schemes will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

- a) Existing buildings are re-used wherever possible. Schemes involving the re-use of historic farm buildings shall maintain and enhance the historic environment; including the character of the built heritage; or
- b) The development is well-related to existing buildings if no suitable buildings are available for re-use; and
- c) The development is secondary to the main agricultural use of the farm; and
- d) The applicant can confirm in writing that the proposal will not be likely to require new dwellings within the rural area to support the enterprise either at the time of first submission or at any future date.

Where new buildings are proposed, the development should incorporate the removal of any redundant, under-used, unsightly or otherwise harmful buildings elsewhere within a site as part of the compensatory mitigation for the additional development being proposed.

In all cases, any new development will be expected to have adequate landscape mitigation to compensate for any additional impact upon the surrounding countryside in accordance with policy LC1.

**New agricultural buildings requiring planning permission will be responsive to their setting and guided to locations on the farm where any impacts are capable of mitigation.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.18 The NPPF requires that planning policies support a prosperous rural economy by enabling the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. The agricultural economy in Colchester is changing, as increasingly farmers are seeking to diversify in order to retain farming.
- 9.19 The Employment Study (2024) recommends that the Council should support flexibility in the rural economy to respond to opportunities to re-use or adapt land and buildings no longer in productive agricultural use. The Study acknowledges that the rural economy in Colchester could provide significant economic opportunities for local people but notes that policies to support economic opportunities should ensure the sustainability of the agricultural sector is not compromised.
- 9.20 This policy ensures that farm diversification supports the rural economy in a manner compatible with environmental preservation, agricultural sustainability, and the unique character of Colchester's rural landscapes.

#### **Alternative**

- 9.21 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on national policy. However, national policy only refers to supporting a prosperous rural economy at a high level and does not provide any local context to considerations that should be considered. Therefore, this is not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy E4: Retail and Centres**

### **Hierarchy of Centres**

The Council will continue to promote the role and function of its town, district and local centres to positively contribute towards their viability and vitality. In accordance with the NPPF, the hierarchy of centres in Colchester is defined below:

**Town Centre:** Colchester City Centre is at the top of the hierarchy, reflecting its role as the principal focus for shopping, services, culture, leisure and other commercial activity in Colchester.

**District Centres:** provide an important role principally serving the convenience-based needs of their local catchments.

- Highwoods
- Tollgate
- Turner Rise
- Tiptree
- West Mersea
- Wivenhoe

**Local Centres:** provide an essential role providing a range of small shops and services to meet the basic needs of local communities, serving a small catchment.

- Local centres defined on the Policies Map

### **Town Centres, District Centres and Primary Shopping Areas**

The Colchester Centre boundary is defined on the Policies Map and reflects the core city centre area defined in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan. A 'town centre first' approach will be adopted to ensure that larger scale development is focused on the city centre, helping to maintain its position at the top of the hierarchy. Policy CC1 requires development proposals within the City Centre to make a positive contribution to levels of footfall, activity and vibrancy and support the City Centres role and function as the cultural epicentre of Colchester.

The District Centres identified in the hierarchy, and as defined on the Policies Map, each have their own characteristics and functions serving the day-to-day needs of the local community as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas, but not to a comparable level with Colchester City Centre.

Primary Shopping Areas are defined and shown on the Policies Map for:

- Colchester City Centre
- Highwoods
- Tollgate
- Turner Rise

- Tiptree,
- West Mersea
- Wivenhoe

To ensure the vitality and viability of the centres identified in the hierarchy, these will be the preferred location for main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF). Retail and other town centre uses will be directed towards these centres, in line with the 'town centre first' approach to continue to strengthen the role of Colchester City Centre in accordance with the hierarchy. Within the defined Primary Shopping Area boundary, support will be given to proposals for retail and other main town centre uses, and commercial, business and service uses falling within Use Class E. A balance between retail and complimentary town centre uses will be sought where appropriate to secure the vitality and viability of the primary shopping areas. Proposals which make a positive contribution to footfall and levels of activity throughout the day will be supported.

### **Sequential Test**

Proposals for main town centre uses that are not within a defined centre and are not in accordance with this Plan, including proposals for a change or intensification of use, or variation of a planning condition, will need to demonstrate that a sequential approach has been undertaken to site selection as required by national policy.

Applicants should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale. Only when in-centre sites are not suitable, and/or available, should edge and then out of centre sites be considered.

In cases where the Council are satisfied that the sequential test has been met, proposals will be supported where they also comply with each of the requirements set out in criteria a - e below.

- a) Proposals for main town centre uses in or on the edge of centres are of a type, proportion and scale appropriate to the role and function of the centre and would not threaten the primacy of Colchester City Centre at the apex of the centre hierarchy, either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals; and
- b) Proposals for main town centre uses in or on the edge of centres are suitable to the town/district centre function and maintains or adds to its vitality and enhances the diversity of the centre without changing the provision of the centre within the overall hierarchy; and
- c) Proposals would not give rise to a detrimental effect, individually or cumulatively, on the character or amenity of the area through smell, litter, noise or traffic problems; and
- d) The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Colchester City Centre and/or any other defined centre either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals; and

- e) The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on committed and/or planned public or private investment in Colchester City Centre and/or any other defined centre either individually or cumulatively with other committed proposals.

### **Impact Assessment**

Proposals for retail and leisure development within edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations which are not in accordance with this plan will require an impact assessment if the development is over 280sqm (or 350sqm gross). Impact assessments should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the retail and/or leisure development proposed. The scope of the assessment should be agreed with the Council.

### **Local Centres**

Local Centres, identified on the Policies Map, will be protected to provide shops and community services and facilities.

Proposals for change of use within designated local centres will need to demonstrate that it will enhance the retail offer, leisure or service role in providing for the day-to-day needs of the area and local community and improve the centres' vitality and viability.

Proposals to expand a local centre will be considered favourably where it can be demonstrated that the use is small scale, proportionate to the role and function of such centres and will serve the basic needs of local communities. Proposals outside of local centres will be assessed in accordance with the sequential test. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that they will not adversely affect residential amenity, particularly in terms of car parking, noise and hours of operation. Proposals should take every opportunity to promote active and sustainable travel.

New strategic residential sites should incorporate local centres at accessible locations within the site where appropriate to provide for the needs of new communities.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.22 National policy, set out in the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play and should promote the long-term vitality and viability of centres. National policy, set out in the NPPF and PPG, provides advice on the hierarchy of centres.
- 9.23 The NPPF defines 'town centre' as the 'Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood

significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.’ Colchester City Centre is at the top of the centre hierarchy for Colchester, the reference to “town centre first” reflects the generic definition of “town centres” in the NPPF.

- 9.24 ‘Main town centre uses’ are defined in the NPPF as ‘Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).’
- 9.25 The NPPF states that planning policies should ‘...define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations.’ The extent of a centres primary shopping area determines whether a proposal should be considered in-centre, edge of centre or out of centre and is therefore key to the application of the sequential and impact tests set out in the NPPF. The purpose of this policy is to set the framework for supporting the role and function of centres in Colchester in providing services and facilities for the local communities. The Policies Map defines the extent of Colchester City Centre and the Primary Shopping Areas.
- 9.26 The Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study (2024) recommends defining Colchester City Centre at the apex of the hierarchy of centres, reflecting its role as the principal focus for shopping, services, culture, leisure and other commercial activity in Colchester. The Centres of Tiptree, West Mersea, Wivenhoe, Tollgate, Turner Rise and Highwoods are varied in their scale and character but they each have an important role principally serving the convenience based needs of their local catchments and are therefore defined as District Centres in the policy.
- 9.27 The policy supports a positive approach to the Centres growth, management and adaption. It sets out how proposals outside the town, district and local centres will be considered.

### **Alternative**

- 9.28 The alternative is not to include the policy and rely on national policy. However, the designation of the centre hierarchy and extent of centres is required by national policy. Therefore, relying on national policy is not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy E5: Colchester Zoo**

The Council recognises the importance of Colchester Zoo as a visitor attraction and as a contributor to the local economy. The Council will work in partnership with the Zoo to maximise the social and economic benefits associated with its operation and development while ensuring any development proposals have regard to the environmentally sensitive location.

The area shown on the policies map defined as the core zoo and expansion area will be safeguarded for potential further expansion of Colchester Zoo to provide additional facilities associated with the Zoo's vision for growth. Development for zoo purposes outside of the area defined will not be supported.

A comprehensive masterplanned approach to growth at the Zoo is required to ensure the Zoo's Vision for growth can be delivered with appropriate consideration and mitigation having regard to key considerations including:

- a) Impacts on the Scheduled Ancient Monument and archaeological resource within the site;
- b) Impacts on the landscape character and setting. Any application will need to demonstrate that the proposal will conserve and restore the wooded river valley landscape by managing and protecting ancient woodland, promoting natural regeneration to extend woodland areas where appropriate, and protecting and extending areas of lowland meadow on the valley floor;
- c) Impacts on biodiversity including Local Wildlife Sites;
- d) Impacts on the Highway network including the wider strategic and local network. A comprehensive transport assessment will be required and proposals will need to ensure any necessary highway improvements are secured and delivered before expansion takes place. Contributions towards improvements at the Maldon Road/Warren Lane junction will be required;
- e) Provision for safe access to the site via Maldon Road, existing public rights of way and accessibility by sustainable transport modes;
- f) Provision of a linked off-road cycle route should be provided linking the Zoo with Gosbecks Archaeological Park to facilitate sustainable modes of travel;
- g) Provision for an appropriate SuDS for managing surface water runoff within the overall design and layout of the site;
- h) The extent of any development ancillary to the zoo, such as additional retail, hotel, and food and drink outlets (defined as town centre uses) will need to be proportionate and related to the function of the zoo and assessed against potential cumulative impacts on the defined Centres where relevant thresholds are met (as defined in Policy E4).

All proposals for new development within the area defined on the policies map for Zoo expansion will need to be considered in the context of the Zoo's wider vision for growth to ensure possible cumulative impacts are appropriately considered and mitigated. Any proposals must comply with and not prejudice the delivery of the agreed masterplan. It will need to be demonstrated that any proposals, when considered both alone and in combination with other planned

development for the Zoo (whether such proposals currently benefit from planning consent or not), will not give rise to unacceptable impacts, including, but not necessarily limited to, the key considerations outlined above. Where possible adverse impacts are identified when considering any proposal, either alone or in combination with other planned development for the Zoo, adequate mitigation will need to be provided.

Any proposals will also take into account the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the developer will be required to submit a Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application.

Should the viability of minerals extraction be proven at any time, the Council has no in principle objections to minerals workings in the area defined for zoo expansion, subject to adequate consideration of relevant impacts. Any such proposals would, however, be required to satisfactorily evidence that any minerals workings will not prejudice the future expansion of the Zoo

Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

- 9.29 Colchester Zoo is an important visitor attraction and has operated successfully in its current location for over 50 years. The Council recognises that tourist attractions require constant updating and the policy is intended to safeguard land for the potential further expansion of the zoo, whilst having regard to its sensitive location. Any proposals for expansion of the zoo will be required to be undertaken through a Masterplan approach.
- 9.30 It is recognised that the zoo attracts customers from a large geographical area and many visitors travel by car. Over the years the zoo has attracted more visitors and there have been unintended consequences on the local road network, resulting in unacceptable congestion at certain times. The current Maldon Road/Warren Lane junction layout presents challenges for traffic flow, safety and accessibility which will deteriorate further if it is expected to accommodate additional vehicular movements and improvements will therefore be required to support any expansion plans at the zoo.



## **Alternative**

9.31 The alternative is not to have a specific policy for the Zoo but this is undesirable as it would not allow site specific requirements to be set out. The Policy provides clarity and certainty for all parties.

# 10. Community and social infrastructure

10.1 Community and Social Infrastructure is needed to support existing and new communities. Appropriate provision, retention and management of the right social and community infrastructure in the right place makes a significant contribution to the Health and Wellbeing of our communities and creating and maintaining healthy places. In this chapter policies cover a range of social and community infrastructure including:

- Community Facilities
- Sports Provision
- Education
- Health Provision
- Emergency Services
- Cultural / Civic Provision

10.2 The policies within the Plan are designed to align with the Council's overarching vision of creating healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities. This vision prioritises health and wellbeing, environmental protection, and inclusivity, ensuring that all proposals contribute positively to improving the quality of life for residents while safeguarding the city's unique natural and cultural assets.

10.3 The community and social infrastructure policies are designed to ensure the retention, enhancement, and provision of essential community infrastructure. The policies encompass a range of priorities, including the protection of existing community facilities, investment in education, and the development of sports, leisure, arts, and cultural opportunities. Recognising the importance of tourism and heritage, they also address the strategic management of caravan parks and other accommodations, which play a pivotal role in supporting the local economy. Together, these policies aim to foster a well-rounded, inclusive environment where residents and visitors alike can thrive.

## **Policy CS1: Retention of Community Facilities**

**The Council will seek the retention of all existing community and social infrastructure including facilities and services and allocations/proposals for such uses where they meet or will meet an identified local need.**

**Any proposal that would result in the loss of a site or building currently or last used for, or allocated for the provision of community / social infrastructure including community facilities, services, leisure or cultural activities that benefit the community, will only be supported in cases where the Council is satisfied that:**

- a) An alternative, equivalent community facility to meet local needs is, or will be, provided in an equally or more accessible location within a minimum walking distance of the locality (800m or the minimum distance based on that appropriate for the facility being provided as set out in the relevant evidence); or**
- b) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the Council that there is no longer a proven need for the community facility; and**
- c) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the Council based on written evidence as detailed in a-c below, submitted with the Planning Application, that it would not be economically viable to retain the site/building for the existing or an alternative community use; and (in all cases)**
- d) The community facility could not be provided or operated by either the current occupier or by any alternative occupier, and it has been marketed to the satisfaction of the Council in order to confirm that there is no interest for any community use and the site or building is genuinely redundant.**

**The evidence of the marketing requirements for (b) and (c) must provide;**

- a) evidence that it has been offered on the open market as a whole (parts having not been identified for separate sale) and at a realistic market value. This should be for a period of not less than six months by a competent agent;**
- b) Evidence should include sales literature, details of approaches, and details of offers; and**
- c) Evidence that the local community has been notified in writing of the intention to close the facility and has not, within a period of six months come forward with a realistic proposal to assume operation of the facility, including its proposals to finance and operate the facility.**

**Applicants proposing to redevelop or convert social and community facilities serving local communities will be expected to consult with those communities about the relative importance of the facilities which could be lost and submit evidence of that engagement with a planning application. This should also show evidence of consideration as to whether the community facility satisfactorily meets the needs of the local community, including any potential**

**for combining or rationalising facilities where appropriate. This must be informed by the most up to date relevant evidence.**

## **Policy CS2: Enhancement of and Provision for Community Facilities**

**The provision and enhancement of community facilities and services will be supported where they contribute to the quality of community life and the maintenance of cohesive and sustainable communities.**

**Where necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development, the Council will require developers of residential schemes to provide or contribute towards the provision / enhancement of community facilities including education, to meet the needs of new and expanded communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities. These will be secured through the use of planning conditions and by Section 106 contributions or CIL/equivalent infrastructure levy. Contributions may be pooled towards larger community infrastructure projects to cumulatively contribute towards provision on a larger scale where a need has been identified.**

**Where existing facilities can be enhanced to serve new development, the Council will work with developers and local partners to audit existing facilities and deliver any requirements for such facilities to deliver comprehensive provision of services to serve these extended communities.**

### **Policy CS3: Education Provision**

**Sites that are in private or public education use or have recently ceased to be used for education purposes will be protected for that use.**

**Where in whole or in part educational use of a site is demonstrated to be redundant (supported by appropriate evidence which confirms the facility / site is genuinely redundant) or proposals for alternative use are put forward, re-development of buildings and/or the grounds will be supported where the local community is and will remain adequately served by alternative provision and receipts from the sale of land will be invested in improved or expanded education facilities. Proposals should be considered in relation to the scale and quality of any replacement facility and its location and accessibility within the area.**

**Where the proposal involves a state funded school which is seeking to relocate into new buildings or sell assets to fund improved education this will be supported in principle subject to meeting other relevant requirements of this plan.**

**The Council will respond positively to appropriate and well-designed applications regarding the creation of new school and education facilities. As expressed in the NPPF, the Council will use a presumption in favour of the development of schools and educational uses. The Council will engage in pre-application discussions with promoters to develop a collaborative approach to suitable applications.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policies**

- 10.4 The purpose of these policies is to protect and enhance community facilities and services. Community facilities and services may include shops pubs, post offices, health care facilities, community centres, village halls, places of worship, cemeteries, schools and other educational establishments. This policy aims to safeguard, enhance, and promote the development of educational and community facilities to meet the evolving needs of local communities. It ensures that such facilities are prioritised, protected, and sustainably developed to support well-being, cohesion, and growth.
- 10.5 The retention of existing education facilities is an important objective of the Local Plan. The university, colleges, schools and early years provide education provision to the whole community and contribute significantly to the local economy.
- 10.6 The plan seeks to preserve these community assets and prevent unnecessary loss by supporting the retention of existing community facilities and infrastructure where they serve an identified local need whilst restricting the loss of facilities unless equivalent alternative provision is made in an accessible location, or evidence demonstrates that the facility is no longer needed or viable. Applicants would require robust evidence for proposing redevelopment or conversion of community facilities.

- 10.7 In accordance with the NPPF/PPG the plan also seeks to ensure that the impact of new development can be mitigated. Developers of residential schemes will be required to address the needs of expanding or new communities by contributing to or providing community facilities, including education, as part of their development plans.
- 10.8 New community facilities should be accessible by active and sustainable modes of transport. Public transport links should be close to the site and provide an adequate service. Any measures to reduce car dependency will be supported.
- 10.9 The policy seeks to secure funding for community infrastructure through planning conditions, Section 106 agreements, or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) mechanisms, including pooling contributions for larger-scale projects where needed.
- 10.10 Essex County Council (ECC), as the Education Authority, is responsible for planning early years and school places. This involves identifying the demand for educational places and assessing any surpluses or shortages through a 10-Year Plan for School Places, which currently spans 2020 to 2029. Decisions regarding whether the change of use or redevelopment of independent schools is surplus to educational needs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.11 The policy framework prioritises the preservation, development, and enhancement of educational and community facilities. By aligning with national policy and fostering collaboration, it supports sustainable growth, ensures transparency in decision-making, and maintains the well-being and cohesion of local communities.

### **Alternative**

- 10.12 The alternative is not to include the policies and rely on the NPPF.

## **Policy CS4: Sports Provision**

The Council will work with the Sports Delivery Group, Sports England, governing bodies and sports providers across the city to protect, enhance and deliver new and improved sports and leisure facilities to encourage active lifestyles and to increase participation in formal and informal recreation.

All outdoor sports facilities will be protected for sports use. Loss of outdoor sports facilities (including lapsed or disused facilities) will only be supported where at least one of the following criteria is met:

- a) a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Sport England and the Council that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport;
- b) The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity and quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use;
- c) The playing field or fields to be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new playing field site or sites of equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements;
- d) The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice of use, of the area of playing field.

All major residential development proposals must assess the need for new sports provision including grass and 3G football pitches and cricket squares on an individual basis and utilise the findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy to determine needs. Any need generated by the development will need to be provided by the applicant to the satisfaction of the Council and Sports England. Where a housing development is not of a size to justify on-site sports provision, contributions will be required to improve existing sites or towards new facilities within the locality.

Where a development is of a size to justify on-site sports provision, discussions should take place with the Council to determine what should be provided and how it should be managed and maintained. All new sports facilities and pitches must have community use agreements in place.



## **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

10.13 The Colchester Playing Pitch Strategy shows that all existing playing field and outdoor sport sites cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. As such, all provision requires protection or replacement until all identified shortfalls have been overcome. The purpose of the policy is to protect existing playing fields and sports sites and ensure new provision where it is required. There are a wide range of organisations currently delivering sport and leisure facilities within Colchester and the Sports Delivery Group has been established to ensure that the delivery of sports and leisure facilities is planned and delivered in a coherent way.

### **Alternative**

10.14 The alternative is not to include the policy.

## **Policy CS5: Tourism, Leisure, Arts, Culture and Heritage**

a) Development of new and extended visitor attractions, leisure, cultural and heritage facilities along with visitor accommodation (including hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation, self-catering accommodation, holiday lodges, static and touring caravans and camping sites) will be supported in suitable locations subject to meeting other policy requirements and minimising their impact on, and demonstrating how the development will make a positive contribution to neighbouring areas, respect the settings of heritage assets and provide biodiversity enhancements (in addition to biodiversity net gain) and environmental net gain where appropriate. Any new large scale visitor attractions should be in line with the spatial strategy.

b) Proposals for tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage facilities should be appropriate in scale and function to the surrounding area and existing uses in the immediate vicinity; be accessible by a choice of means of transport and promote active travel; and not cause significant harm to the amenity of people living and working nearby.

c) Proposals in the countryside should help to support existing communities and facilities. Proposals must be compatible with the landscape character of the surrounding area and avoid causing undue harm to the open nature of the countryside and local wildlife sites. Where accessibility is poor, proposals should be small scale and/or involve the change of use of existing buildings or small-scale extension to existing tourist facilities.

d) Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of habitats sites or the Dedham Vale National Landscape will not be supported.

e) In locations where residential use would be inappropriate, developments of visitor accommodation, where supported, will be limited by condition or legal agreement to holiday use only and/or certain periods of the year in order to prevent permanent or long-term occupation.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

10.15 Colchester has a rich historic environment and range of beautiful landscapes, which provides the basis for an important tourism sector which creates jobs and provides facilities, attractions and environments for visitors that also enhance the quality of life for local residents. The purpose of this policy is to provide support for the tourism sector whilst ensuring that proposals do not detract from the settings and features that make visitor destinations attractive and distinctive.

#### **Alternative**

10.16 The alternative is not to include the policy.

## **Policy CS6: Caravan Parks**

**Development proposals at caravan parks, including change of use, intensification of an existing use, or change in activities on site will only be supported where they meet all the following criteria:**

- a) Anglian Water Services confirm that there is adequate wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure capacity to serve the caravan park and avoid adverse impacts on water quality;**
- b) Help protect the integrity of habitats sites and minimise disturbance to designated breeding and wintering species. Any future extensions to caravan parks by the coast will require their own Habitat Regulations Assessment, including appropriate assessment where necessary, and must demonstrate how any avoidance or mitigation measures identified in the appropriate assessment will be delivered;**
- c) Minimise impact on the amenity of residents or businesses living or operating near the site;**
- d) Are supported with a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management and Flood Evacuation Plan. Proposals for caravan extensions in flood zone 3 will not generally be supported due to the increased risk to people and property from coastal flooding;**
- e) Are supported by measures to promote sustainable and active travel for leisure;**
- f) Any outdoor lighting proposed must follow dark sky lighting principles to ensure that lighting avoids light pollution, avoids any further reduction in tranquillity and protects landscape character and wildlife. Any lighting proposed should be justified, directed to where it is needed to avoid spill and comply with relevant standards and best practice from the Institute of Lighting Professionals and UK Dark Skies Partnership;**

**Permission will not be granted for visitor accommodation at the caravan parks to be used as permanent residences. Visitor accommodation will be limited by condition or legal agreement to holiday use only and/or certain periods of the year in order to prevent permanent residences.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

10.17 The purpose of the policy is to provide criteria that will be used to assess the suitability of any new or extensions to existing or intensification of caravan parks. Other policies will be relevant including the coastal areas, landscape and tourism policies.

10.18 There are numerous caravan parks on Mersea Island. The Landscape Character Assessment notes that two of the key characteristics and sensitivities and value of the Mersea Island Coastal Farmland landscape character area are: 'a rural landscape albeit the sense of tranquillity is diminished in the vicinity of settlement

and the holiday caravan parks'; and 'a strong sense of remoteness and wildness along the coastal edges, with wide open views across marshes and mudflats towards the surrounding estuaries and channels and the sound of wind and birds'. Guidance for Development Management includes reducing lighting impacts and avoiding any further reduction in tranquillity around West Mersea and the holiday caravan parks.

10.19 The introduction of further lighting has the potential to increase light pollution, reduce dark skies, further reduce tranquillity and adversely affect landscape character and wildlife. The policy criteria for lighting will ensure that the impacts of any further lighting are understood and that lighting schemes are designed to respect the tranquillity of the area. The policy requires compliance with dark sky lighting principles. These principles were developed by DarkSky International. The principles for outdoor lighting are: useful, use light only if it is needed; targeted, direct light so it falls only where it is needed; low level, light should be no brighter than necessary; controlled, use light only when it is needed using controls such as timers or motion detectors; and warm-coloured lights where possible to limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light.

#### **Alternative**

10.20 The alternative is to rely on other relevant policies, such as tourism, biodiversity and flood risk policies, and not include a caravan park policy.

# 11. Place and Connectivity

- 11.1 Places that are sustainable, inclusive, attractive and safe contribute to the health and wellbeing of our communities. High quality placemaking and design therefore plays an essential role in making places healthier. Good design helps reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change, promote healthier lifestyles and create safer and more accessible places for people to live in or use.
- 11.2 The quality of public realm plays a central role in creating well-connected, inclusive and safe places. The design of our neighbourhoods including in and around the home, public spaces and access to services, can influence physical activity levels, the food we eat, travel patterns, and health and wellbeing outcomes.
- 11.3 National planning policy requires planning policies to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lives. This chapter covers a range of policies to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. Policies cover Healthier Food Environments, Active and Sustainable Travel, Parking Standards, Development Density, Domestic Development, Design and Amenity, Residential Schemes on Greenfield Sites and Private Amenity Space.
- 11.4 The policies in this chapter will contribute towards all the themes of the vision by creating healthy, vibrant and diverse places that are sustainable, inclusive and well connected.

## **Policy PC1: Healthier Food Environments**

New development should safeguard and, where appropriate, create or enhance the role of allotments, orchards, community gardens and food markets to promote healthy lifestyles by providing access to healthy, fresh and locally produced food, providing food growing opportunities and for exercise and recreation. Allotment provision must be well located to residential areas and community spaces, with suitable access arrangements for all.

Some locations are more suited than others for fast food outlets and takeaways. All proposals for these uses need to consider to the following factors, and should reflect the relevant evidence, to inform the planning decision:

- a) Proposals for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets within 400m walking distance of the entrances/exits of a nursery, a primary school, a secondary school, a community college, playground or youth facilities and other places where children and young people frequent will be refused unless the location is within a designated centre; and
- b) Within designated centres, proposals for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets will be supported unless there is evidence that the impacts of clustering or cumulative impact resulting from an over concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour; and
- c) In all other areas, proposals for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets will require a Health Impact Assessment in order to appropriately consider the impacts of such uses on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour. Where impacts are shown as having an adverse impact as a result of the proposal, or cumulative impacts on communities / catchments they are intended to serve, proposals will be refused unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.

In cases applying to criteria b) and c), evidence will need to include indicators such as levels of obesity, areas of deprivation, or other health indications with a recognised link to healthy eating. Evidence demonstrating significant levels of adverse health impacts arising from air quality and pollution, and evidence of excessive anti-social behaviour in the immediate vicinity of the proposed use will also be relevant.

Where the Council are minded to approve proposals, conditions may be used to restrict the hours of operation where this is appropriate and supported by relevant evidence.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

11.5 Planning has an important role in shaping healthy communities. Allotments and community gardens provide physical, mental and social health benefits as well as reducing household food costs.

11.6 Hot food takeaways can provide a service to local people and add to the vitality and viability of centres but can also have negative impacts on health and wellbeing. The Council will seek to prevent a concentration of hot food takeaways, especially in

areas where children and young people tend to spend time or congregate, to avoid clustering of such uses and to avoid adverse impacts on existing communities.

- 11.7 National Policy requires that local planning authorities should refuse applications for hot food takeaways and fast-food outlets within walking distance of schools and other places where young children and young people congregate, unless the location is within a designated town centre; or in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social behaviour.

**Alternative**

- 11.8 The alternative is not to include a policy and rely on the retail policy. However national policy only provides a high level of detail in relation to local circumstances and the requirement for a Health Impact Assessment and this is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative.

## **Policy PC2: Active and Sustainable Travel**

All new development should be planned around a network of safe and accessible active travel routes, creating places that maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel for all and support healthy and active lifestyles.

Proposals for development should:

- a) Give priority to the movement of people walking and cycling; and
- b) Create safe, secure, convenient, well designed and attractive layouts that are permeable for active travel modes, prioritise desire lines and are inclusive and accessible for all; and
- c) Support the provision of infrastructure to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel that are inclusive and accessible to all; and
- d) Ensure that cycling infrastructure is designed having regard to the latest best practice (LTN 1/20 or subsequent updated guidance); and
- e) Protect and enhance existing active and sustainable travel infrastructure including mobility hubs; and
- f) Link the development to the surrounding walking, cycling and public transport networks, having regard to the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and improve connectivity to adjoining areas and key destinations; and
- g) Facilitate access to high quality public transport infrastructure; and
- h) Promote the use of car clubs and provide the required infrastructure where appropriate; and
- i) Incorporate infrastructure provision for charging electric vehicles in line with the latest guidance and standards, and make provision for charging electric bicycles; and
- j) Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and services; and
- k) Include school streets and zones around new education and childcare facilities.

All developments that generate significant amounts of movement will require a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment in line with thresholds set out in the latest Essex County Council guidance. The Transport Assessment or Statement must demonstrate how the development will encourage active and sustainable transport, demonstrating how opportunities for active and sustainable measures have been maximised, and mitigate traffic impacts in terms of capacity and safety.

All developments that generate significant amounts of movement will be required to produce a Travel Plan in line with thresholds and guidelines set out in Essex County Council published guidance. Any Travel Plan should include an Action Plan setting out specific actions, timelines and targets to be monitored and reviewed.

## **Justification**



## **Purpose of the policy**

- 11.9 Active and sustainable travel are key elements of sustainable development. Neighbourhoods with easy access to services by active modes of travel including walking and cycling can increase rates of physical activity. The purpose of this policy is to maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel within new development.
- 11.10 National planning policy requires the planning system to focus significant development on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.
- 11.11 The Colchester Active Travel SPD, adopted in December 2023, requires that the following elements are considered as part of any new development proposals: provision of good quality active travel infrastructure; improvements to existing infrastructure; and cycle parking. Guidance set out in the Active Travel SPD will also be taken into account in development proposals.
- 11.12 The NPPF states that planning policies should provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking. Connectivity via active and sustainable travel should be considered at the earliest stages of the design process.
- 11.13 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), as set out in the Governments Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. Essex County Council has prepared an LCWIP for Colchester, which identifies and prioritises cycling and walking improvements. This policy requires new development to link to the strategic LCWIP network and other existing walking and cycle routes where appropriate.

## **Alternatives**

11.14 The alternatives are to retain Policy DM21 from the Adopted Local Plan or to rely on national policy and guidance and not include a policy on active and sustainable travel. However, national policy and guidance does not provide detailed guidance on the provision of quality active travel infrastructure in new development.

### **Policy PC3: Parking Standards**

The Council will have regard to the parking standards set out in the Essex Planning Officers Association Parking Guidance (Parts 1 and 2) and any locally set parking guidance or subsequent updated guidance, when determining planning applications.

The amount of car parking should take account of the following factors:

- a) Levels of local accessibility.
- b) The size, type, tenure and location of any dwellings.
- c) The appropriate mix of parking types including opportunities for car sharing (e.g. unallocated, on-street, visitor, and car club parking).

A more flexible approach to the parking standards will only be considered if supported by evidence detailing the local circumstances that justify the approach.

Parking for staff, visitors and operational uses on non-residential development should be managed as part of a Travel Plan. Where opportunities arise, for example on mixed use sites, shared parking and car sharing will be encouraged as part of an agreed Travel Plan, to make efficient use of land and to support place making.

Secure cycle parking should be incorporated into all development proposals and should be accessible, convenient to use, well laid out and used exclusively for cycle parking. In the case of flats and shared accommodation, secure cycle parking should be incorporated into development proposals and located near the entrance to the building. All cycle parking should be designed in accordance with LTN 1/20 and the Essex Parking Guidance or subsequent updated guidance.

Applications for new or expanded car parking provision will be considered on an individual basis in relation to evidence and need. The existing car parking availability, current usage and, where appropriate, the existence of a Travel Plan and the current use of non-car modes, should all be demonstrated. New car parks should include electric charging points.

Where possible, large car parks, for example serving both city centres and out of town retail, leisure and business parks, should be stacked and/or underground to facilitate improved place making, provide town centre equality, and result in more compact forms of development which use less land and prioritise sustainable transport. Redevelopment of existing car parking will also be considered to make efficient use of land, improve townscape and support regeneration.

The use of Park and Ride and Rapid Transit System will be encouraged for trips in the city centre and other major destinations along the route of the service.

### **Justification**

### **Purpose of the policy**

- 11.15 Parking directly and indirectly impacts on the environment, communities and the economy. The lack of, or poor planning of, parking provision can have a negative impact on the public realm and the local highway network and can restrict the accessibility and mobility needs of people and businesses. Over provision and poor management can lead to the inefficient use of land and can also discourage greater use of more sustainable modes of transport. The purpose of the policy is to achieve an appropriate balance to help achieve a reduced reliance on the private car while making provision for travel by all modes in a way that does not prejudice the safety or the quality of new development.
- 11.16 The Essex Parking Guidance has been updated. The Guidance aims to support the assessment of planning applications by ensuring proposals include an appropriate level of cycle parking, car parking and electric vehicle parking provision, and that parking designs and arrangements operate effectively and safely. The updated parking standards reflect changes in national policy.
- 11.17 The revised Essex Parking Guidance recognises that the level of parking required for a development is dependant not only on the land use type, but also the level of connectivity to the site and it incorporates a zonal approach to parking standards recommending that a lower provision of vehicle parking may be appropriate in highly connected locations where there is good access to facilities via public transport, walking and cycling.
- 11.18 The Essex Parking Guidance is considered appropriate guidance to inform levels of parking and parking standards in Colchester. The Council however recognises that there needs to be flexibility to provide appropriate parking based on local circumstances.
- 11.19 The Active Travel SPD contains key principles to be considered for provision of cycle parking in new developments.

### **Alternative**

- 11.20 The alternative is to not have regard to the revised Essex Parking Guidance and set out detailed parking guidance within the Policy. Another option is to adopt the Essex Parking Standards and rely entirely on them.

## **Policy PC4: Development Density**

The Council will support development densities that make efficient use of land and relate to the specific opportunities and constraints of proposed development sites. The appropriateness of a development's density will be considered in the context of potential impacts on the residential amenity in the surrounding areas.

Proposals with development densities that encourage sustainable transport and help sustain local amenities will be supported.

In particular all residential development will need to be at an appropriate density and massing, having regard to:

- a) The character of the site and its immediate surroundings, as well as the wider locality, including where applicable the setting of designated heritage assets;
- b) The adequacy of the access and the local road network to accommodate the traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development (that has been supported by evidence) as well as the scope to enhance walking and cycling access to local amenities and public transport;
- c) The existing landscaping, trees and hedgerows on the site and the need for further landscaping;
- d) The provision of appropriate on-site amenities to serve the development in accordance with policy PC6 and any relevant adopted guidance including the provision of open space and sustainable drainage facilities where suitable;
- e) Ensuring any over provision of private space within a site is balanced with an overprovision of public space;
- f) Achieving higher net densities within sites with a view to prioritising the provision of publicly accessible spaces over the provision of private spaces. The provision of appropriate parking to serve the development in accordance with the relevant standards and policy PC3;
- g) An adequate standard of residential accommodation being provided for future occupants in accordance with policy PC5;
- h) An appropriate mix and type of housing as informed by the various housing policies;
- i) A strategy for BNG acknowledging that on site delivery may be difficult.

Developments with higher densities, that contrast with surrounding densities, will be supported where the wider development provides for public benefits in excess of standard policy requirements (e.g. >30% affordable housing, >10% POS, exemplar standard of design and placemaking). Benefits will need to outweigh any detrimental impacts arising from the increase in density and any resulting harm.

## **Justification**

## **Purpose of the policy**

- 11.21 The density of new developments can have significant implications for sustainability, local character, travel behaviour, the efficient use of land and residential amenity. In practice many factors will have a moderating effect on densities including the provision of on-site facilities such as the provision of public open space, vehicular access, sustainable drainage systems, vehicle parking and cycle storage facilities.
- 11.22 Where development is proposed in highly accessible locations, it is important to optimise capacity through the use of higher densities. For example, locations with good accessibility to services and sustainable transport, such as the City Centre, are more suited to higher density development than areas with poor accessibility to services and sustainable transport. Higher densities in accessible locations can accommodate more people and allow residents to easily access their needs by walking and cycling as well as providing a sufficient threshold of demand to support public transport provision which in turn supports the viability of local businesses, and other forms of key economic and social infrastructure.
- 11.23 However, it is important that the Council has a flexible approach to housing densities in order to reflect site-specific considerations such as local character and townscape because development that is poorly located or poorly designed can have adverse impacts on the quality of life of both existing and future residents. It is therefore vital that high density developments are well designed and have regard to the provision of adequate open spaces and a high-quality public realm whilst also enhancing heritage and biodiversity conservation.
- 11.24 Densities therefore may need to be moderated at less accessible locations and to reflect local character. The provision of open space, parking and a mix of housing will also have moderating effect on densities. The density of developments also needs to be informed by the provision of open space, parking, the character of the area, and the mix of housing.
- 11.25 In areas where there is a need for affordable homes, higher density development may be considered to increase the supply of housing. However, this must still be balanced with ensuring that the development is of high quality, with suitable infrastructure and amenities.
- 11.26 Comparing net and gross densities can highlight the efficiency of land use. Gross density helps address overall land-use balance in large-scale developments to ensure new developments align with broader spatial strategies. Net density focuses on maximising housing delivery on residential land.

## **Alternative**

- 11.27 The alternative is not to include the policy.

## **Policy PC5: Domestic Development**

### **Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings**

**Residential alterations, extensions and outbuildings will be permitted, provided the proposal meets all the following criteria:**

- a) The proposal is compatible with the scale, appearance and character of the original dwelling including taking into account the cumulative impact of such development;**
- b) The proposal does not result in the over-development of the site, and demonstrates design in scale with its surroundings, taking into account the footprint of the existing dwelling and the relationship to neighbouring site boundaries;**
- c) Proposals for extensions and outbuildings result in an appropriate composition, appearing well designed and retaining the legibility of the original dwelling in terms of design and setting;**
- d) The proposal will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties, including on privacy, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of light; and**
- e) The proposal will not result in adverse impact to the appearance of the street scene and character of the area.**

### **Residential annexes**

**Residential annexes will be supported where the need for additional space cannot be met within an existing dwelling or buildings suitable for conversion on the site in the first instance, provided the proposal meets all of the following criteria:**

- a) The proposal is physically attached or closely related to the main dwelling so that it cannot be subdivided from the main dwelling;**
- b) The proposal retains some form of demonstrable dependence on the main dwelling, such as shared access (including both vehicular access and doorways) and communal amenity spaces (the use of annexes as a separate dwelling will not be permitted and the desire for annexed occupants to be independent from existing residents will not be considered as adequate justification to allow self-contained dwellings in annexes);**
- c) The proposal respects and enhances both the character of the original dwelling and the context of the surrounding area through high quality design; and**
- d) The proposal does not result in the loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.**

### **Flat conversions**

**Proposals for the conversion and sub-division of existing residential premises into flats and other self-contained residential units will be considered having regard to the intensity of the use proposed and the sustainability of the location in respect of the proximity of the site to key services and public transport provision.**

**In addition, proposals for the conversion and sub-division of existing residential premises and, conversions of non-residential buildings where planning**

permission is required, will only be supported if they meet all the following criteria:

- a) The proposal does not result in detrimental effects to the appearance of the building by reason of unsympathetic additions or alterations, either in isolation or due to cumulative impact;
- b) Opportunities are taken for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions;
- c) Appropriate provision is made for parking, private amenity space, cycle storage and refuse storage facilities, in a visually acceptable manner;
- d) The internal layout minimises possible noise disturbance and/or overlooking to the immediate neighbours; and
- e) Overall, the proposal will not result in an unsatisfactory living environment for prospective occupiers.

### **Replacement dwellings in the countryside**

Replacement dwellings in the countryside within existing curtilages will be supported, provided the proposal meets the following criteria:

- a) It is on a one-for-one basis and the property to be demolished is a permanent lawful dwelling;
- b) It is of a high quality design that is appropriate to the rural area in scale and character and preserves or enhances access, siting and dwelling orientation;
- c) It is of a scale appropriate to the size of the existing plot;
- d) It provides high quality landscaping, where necessary, to integrate the new dwelling into the wider rural context with no greater adverse impacts than the existing dwelling;
- e) There is a presumption against the demolition of properties considered to be heritage assets and/or properties which positively contribute to the character of a rural conservation area. Note: there is a presumption in favour of retaining properties considered to be heritage assets and/or properties which positively contribute to the character of a rural conservation area; and
- f) The flood risk sequential test will have to be applied.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

11.28 Permitted Development Rights enable some small-scale changes to domestic properties without requiring planning permission. However, there are a number of scenarios where planning permission is still required including residential alternations, extension and annexes and flat conversions. Domestic development proposals represent a large number of planning applications received by the Council.

11.29 This policy sets out the criteria which are to be applied when assessing these planning applications, alongside other relevant policies in this Draft Local Plan.

- 11.30 The Council wishes to retain and promote a balanced mix of dwelling types and sizes across Colchester and avoid the loss of smaller and more affordable units. Therefore, extensions and annexes should always be compatible and subordinate to the original dwelling and not result in the over-development of residential plots.
- 11.31 The Council also wishes to ensure that dwellings do not incrementally grow by a succession of small extensions which cumulatively can alter the scale and character of the original dwelling. Therefore, the cumulative impact of proposals will be taken into account when determining applications for domestic alterations. For the purposes of this policy, the 'original' dwelling is defined as the building as it existed on 1st July 1948, or as it was originally built, if later than this date.
- 11.32 The Council recognises the important contribution flat conversions make to the provision of smaller and more affordable dwellings, particularly in urban areas where demand for such units are at their highest. However flat conversions will only be permitted where they are sympathetic to the original dwelling and make appropriate provision for amenity, storage and parking. Importantly flat conversions should not result in unsatisfactory living conditions for future residents.
- 11.33 This policy allows householders the freedom to develop their property in a manner they choose whilst ensuring that proposals do not adversely affect the original dwelling or the surrounding area or residential amenity.
- 11.34 In order to retain the availability of smaller and more affordable dwellings in the countryside, it will be appropriate to require replacement dwellings to be of an appropriate scale. Extensions to and replacement dwellings in the countryside should respect their rural setting and not result in any greater adverse impacts than the original dwelling.
- 11.35 In order to protect the countryside, proposals for extensions of domestic gardens into the open countryside will not be permitted if they result in an adverse impact on the surrounding countryside; result in the loss of good quality agricultural land; or set a precedent for unacceptable extensions to gardens at one or more neighbouring properties. Where planning permission is granted, applicants may be expected to relinquish their permitted development rights over the new area of garden.

### **Alternative**

- 11.36 The alternative is to rely on national policy and guidance and not include a policy on domestic development. However, national policy and guidance does not provide specific detail on the types of development proposals addressed in this policy and could result in less than satisfactory domestic developments across Colchester. The policy ensures where planning permission is required outside the scope of permitted development rights (which does not require planning permission) this is carried out in a way which respects local areas and protects the needs of existing and future residents and neighbours.



## **Policy PC6: Design and Amenity**

All development, including new build, extensions and alterations, must be designed to a high standard, positively respond to its context, achieve good standards of amenity, and demonstrate social, economic and environmental sustainability. Development proposals should reflect the local distinctiveness of Colchester and the immediate locality, contribute to placemaking, and support the transition to a low-carbon, inclusive and climate resilient future. Great weight will be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Poor design will be refused including that which fails to take the opportunity for good design or improving the local area.

The Council will use and/or promote a range of planning processes and tools to help achieve high quality design, including design codes. Ultimately, development proposals must demonstrate that they, and any ancillary activities associated with them, will:

- a) Respect and, wherever possible, enhance the character of the site, its context and surroundings in terms of its layout, architectural approach, height, scale, form, massing, density, proportions, materials, townscape and/or landscape qualities, and detailed design features. Wherever possible development should positively enhance and integrate the existing built environment and other, heritage, biodiversity, arboricultural and landscape assets, including trees, hedgerows and watercourses, removing problems or barriers as part of the overall development process;
- b) Promote visually attractive, functional, coherent and distinctive environments to establish a strong sense of place for living, working and visiting, supported by high quality architecture and landscaping;
- c) Promote and sustain an appropriate mix and density of uses which are well located and integrated, optimise the efficient use of land (including sharing of land), contribute to inclusive communities, and support retail centres and active and sustainable transport networks;
- d) Provide attractive, well connected and legible streets and public spaces, which prioritise walking, cycling, public transport and community vitality, whilst adequately integrating safe vehicle access and encouraging vibrant community activity;
- e) Safeguard public and residential amenity, particularly with regard to privacy, overlooking, security, noise and disturbance, pollution (including light and odour pollution), and access to daylight and sunlight;
- f) Create a safe, resilient and secure environment, which supports community cohesion, resilience and pride of place, whilst reducing vulnerability to neglect or crime;
- g) Provide functional, robust and adaptable designs, which contribute to the long-term quality of the area and, as appropriate, can facilitate alternative activities, alterations and can accommodate evolving community needs and possible future development;

- h) Minimise carbon emissions and energy use through sustainable design solutions such as orientation, massing, natural ventilation and tree planting. Incorporate sustainable drainage systems and biodiversity enhancements to contribute to climate resilience;
- i) Incorporate an accessible refuse and recycling storage area, external drying areas and any necessary infrastructure and services including utilities, recycling and waste facilities to meet current collection requirements, highways and parking. This should be sensitively integrated to promote successful placemaking;
- j) Demonstrate an appreciation of the views of those directly affected and explain the design response adopted. Proposals that can demonstrate this inclusive approach will be looked on more favourably;
- k) Integrate principles of Active Design to encourage physical activity through layout, design and access to open spaces by providing facilities for walking, cycling and outdoor recreation;
- l) Incorporate a network of green infrastructure, open space and landscape as part of the design of the development to reflect the importance of these networks to biodiversity, climate change mitigation, healthy living and creating beautiful places. For the purpose of this policy, ancillary activities associated with development will be considered to include vehicle movement;
- m) Consider flood risk at an early stage when deciding the layout and design of a site and take opportunities to make space for water;
- n) Where vehicular access is necessary, it shall be provided in a safe manner;
- o) Acceptable levels of daylight to all habitable rooms and no single aspect north-facing homes;
- p) Acceptable levels of privacy for rear-facing habitable rooms and sitting-out areas;
- q) All new build will be expected to comply with internal space standards demonstrated to be in accordance with the National Described Space Standards (DCLG, 2015) or any future replacement of this;
- r) All new applications for accommodation, with a top storey above 11m (about 4 storeys) in height, are required in accordance with Building Regulations to provide sprinkler systems. Consideration should also be given to the inclusion of sprinklers in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), care homes and sheltered accommodation.

Development proposals must demonstrate that they, and any ancillary activities associated with them will be in accordance with submitted Masterplans and Design Codes for strategic-scale developments, ensuring coordinated, high quality design outcomes. The Council may also implement Design Briefs and Design Codes for smaller developments.

### Justification

Purpose of the policy

11.37 Good design is integral to good planning and a fundamental requirement of the NPPF for achieving sustainable development. High quality design creates desirable, functional and efficient places, benefitting residents, businesses, and visitors while fostering improved amenities, inclusive communities, economic activity and reduced environmental impact. This is particularly critical for Colchester, where good design can generate local support for planned growth, complement the City's heritage assets and ensure regeneration activities leave a lasting placemaking legacy.

11.38 In Colchester, as elsewhere in the UK, there is a need to deliver high quality design, whilst still ensuring sustainable development is viable and deliverable. As a result, there requires clear and practical guidance that reflects best practices and provides flexibility to respond to site specific challenges and opportunities.

11.39 The promotion of design excellence in Colchester will be achieved through the adoption of effective processes, tools and guidance, including:

- Good design team selection, including ecologists and landscape architects, and encouraging early engagement through pre-application dialogue, planning performance agreements, consultation with key stakeholders and the community;
- Design guidance (e.g. masterplans, design codes, development briefs and neighbourhood plans) for priority growth and regeneration areas. These might be produced by the Council or other key stakeholders as appropriate;
- Site and context analysis required through analysis to identify opportunities and constraints, and the design response needed to enhance local character and address site specific needs;
- Alternative options to encourage the exploration of multiple design approaches to identify the best possible outcome;
- Independent Design Review for significant or complex proposals to provide objective, expert feedback on appropriate schemes;
- Supporting well designed self and community led development; and
- Ensuring applicants provide sufficient design material to allow accurate assessment of their proposals.

11.40 Requests by the Council for information in relation to applicant's design proposals will be reasonable and proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal to avoid unnecessary burdens on applicants. Some of the adopted neighbourhood plans include design policies. The NPPF highlights the importance of plan-led development through to detailing, especially on larger scale developments. This can be achieved by following the principles of Garden Cities (TCPA publication) or those of other potentially appropriate urban design models, such as urban, village and arcadian case studies outlined in the Essex Design Guide.

### **Alternative**

11.41 The alternative is to rely on strategic Placemaking policy and not include this design policy.



## **Policy PC7: Residential Schemes on Greenfield Sites**

Major residential developments on greenfield sites must comply with the following requirements:

- a) The primary public open space should be located centrally within the site in order to optimise access for future residents. This space should not be dominated by adjacent parking provision.
- b) Include informal areas of incidental public open space within the built up areas of the site, in addition to areas of more strategic or larger public open spaces. These areas should include both multifunctional green and blue infrastructure, which should consist of a network of integrated features.
- c) Areas of public open space should be fronted by units in order to ensure good levels of activity and natural surveillance. Similarly, units should front boundaries with existing adjacent roads and countryside edges to avoid domination of the streetscape and wider landscape views by rear boundary treatments. The layout should also avoid these sensitive edges being dominated by parking and vehicular movements.
- d) Built form should establish a site wide positive and coherent identity. This identity should respond to the sites context and reinforce or enhance the local vernacular. This can be achieved through a historic/traditional approach or through the adoption of a contemporary design solution; both options are valid, but whichever approach is adopted, the detailing must be of a high quality.
- e) The layout of the development and positioning of elements of landscape and built environment should create a series of distinct spaces and take the opportunity to create character areas within the development. Character areas can be established through the hierarchy of streets, the grain of the development, the spatial enclosure of the street, the definition between the public and private domain as well as through landscaping, materials, and the design of the buildings. Distinct and legible character areas within the site should contribute to an overall distinct sense of place for the wider site.
- f) A variety of vehicular parking treatments should be adopted across the site. Vehicular parking must be well-designed, landscaped and sensitively integrated into the built form so that it does not dominate the development or the street scene. Car parking areas should incorporate green infrastructure, including trees, to soften the visual impact of cars, help improve air quality and contribute to biodiversity enhancement. Car parking areas must be secure and overlooked.
- g) A clear and legible street hierarchy should be established and reinforced utilising materiality, landscaping and spatial treatments.
- h) Sites should support modal shift, incorporating prioritised routes and enhanced connectivity, both within and beyond the site for active

travel modes, including through filtered permeability for vehicular movements.

- i) **Back to back distances should comply with adopted guidance to ensure appropriate levels of amenity for existing and future occupants. Where reduced provision is proposed this should be weighed against subsequent placemaking enhancements within the wider scheme.**
- j) **Focal/nodal buildings should be included to enhance legibility and wayfinding within the site.**
- k) **Brick walls should be used to enclose boundaries that address public/semi-public realm, including parking courts.**
- l) **Design features should be applied consistently across all elevations of built environment, variations in materiality, fenestration of detailing should respond to the composition of the architecture.**
- m) **Meter housing and service intakes, and rainwater goods, should be located out of public view or should be purposefully designed into the treatment of the building's façade, so as to not cause detriment to the standard of design achieved.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

11.42 The purpose of this policy is to guide the design and layout of major residential developments on greenfield sites to ensure they are well-integrated, sustainable, and responsive to their context. It seeks to achieve the following:

- Ensure that public open spaces are centrally located and accessible, creating opportunities for recreation, social interaction, and community engagement while minimising disruption from parking and vehicular movement.
- Promote the incorporation of natural elements, such as planting and water features, into the urban fabric to enhance biodiversity, improve environmental quality, and support community well-being.
- Require buildings to front public spaces and boundaries to enhance safety, activity, and aesthetic integration with the surrounding environment.
- Encourage developments to establish a distinctive and high-quality identity that respects Colchester's architectural styles and vernacular, whether through traditional or contemporary design approaches.
- Foster a sense of place by creating distinct character areas within the site using thoughtful design elements, such as street hierarchy, landscaping, and architectural detailing, contributing to a unique and cohesive community identity.
- Promote well-integrated, landscaped parking areas that minimise visual impact, enhance air quality, and contribute to biodiversity while maintaining security and accessibility.
- Ensure developments feature clear street hierarchies and prioritise active travel routes, supporting modal shifts and enhanced connectivity within and beyond the site.

- Maintain appropriate separation distances and design layouts to balance amenity and placemaking considerations for current and future occupants.
- Include focal buildings and consistent architectural detailing to enhance legibility, orientation, and visual appeal across the site.
- Ensure functional elements like boundary treatments, meter housing, and rainwater goods are carefully integrated into the design to uphold overall quality and visual harmony.

11.43 Overall, this policy aims to ensure that new residential developments on greenfield sites are sustainable, attractive, and contribute positively to their surroundings and the wider community.

**Alternative**

11.44 The alternative is to rely on strategic Placemaking policy and not include this policy.

## **Policy PC8: Private Amenity Space**

All residential proposals must provide easy access to private amenity space and in the case of flats and maisonettes, private communal amenity space. The area of amenity space should be informed by the needs of residents and the accessibility of the location. Private amenity space must be designed to a high standard to optimise its use and meet the recreational needs and promote health and wellbeing of residents. The siting, orientation, size and layout must create a secure and usable space that functions well, which has an inviting appearance for residents and is appropriate to the surrounding context. Environmental factors that may affect its usability such as sunlight and shade, noise, pollution and drainage must be considered. All private amenity spaces must be designed to avoid significant overlooking.

The following standards shall apply:

For houses:

- a) One or two bedroom houses – a minimum of 50m<sup>2</sup>
- b) Three bedroom houses – a minimum of 60m<sup>2</sup>
- c) Four bedroom houses – a minimum of 100m<sup>2</sup>

For flats and maisonettes:

- d) A minimum of 25m<sup>2</sup> per flat provided communally (where balconies are provided the space provided may be taken off the communal requirement).

A larger amount of private amenity space may be required for small infill (including backland) schemes to reflect the character of the surrounding area. Proposals for infill development will not be permitted if they unacceptably reduce the level of existing private amenity space provision for existing dwellings.

For proposals in highly accessible and sustainable locations such as the city centre, where higher densities may be appropriate, reduced private amenity space for houses may be acceptable but a minimum of 25m<sup>2</sup> of useable private amenity space should be provided for every dwelling, either as gardens, balconies or roof gardens/terraces.

Communal private amenity space should have regard to the design criteria for private communal space included in the Essex Design Guide.

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of policy**

11.45 All residential development must provide new residents with access to private and/or communal amenity space, in addition to public open space requirements. At least 25m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling of private/communal open space will be sought for flats and maisonettes, whilst houses should provide larger private gardens. The National



Design Guide recognises that well-designed homes and buildings include the provision of good quality external environments, promoting health and wellbeing; and relate positively to the private, shared and public spaces around them, contributing to social interaction and inclusion.

11.46 The Essex Design Guide has replaced previous guidance which specified a range of minimum garden sizes with guidelines emphasises a focus on small, walled outside yards of around 25m<sup>2</sup>. However, the Council considers that private amenity space is essential for the creation of good quality homes that promote health and wellbeing and will continue to apply a policy of minimum standards for private amenity space. Private amenity space can add significantly to the quality of life of residents of all ages through the provision of access to daylight, fresh air, space to dry washing, socialise, play, enjoy wildlife and a place to grow plants/vegetables.

**Alternative**

11.47 The alternative is not to include standards for private amenity space in the policy.

## 12. Place Policies

- 12.1 The policies contained within this chapter set out allocations for different areas of the City. The allocations contain site specific requirements based on the evidence available to date including for infrastructure and mitigation and management of any site constraints. These will be required in addition to general requirements for infrastructure contained in Policy ST7 and other requirements as relevant. Policy ST7 highlights general issues concerning infrastructure provision and developer contributions that affect proposals across the City and are essential to ensuring that new development adequately mitigates its impact on the surrounding area and makes a positive contribution to its character and amenity
- 12.2 The Infrastructure Audit Delivery Plan (IADP) Stage 1 and 2 identifies the baseline for 37 types of infrastructure. The report produced by AECOM in mid-late 2024 set out in detail the baseline position for each infrastructure type. It also reviewed the high level spatial options consulted on by the Council as part of the Local Plan Issues and Options stage, in order to identify infrastructure implications of those options and inform the preferred options for the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan. The Stage 3 IADP report (January 2025) has assessed an initial draft emerging development trajectory which identified a shortlist of potential allocations for further testing based on the preferred spatial strategy following an assessment of sites through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and against other available evidence. This considers the demand which potential planned growth will generate for each infrastructure type, and how infrastructure will be provided to meet this demand to 2041. It should be noted that the emerging development trajectory represents a scenario for the potential delivery of housing and employment land in Colchester which was produced in November 2024 to allow infrastructure implications to be tested. Further consideration and refinement has informed the allocations identified in this Preferred Options Plan.
- 12.3 Work on the IADP will continue as part of the consultation and a full Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Stage 4 of the IADP will be prepared to support the Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan. This work will be used to further develop the Place policies to ensure that all policies include site specific infrastructure requirements where these are identified through the IADP.
- 12.4 This chapter is broadly ordered in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. At the top of the hierarchy is the urban area of Colchester, including the City Centre, followed by Growth and Opportunity areas which includes the Hythe and Magdalen Street within the Urban area and Marks Tey and TCBGC.
- 12.5 Each settlement has a short introduction preceding the allocation policy. The Settlements evidence provides further information on each of the settlements including those which are not proposed to take any growth. Proposed changes to the settlement boundaries are explained in the Stage two Settlements Evidence.
- 12.6 Housing allocations made within this Local Plan allocate approximate housing numbers to individual sites, this is to allow flexibility within the detailed design of sites to facilitate achieving both the efficient use of land and an optimal standard of placemaking. Increased densities will not be supported at the expense of good

placemaking, proposals should be mindful of Policy H1: Housing Mix and Policy PC7: Residential Schemes on Greenfield Sites in this regard. All large scale allocations will require a comprehensive masterplan to be prepared and agreed with the Council.

## **Colchester**

12.7 Within Colchester urban area and city centre, there is a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services and travel choices for future communities. This is the most sustainable location, and growth is directed here in the first instance.

### **Policy CC1 City Centre**

**The City Centre is defined by the boundary shown on the policies map and is the principal focus for retail, food and drink, cultural, leisure, community and other business uses in Colchester. As such the City Centre is at the top of the Centre Hierarchy as indicated in Policy E4. Development proposals within the City Centre will be supported where they make a positive contribution to levels of footfall, activity and vibrancy and support the City Centres role and function as the cultural epicentre of Colchester. Accordingly, proposals should be mindful to ensure high levels of equality and accessibility in contributing toward a provision that serves the wider population of Colchester in its entirety. All proposals must have regard to the City Centre Masterplan.**

**Within the City Centre, proposed uses should contribute toward creating a diverse mix of uses that support the vitality and viability of the centre. Proposed uses must provide active street frontages and ground floor uses should primarily fall within Use Class E (as defined by the Use Classes Order).**

**Proposals which complement the role and function of the City Centre will also be supported, where the proposed use would increase footfall and encourage visitors to enjoy the City Centre for longer by facilitating multiple user events/activities within the centre per visit. These include, (but are not limited to): residential, leisure and cultural uses, creche, day nursery, medical and health services, sport and recreation provision, open space, and offices, as well as retail and food and drink uses. Proposals that retain and enhance existing or deliver new elements of green infrastructure that provide benefits in terms of active travel, climate change resilience and/or habitat connectivity will be supported.**

**Within the Primary Shopping Area, the majority of street frontage should be dedicated to active retail frontages. Non-retail uses will be supported within the Primary Shopping Area where the proposed use will provide a service directly compatible with the function of the Primary Shopping Area and help to secure its long-term vitality and viability. Non-retail uses will not be supported where an over-concentration of said uses would detract from the established retail character in the locality, and such impacts should be considered accumulatively.**

**The role and benefit of upper floors to premises in the City Centre in providing residential uses is recognised, as is the role that residential development can play in the vitality of centres. As a result, in addition to the identified residential redevelopment sites allocated within the City Centre, proposals for residential development within the City Centre will be supported where they complement**

**the mix of uses in the locality. Higher densities should be promoted and will be supported within the City Centre, where it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts satisfactorily mitigated and can be outweighed by substantive public benefits. Residential uses should primarily be accommodated on upper floors and will not be supported on ground floor street frontages within the Primary Shopping Area.**

**Development proposals within the City Centre will be required to deliver the highest standard of design and placemaking, given the cultural significance of the City Centre and the emphasis this places on its streetscapes and public spaces. Proposals should secure improved streetscapes via minimising street clutter; use of high-quality materials; well-designed street furniture; public art and interpretation; retention of important spaces and key views; enhancement of street frontages; and use of sympathetic shopfronts and signage (in accordance with adopted guidance). Development proposals will need to not only protect and enhance the character of the conservation area, listed buildings, heritage assets and their setting including where appropriate the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Town Walls), but also must protect the City Centre's cultural significance, along with the distinct positive elements of its skyline.**

**In the longer term, as the catchment area population increases and new development proposals emerge, there may be additional demand for commercial leisure facilities, in which case any such provision should be directed to the 'town centres first' in accordance with the sequential approach to strengthen their diversity of uses and overall vitality.**

## **Policy PP1: Britannia Car Park, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Proposals must have regard to the Britannia Yard Design Framework in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD;
- c) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- d) Green infrastructure to support active travel and habitat connectivity in the urban area;
- e) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. It must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the City Centre Conservation Area and the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two conservation areas, 6 grade II listed buildings and a number of scheduled monuments including St Botolphs Priory as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- f) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan recommendations for Critical Drainage Area COL 03 (Abbey Gate);
- g) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Policy PP2: Vineyard Gate, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Proposals must have regard to the Vineyard Gate Design Framework in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD;
- c) Safe and suitable site access to the required highway design standards and vehicle access to be off Osborne Street and Stanwell Street to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- d) Provide pedestrian connections directly to / from Lion Walk;
- e) Green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area;
- f) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Town Walls). It must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the town centre conservation area and the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes five scheduled Monuments and 98 listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- g) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

### **Policy PP3: St Runwalds Street Car Park, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 40 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Proposals must have regard to the Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD;**
- c) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- d) **Green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area;**
- e) **Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the town centre conservation area and the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site sits within the Town Wall (Scheduled monument) with a huge number of Designated heritage assets surrounding the site as informed by the Stage 1 HIA.**
- f) **Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.**
- g) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- h) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) **Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) **Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) **Reduction in the demand for potable water.**



#### **Policy PP4: Braiswick, Colchester**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 30 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be via the adjoining site with planning permission (part of the former overall allocation) to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian connection to existing footway including via the adjoining site with planning permission (part of the former overall allocation);**
- d) Include links for active travel connecting with Bakers Lane;**
- e) Onsite biodiversity mitigation and BNG measures should focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of existing grassland and scrub;**
- f) Development will need to protect and enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). There are no Designated heritage assets within or close to the allocated site as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**
- g) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.**
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP5: Land at Chesterwell, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Onsite BNG measures should be based around watercourse gain requirements. The previous line of the watercourse onsite could be restored. Consideration should be given to creating higher distinctiveness grassland in the north of the site.
- d) For the retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site;
- e) Improved walking and cycle routes to surrounding development and the railway station, utilising and connecting to the Public Right of Way network where possible;
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Grade II listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.
- g) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighborhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP6: Land at Colchester Station, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 250 new dwellings as part of a mixed-use scheme incorporating a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Commercial floorspace to serve commuters and the surrounding community;
- c) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- d) Priority route for active travel through the site from east to west linking with existing active travel routes;
- e) Priority interchange facilities and shared mobility hub to support active travel modes;
- f) Enhancements to the station as a transport hub and the associated sense of arrival and enhanced public realm including considering the context and relationship of the built form to the wider landscape through townscape analysis;
- g) Consolidated parking provision for the station with any reduction in parking capacity to be supported by evidence;
- h) Servicing needs to avoid conflicts between pedestrian and car borne station users;
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets in close proximity the allocated site includes a Conservation Area, one Grade II Listed Building and one Scheduled Monument as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- j) Solutions to address the risk of surface water and groundwater flooding across the entire site;
- k) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option. Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP7: Land off Bakers Lane, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian connection to an existing footway within close proximity to the site and ensure connectivity with existing Public Rights of Way;
- d) Onsite biodiversity mitigation and BNG measures should focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of existing grassland and scrub. Habitat creation measures should be maximised with regard to the adjacent strategic biodiversity area as defined on the policies map;
- e) Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained. Retain and create buffers around Co94 Lexden Dyke LoWS and Priority habitat. Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering and expanding the LoWS and woodland habitat with new planting including structured edge habitat;
- f) Incorporate appropriate screening for the protection of landscape character;
- g) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat or grassland habitats to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- h) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. It must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site sits partially within a Scheduled Monument and significant buffer will be required. Other Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- i) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- l) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Northern Gateway**

The area known as Northern Gateway includes the recent development of the Colchester Sports Park and the leisure uses off Junction 28 of the A12.

The remaining areas of land which are part of Northern Gateway which are undeveloped are safeguarded for future development opportunities covered by Policy OA4 for a mix of uses including residential uses, open space and other commercial uses.

## **Policy OA4 Northern Gateway**

The area shown on the policies map comprising the former Rugby club and surrounding land will be safeguarded for the purposes identified below:

- a) Provision of approximately 650 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Provision for employment on land north of Axial Way as shown on the policies map allocated for employment, primarily for office use within E class;
- c) Open space provision as identified on the policies map;
- d) Provision for a range of other uses including but not limited to, housing for care, commercial, health care provision, energy infrastructure, employment generating uses and recreation / community provision;
- e) Provision for a new local centre to serve the new and existing local community, this may include provision of retail, commercial and community facilities at an appropriate scale, relevant to the role and function of a local centre and the communities it is intended to serve. Any retail / leisure uses within the local centre will be subject to the requirements of Policy E4 in respect of the sequential test and for proposals above 350sqm gross floorspace a retail impact assessment will also be required;
- f) Provision of a safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards via Axial Way to be agreed with the Highway Authority;
- g) Proposals within the area defined on the policies map as OA4 will also need to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity through green infrastructure and sustainable travel links. In particular opportunities to maximise the potential of the Rapid Transit System, the Park and Ride facility and other local links, including the Colchester Orbital;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;

- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- l) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.**

**Land North of Axial Way, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. The land will be safeguarded for employment uses, primarily for office use within E class.**

**Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters.**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:**

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the potential of the Rapid Transit System, the Park and Ride facility and other sustainable transport links;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity.**

**All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**



## **Policy PEP1 Colchester Business Park**

Land north of The Crescent, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provides:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development will need to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- d) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- e) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- f) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- g) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters.

All development Proposals within Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Area will also be determined against the policies in the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review where relevant (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP8: Land at Lakelands Crescent, Colchester**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 5 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards to be off Magpie Close, and agreed with the Highway Authority;**
- c) Evidence that development adequately safeguards Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site;**
- d) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Grade II listed building informed by the stage 1 HIA.**
- e) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.**
- f) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- g) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDS (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

### **Policy PEP3 Land South of Tollgate West**

Land south of Tollgate West, as shown on the policies map, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1.

#### **Justification**

##### **Purpose of the policy**

- 12.8 Planning permission for mixed use development was approved in 2023 which includes outline permission on part of the planning application site, and full planning permission for the erection of new buildings to accommodate flexible use classes E, B2, B8 and/or uses to allow for dark kitchen, laundrette, drinking establishments, take-aways &/or data centre on part of the planning application site which is the land safeguarded in Policy PEP3.

### **Policy PEP4 Maldon Road**

Land West of the Colchester Recycling Centre, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses and where appropriate opportunities for intensification of employment uses, will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provides:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their setting). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Scheduled Monuments and three Grade II Listed buildings, as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDS (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- j) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters given proximity to Shrub End Recycling Centre for Household Waste.**

## **Policy PP9: North-East Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) A predominantly residential development including community infrastructure, strategic open space and approximately 2,000 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provision of active and sustainable travel and passenger transport;
- d) Provision of a new local centre to serve the new and existing local community, this may include provision of retail, commercial and community facilities at an appropriate scale, relevant to the role and function of a local centre and the communities it is intended to serve.
- e) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include at least one area of strategic open space and multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space.
- f) As a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised with regard to the Salary Brook strategic biodiversity area as defined on the policies map. Onsite BNG measures should focus on woodland creation to expand and buffer the SSSI, enhanced connectivity through creation of a green corridor between designated sites, buffers to Welsh Wood and Wall's Wood LoWS, gain in watercourse units, and delivery of a range of habitat creation measures including acid grassland;
- g) Biodiversity mitigation measures must include a buffer to Bullock Wood SSSI, the size of the buffer must be informed by a survey. The watercourse within the site must be protected and buffered. Opportunities should be taken to secure improved management to the SSSI to include protection from recreational disturbance, and connections between the SSSI and Welsh Wood and Wall's Wood LoWS;
- h) Protection of water quality within Salary Brook water course and the conservation and enhancement of its biodiversity value;
- i) Adequate protection of the Ancient Woodland and retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site;
- j) Tree screening, muted colours and non-reflective surfaces at the edge of the site to help provide mitigation and integration within the landscape;
- k) An active travel plan to be agreed with the Council which ensures site wide active travel connectivity including links beyond the site;
- l) Connectivity with existing Public Rights of Way including connection and enhancement to the Colchester Orbital and connections between the areas of woodland within and adjacent to the site;

- m) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes four Grade II Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA;
- n) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. A Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development;
- o) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- p) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- q) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- r) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (to include education provision (2.1ha site for Primary school and Early Years), highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
- s) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers, it should incorporate engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary, the masterplan shall be supported by parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.

## **Policy PP10: Land South of Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 875 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards via the adjoining development to be agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**  
**Provision of a new local centre to serve the new and existing local community, this may include provision of retail, commercial and community facilities at an appropriate scale, relevant to the role and function of a local centre and the communities it is intended to serve. The location of the centre should be informed by masterplanning and should recognise the need for a community centre in Berechurch;**
- c) **The development shall incorporate off road walking and cycling routes to enable connections to Gosbecks and Friday Woods and the existing Public Rights of Way network;**
- d) **Onsite BNG measures should focus on improving east to west connectivity between Gosbecks to the west and Friday Woods to the east, which are strategic priority areas for biodiversity, and have regard to the adjacent strategic biodiversity area as defined on the policies map;**
- e) **Measures to mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance to the Roman River Valley SSSI;**
- f) **Enhancement of the quality and value of Camulodunum Way open space;**
- g) **Protection of existing tree belts and hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape;**
- h) **Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes a Scheduled Monument as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;**
- i) **Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. A Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development;**
- j) **Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;**
- k) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- l) **A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**

- i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
- n) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers and through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.



## **Policy PP11: Europit Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 40 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and Colchester Town Station and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site include two conservation areas, five listed buildings and three scheduled monuments as per the Stage 1 HIA;
- g) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03 - Abbey Gate;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Policy PP12: Land at Robertson Van Hire Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 6 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Conservation Areas, six Grade II listed buildings and a scheduled monument informed by the Stage 1 HIA;
- e) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03 - Abbey Gate.
- f) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Policy PP13: 146 Magdalen Street Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes a Conservation Area and four Grade II listed buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- e) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 03 - Abbey Gate;
- f) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Policy PP14: Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 200 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Retention of wooded areas within the site;
- g) The developments should connect to PROW Colchester 144 and contributions may be sought to upgrade existing walking and cycling routes in the area;
- h) Contributions towards enhancement of the quality and value of Old Heath Recreation Ground;
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Grade II Listed Building and is in the landscape setting of Hythe Conservation Area as informed by the HIA;
- j) Residential development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within flood zones 2 and 3;
- k) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Areas CDA 013 Hythe Quay and CDA 02 The Hythe;
- l) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- m) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- n) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- o) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

## **Policy PP15: Hawkins Road, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Development must contribute to the restoration of the riverside footpath to deliver sufficient public realm enhancements appropriate to the local context, maximising the potential of the riverside location and improving the environment, through biodiversity improvements and the protection of water quality, increasing connectivity and providing convenient public access for pedestrians and cyclists;
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes ten Grade II Listed Buildings and is adjacent to a Conservation Area as per the HIA;
- h) No residential development at ground floor level within flood zone 3;
- i) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area CDA 08 - Parsons Heath.
- j) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- k) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Policy PP16: Coal Yard Site, Colchester**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and agreed with the Highway Authority. It will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety and that a safe and suitable site access could be provided off Hythe Station Road;
- c) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the City Centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- d) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- e) A compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes multiple Grade II Listed Buildings within a Conservation Area, with the site adjacent to the Conservation Area as per the Stage 1 HIA;
- g) Residential development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within flood zones 2 and 3;
- h) Contributions towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Recommendations for Critical Drainage Area 08 Parsons Heath;
- i) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

## **Growth and Opportunity Areas**

### **Hythe Opportunity Areas**

- 12.9 The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land. There has been change in this area over the last few years, through expansion of the University of Essex and student accommodation. The area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area.
- 12.10 There is good access to Hythe Station and the Hythe is located close to the University of Essex and City Centre but is constrained by flooding due to its proximity to the River Colne.
- 12.11 A number of sites are allocated for residential development in this area (see policies PP14, PP15 and PP16). However, there are additional opportunities at the Hythe, through wider regeneration.
- 12.12 Regeneration will involve partnership working with public sector agencies, the local community and other key stakeholders including Community Land Trusts and the Hythe Task and Finish Group (responding to flooding issues in the area).



## **Policy OA1: King Edward Quay Opportunity Area**

Development will be encouraged and supported on land identified on the policies map for approximately 200 homes, where it contributes to achieving the following objectives:

- a) Comprehensive approach to regeneration to respond to constraints such as flood risk and land contamination;
- b) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- c) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- d) Softening of the environment around the electricity substation to minimise its intrusive impact on the surrounding area;
- e) Enhance provision of green infrastructure to maximise potential opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation, benefit nature conservation and landscape, enhance connectivity and establish new areas of open space for public enjoyment including an urban park to serve the community;
- f) Respond positively to the setting of the nearby Distillery Pond Conservation Area;
- g) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and recommendations in the Surface Water Management Plan for Critical Drainage Areas 01 (Old Heath) and 02 (The Hythe);
- h) Proposals should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment and explore opportunities for river restoration, enhancement and provision of flood storage areas;
- i) Situate proposals for residential development away from land which is contaminated. Where necessary mitigation measures will be required to be agreed with the Council;
- j) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- k) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- m) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters given proximity to Hythe WWTW and Haven Road Recycling Centre;
- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

## **Policy OA2: Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area**

Development will be encouraged and supported on land identified on the policies map of approximately 150 homes, where it contributes to achieving the following objectives:

- a) Comprehensive approach to regeneration to respond to constraints such as flood risk and land contamination;
- b) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- c) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- d) Ensure new developments are responsive to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the Hythe Conservation Area designation through the reuse of heritage assets. Designated heritage assets in the area include Hythe Conservation Area, and ten Grade II Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA;
- e) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN9 and recommendations in the Surface Water Management Plan for Critical Drainage Area 08 (Parsons Heath);
- f) Proposals should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment and explore opportunities for river restoration, enhancement and provision of flood storage areas;
- g) Situate proposals for residential development away from land which is contaminated. Where necessary mitigation measures will be required to be agreed with the Council;
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

### **Magdalen Street – Opportunity Area**

- 12.13 Magdalen Street is a key gateway to Colchester City Centre. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. The area has changed in recent years through the development of student accommodation and Aldi.
- 12.14 The area is located close to Colchester Town Station and future development is planned as a part of the Transforming the City Centre project, funded by the Town Deal and Levelling Up Funds. This includes improvements to the St Botolph junction to modernise the area creating a better balance between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and improve the public space.

### **Policy OA3: Magdalen Street Opportunity Area**

Development will be encouraged and supported on land identified on the policies map for mixed-use proposals including approximately 100 homes, where it contributes to achieving the following objectives:

- a) A comprehensive approach to regeneration in accordance with the City Centre Masterplan (adopted January 2024) and Magdalen Street Development Brief (adopted February 2014);
- b) Development at densities appropriate to an urban area;
- c) Provision of parking appropriate to a City Centre location;
- d) Retention of existing businesses where possible or consider relocation where necessary;
- e) Provide for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity;
- f) Provide pedestrian and cycle routes and connections to link to the City Centre and wider networks;
- g) Ensure new developments are responsive to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the New Town Conservation Area designation through the reuse of heritage assets;
- h) Contribute towards flood risk solutions, in accordance with Policy EN8 and recommendations in the Surface Water Management Plan for Critical Drainage Area 03 (Abbey Gate);
- i) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- l) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).

## **University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway**

- 12.15 The Council recognises the value of the University of Essex and the Knowledge Gateway to Colchester City's economy and the vitality and viability of the city centre and will work in partnership to maximise the economic and social benefits associated with the University and Knowledge Gateway.

### **Policy PEP2 Knowledge Gateway**

The area shown on the policies map comprising the Knowledge Gateway will be safeguarded for employment purposes in accordance with Policy E1 to allow for provision of a range of additional jobs and to accommodate expansion of the existing research and technology uses.

Within this area the Council will continue to support the growth and retention of the Research Park, and where appropriate, opportunities for intensification of employment uses. All land and premises within this area will be safeguarded for employment uses, primarily for office use within E class where appropriate and non-B class employment generating uses of a scale and type compatible with the Research Park. Encouragement will also be given to uses which can be shown to be directly linked to the development of research associated with the University of Essex and to the provision of business incubator units. Proposals for uses which are not for office use within E class or where it cannot be demonstrated that they are linked to the Research Park will only be supported where they:

- a) Are ancillary to the existing employment uses on the site and are intended to serve the primary function of the site as an employment area and research park;
- b) Provide the opportunity to maximise the sites potential for economic growth;
- c) Support the continued operation of existing employment uses within the employment area and in particular its focus for research and technology contributing towards the delivery of the overall vision;
- d) Do not generate potential conflict with the existing proposed E class uses and activities on the site.

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses should provide:

- e) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the Garden Community, University, City Centre and Hythe Station and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- f) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity.

- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Grade II, one Grade II\* Listed Buildings, one Scheduled Monument and One Registered Park and Garden as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Consideration of how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, which could be through the provision of green infrastructure;**
- i) Development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within flood zones 2 and 3.**

## **Policy UE1 University of Essex**

The area shown on the policies map is designated for University uses adjoining the Knowledge Gateway Employment Area and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. Within this area, (in addition to opportunities provided through the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD and stated in policy ST9), development will be supported which enables significant expansion of the University of Essex as reflected in its current Strategic Plan 2019-28. Policy PEP2 and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD seek to safeguard the retention and expansion of the Knowledge Gateway to allow for provision of a range for additional jobs and to accommodate expansion of the existing research and technology uses which build on the benefits of the University.

There will be a need for a comprehensive approach to development in conjunction with the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community proposed to the east of Colchester, working in partnership with key stakeholders including the University.

Proposals for the expansion of the University will be required to provide good public transport, pedestrian and cycle links ensuring good connectivity to and from the City Centre, Hythe railway station and surrounding area, the Knowledge Gateway and the proposed Garden Community to the East of Colchester including contributing to the Colchester Orbital route as shown on the policies map.

Proposals will need to pay special regard to the preservation and enhancement of the Grade II listed Wivenhoe House and its Registered Park and Garden, including the wider setting of these heritage assets. Consideration should be given to how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, which could be through the provision of green infrastructure.

Development will be expected to contribute to the cost of direct infrastructure improvements as required, supported by up-to-date evidence in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) or subsequent evidence which will be secured to an appropriate level by way of legal agreement.

## **Marks Tey Growth Area**

- 12.16 Marks Tey is located at the junction of the A12 and A120. It is essentially a linear settlement that, while being sustainably located has been fragmented by the railway and A12/A120. It contains a good range of facilities which are located in different sections of the village; a railway station to the east providing an interchange between the mainline to London and branch services; a larger area of modern housing, a village hall, commercial areas and the primary school to the west and retail facilities to the south of the A12.
- 12.17 Large areas of land have previously been promoted for development in and around Marks Tey and there is an opportunity for Garden Village scale growth which could help reconnect the village. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, add weight to the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support development at the scale promoted. Accordingly, the Plan allocates sites for housing which could deliver up to 2,500 new homes within the plan period, but on the proviso that it can be demonstrated that additional vehicular movements can be safely accommodated on the A12 and A120 without significantly increasing congestion.
- 12.18 Additional employment land is also allocated, recognising the areas potential given its location on the strategic road network and its position in relation to Stanstead to the west and the Haven ports to the west.
- 12.19 The policies below reflect the fact that it is not anticipated that all the growth promoted can be accommodated without significant upgrades to the A12 and A120. The Opportunity Area designation is intended to demonstrate that some development would be acceptable within the overall sites, subject to further evidence being agreed with the highway authority and National Highways.



## **Policy PP17: Land South of A12, Marks Tey Growth Area**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) A mixed-use development including commercial uses and approximately 1,500 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) A mix of other uses which support a sustainable community appropriate to the scale of development including public open space to accommodate formal and informal sport and leisure, community facilities, local services and local centres;
- c) Substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include strategic open space in addition to multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space;
- d) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point(s) of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- e) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity within the site and to the surrounding area; and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport including links to the railway station;
- f) Mature trees and hedgerows and grassland of medium or high distinctiveness within the site should be retained;
- g) As a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised. A core of onsite BNG measures should be located together to provide a substantive area for biodiversity, with associated connectivity through and beyond the site. The site is on chalky boulder clay, which should influence the design and creation of new habitats. Opportunities should be taken to maintain and enhance the known Great Crested Newt population over and above any mitigation requirements;
- h) Create woodland and standing freshwater habitat as identified as strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- j) Ensure connection within and throughout the site to Public Rights of Way to provide green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, including the creation of active travel connections to Copford Green;
- k) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets within the site include one Scheduled Monument, 1 Grade II\* Listed Building and two Grade II Listed Building. Designated Assets close to the allocated site includes

- six Grade II Listed Buildings, one Conservation Area and one Grade one Listed Building as per the stage 1 HIA;
- l) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. A Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development;
  - m) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
  - n) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
    - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
    - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
    - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
  - o) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
  - p) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (to include education provision (2.1ha site for Primary and early Years Provision), highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);
  - q) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

Development proposals will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire site, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers and through engagement with the local community. It should be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.

All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP18: Land North of A120, Marks Tey Growth Area**

Land to the north of the A120 has been promoted for a Garden Village scale, mixed-use development, but the development potential within the plan period is limited because of infrastructure constraints. It will be important when planning for the first phase of development that the whole site area is masterplanned to ensure residential development is supported by infrastructure including schools, community facilities and open space.

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, in particular those concerned with highway capacity, development will be supported on land to the south of the larger site identified on the policies map which provides within the plan period:

- a) Approximately 1,000 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) A mix of other uses which support a sustainable community appropriate to the scale of development including public open space to accommodate formal and informal sport and leisure, community facilities, local services and local centres;
- c) Substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include strategic open space in addition to multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space;
- d) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. Point(s) of vehicular access will need to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- e) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity within the site and to the surrounding area; and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport, including links to the railway station;
- f) Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained. Ponds and woodland within the site must be retained and buffered. Onsite BNG measures should focus on creating a mosaic of grassland, scrub and trees and be located around existing ponds (including offsite ponds) and woodland;
- g) As a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised. A core of onsite BNG measures should be located together to provide a substantive area for biodiversity, with associated connectivity through and beyond the site. This core should include the corridor of the Roman River (enhanced to provide the required watercourse unit uplift), and LoWS Co27 and the woodland Priority Habitat, appropriately buffered and connected. Much of the site would be suitable for the creation of chalky boulder clay grassland;
- h) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat, woodland or grassland habitats within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;

- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- j) Ensure connection within and throughout the site to Public Rights of Way to provide green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside;**
- k) Linkages to the proposal for a Roman River corridor nature recovery area, as shown on the policies map;**
- l) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Grade I and 27 Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;**
- m) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters. A Minerals Resource Assessment as part of any planning application. Should the viability of extraction be proven, the mineral shall be worked in accordance with the scheme/masterplan as part of the phased delivery of non-mineral development. Undertake a Mineral Infrastructure Impact Assessment given the site's proximity to Marks Tey Brickworks;**
- n) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- o) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
 
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- p) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- q) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);**
- r) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**Development proposals will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire site, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in**

**collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers and through engagement with the local community. It should be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes or guidance.**

**All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PEP5 Land South of A12, Marks Tey**

Land south of the A12, Marks Tey, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including existing and new communities and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity.
- c) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the site boundary include one Scheduled Monument (moated site) and four Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- d) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- e) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- f) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- g) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.

### **Policy PEP6 Anderson's Site, Marks Tey**

**Land at Anderson's Site, Marks Tey, as shown on the policies map, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1.**

**All development Proposals within Marks Tey parish will also be determined against the policies in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan where relevant (adopted April 2022) where they are up to date and relevant.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

12.20 Planning permission for commercial, business and service (Class E c and g), general industrial (Class B2) and storage and distribution (Class B8) purposes on the site which is the land safeguarded in Policy PEP6 was approved in 2023.

## **Large Settlements**

12.21 Colchester's large settlements have the most facilities, services, travel choices and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. However, in the case of West Mersea and Wivenhoe, these settlements have environmental constraints. Accordingly, the level of growth proposed in West Mersea and Wivenhoe is balanced with the environmental constraints.

### **Tiptree**

12.22 Tiptree is a large village located on the southwest boundary of Colchester. Development has grown up around key highway intersections in a roughly triangular built form. There is a small separate cluster of houses to the southwest of the main village known as Tiptree Heath. Tiptree has a district centre with a high number of key services and community facilities. It is the only large village with a secondary school. A neighbourhood plan with site allocations was adopted in 2023. The vision of the neighbourhood plan is to deliver a link road in the north of Tiptree, reducing congestion throughout the village. This plan seeks to build on the work undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and ensure the vision can be achieved.



## **Policy PP19: Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 600 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs which is compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Development must secure the delivery of the northern link road between the B1022 (Colchester Road) and the B1023 (Kelvedon Road) within the geographical scope of the allocation in accordance with Policy TIP07 and the objectives of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan;
- d) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement to the South;
- e) Consideration to be given to the inclusion of a mobility hub incorporating provision for bus layover, in the vicinity of the site allocated for health/community purposes.
- f) Retain and create buffers around Co13 Eden Wood LoWS, Co6 Inworth Wood LoWS and retain the internal network of Priority habitat hedgerows, including the 'green lane';
- g) Onsite BNG measures should include enhancement of the existing woodland (if possible) and their expansion to provide gain for any woodland Priority Habitat within the baseline. Other BNG measures should focus on maintaining and improving connectivity through and beyond the site, particularly between the LoWS. The site includes pockets of superficial sands and gravels, which could be particularly suitable for the creation of acid grassland or heathland;
- h) Create woodland, grassland and standing freshwater habitat as identified as strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- i) Delivery of a Tiptree Country Park of approximately 27 hectares as indicated on the policies map;
- j) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- k) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes a number of Grade II, one Grade II\* and one Grade I Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA.
- l) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste matters.

- m) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.**
- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community, sport and open space provision). There is an expectation that the development will include the delivery of a health/community building on land set aside in earlier phases of the development and as articulated in the Tiptree NP.**
- o) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council and infrastructure providers, and through engagement with the local community. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

**All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies (including those concerned with design) in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP20: Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 30 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Contributions are likely to be required towards site specific infrastructure identified in the IDP (likely to include education, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community, sport and open space).**
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.**
- f) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing the distinctiveness and condition of retained areas of grassland;**
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes seven Grade II Listed Buildings as per the stage 1 HIA.**

**All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP21: Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and Public Rights of Way to provide green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Any loss of hedgerow and grassland onsite must be mitigated;
- e) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- f) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.
- g) Contributions are likely to be required towards site specific infrastructure identified in the IDP (likely to include education, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community, sport and open space).

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PP22: Telephone Exchange, Tiptree**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 5 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;**
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Onsite BNG measures should focus on small-scale grassland enhancement, hedge enhancement and tree planting;**
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.**
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes four Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the Stage 1 HIA.**

**All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PEP7 Highland Nursery, Tiptree**

Land at Highlands Nursery, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan and provide:

- a) Active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- d) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site include the Grade II listed Building Hill Farmhouse.

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Policy PEP8 Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree**

Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) **Active travel links to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and active travel routes, and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area to maximise the use of sustainable transport;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;**
- c) **Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- d) **Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site include five Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;**
- e) **Protection and enhancement of the areas of Priority Habitat within the site;**
- f) **Retain the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation to limit the potential for adverse impacts on the landscape setting.**

All development Proposals within Tiptree Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **West Mersea**

12.23 West Mersea is a coastal town located on the confluence of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries, approximately 15km from Colchester city centre. There are frequent bus routes serving the town to and from Colchester and serving the local secondary schools. West Mersea has numerous town centre and community uses both within the district centre and throughout the town, making it a sustainable settlement. However, it has environmental constraints with the Colne and Blackwater estuaries, which are designated at international level for nature conservation (the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries are Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites and form part of the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation). A balance is needed to allow some development in this sustainable settlement but to limit this to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries.



## **Policy PP23: Land East Dawes Lane, West Mersea**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 300 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and which is compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and a singular point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority which demonstrates that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) A safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, and The Glebe, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement, including to the district centre;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Enhanced provision of open space of at least 5 hectares must be provided within the site and this open space must link with the open space within the approved scheme at Dawes Lane and connect through to The Glebe as indicated on the policies map;**
- f) Contributions towards the enhancement of the quality and value of The Glebe Sports Ground and facilities.**
- g) Provision of allotments to be transferred to West Mersea Town Council to manage and maintain**
- h) Native hedgerows and grassland within the site should be retained and enhanced with any loss of grassland compensated within the site. BNG measures should include enhancing retained grassland, establishing new grassland and native hedges, and new tree planting;**
- i) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- j) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes six Grade II Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- k) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**

- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- n) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**All development Proposals within West Mersea Parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Mersea Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) Neighbourhood Plan where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Wivenhoe**

12.24 Wivenhoe benefits from good infrastructure provision including a mainline train station, a GP surgery, two primary schools, numerous shops and restaurants and abundant open space provision. There are also frequent bus services between Wivenhoe and Colchester, a cycle path between Wivenhoe and the University of Essex and the popular Wivenhoe Trail along the river to Colchester. However, there are a number of constraints which has influenced the amount of growth considered appropriate for Wivenhoe beyond 2033. Wivenhoe is bordered by the River Colne to the west and south. In addition to the physical boundary that the river presents, land falls within flood risk zone 3. There are a number of environmental designations surrounding Wivenhoe. The Upper Colne Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the west and south of Wivenhoe. The Colne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site and SSSI and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lie to the south-east of Wivenhoe. The Colne Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site runs adjacent to the built-up western boundary. The Coastal Protection Belt surrounds the west and south of Wivenhoe. Wivenhoe Gravel Pit SSSI lies to the north-east of Wivenhoe. A balance needs to be struck to allow some growth in this sustainable settlement which accords with the Spatial strategy and protection of sensitive environments.

## **Policy PP24: Land Northwest of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 175 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be via the adjoining Neighbourhood Plan allocation, to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Contributions towards enhancement of the quality and value of King George V Playing Fields;
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape and to maintain settlement separation;
- f) Biodiversity enhancement measures should include enhancing hedgerow condition and establishing grassland habitats along road verges;
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes five Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- h) The total number of dwellings will be spread between this site and the area currently set aside for a care home as part of the neighbourhood plan allocation;
- i) A new community space must be included within the site and pedestrian access to the adjacent allotments must be created;
- j) Opportunities for undergrounding should be explored;
- k) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option.
- l) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- m) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.

- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- o) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**All development Proposals within Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan Area, will also be determined against the policies in the Wivenhoe Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted May 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Medium Settlements**

12.25 Medium settlements include settlements with a range of community and social infrastructure but to a lesser extent than the infrastructure within the larger settlements. These medium settlements are capable of accommodating growth appropriate to the size, scale and infrastructure of the settlement.

### **Abberton and Langenhoe**

12.26 Abberton and Langenhoe were originally two separate settlements but have now effectively merged into one village which share services and facilities. The facilities in the village include a primary school, community hall, and public open space. The village benefits from good road connections to Colchester being situated along the B1025 which has bus stops situated along it which are served by the Mersea bus.

### **Policy PP25: View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any Public Rights of Way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside particularly to the north of the site, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing the condition of any higher distinctiveness grassland and enhancing the condition of hedgerows;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site include nine Grade II Listed as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated**

**connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.**

- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

## **Boxted**

12.27 Development in Boxted is currently concentrated within three distinct settlement areas: Boxted Cross, Workhouse Hill and an area to the south of the parish to the west of Straight Road. Development in Boxted Cross has grown in a linear manner around Straight Road/Carters Hill, Dedham Road/Cage Lane crossroads extending north eastwards as far as Cooks Lane. Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable location for growth as it is reasonably well served by a number of services and facilities.

### **Policy PP26: Land North of Boxted Straight Road, Boxted Cross**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 150 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access off Boxted Straight Road, to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering woodland Priority Habitat to the north of the site and woodland to the west. Soil conditions may favour the creation of higher distinctiveness grasslands;**
- e) To conserve the local distinctiveness and rural setting of Boxted, the impact of development must be minimised through careful design, in terms of siting, form, scale, massing, materials including the local vernacular of colour buildings, weatherboarding and brick;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Grade I and seventeen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.**



- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water;****
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);**
- l) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**All development Proposals within Bosted parish will also be determined against the policies in the Bosted Neighbourhood Plan Review (adopted December 2016) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Chappel and Wakes Colne**

12.28 Chappel and Wakes Colne are separate settlements but are located adjacent to one another and share services and facilities. Chappel has one core settlement area with three remote/dispersed small clusters of housing at Rose Green, Swan Street and Wakes Street. The core focus of Chappel is centred around the primary school. The settlement is defined to the east by the railway line, which is the operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. Wakes Colne is the main settlement area with smaller dispersed clusters of housing around Inworth Lane and at Middle Green. The core focus of Wakes Colne is around the railway, defined to the east by the railway line, which is operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. The railway station is also home to Chappel and Wakes Colne Railway Museum which hosts many events and houses a number of refurbished steam trains.

### **Policy PP27: Swan Grove, Chappel**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 35 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing hedgerow condition, buffering Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green LoWS, and maintaining and strengthening ecological connectivity;**
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes a Conservation Area, Scheduled Monument, one Grade I, one Grade II\* and eight Grade II Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area and six further Grade II Listed Buildings outside of the Conservation Area as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**

- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

## **Policy PP28: Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) **Approximately 200 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety. This is to include provision of a link road between Station Road and the A1124 and stopping access along Station Road to through traffic;**
- c) **Creation of enhanced pedestrian priority route along the lower section of Station Road (where through traffic is restricted) to provide a safe route to the railway station;**
- d) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way, particularly to the southwest of the site. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- e) **Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;**
- f) **Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering and extending the adjacent Acorn Wood LoWS and strengthening north to south connectivity (this an important ecological corridor). The site is on the north valley slope of the Colne valley with patches of superficial sand and gravel deposits, which might make parts of it particularly suitable for grassland creation;**
- g) **Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) **'Enhanced Open Space' substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include of approximately 8 hectares within the site to provide recreation, community and BNG uses;**
- i) **Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater, woodland or grassland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- j) **Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes A Conservation Area, eighteen Grade II, three Grade II\*, one Grade I Listed Building and one Scheduled Monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- k) **Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**

- l) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- m) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

## **Policy PEP12 Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre**

Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes Wakes Colne Conservation Area, seven Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Building as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- d) Promote the use of natural screening through the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and incorporation of new native features.
- e) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters.

## **Copford**

12.29 The Parish of Copford with Easthorpe comprises three distinct villages: Copford, Easthorpe, and Copford Green, the latter being a designated conservation area and one of Colchester's small settlements. Development in Copford has grown in a linear manner along London Road, eastwards towards Stanway and westwards towards Marks Tey. Copford Church of England Primary School is located on Church Road between Copford and Copford Green. There is open space, a village hall, gift shop and pub within the parish and a number of local services including pubs, restaurants and a post office located along London Road in Stanway, just outside of the Copford parish boundary and in Marks Tey, which is approximately 1km from the centre of Copford.

### **Policy PP29: Land East of School Road, Copford**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 300 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) A replacement village hall must be delivered within the site, well connected to new homes and existing homes in Copford;**
- e) Provision for appropriate service and facilities / uses to create a local centre to serve the communities across the site as informed by the masterplanning;**
- f) Strategic open space to provide a naturally landscaped community space that is well connected to the wider network of public footpaths;**
- g) The adjacent Pits Wood LoWS (which consists of Ancient Wood Irreplaceable Habitat and Priority Habitat) must be buffered and protected from recreational pressure associated with new housing;**
- h) Onsite BNG measures should focus on creating a buffer with a mosaic of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats around the adjacent LoWS, which could be through creating additional woodland, scrub or grassland;**
- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**

- j) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater or woodland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRs;**
- k) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes seven Grade II Listed Buildings and Copford Green Conservation area to the south as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- l) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters;**
- m) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- n) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
 
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- o) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- p) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision);**
- q) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

**All development Proposals within Copford parish will also be determined against the policies in the Copford Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2023) where they are up to date and relevant.**



## **Dedham and Dedham Heath**

12.30 Most of the Dedham parish area falls within the Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly AONB). The largest settlement within the parish is the main historic village of Dedham to the north. A smaller area of predominantly housing called Dedham Heath lies to the south and two smaller clusters of properties lie to the west and east of Dedham Heath known as Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane respectively. Dedham has a range of services and facilities, including its own primary school. Dedham Heath is located approx. 1km away and is on a bus route to Dedham.

### **Policy PP30: Land South of Long Road, Dedham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained. Retained hedgerows must be outside of garden areas or will need to be compensated;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of grassland;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) To conserve the local distinctiveness and rural setting of Dedham, the impact of development must be minimised through careful design, in terms of siting, form, scale, massing, materials including the local vernacular of colour buildings, weatherboarding and brick;**
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes seven Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.**

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****

## **Eight Ash Green**

12.31 Eight Ash Green comprises three main areas of which two are considered sustainable and have a range of services and facilities: Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green /Choats Corner. Seven Star Green is not considered sustainable as it is located south of Halstead Road and is separated by this main road from the key facilities available in the village. Eight Ash Green is interspersed with open farmland and contains some small businesses premises. There are a number of local services including hairdressers, convenience store, petrol station, village hall, open spaces and primary school. Tollgate and Stane Park is located approximately 1.5km to the south-east.

### **Policy PP31: Land North of Halstead Road and East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 180 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement and to Tollgate District Centre;**
- d) Biodiversity mitigation must include a buffer to the watercourse and to the adjacent ancient woodland to protect it from recreational and other disturbance;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on buffering the woodland and providing watercourse enhancements, with other medium distinctiveness habitat (e.g. other neutral grassland);**
- f) Support will be given to delivering grassland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Contributions towards the provision of a new village hall in Eight Ash Green;**

- j) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**All development Proposals within Eight Ash Green parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

**Policy PP32: Land North of Halstead Road and West of Fiddlers Wood Eight Ash Green**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 250 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement and to Tollgate District Centre;
- d) The adjacent Fiddlers Wood Co43 LoWS (ancient woodland) must be safeguarded, buffered and protected from recreational pressure associated with new housing;
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on creating woodland, scrub and grassland habitats as buffers to the adjacent ancient woodland. New boundary hedgerows should be planted in gaps and the condition of existing hedgerows should be enhanced;
- f) Support will be given to delivering grassland or woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes three Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- i) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste
- j) Contributions towards the provision of a new village hall in Eight Ash Green.
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).
- l) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any

**development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**All development Proposals within Eight Ash Green parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

### **Policy PEP9 Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green**

Land at Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site and existing footways and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity;
- c) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

All development Proposals within Eight Ash Green parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan (adopted December 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Fordham**

12.32 Fordham is a linear settlement with a core concentration of development which has evolved over time, including a number of small estate type developments. A primary school is situated at the southern end of the village just beyond the settlement boundary. The village hall is located within the core of the concentrated area of development and hosts a shop and post office at limited times during the week. Also within the village is a playing field and a community orchard maintained by the local community. A small cluster of dwellings to the north along Plummers Road is separated by the Grade II listed Moat Hall which is situated on a significant mature landscaped garden which adjoins an established community woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

### **Policy PP33: Land East of Plummers, Fordham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be through the existing site off Plummers Road (reserved as part of planning application), to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Support will be given to delivering woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes fifteen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**



## **Great Horkesley**

12.33 Great Horkesley is essentially linear in shape and has developed over time along the old Roman road that radiates away from north Colchester (now the A134). More recently development has spread westwards along a number of roads off the main road. Land to the east of the main road has remained relatively free of development and is more open in character. Great Horkesley is fragmented with the main core of the settlement to the south and two smaller fragments to the north along the A134. The southern edge of the main part of the village is approximately 0.6km from the Colchester urban edge and is located north of the A12. There are a range of services and facilities within the village.

### **Policy PP34: Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 400 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be via a single point of vehicle access off Coach Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way, particularly to the South of Coach Road. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Active travel route including a pedestrian link to the existing village hall;**
- e) Retention of hedgerows within the site;**
- f) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater, grassland or woodland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- h) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water**
- l) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes eight Grade II Listed Buildings and one scheduled monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- m) Contributions will be sought towards extending the village hall or other local community facilities to be informed by the Parish Council;**
- n) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

## **Policy PP35: The Old School, Great Horkesley**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 13 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access off School Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Mature trees within the site should be retained and existing hedgerows should be retained and enhanced at the northern and eastern edges of site to provide screening;
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network.
- f) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets within the allocated site include two Grade II Listed Buildings. Assets close to the allocated site includes twelve Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

## Great Tey

12.34 Great Tey is situated north of the Roman River and is surrounded by largely flat arable land. The parish of Great Tey is a small rural community that contains a few local amenities including a village pub, a school, and a Norman church. The community originally developed at the southern end, as evidenced by the Conservation Area, with a newer small estate to the north and ribbon development along the main road through the village between Little Tey and Chappel.

### **Policy PP36: Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 125 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access including junction visibility at Earls Cone Road / Chappel Road to required highway design standards and point of vehicle access off Earls Colne to be agreed with the Highway Authority and demonstration that proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity or safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way particularly to the north of Earls Colne Road. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Onsite BNG measures should consider the creation of chalky boulder clay grassland as soil conditions may be suitable if nutrient status can be reduced;**
- e) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater or woodland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character and protect the landscape quality and tranquillity around Great Tey;**
- g) Respond to the historic settlement pattern and use materials which are appropriate to local landscape character including the local vernacular of weatherboarding and brick;**
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes eighteen Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Building as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated**

- connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;
- j) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste;
  - k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).
  - l) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.

All development Proposals within Great Tey parish, will also be determined against the policies in the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2024) where they are up to date and relevant.

## Langham

12.35 Langham includes two areas of settlement, Langham Moor and St. Margaret's Cross, linked by School Road. A former WWII airfield lies between the two areas. The village contains a mixture of historic properties and farmhouses with more recent development. Langham contains a public house, a community café, a community shop, community centre, recreation ground, a playground, football pitches and tennis courts. It lies close to the A12 trunk road and the Dedham Vale National Landscape is outside the settlement to the north and east.

### **Policy PP37: Land north of Park Lane, Langham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 900 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Impacts on the Strategic Road Network can be satisfactorily mitigated to the satisfaction of National Highways;**
- d) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- e) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**
- f) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- g) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.****
- h) Onsite BNG measures should include enhancement of existing hedgerows. Soil conditions may favour the creation of higher distinctiveness grasslands, including some of a calcareous character;**
- i) Support will be given to delivering grassland habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**

- j) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- k) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include at least one area of strategic open space and multiple areas of less formal and more incidental open space.**
- l) Deliver a strategic open space centrally within the site to provide a naturally landscaped community space that is well connected to new and existing development;**
- m) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes twenty-two Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**
- n) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on mineral and waste;**
- o) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**
- p) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**

**Proposals for the allocated site will only be supported where they accord with a comprehensive masterplan in relation to the entire allocation, that has been agreed with the Council prior to submission of any planning application. The masterplan must be of sufficient detail to ensure optimal placemaking and housing delivery outcomes for the allocation and should be informed by an appropriate evidence base. The masterplan should be developed in collaboration with the Council, and relevant infrastructure providers through engagement with the local community and be informed by use of design review. Where appropriate and necessary the masterplan shall be supported by, parameter plans, design codes and/or guidance.**

## **Policy PP38: Land opposite Wick Road, Langham**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement ;
- d) Retention of Hedgerows within the site and must be outside of garden areas or will need to be compensated;
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- f) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing the distinctiveness and condition of retained areas of grassland and hedgerow;
- g) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development.
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- j) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes five Grade II Listed Buildings close to the south of the site as informed by the stage 1 HIA.



## **Policy PEP10 Lodge Lane, Langham**

**Land at Lodge Lane, as shown on the policies map, is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1.**

### **Justification**

#### **Purpose of the policy**

12.36 Planning permission for Outline consent for up to 3,000sqm of office floorspace was approved in 2020 on the site which is the land safeguarded in Policy PEP10 with subsequent Reserved Matters applications.

## **Layer de la Haye**

12.37 Development in Layer de la Haye is concentrated within two settlement areas: Layer village and Malting Green. The two areas are physically separated by a large grass sward known as Malting Green, a large part of which is a designated Local Wildlife Site (Co 93). It is also an important open space that plays an important function in defining the rural character of the existing two settlement areas. Layer de la Haye has a mix of community and social infrastructure including a primary school, GP surgery, shop, two pubs, village hall and open spaces.

### **Policy PP39: Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 10 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening through the retention of existing hedgerows, trees and vegetation, particularly along The Folley at its eastern boundary to support the sensitive integration of the site into the existing landscape;**
- e) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes seven Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**

## **Policy PP40: Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 60 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way particularly to the East of the Folley. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) A suitable and safe active travel link between the site to the adjoining site with planning permission;
- e) Retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site;
- f) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing woodland and grassland habitat. The site is on superficial sands and gravels that should make the site suitable for the creation of Lowland Dry Acid Grassland if nutrient levels can be lowered;
- g) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes eight Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

## **Rowhedge**

12.38 Rowhedge lies within the parish of East Donyland, which covers the south-east of Colchester. The settlement was historically centred around the shipbuilding and fishing industries of the River Colne. The village lies on the opposite bank of the river to Wivenhoe but despite its close proximity to the town, access is only available by road through Colchester. Rowhedge has good public transport and road links to Colchester and contains its own primary school, post office and recreational facilities.

### **Policy PP41: Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) The area of woodland within the site will be safeguarded and retained as tree cover and open space;**
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing adjacent woodland and open mosaic condition;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes a Conservation Area, three Grade II Listed Buildings and a scheduled monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Development must discharge attenuated surface water to a receiving waterbody and not to the combined sewer network, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no other option;**
- i) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- j) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;****

- ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
- iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

## **West Bergholt**

12.39 West Bergholt is situated approximately 1km to the north-west of Colchester. The village is centered around a triangle of roads: the B1508 Colchester Road, Chappel Road and Lexden Road. West Bergholt is separated from Colchester by an area of open countryside and the valleys of St Botolph's Brook and the River Colne. The A12 bisects the open countryside between West Bergholt and Colchester. The majority of the more recent development has occurred on the northern side of Colchester Road.

### **Policy PP42: Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 50 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access to be off Colchester Road via the existing Neighbourhood Plan site allocation to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way particularly to White Hart Lane and Manor Road. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- f) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**
- g) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- h) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;****

- iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes eight Grade II and one Grade I Listed Building as informed by the stage 1 HIA.

All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

### **Policy PP43: Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be off William Sims Close to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way, particularly to the west and to Armoury Road to the east. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- e) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;
- f) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- g) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.
- h) Retention of native hedgerows within the site;
- i) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- j) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes five Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- k) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).



**All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PP44: Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt**

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) Development must ensure it does not harm the coalescence break which is defined in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan and ensure appropriate mitigation and enhancement is provided as evidence through appropriate landscape character evidence to be agreed with the Council;
- e) Onsite BNG measures should focus on enhancing hedgerows and enhancing the condition and distinctiveness of grassland;
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- g) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;
- h) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;
- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water;
- i) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes six Grade II, one Grade II Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monument to the east as informed by the Stage 1 HIA;

- j) Any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP (likely to include education provision, highway mitigation, water and wastewater and specific community / open space provision).**

**All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.**

## **Policy PEP11 Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt**

Land at Pattens Yard, West Bergholt, as shown on the policies map, is allocated for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST7 and subject to compliance with all other policies, proposals for employment uses will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which accord with Policy E1 and provide:

- a) Safe access to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity by sustainable modes to the surrounding area;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure;
- d) Screening from the wider landscape through the protection and enhancement of native trees and hedgerows;
- e) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes six Grade II, one Grade II\* Listed Building and a Scheduled Monument just outside to the east as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- f) Liaise with ECC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority on waste matters given proximity to Patterns Yard Inert Recycling Centre.

All development Proposals within West Bergholt parish, will also be determined against the policies in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan (adopted October 2019) where they are up to date and relevant.

## **Small Settlements**

12.40 Small scale growth is proposed in some of Colchester's small settlements reflecting the size and level of community and social infrastructure.

### **Aldham**

12.41 Aldham is a nucleated settlement that has developed around the junction of Brook Road/New Road and Green Lane/Tey Road with more modern development to the north-east and south-east. Aldham is rural in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes but is close to the A12/A120 and A1124.

### **Policy PP45: Land off New Road, Aldham**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Any loss of hedgerow to allow for suitable access must be compensated;**
- e) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- f) Development must respond to the historic settlement pattern and use materials which are appropriate to local landscape character including the local vernacular of weatherboarding and brick;**
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes four Grade II and one Grade II\* Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**

## **Birch and Layer Breton**

- 12.42 Birch Green is the largest area of housing within the wider Birch parish area (with the smaller historic core of Birch to the north and a separate, isolated cluster of dwellings known as Hardy's Green to the north-west). Birch Green is broadly triangular in shape where development has filled the space between Birch Street, Mill Lane and Straight Way, with some development extending beyond Mill Lane and Birch Street to the north and Crayes Green to the south-east. Birch Green is rural in character, has limited connections to the strategic road network but has a few key services including its own primary school and village hall.
- 12.43 Layer Breton is a linear settlement that has developed over time as a form of ribbon development along Layer Breton Hill, which is a rural road that links Colchester with Tolleshunt D'Arcy via Birch. Layer Breton is rural in character, poorly connected to the strategic road network and is accessed by narrow country lanes.

### **Policy PP46: Land at Birch Green, Birch**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) **Approximately 15 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) **Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) **Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) **'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space onsite and demonstrate how this can link to the adjacent open space to the north;**
- e) **Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural wooded character;**
- f) **Grassland compensation and any mitigation set out in protected species surveys (there is a pond 25m east of the site) is required.**
- g) **Biodiversity enhancement and BNG measures should include grassland and hedgerow enhancement and tree planting;**
- h) **Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes nine Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA.**



## **Fingringhoe**

12.44 Fingringhoe is essentially a linear settlement comprised of two main residential areas that have developed either side of the historic core of Fingringhoe, which contains a primary school, church and public house.

### **Policy PP47: Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 5 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development and contribute towards meeting the identified housing requirements in the Fingringhoe Housing Needs Survey;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) Screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- e) Grassland habitat should be created and the proposal should have regard to the Essex LNRS, which identifies a strategic opportunity for grassland habitat north of the site;**
- f) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Conservation area, one Grade I and seven Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- g) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**
- h) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- i) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;****



- ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
- iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

## **Messing**

12.45 Messing is located north of Tiptree. Messing is very rural and historic in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes. It has limited services and facilities but it has a primary school.

### **Policy PP48: Kelvedon Road, Messing**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to be off Kelvedon Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include a minimum of 1.7ha of public open space;**
- e) Support will be given to delivering standing freshwater habitat to support the delivery of the strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one conservation area, one Grade II\*, sixteen Grade II Listed Buildings and one scheduled monument as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- h) Development must not discharge surface water to the foul sewer network;**
- i) Before granting planning consent, wintering bird surveys will be undertaken at the appropriate time of year to identify any offsite functional habitat. In the unlikely event that significant numbers are identified, development must firstly avoid impacts. Where this is not possible, development must be phased to deliver habitat creation and management either on or off-site to mitigate any significant impacts. Any such habitat must be provided and fully functional before any development takes place which would affect significant numbers of SPA birds.**



## **Peldon**

12.46 Housing in Peldon is laid out in a triangular pattern around three roads. The settlement boundary in Peldon currently comprises two roughly equivalent areas of housing on either side of two of the three roads. The triangular residential area is surrounded by arable farms. The village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt.

### **Policy PP49: Land at St Ives Road, Peldon**

**In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:**

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;**
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to off St Ives Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;**
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;**
- d) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include a minimum of 0.6ha of open space within the site;**
- e) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;**
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;**
- g) Respect the setting of and conserve the local distinctiveness of the Church of St Mary (Grade I Listed Building) at Peldon which forms a prominent landmark, visible from much of the surrounding landscape due to its location on a localised knoll;**
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Grade I, one Grade II\* and fifteen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;**
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;**

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;**
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:**
  - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;**
  - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;**
  - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.**

# 13. Monitoring

13.1 The Local Plan is at an early stage in its development. As such, the monitoring measures that have been proposed in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report in relation to all of the SA objectives in the SA framework are set out below as the starting point for considering proposals to monitor the Plan. It may be appropriate to narrow down the monitoring framework to focus on a smaller number of the SA objectives for which significant (including uncertain) effects are identified as part of the iterative SA.

13.2 The monitoring framework reflects the indicators included in relation to the SA framework set out in the SA Scoping Report (2024) and reflects indicators received as part of consultation on the SA Scoping Report. The data used for monitoring in many cases will be provided by outside bodies. Information collected by other organisations (e.g. the Environment Agency) can also be used as a source of indicators.

SA Objective	Assessment criteria	Monitoring indicators
<p>1. Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable</p>	<p>Will it deliver the number of houses needed to support the existing and growing population?</p> <p>Will it provide more affordable homes?</p> <p>Will it deliver a range of housing types and tenures including housing for students, gypsies and travellers, and the aging population?</p> <p>Will it deliver well designed and sustainable homes?</p>	<p>Housing completions per annum (net)</p> <p>Percentage of affordable housing units provided on qualifying sites</p> <p>Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation provision (net)</p> <p>Total Empty Properties (classified as empty for Council Tax purposes)</p> <p>Length of time Total Empty Properties have been empty</p> <p>Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households</p> <p>Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households</p>
<p>2. Support the efficient use of land</p>	<p>Will it lead to development on previously developed land?</p> <p>Will it minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land?</p> <p>Will densities make efficient use of land?</p> <p>Will a mix of uses be provided?</p>	<p>Employment floorspace granted on previously developed land</p> <p>Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census</p> <p>Take-up of Travel Plans</p>

<p>3. Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres</p>	<p>Will it improve the range of employment opportunities?</p> <p>Will it support the vitality and viability of town centres?</p> <p>Will it support skills and training and changing economies?</p> <p>Will it support tourism, including an understanding of heritage, and the arts?</p>	<p>Permissions granted for employment and leisure by type</p> <p>Economically active population</p> <p>Universal Credit (including Job Seekers Allowance)</p> <p>Economically inactive population</p> <p>Number of businesses (total)</p> <p>Visitor trips numbers</p> <p>Visitor spend/value</p> <p>Tourism related employment</p>
<p>4. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion</p>	<p>Will it provide good accessibility by a choice of modes of transport?</p> <p>Will it reduce the reliance on private vehicles?</p> <p>Will it enhance the active travel network?</p> <p>Will a mix of uses be provided?</p> <p>Will it increase development density in higher order service centres?</p> <p>Will the levels of sustainable and active travel increase?</p>	<p>Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census</p> <p>To obtain an agreed Travel Plan for all major commercial/community developments</p> <p>Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport</p> <p>Bus patronage</p>
<p>5. Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation</p>	<p>Will it reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime?</p> <p>Will it reduce the proportion of people living in deprivation?</p> <p>Will it meet the needs of specific groups including those with protected characteristics?</p> <p>Will it increase access to open spaces, green infrastructure and recreational facilities, including access to nature?</p> <p>Will it encourage healthy lifestyles?</p> <p>Will it facilitate the integration of new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?</p>	<p>Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations</p> <p>Life expectancy</p> <p>Obesity rates</p>
<p>6. Provide access to services, facilities, and education</p>	<p>Will it support easy access to a range of high-quality services and facilities?</p> <p>Will it contribute to improving educational levels of the population of working age,</p>	<p>Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations</p> <p>Educational attainment</p>

	including by improving access to educational facilities?	Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport
7. Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets	Will it conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage and cultural assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?	Recorded loss of Listed Buildings Grade I and II+ (by demolition), Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological sites and assets on the Colchester Local List to development  Number of Listings on the Heritage at Risk Register  Number of Historic parks and Gardens Additions to Colchester's Local List  Number of Conservation Areas
8. Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity	Will it protect and enhance designated nature conservation assets?  Will it protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, including local wildlife sites?  Will it protect and enhance geodiversity?  Will it protect and enhance ecological networks, including opportunity areas identified through the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy?  Will it deliver environmental net gain?	Amount of development in designated areas  Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA  Number and area of local nature reserves (LNRs) and local sites (LoWS) within Colchester  Condition of SSSIs  Compliance with Essex Coast RAMS (Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy)  Increase in open space  Biodiversity net gain habitat sites  Area of ancient woodland  Number of planning approvals that generated any adverse impacts on sites of acknowledged biodiversity importance.  Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations.
9. Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape	Will it maintain and enhance landscape character including the Dedham Vale National Landscape?  Will it improve the condition of parks and open spaces?  Will it maintain and enhance the character of settlements?	Amount of development in designated areas  Amount of new development in National Landscape with commentary on likely impact.



<p>10. Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change</p>	<p>Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions?</p> <p>Will it plan and implement adaptation measures for the likely effects of climate change?</p> <p>Will it include energy efficiency measures?</p> <p>Will it reduce energy consumption?</p> <p>Will it support the delivery of renewable energy schemes?</p>	<p>Greenhouse Gas Emissions reporting Local Authority Carbon Management Plan</p> <p>Renewable energy installed by type</p>
<p>11. Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources</p>	<p>Will it limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere?</p> <p>Will it promote the use of SuDS for flood resilience and improving water quality?</p>	<p>Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes</p> <p>Recorded flood events</p>
<p>12. Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling</p>	<p>Will it reduce the amount of waste produced?</p> <p>Will it reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?</p> <p>Will it reduce the amount of waste produced?</p> <p>Will it reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?</p>	<p>Percentage of residual waste produced per household</p> <p>Percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted</p>
<p>13. Protect and improve air quality</p>	<p>Will it improve air quality?</p> <p>Will it help to achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Areas?</p> <p>Will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?</p>	<p>Number of AQMAs</p> <p>Exceedances of air quality objectives</p>
<p>14. Protect the quality and quantity of water resources</p>	<p>Will it ensure there is sufficient water for the lifetime of the development in a changing climate without negatively impacting on the environment?</p> <p>Will it ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment infrastructure and environmental capacity to accommodate the new development in a changing climate?</p>	<p>Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes</p>



# 14. Appendices

## Appendix A - Superseded Policies and Documents

14.1 Colchester Local Plan Section 1 (February 2021) and Section 2 (July 2022) will be superseded by the Colchester Local Plan 2026 to 2041. The table below sets out the adopted Local Plan policies and the name of the relevant new policy. It also identifies any policies which are to be saved from the Section One Local P Lan.

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
<b>Section 1</b>			
SP1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development		
SP2	Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)	EN1	Nature Conservation and Designated Sites
SP3	Spatial Strategy for North Essex	ST3 ST4	Spatial Strategy Development in the Countryside
SP4	Meeting Housing Needs	ST5	Colchester's Housing Need
SP5	Providing for Employment	ST6	Colchester's Employment Need
SP6	Infrastructure and Connectivity	ST7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation
SP7	Place Shaping Principles	ST8	Placemaking Principles
SP8	Development and Delivery of New Garden Community in North Essex		Saved
SP9	Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community		Saved

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
<b>Section 2</b>			
SG1	Colchester's Spatial Strategy	ST3 ST4	Spatial Strategy Development in the Countryside
SG2	Housing Delivery	ST5	Colchester's Housing Need
SG3	Economic Growth Provision	ST6	Colchester's Employment Need
SG4	Local Economic Areas	E1 PEP1- PEP11	Protection of Employment
SG5	Centre Hierarchy	E4	Retail and Centres
SG6	Town Centre Uses	E4	Retail and Centres
SG6a	Local Centres	E4	Retail and Centres
SG7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation	ST7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation
SG8	Neighbourhood Plan		
ENV1	Environment	ST2 EN1 EN2 EN3 EN4	Environment and the Green Network Nature conservation designated sites Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain Biodiversity and geodiversity Irreplaceable habitats
ENV2	Coastal Areas	LC3	Coastal areas
ENV3	Green Infrastructure	GN1	Green Network and Waterways Principles

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
ENV4	Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	LC2	Dedham Vale National Landscape
ENV5	Pollution and Contaminated Land	EN9	Pollution and Contaminated Land
CC1	Climate Change	NZ1 GN4	Net Zero Carbon Development (in operation) Tree Canopy Cover
PP1	Generic Infrastructure and Mitigation Requirements	ST7	Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation
TC1	Town Centre Policy and Hierarchy	E4	Retail and Centres
TC2	Retail Frontages	E4	Retail and Centres
EC1	Knowledge gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area	PEP2 UE1	Knowledge Gateway University of Essex
WC3	Colchester Zoo	E5	Colchester Zoo
SS12b	Coast Road West Mersea	LC3	Coastal Areas
SS12c	Mersea Island Caravan Parks	CS6	Caravan Parks
OV1	Development in Other Villages	ST3	Spatial Strategy
OV2	Countryside	ST4	Development in the Countryside
DM1	Health and Wellbeing	ST1 PC1	Health and Wellbeing Healthier Food Environments
DM2	Community Facilities	CS1 CS2	Retention of Community Facilities Enhancement and Provision for new Community Facilities
DM3	Education Provision	CS3	Education Provision

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
DM4	Sports Provision	CS4	Sports Provision
DM5	Tourism, leisure, Culture and Heritage	CS5	Tourism, Leisure, Arts, Culture and Heritage
DM6	Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside	E2	Economic Development in Rural Areas and the Countryside
DM7	Agricultural Development and Diversification	E3	Agricultural Development and Diversification
DM8	Affordable Housing	H2	Affordable Housing
DM9	Development Density	PC4	Development Density
DM10	Housing Diversity	H3 H4 H5 H6	Student Accommodation Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Specialist Housing including Housing for an Aging Population Self and Custom Build
DM11	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	H7	Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
DM12	Housing Standards	PC6 H5	Design and Amenity Specialist Housing including housing for an aging population
DM13	Domestic Development	PC5	Domestic Development
DM14	Rural Workers Dwellings	H8	Rural Workers Dwellings
DM15	Design and Amenity	PC6	Design and Amenity
DM16	Historic Environment	EN6 EN7	Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment Archaeology
DM17	Retention of Open Space	GN6	Retention of Open Space

Colchester Local Plan 2017 to 2033		Colchester Local Plan Review 2026 to 2041	
Existing Policy Reference	Existing Policy Name	New Policy Reference	New Policy Name
DM18	Provision of Open Space and Recreation Facilities	GN1	Green network and waterways principles
DM19	Private Amenity Space	PC8	Private amenity space
DM20	Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour	PC2	Active and Sustainable Travel
DM21	Sustainable Access to development	PC2	Active and Sustainable Travel
DM22	Parking	PC3	Parking Standards
DM23	Flood Risk and Water Management	EN8	Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
DM24	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	EN8	Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
DM25	Renewable Energy, Water Waste and Recycling	NZ4	Renewable Energy
		NZ3	Wastewater and Water Supply
Place Policies		Place Policies PP1-PP49; OA1-OA4	

14.2 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance are superseded:

- Colne Harbour Masterplan – January 2008
- Colne Harbour Design Framework – January 2001
- Colne Harbour Public Space Design Guide
- Essex County Hospital Development Brief – December 2014
- Stanway Railway Sidings Development Brief – April 2011
- Stanway Southern Sites Access Development Brief – December 2013
- Garrison Masterplan – November 2002
- Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide – December 2014
- Planning Guidance Note on Air Quality – August 2012
- Sustainable Construction SPD

14.3 The following Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance remain:

- Abro Development Brief - SPD
- Active Travel SPD
- Climate Change SPD
- Biodiversity SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Backland and Infill SPD
- Essex Coast RAMS SPD
- North Colchester Growth Area SPD
- Provision of Community Facilities SPD
- Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities SPD
- Shopfront Design Guide SPD
- Street Services Delivery Strategy SPD
- Colchester City Centre Masterplan SPD
- Vehicle Parking Standards SPD – 2009
- Development and Public Rights of Way – Jan 2010
- Managing Archaeology in Development SPD – 2015
- External Materials Guide for New Development – July 2004
- Developing a Landscape for the Future – September 2013
- Magdalen Street Development Brief – February 2014
- Magdalen Street Sidings Development Brief – February 2014
- Planning for Broadband – February 2016
- Rural Workers Dwelling – Guidance Note for Applicants – August 2012
- Tollgate Vision July 2013



## 15. Glossary

**Adopted/Adoption** - The final confirmation of a plan's status by a local planning authority (LPA).

**Affordable Housing** – The Councils definition will accord with the current definition in the National Planning Policy Framework (or any successor document) but will also include those uses eligible under Essex County Council's Independent Living Programme. It 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 Management Areas (AQMA)** – Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

**Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)** – A report published annually by the Councils monitoring progress in delivering progress in Local Plan policies and allocations.

**Biodiversity Net Gain** - Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. The Environment Act contains a new biodiversity net gain condition for planning permissions. To meet this requirement biodiversity gains will need to be measured using a biodiversity metric.

**Brownfield Land (also known as Previously Developed Land)** - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

**Boundary treatment** - How a building or development site relates to its boundary - open, closed, accessible, fence, landscaped etc.

**Carbon Positive** - Carbon positive moves beyond carbon zero by making additional 'positive' or 'net export' contributions by producing more energy on site than the building requires and feeding it back to the grid.

**Carbon sequestration** - Carbon sequestration is the process of storing carbon in a carbon pool. Carbon dioxide is naturally captured from the atmosphere through biological, chemical, and physical processes.

**Centre** - References to centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. See definitions of local centres and district centres.

**Community Facilities** - Are buildings, which enable a variety of local activity to take place including, but not limited to, the following: Schools, Universities and other educational facilities; Libraries and community centres; Doctors surgeries, medical centres and hospitals; Public houses and local shops; Museums and art galleries; Child care centres; Sport and recreational facilities; Youth clubs; Playgrounds; Cemeteries; and Places of worship.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – A mechanism by which Councils can set a standard charge on specified development in their area to pay for new infrastructure required to support growth.

**Competent person (to prepare site investigation information)** - A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.

**Conservation credits** – When a developer cannot achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain on their development site following application of the mitigation hierarchy, they will have the option to purchase biodiversity units from an offsite habitat market. If units cannot be sourced from local habitat markets, developers will be able to purchase their required units (as credits) which will be invested in habitat creation.

**Critical drainage area** - A discrete geographic area (usually a hydrological catchment) where multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk cause flooding during a severe rainfall event thereby affecting people, property or local infrastructure.

**Design code** - A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.

**Development** – The definition in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is ‘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’.

**Development Plan** – This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Development Plan is the starting point for decision making. This includes the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

**District Centre** – 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 to a level comparable with Colchester City Centre.

**Energy hierarchy** – The energy hierarchy is a classification of energy strategies, prioritised to assist progress towards a more sustainable energy system. The steps are: be lean, use less energy; be clean, supply energy efficiently; be green, use renewable energy; and offset.

**European Sites** - The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes SPA, SAC, and Ramsar sites). See also habitats sites.

**Flood risk** - The level of flood risk is the product of the frequency or likelihood of the flood events and their consequences (such as loss, damage, harm, distress and disruption). Areas at risk of flooding are those at risk of flooding from any source, now or in the future. Flood risk also accounts for the interactions between these different flood sources.

**Flood zone** - Flood Zones show the probability of flooding, ignoring the presence of existing defences.

**Garden Community** – Communities which are holistically planned new settlements that respond directly to their regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create developments underpinned by a series of interrelated principles which are based on the following Town and Country Planning Association Garden City Principles: Land value capture for the benefit of the community; Strong vision, leadership and community engagement; Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets; Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable; A wide range of local jobs in the Garden Community within easy commuting distance of homes; Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food; Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience; Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods; Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

**Green Infrastructure** – A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

**Green Network and Waterways** – The Council's name for green and blue infrastructure, named to be more easily understood by the public. It encompasses the definition of green infrastructure in the NPPF.

**Greenfield Site** - Land which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

**Gypsies and Travellers** - Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's

or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such. In determining whether persons are "gypsies and travellers" consideration will be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters: a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

**Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)** - The Habitat Regulation Assessment is a statutory requirement under the [Conservation \(Natural Habitats\) \(Amendment\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2010 \(as amended\)](#). An HRA is required for a plan or project which, either alone or in combination with, other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a European/habitats site.

**Habitats site** - Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites. Part of the 'national site network'.

**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 (but not exclusively): footways, cycleways and highways; public transport; drainage and flood protection; waste recycling facilities; education and childcare; healthcare; sports, leisure and recreation facilities; community and social facilities; cultural facilities; emergency services; green infrastructure; open space; affordable housing; broadband; facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

**Local Centre** – An essential role providing a range of small shops and services to meet the basic needs of local communities, serving a small catchment.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)** - This is the project plan for a three year period for the production of all documents that will comprise the Local Plan. It identifies each Local Development Document and establishes a timetable for preparing each.

**Local Plan** - The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#).

**Local Wildlife Sites** – Habitats identified by Essex Wildlife Trust as important for the conservation of wildlife.

**Massing** - The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces. This is also called bulk.

**Main Town Centre Uses** – As defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, main Town Centre uses include retail development (Including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities, the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

**Mineral Safeguarding Area** - An area designated by the Minerals Planning Authority (Essex County Council) which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

**Mitigation hierarchy** - The mitigation hierarchy is a widely used tool that guides users towards limiting as far as possible the negative impacts on biodiversity from development projects. As a priority, impacts on key habitats and features must be avoided wherever feasible. Then the design must minimise impacts, then remediate impacts, and as a last resort compensate for impacts.

**Mobility as a Service (MaaS)** - Integrates various forms of transport services into a single mobility service accessible on demand. A MaaS operator facilitates a diverse menu of transport options to meet a customer's request, be they public transport, ride-, car- or bike-sharing, taxi or car rental/lease, or a combination thereof.

**Modal Share** - A modal share is the percentage of travellers using a particular type of transportation.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - Government planning policy which replaces a large number of Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements with one single document. It sets out new planning requirements and objectives in relation to issues such as housing, employment, transport and the historic and natural environment amongst others.

**Natural surveillance** - Natural surveillance is an urban design, architecture and landscaping technique that seeks to deter crime with social and highly visible spaces. Natural surveillance is based on the theory that isolation makes crime both easier and more likely.

**Neighbourhood Plan** - A plan prepared by a Parish Council, Neighbourhood Forum, or other locally constituted community group, for a particular neighbourhood.

**Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN)** – The National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period. Further guidance provided in Planning Practice Guidance provides that 'The assessment of development needs is an objective assessment of need based on facts and unbiased evidence. Plan makers

should not apply constraints to the overall assessment of need, such as limitations imposed by the supply of land for new development, historic under performance, viability, infrastructure or environmental constraints. However, these considerations will need to be addressed when bringing evidence bases together to identify specific policies within development plans.'

**Open space** - All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**Permitted Development Rights** – The level of development that can take place before planning permission is required, as stated in [The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) Order 1995](#), as amended.

**Planning Obligation/Section 106 Agreement** – A legally binding agreement between a local planning authority and any person interested in land within the area of the local authority, or an undertaking by such person, under which development is restricted, activities or uses required; or a financial contribution to be made. Used to mitigate the impacts of development.

**Planning Practice Guidance** – Guidance and detail supporting the National Planning Policy Framework which is published online and regularly updated.

**Previously Developed Land** - see brownfield land above.

**Ramsar Site** – An area identified by international agreement on endangered habitats.

**Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)** – A tool used to manage and mitigate the adverse effects from increased recreational disturbance arising from new developments on European/ habitats Sites.

**Self-build and custom-build housing** – Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

**Setting of a heritage asset** - The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

**Significance (for heritage policy)** - The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** - Land notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as an ecosystem of flora and/or fauna considered to be of significant national value and interest to merit its conservation and management.

**Sound/Soundness** - To be considered sound, a Development Plan Document must be justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy) and effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored).

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** - A site of European importance designated by the member states, where necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at favourable conservation status, of the habitats and/or species for which the site is designated.

**Special Protection Area (SPA)** - A site designated under the Birds Directive by the member states where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site is designated.

**Starter Homes** – Newly built properties that must be sold to someone who is a first-time buyer below the age of 40, with a discount of at least 20 per cent off the market value.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** - This will set out the standards that the Council intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration, and continuing review of all Local Development Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the Council intends to achieve those standards. The Statement of Community Involvement will not be a Development Plan Document (see above) but will be subject to independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the Local Planning Authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Development Documents.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)** - A study prepared for the Councils Evidence Base further to national guidance which assesses the overall state of the housing market and advises on future housing policies used to inform the Housing Strategy.

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

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

**Sustainable Communities** - places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are

safe and inclusive, well planned, built, and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

**Sustainable Construction** – is the name given to building in an energy efficient way. The incorporation of many new technologies and energy saving techniques into a building can dramatically reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and carbon footprint of a building. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling, wind turbines and ground water heating systems.

**Sustainable Development** - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)** –Methods of management practices and control structures that are designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable manner than some conventional techniques.

**Sustainable Transport** - Sustainable Transport refers to walking, cycling and public transport, including train and bus. Sustainable Transport is transport that makes efficient use of natural resources and minimises pollution. In particular, Sustainable Transport seeks to minimise the emissions of carbon dioxide – a greenhouse gas associated with climate change – as well as nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, carbon monoxide and particulates, all of which affect local air quality.

**Swales** - Swales are shallow, broad and vegetated channels designed to store and/or convey water runoff and remove pollutants.

**Topography** - the physical features of an area of land, especially the position of its rivers, mountains.

**Town Centre** - Area defined on the proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops.

**Travel Plan** - A plan demonstrating how a development would encourage its users to use more sustainable methods of transport to access a development.

**Use Class** - Different uses are given a classification as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended). For example, an E use refers to retail, restaurant, office, financial/professional services, indoor sports, medical and nursery and a C3 use would refer to a residential dwellings (houses, flats, apartments etc).