



# Settlement Boundary Review

Part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan, April 2017 Update

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## 1. Introduction

Colchester Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.

The Local Plan sets out a vision, strategy, objectives and policies for planning and delivery across the Borough. These are first set out at the strategic level in Part 1 of the plan, and then followed by more detailed information on Colchester in Part 2 of the plan. Taken together, these two parts of the plan combine to provide a spatial framework that brings together and co-ordinates a range of strategies prepared by the Council, its partners and other agencies and authorities. It includes policies for deciding development proposals. It takes account of projected changes in the economy, employment, housing need, transport demand, and seeks to maintain the quality of the natural and built environment as well as its historic environment. It provides the strategy and policies for shaping the Borough until 2033 and beyond.

The underlying principle of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and therefore the Local Plan is to support the principle of sustainable development. Sustainable development is at the heart of the Local Plan and it is important that the Borough's settlement boundaries and any new allocations for growth relate to sustainable locations. The Local Plan defines settlements which are "sustainable" and this is justified by this Settlement Boundary Review. By implication any other settlements (or parts of settlements currently defined by a settlement boundary) are unsustainable (or less sustainable).

This evidence base document begins by outlining the policy background and the methodology for this review. A review of each settlement is then presented; firstly for the sustainable settlements and then the other villages.

## 2. Policy Background

The need to review settlement boundaries is in the first instance part of the requirement to have a comprehensive evidence base for the Borough's Local Plan. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It goes on to say that: "There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas."

The NPPF also looks in more detail at specific policy areas which are relevant to this Review. The following sections are considered relevant:

### Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

1. To boost significantly the supply of housing, 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, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period;
  - identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements (plus a buffer);
  - identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;
  - for market and affordable housing, illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and set out a housing implementation strategy for the full range of housing describing how they will maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target; and
  - set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.

2. Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
3. To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand;
4. In rural areas, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. Local planning authorities should in particular consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs.
5. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances

### Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

1. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; minimising impacts on biodiversity; preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability;
2. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value
3. Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.
4. Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.
5. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
6. The presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14) does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered.

### Local Plans

1. Local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver:
  - the homes and jobs needed in the area;
  - the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;

- the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management,;
  - the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and
  - climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.
2. Crucially, Local Plans should:
    - plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the Framework;
    - be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date;
    - indicate broad locations for strategic development on a key diagram and land-use designations on a proposals map;
    - allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land, bringing forward new land where necessary, and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate;
    - identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic significance; and
    - contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
  3. Local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.
  4. Local planning authorities should have a clear understanding of business needs within the economic markets operating in and across their area. Local planning authorities should use this evidence base to assess the needs for land or floorspace for economic development.
  5. Planning policies and decisions should be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area. Local Plans may require a variety of other environmental assessments, including under the Habitats Regulations where there is a likely significant effect on a European wildlife site, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and assessments of the physical constraints on land use. Shoreline Management Plans should inform the evidence base for planning in coastal areas.
  6. Local planning authorities should have up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and use it to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment. Where appropriate, landscape character assessments should also be prepared.

### 3. Colchester's Settlements

Settlement boundaries are recognised and generally accepted as an essential tool for the management of development, principally to prevent the encroachment of development into the countryside. The settlement boundaries have been carried forward from previous Local Plans and in recent years very few changes have been made. This has reflected both national and local policy aimed at promoting brownfield development, allocating the most sustainable sites and protecting the countryside.

The Council carried out a settlement boundary review in 2009 as part of the evidence base for the Site Allocations. The Inspector commented that:

“The Council has carried out a ‘Settlement Boundary Review and Village Survey’ which I consider meets the need foreshadowed by the Explanation under Core Strategy policy ENV2.”

The settlement boundaries to be reviewed are those set in the 2010 Proposals Maps which accompanied the Councils Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD. They were defined on the basis of the following principles:

- (i) To safeguard the form and character of the village;
- (ii) To define the main nucleus of the settlement;
- (iii) To exclude ribbons or loose scatters of housing which it would be undesirable to consolidate.

The next section outlines the methodology for this review.

## 4. Settlement Boundary Review

To identify the most sustainable settlements and inform the hierarchy and approach to the spatial strategy, particularly for planning growth beyond the urban edge of Colchester and the Strategic Sites, an assessment of the comparative sustainability of the Borough's settlements was carried out. This is a Council evidence base study; it is not a consultation document.

This report updates the Settlement Boundary Review following the draft Local Plan consultation. During this consultation period this review was published and Parish Councils were asked to review the factual information in relation to their areas. The nature of the information relating to the current service provision within the Borough's settlements is such that changes regularly occur. Although various sources have been drawn on to pull this evidence together it is recognised that local communities are best placed to confirm the most up to date position in respect of service provision at any point in time.

This update also reflects proposed changes to the site allocations. Changes have been made to reflect emerging evidence and representations received.

The starting point for the review of the settlement boundaries was those currently identified on the Proposals Map in the Council's Local Plan (2010). Any built development that has occurred and planning permissions for built development that have not expired since the original boundaries were drawn were taken into account.

From this starting point, the following methodology was followed:

- A desk top exercise using aerial photographs and the most up to date Ordnance Survey map to establish land use.
- The planning history of sites around the current boundaries to establish any areas that have been developed and planning permissions that have not expired since the original boundaries were drawn was researched.
- Site visits to verify the situation 'on the ground.'
- The village facilities survey was updated as far as practicable to identify which settlements are supported by community services and facilities, drawing on evidence sources including Rural Community Council for Essex.
- An assessment was undertaken of sites put forward under the Call for Sites (2014 & 2015).
- Sites that might be suitable for future development were identified.
- Any additional settlement boundaries that may be required were considered.

The following criteria were included in the assessment of each settlement (and part of settlement where separate settlement boundaries exist) to help assess the sustainability of each settlement and the capacity for growth:

- Access to sustainable transport (Railway station; bus stop (including crude consideration of quality of service));
- Environmental constraints;
- Proximity community facilities including;
  - Primary School;
  - Public open space;
  - Community / village Hall;
  - Doctors Surgery

- Proximity to Secondary School;
- % of people who travel less than 2km to work (RCCE Profile);
- Total Population;
- Total Households.

The review of each settlement also considers the Strategic Land Availability Sites (SLAA) sites. For the purposes of the SLAA and this assessment a broad indicative site capacity has been applied using a density of 30 dwellings per hectare for 85% of the site area. In reality there are many factors that would need to be taken into consideration at the site level that would influence site capacity and so the numbers included in the SLAA and this assessment may not represent what may be recommended for allocation in the Local Plan. The list of SLAA sites excludes those sites that scored a red RAG rating in the SLAA, which were excluded at the early stage of the process.

For the purpose of the settlement boundary review, the settlements which may be affected by Garden Settlements / strategic allocations are assessed in the context of providing their relevant role with delivering non-strategic growth relative to their place in the hierarchy where a Neighbourhood Plan is not making site allocations. Further consideration in relation to strategic growth will be addressed further through a master planning process for the new garden communities.

It should be noted that the reference numbers listed in the following site assessments relates to the SLAA reference. The SLAA Report, also available as part of the evidence base, lists and maps the sites, with the reference number, site location and the corresponding Call for Sites number where appropriate.

Appendix A lists the settlement boundary review principles. These principles were particularly helpful as part of site visits and help to ensure consistency across the Borough's settlements.

A number of sites were submitted after the close of the two call for sites consultations. Some of these late sites were assessed earlier in the process as part of other SLAA sites. A list of these sites and the SLAA reference number is included in Appendix B.

## 5. Sustainable Settlements

### Abberton and Langenhoe

#### Settlement shape and form

Whilst Abberton and Langenhoe are defined by separate settlement development boundaries, they are considered together in this assessment due to their physical closeness and shared services and facilities. Originally developed around a crossroads (where Layer/Fingringhoe Roads cross with Mersea Road) and around Peldon Road, over time the community has expanded along the roads to the north, south and east with the majority of more recent housing development being to the south of the village. Abberton/Langenhoe is fairly well connected to the road network as it is situated on the main Mersea to Colchester road (B1025) and has a good bus service but poor access to rail services. There is a primary school, post office/shop and village hall. There is also a cricket club with club house. Abberton and Langenhoe are the only two settlements within the Abberton and Langenhoe Parish, which are located in the centre of the parish area.

Land to the south of Abberton/Langenhoe is within the Coastal Protection Belt and land begins to slope down to the south of the village.

#### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Abberton and Langenhoe are considered to be sustainable in principle; but are located some distance away from a secondary school (4.5km), the nearest GP (3.9km) and Colchester town centre (approx 6km) and have limited services and facilities compared to some other sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough.
- A portion of the village of Abberton and the whole of Langenhoe and land to the south lies within the Coastal Protection Belt. Land changes character to the south of Abberton where it begins to slope down towards the coast.
- There is evidence of sewerage/drainage/mains capacity issues which limits growth. Improvements to existing facilities will be required to support any proposed development.
- The local primary school (Langenhoe Community Primary) is forecast to have a deficit of -18 places at 2019/20 which suggests capacity will be an issue for any significant growth, but there appears to be space for physical expansion if required.
- Options for growth are limited in order to prevent further ribbon development away from existing village services and facilities, where character is more rural/or is open countryside. This applies to the north along Mersea Road, to the east (along Fingringhoe Road), to the west (along Layer Road and Glebe Lane) and to the south beyond existing extent of Langenhoe to discourage further development.
- Additionally, options for growth are limited in order to seek to discourage development that would not represent a logical or sensible extension to the existing built up area.
- Development which creates stronger links between the two defined areas of Abberton and Langenhoe would potentially lead to a significant level of growth

which is unlikely to be appropriate given the constraints which apply and the relative sustainability.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Potential opportunity to consider linking the currently separately defined settlements of Abberton and Langenhoe together in one boundary, as the primary school and post office/shop are situated between the two settlements.
- Abberton is the main settlement in the Abberton and Langenhoe Parish area where most of the key community facilities mentioned above are located so is the main community focus within the parish. A small increase in growth may help to sustain these.
- Abberton and Langenhoe are located on a key transport route (B1025) between Colchester and Mersea with a good bus service.
- A number of sites have been promoted / identified around the village which suggests there is interest in development in this location and that there is land available for development.
- A new village shop is proposed for the former Langenhoe Lion PH which has planning permission for residential redevelopment.
- There are also allotments, a play area and village hall.
- There is an opportunity through new development to address parking issues at the village school.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Agreement in principle to all 4 green / amber SLAA sites that have been promoted but concern expressed about provision of additional mains services, increase in traffic flows/parking issues particularly linked to the primary school and the need for additional facilities – preference being for a village shop.

A village meeting was held on 22 August 2016 at the Abberton & Langenhoe village hall. There were over 100 residents in attendance including the parish councillors, Cllr Davidson, Cllr Bentley and Karen Syrett from Colchester Borough Council. The following points were raised by the residents with the overall decision being to object to proposed housing in Abberton and Langenhoe.

The general consensus of the meeting was that 30 houses were not needed in the village. The concerns of the residents were:

- Ecological issues - the effect on wildlife, especially newts, adders and nightingales.
- The infrastructure of the roads, ie not being wide enough to sustain access, for example Glebe Lane, as well as not being able to cope with the additional traffic.
- That the shop proposed for The Lion site had fallen through at present and no other facility of this kind in the village.
- The additional traffic in the village from the build of these houses along with the proposed 350 houses in Mersea causes severe concern on the number of cars and more importantly the speeding through the village which is already an ongoing issue and potential accidents.
- The school would have to offer more places which is currently over-subscribed.

- It was raised that the village is aging and no 'starter' houses are being built in the village.
- No facilities in village only the school.
- More noise, pollution and fumes.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- 401 households in the Abberton and Langenhoe parish area of which 309 dwellings are within the current settlement boundaries.
- Abberton and Langenhoe have a number of key community facilities (including its own primary school) but these are relatively limited compared to more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough.
- The above physical constraints linked to avoiding expansion into open countryside where landscape sensitivity becomes more of an issue and avoiding further ribbon development away from the village centre limits the opportunity for expansion around the village.
- The limited capacity of water infrastructure in the village and lack of capacity at the primary school (which is currently at capacity and projected to remain so up to 2019) also limits the opportunity for growth. Any growth proposed will be required to contribute to improvements to ensure any new homes are supported by the necessary social infrastructure.
- Approximately 10% growth over the plan period is considered to be incremental and appropriate to the environmental and physical capacity of the village and its size and sustainability but growth would need to be able to contribute to any additional social infrastructure required to support this level of growth (in particular any improvements to the local primary school or sewerage provision), subject to sites being available and suitable.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

##### **Broad area 1 – Expansion of the village southwards along Peldon Road**

This area is currently in agricultural use and is comprised of small fields and paddocks. The area is heavily vegetated with thick field boundaries, hedgerows and mature trees which contribute to its rural character. Landscape sensitivity is more of an issue towards the south of the village as the landscape begins to slope down to the south, with the land forming part of the character and function of the surrounding Coastal Protection Belt. This area abuts existing development to the north and is situated south of the primary school but there would need to be improvements to Peldon Road and provision of a footpath to better link the area with existing development. Development would be close to the primary school and the village shop/post office but it would impact on landscape character and would need to be accompanied by appropriate screening and landscaping. Two SLAA sites have been promoted here (RSE10 and RSE01) but the development of both of these sites in full, would be over and above what is considered to be appropriate for Abberton and there is a concern that the development of all of RSE01 would extend the village too far south into open countryside that is considered to contribute to the surrounding coastal landscape. Development of only the north-western part of RSE01 (on the west side of Peldon Road) would be more appropriate. Potential for up to 50 dwellings on these sites

would be more appropriate but careful design, screening and landscaping would be required to minimise impacts on the surrounding rural landscape character, and the listed property (and its setting) to the north of RSE10. There is an opportunity to address parking and drop off problems associated with the village school.

### **Broad area 2** – Expansion southwards to the east of Mersea Road

On a map there appears to be an opportunity for development to fill the gap between the separate villages of Abberton and Langenhoe. However this area is currently occupied by woodland, allotments and part is a large private residential curtilage so suitability is questionable. No SLAA site has been promoted here so availability is not known and accordingly the area has not been taken forward.

### **Broad area 3** – Expansion westwards around Glebe Lane

Two SLAA sites have been promoted to the west of Abberton (RSE02 and RSE11) but taking into account the physical constraints outlined above linked to avoiding ribbon development, this effectively rules out RSE02. The area occupied by site RSE11 is surrounded by existing residential development on 2-3 sides and is on the settlement edge, but the site contains a mature roadside hedgerow which may be lost if developed. An alternative access is not considered suitable because of its width, private ownership and unmade nature. The suitability of Glebe Lane to accommodate further growth is questionable, although there is some recent small-scale housing development along the lane.

### Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in Abberton/Langenhoe in the SLAA (4)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                         | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING | SOURCE         |
|----------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| RSE01    | Peldon Road, Abberton                | 118                      | Green      | Call for sites |
| RSE02    | Glebe Lane, Abberton                 | 26                       | Amber      | Call for sites |
| RSE10    | Peldon Road, Abberton                | 6                        | Amber      | Call for sites |
| RSE11    | Ashpark House, Peldon Road, Abberton | 21                       | Amber      | Call for sites |

### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

- RSE01 and RSE10 – development of sites off Peldon Road offer the potential for 50 dwellings which accords with what is considered to be appropriate for Abberton/Langenhoe. The sites are close to the primary school and offer the potential to deliver a car park to serve the school and improved pedestrian links. Careful design would be required to minimise landscape impacts and impact on the setting of a listed building. The portion of RSE01 that is being recommended as a housing allocation is defined to the east by Peldon Road, to the north by residential development and to the west by vegetation/field boundaries. Suitable screening/landscaping to the south is required to provide a robust settlement edge and minimise impacts on the wider landscape. RSE10 is defined by residential development to the north, school playing field to the

east, an existing property to the south and Peldon Road to the west. Visibility issues with the Peldon Road/Layer Road junction will need to be addressed if new development is to go ahead. Development will need to contribute to the upgrade of sewerage facilities, manage surface water flooding/foul water and education improvements (in particular improvements/expansion of Langenhoe Primary School) to accommodate the level of growth proposed. To address concerns over school car parking an area for car parking should be included in the development with play equipment.

### SLAA sites to discount

RSE02 – Development of this site would result in further ribbon development westwards in an area that is more rural in character and currently occupied by mature trees. Glebe Lane narrows and becomes unsuitable further westwards out of the village and would need widening, upgrading and provision of footpaths. This would urbanise the character of the area.

RSE11– The site represents a gap on the edge of the settlement. Glebe Lane narrows and becomes unsuitable further westwards out of the village and would need widening, upgrading and provision of footpaths. This would urbanise the character of the area. There are also concerns about the junction of Glebe Road with Peldon Road. An alternative access appears to be private and unsuitable. Further evidence gathering has identified significant concerns over the achievement of access to the site and accordingly the site is not considered suitable for development.

### Summary

Abberton is a sustainable settlement but the scope for expansion around its periphery is limited due to surrounding environmental constraints/issues with landscape sensitivity to the south, the need to discourage inappropriate forms of development and sprawl of the settlement into the surrounding open countryside as well as the lack of services and facilities compared to more sustainable settlements within the borough. Approximately 50 dwellings would represent a proportionate level of growth for this village within the Local Plan period.

It would not be appropriate to link Abberton with Langenhoe through development along Mersea Road as whilst the settlements are very close, they feel distinctly separate in character and there is little active frontage development along Mersea Road to the north of Langenhoe, which enhances the separation between the two settlements. It is further concluded that the area defined by the settlement boundary as Langenhoe in itself less sustainable and not an appropriate location for additional growth. The settlement boundary around this area of existing cluster of dwellings is therefore recommended to be removed.

## **Birch**

As part of the process of considering representations to all of the Borough's 'Sustainable Settlements' and 'Other Villages' the Council has formed the view that the range of services/facilities in Birch is more comparable with the Borough's 'Other Villages' rather than the 'Sustainable Settlements'. Since considering the draft site the GP surgery has closed and Birch now only has a school and village hall. The bus service is also very poor, as highlighted in the representations. Consequently, Birch will be identified as an 'Other Village' in the spatial hierarchy and the allocation of land east of Birch Street will be removed from the Local Plan.

### Settlement shape and form

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 lies to the south of the parish area, close to the neighbouring small village of Layer Breton. 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 and until recently a GP surgery.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Birch has limited facilities as detailed above.
- The separate clusters of housing at Birch and Hardys Green are too remote from the settlement core of Birch Green and are not considered to be sustainable in themselves so no growth should be directed to these locations.
- There is evidence of sewerage/drainage/mains capacity issues which limits growth. Improvements to existing facilities will be required to support any proposed development.
- Options for growth are limited in order to prevent further ribbon development along the roads out of the settlement to prevent Birch Green merging with the historic core of Birch to the north and with Layer Breton to the south and to discourage further development being located away from existing village services and facilities and where character is more rural/or is open countryside.
- Options for growth are limited to the south as this is a Local Wildlife Site.
- Additionally, options for growth are limited in order to seek to discourage development that would not represent a logical or sensible extension to the existing built up area i.e. development behind established frontages where there is poor vehicular access, ribbon development and urban sprawl into open countryside where there are no obvious physical features to contain new development.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Birch Green is the largest settlement in the Birch Parish area and is the main community focus within the parish and a small increase in growth may help sustain / enhance the existing services and facilities in the village.
- The local primary school (Birch Church of England Primary School) is forecast to have a surplus of 13 places at 2019/20, which suggests some growth could be accommodated without the need for expansion of the school.
- A number of areas of land have been promoted/identified around the village which suggests there is interest in development in this location and that there is land available for development.

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Birch Parish Council submitted a representation to the Local Plan Preferred Options consultation stating: Concern that the village does not have enough services to provide for additional housing including a lack of shop and doctors surgery. Furthermore the school is at capacity. Another concern is the road which is dangerous at school pick-up and drop-off times.

Discussion on appropriate growth

- There are 325 households currently in the wider Birch parish area of which 226 dwellings are within the current settlement boundaries of the main residential core of Birch Green. The cluster of housing known as Hardys Green is not considered to be sustainable and so is not included within this figure.
- Birch has a number of key community facilities (including its own primary school – which is forecasted to have a surplus by 2019/20). It is however understood that this situation may have changed recently and there will be a need to update the evidence.
- The above physical and environmental constraints linked to the surrounding environmental constraints, avoiding the merging of Birch Green with Birch and Layer Breton, the relative sustainability of Birch Green limits the opportunity for expansion around the village and its suitability for large-scale growth.
- Taking into account the above constraints, no growth is considered to be appropriate within Birch other than small-scale infill development within the village and/or a rural exception site to meet identified local needs.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities**Broad area 1** – Expansion north of Mill Lane

This broad area is SLAA site RSW04. The development of this broad area would not represent an appropriate scale of growth due to its size. The land is currently heavily vegetated and rural in character.

**Broad area 2** – Expansion north of Stamps Farm

This broad area is SLAA site RSW12. No obvious means of vehicular access into the site and the development of this broad area would not represent an appropriate scale of growth due to its size. The land is currently heavily vegetated and rural in character.

### **Broad area 3 – Expansion east of Birch Street**

This broad area comprises SLAA site RSW06. The site is on the main road through the village and adjacent to the existing housing to the south and west. There are no current obvious features to contain development and avoid adverse impacts on the surrounding open countryside.

### Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in Birch Green in the SLAA (3)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS             | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RSW04    | Mill Lane, Birch         | 22                       | Amber      |
| RSW06    | Birch Street, Birch      | 15                       | Amber      |
| RSW12    | Stamps Farm, Birch Green | 30                       | Amber      |

### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

None as Birch is now classified as an 'Other Village'.

### SLAA sites to discount

- RSW04 – Mill Lane is narrow and not suitable for additional growth and surrounding housing is rural in character. The land is currently heavily vegetated which contributes to the rural character of the village. The size of the site proposed would be too large and over and above what is considered appropriate for the village.
- RSW12 – No obvious suitable vehicular access (insufficient frontage and a number of public rights of way within/immediately adjacent the site) and development would extend the settlement further southwards into open countryside. The land is currently heavily vegetated which contributes to the rural character of the village. The size of the site would be too large and over and above what is considered appropriate for the village.
- RSW20 – The site scored a red RAG rating in the SLAA and was excluded at the early stage of the process because the developable part of the site is unlikely to be able to accommodate 5 dwellings which is below the site-size threshold for the SLAA and this assessment.
- RSW06 The Council acknowledges that land east of Birch Street has merit and is preferable to other sites considered as part of the SLAA, however as an 'Other Village' no land will be allocated and policy OV1 will apply. There is potential for the site to come forward through the development management process as a rural exception site under this policy.

## Summary

As part of the process of considering representations to all of the Borough's 'Sustainable Settlements' and 'Other Villages' the Council has formed the view that the range of services/facilities in Birch is more comparable with the Borough's 'Other Villages' rather than the 'Sustainable Settlements'. Since considering Preferred Options the GP surgery has closed and Birch now only has a school and village hall. The bus service is also very poor, as highlighted in the representations. Consequently, Birch will be identified as an 'Other Village' in the spatial hierarchy and the allocation of land east of Birch Street will be removed from the Local Plan.

The smaller area of housing known as Hardys Green to the north-west that is currently within a settlement boundary is not considered to be sustainable and so it is recommended the settlement boundary is removed.

## **Boxted**

### Settlement shape and form

Development in Boxted is currently concentrated within 3 distinct settlement areas: Boxted Cross, Workhouse Hill and an area to the south of the parish to the west of Straight Road. These latter two settlement areas have been classed as unsustainable and therefore not considered suitable to be the focus for further growth. Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable location for growth as it is reasonably well served by a number of services and facilities. 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. The southern boundary of Boxted Cross settlement boundary runs just south of East Side.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable settlement although transport links are limited (limited bus services; 6.5km from Colchester railway station and 3km from the Park and Ride). It also has limited services and facilities compared to more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (no GP surgery and a limited community hub/shop).
- The nearest secondary school is The Gilberd which is approximately 6.5km from Boxted Cross.
- The Dedham Vale AONB abuts the north eastern edge of Boxted Cross settlement boundary in the vicinity of Cooks Lane.
- The settlement boundary is constrained to the east by the sports and recreation ground and arable land. Local Site Co136 Black Brook (an extensive mosaic of habitats forming an important wildlife corridor on the eastern edge of Boxted Cross) is also a constraint on development in this direction.
- Development is constrained to the northwest and west by arable land and land used as orchards/vineyard.
- It is desirable to prevent further ribbon development to the south along Boxted Straight Road to discourage further development away from existing village

services and facilities and prevent the coalescence of Boxted Cross with the smaller area of housing along Straight Road to the south.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Boxted Cross has a primary school, a village hall, recreation/sports ground and sports hall and play area. There is also a British Legion club and a number of businesses along Boxted Straight Road.
- Boxted Cross is the largest settlement within the Boxted Parish area, where the primary school, village hall, bus stops and playing field are located and so is the main community focus within the parish and an obvious location for some growth.
- The primary school is forecast to have a surplus of 30 places at 2019/20.

#### Parish Council /Neighbourhood Plan group view

Boxted Parish Council have prepared a Neighbourhood Plan and have allocated one site for residential development (Hill Farm). The Local Plan accordingly reflects the Neighbourhood Plan. None of the other sites that were promoted through the Call for Sites process are supported for the following reasons:

- The Working Group was keen to retain a green buffer around Boxted, the surrounding villages and the surrounding urban areas. The loss of open space surrounding the village would result in coalescence between settlements and the loss of Boxted's rural character.
- The SLAA sites proposed are not considered sustainable from a social, economic or environmental sense as required by the NPPF as they are removed from shops, services and facilities, requiring trips in the private car to access such day to day needs. Bus services are limited and pavements are not available along Boxted Straight Road. There are no cycle ways. Therefore, the car would be heavily relied upon, contrary to broader sustainability principles.
- The proposed developments would be clearly visible, intrusive and harmful to the rural character of the area, on the edge of the AONB.

Boxted Parish Council submitted a representation of support to the Preferred Options and thanked the Council for their sympathetic consideration of all issues in Boxted.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- There are 555 households in the Boxted Parish area of which 219 dwellings are located within the current Boxted Cross settlement boundary.
- Boxted has a number of key community facilities (including its own primary school) but these are relatively limited compared to more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough.
- The above physical constraints linked to avoiding expansion into the AONB and adjoining sensitive environmental areas and avoiding further ribbon development away from the village centre limits the opportunity for expansion around the village.

- The forecasted surplus of primary school places at 2019/20 suggests a small amount of growth is likely to be capable of being accommodated without the need for expansion of the school.
- Around 15% growth over the plan period is considered to represent an appropriate level of growth in Boxted Cross relative to the environmental and physical capacity of the village and its size and sustainability and is a level of growth being promoted in the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** – Expansion northwards (Hill Farm to the north west of the Straight Road/Carters Hill junction)

This area of land is situated at the centre of the village to the north of Boxted Straight Road and west of Carters Hill. It is defined by Carters Hill to the east, Straight Road to the south, field boundaries to the west and a large residence and its curtilage to the north. The site was originally in agricultural use and much of it remains covered by hardstanding and the remains of the former agricultural buildings that were most recently used for employment purposes. Development would be located at the centre of the village opposite the local primary school and near to the village hall and playing field. This broad area contains SLAA site RNE57, which has been allocated for development by the local community through the adopted Boxted Neighbourhood Plan.

**Broad Area 2** – Expansion southwards, to the west of Straight Road

From aerial photography land to the west of Straight Road appears to offer an opportunity for development that would fill a gap between existing residential dwellings. The site is fronted by mature trees which helps define an open rural character to this part of Straight Road. However, no site has been promoted here so availability is not known and growth in this location is not supported in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Broad Area 3** – Expansion southwards, to the south of Hobbs Drive

Land to the south of Hobbs Drive appears to offer an opportunity for development that would adjoin existing residential development and would be contained within the wider landscape to the south by low patchy hedgerows and occasional larger trees. However this area is currently in arable use and there is no obvious means of highway access. No site has been promoted here so availability is not known and growth in this location is not supported in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in Boxted in the SLAA (1)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS      | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RNE57    | Hill Farm, Boxted | 51                       | Amber      |

## SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RNE57 – This site was previously allocated for employment uses in the Local Plan. However, the Neighbourhood Plan has now allocated it for residential development. A previous appeal for residential development on the site was dismissed in 2015 but it is now considered that modifications in the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan address the key issues raised in the inspectors report and the site is therefore considered suitable for allocation for housing. An application for 36 dwellings is currently under consideration, which would result in a density around 15 – 20 dwellings per hectare. Whilst this is low, it would be in keeping with the density of the surrounding housing developments and character of this area of Boxted. This is also consistent with research into the density of dwellings in Boxted Cross/Boxted undertaken as part of the Hill Farm appeal. This number of units is also considered to represent a proportionate level of growth for Boxted Cross as detailed above.

### Summary

Boxted Cross is a sustainable settlement but the scope for expansion is limited due to surrounding environmental constraints, the need to discourage inappropriate forms of development and sprawl of the settlement into the surrounding open countryside as well as the lack of services and facilities compared to more sustainable settlements within the borough. Around 36 dwellings would represent an appropriate level of growth for this village within the Local Plan period. The smaller areas of housing that are currently within settlement boundaries located to the south west of Boxted Cross are not considered to be sustainable and so it is recommended the settlement boundaries are removed.

## **Chappel and Wakes Colne**

### Settlement shape and form

Chappel and Wakes Colne are two Parishes, separated by the A1124 (Colchester to Halstead road). For the purposes of considering growth they are considered together as development in either settlement will influence the sustainability and capacity of both settlements. This in no way undermines the separate identity of the two villages. Each comprise a core settlement, located in close proximity to each other situated north and south of the A road, as well as a number of more remote/dispersed small clusters of housing. The core focus of Chappel to the south is centred around the primary school and Wakes Colne to the north around the railway station. Both settlements are defined to the east by the railway line, which is the 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.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- The primary school has capacity for a small increase, but may have difficulty in accommodating more significant expansion as the site is restricted and is located within a Conservation Area.

- The topography is such that both core areas of the settlements are located on a hill rising away from the A1124 which is situated in the valley alongside the River Colne. The railway line deals with the change in level by crossing the road and river by way of a viaduct which is a significant structure within the Conservation Area as well as being Listed.
- The northern half of Chappel is within the Conservation Area which includes the viaduct, the primary school and the church. This boundary just touches the southern tip of Wakes Colne.
- The area between the core settlements of Wakes Colne and Chappel is within Flood Risk Zone 3. This essentially follows the river valley and would act as a strong constraint for residential development which would prevent the opportunity to enhance connectivity between the two settlement areas, despite the sharing of key community facilities.
- Both settlement areas are physically constrained by the railway line to the east and by the A1124 to the south of Wakes Colne and north of Chappel.
- The land to the west of Wakes Colne is open farmland (approximately split 50% grade 2 and 50% grade 3) without obvious defensible limits (without including significant land area).
- Opportunities for Wakes Colne are limited to the north close to the railway line or to the west.
- The linear nature of some clusters of development outside of the core area of the settlements runs alongside the roads. Further expansion or intensification of this ribbon development will not represent cohesive development and could create actual or perceived remoteness from the key facilities serving the community.
- Groups of protected trees and numerous TPOs on individual trees are prevalent affecting the character of the settlement around the railway line and the river valley. The area includes some Local Wildlife Sites, particularly to the west and east of Chappel.
- Evidence from Anglian Water suggests that upgrades or treatments are likely to be needed to serve any proposed growth. There are also issues related to poor capacity to manage surface water and foul water. AW has identified a major constraint regarding managing surface water flooding in this vicinity.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Chappel and Wakes Colne are sustainable settlements with reasonable accessibility, significantly enhanced by the railway station. Although only a branch line, it is just 5 minutes to Marks Tey from where there is a reasonable service offering opportunities for travel to Colchester and London.
- Both villages have good accessibility to other key services including a primary school, a village hall and a convenience shop. There is potential to consolidate development close to the key facilities and core areas of the settlements. This has its limitations due to flood risk and other constraints but some potential on a small scale worth further exploration.
- Both Chappel and Wakes Colne are the largest settlements within their respective parish areas where the majority of the key services are located. These settlements are therefore the community focus within each parish and an obvious location for some growth.

- A number of sites have been promoted which suggests there is developer interest and land available.
- Potential for development may bring about enhanced connectivity between the two settlements as the key services are currently shared between the two.
- Land to the south of Chappel is away from the Flood Risk Zone and the conservation area designation and so is relatively unconstrained.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Representatives of Chappel Parish Council have attended an informal meeting with CBC officers to consider the SLAA sites but have not expressed a confirmed view in respect of the assessed sites. An indicative view was provided at the meeting acknowledging support in principal for some growth. Wakes Colne Parish Council indicated support to the principle of small scale, infill type development rather than larger scale growth, in their response to the Issues and Options Consultation.

Chappel Parish Council submitted a representation of support to the Preferred Options for the proposed housing site but raised the following concerns:

- Swan Grove has for many years had an issue with parking.
- Due to the parking issues in Swan Grove the Parish Council is concerned about traffic flow if the development is only accessed in and out using Swan Grove.
- We would ask that you liaise with Chappel Primary School regarding their need for development/expansion with regards to the extra pressures of spaces.
- Cllrs discussed the need for smaller housing units.
- Please can we also ask that your document is amended in relation to water supply

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

Chappel and Wakes Colne are separate settlements despite sharing key facilities, which are split between them. 257 households in the Chappel and Wakes Colne parish areas, of which 120 dwellings are located within the current main settlement areas of both villages.

- Chappel and Wakes Colne combined have a number of key community facilities (including a primary school) but these are relatively limited compared to more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough but the presence of a railway station increases the sustainability of the settlement.
- However, the above environmental and physical constraints including flood risk and historic character suggest that only small scale development is appropriate which is also supported by the current infrastructure.
- Additionally, the forecast surplus of primary school places at 2019/20 is only likely to be able to support a very small amount of growth, before further expansion/improvements may be required.

## Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

### **Broad Area 1 – Land to the South of Chappel (east of Chappel Hill)**

This area is constrained to the east by the railway line, and defined to the west by the road. To the south there is a clear definition provided by an existing hedgerow and existing property. It is well connected for key services including the primary school and PO / shop. The area to the south is free from environmental constraints which cover much of the area to the north, including flood risk and Conservation Area designation. Consideration would need to take account of a local wildlife site and nearby listed buildings. This potential area of search to the south includes 1 Amber SLAA site RNW66 which has the potential to accommodate up to 44 units, depending on how much land is released.

### **Broad area 2 – Land to the west of Chappel Hill**

This area of search could extend south as far as the boundary of Hill Farm Bungalow. No part of this area of search is covered by any SLAA sites, so consideration would need to be given to availability since no information on this is currently available. As there are suitable alternatives this is not pursued further at this stage, particularly given the level of constraints associated with the conservation area, heritage and landscape characteristics.

### **Broad area 3 – Land between Chappel and Wakes Colne**

An opportunity to create enhanced physical connectivity as although they are two separate Parishes the key services are split between the two. The A1124 and the fact that the whole area is within Flood Zone 3 suggests that no further consideration of this area is appropriate.

### **Broad area 4 - Land to the north and west of Wakes Colne**

Due to the railway line to the east the potential for Wakes Colne to extend is limited to northwards or westwards. Land to the north and west of Wakes Colne comprises the SLAA sites RNW06 with RNW07 which were submitted for residential development on approximately 2 hectares of land west of Bures Road and approximately 1.3 hectares for recreational use north of Colchester Road. The area proposed under RNW06 for housing has the potential to accommodate 67 dwellings. It is a small part of a larger agriculture field extending north and west of Wakes Colne. The Highway Authority has indicated that suitable access to the site is likely to be possible; however, any development would need to ensure that safe pedestrian access is provided connecting footways along station road to the facilities in Chappel. It's elevated nature would expose any development to public views across the open fields from Lane Road to the west particularly given the lack of hedgerow structure between Lane Road and the site. In addition, the hedge to Bures Road, which extends for just over half of the northern half of the sites roadside boundary is protected under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (HR97) and is classified as 'Important' under the HR97 criteria. There should therefore be a presumption to retain this hedge fully intact and in its entirety. Any development would need to be set outside the root protection area of

both this hedge and associated hedgerow trees, a constraint which would assumedly reduce, in practical terms, the development potential of the site. The character of the site as it rises northwards suggests that development of this site would constitute an extension into and loss of rural landscape, and arguably help dilute the perceived rural separation between Chappel and Wakes Colne Green.

### Other Areas

There are currently 5 small clusters of development defined by settlement boundaries around Chappel and Wakes Colne which are located remotely from the core of either settlement. These areas: Rose Green, Swan Street, Wakes Street, Inworth Lane and Middle Green are dispersed clusters remote from the settlement cores of either Chappel or Wakes Colne. Due to their remote location and physical detachment from the main settlement and key services they have limited sustainability and as such it is recommended that they are no longer defined by settlement boundaries.

### Summary of sites promoted/identified in Chappel and Wakes Colne in the SLAA

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS            | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH)     | RAG RATING |
|----------|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| RNW06    | Bures Road, Wakes Colne | 67                           | Amber      |
| RNW66    | Swan Grove, Chappel     | 44                           | Amber      |
| RNW13    | Middle Green            | 6                            | Amber      |
| RNW 21   | Bacon's Lane            | 39 (10) for highway reasons) | Amber      |
| RNW30    | Inworth Lane            | 24                           | Amber      |

A number of other sites were submitted around Chappel and Wakes Colne which were assessed in the SLAA and received a red rating so have not been considered further as part of the Settlement Boundary Review.

### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RNW66 Swan Grove Chappel (1.74ha) 30 units – This self-contained site provides a logical extension to the settlement boundary. 30 units is considered an appropriate increase in new housing at this location given the rural character of the area. Development of the site will need to ensure that it is well landscaped to reflect the character of the surrounding area.

### SLAA sites to discount

- RNW 06 - Bures Road, Wakes Colne (2.63ha) 67 units - The delivery of 67 new dwellings at this site is not considered to represent an appropriate level of growth in Wakes Colne. Even if the numbers of dwellings was reduced to only

deliver a road frontage development, the Highway Authority has raised concerns about the lack of footways on Station Road and a lack of developer control over land to deliver safe pedestrian access as part of any future development at this site. The site is quite prominent in the landscape from the south and development could adversely affect landscape character. Development of the site would extend the village's existing development edge along Bures Road into the open countryside. Furthermore, the site is distant from all services apart from transport links (rail and bus), which has an impact on its sustainability. RNW07 - Colchester Road, Wakes Colne recreational uses proposed are associated with the proposals presented by RNW06

- RNW13 This site is located well outside the 2 sustainable settlements areas of Chappel and Wakes Colne, therefore new development at this location is not considered sustainable as it would in effect deliver housing in open countryside and separate new residents from the key facilities in the core areas of Chappel and Wakes Colne.
- RNW 21 This site this site is located well outside the 2 sustainable settlements areas of Chappel and Wakes Colne, therefore new development at this location is not be considered sustainable as it would in effect deliver housing in open countryside and separate new residents from the key facilities in the core areas of Chappel and Wakes Colne.
- RNW30 This site this site is located well outside the 2 sustainable settlements areas of Chappel and Wakes Colne, therefore new development at this location is not be considered sustainable as it would in effect deliver housing in open countryside and separate new residents from the key facilities in the core areas of Chappel and Wakes Colne.

### Summary

As sustainable settlements, supporting a primary school, post office, pub, shop, village hall and railway station, Chappel and Wakes Colne are considered appropriate for growth which will help sustain the key services. The extent of flood risk, the topography of the area and the physical limitations as a result of the railway line and the A1124 suggest that growth of approximately 30 houses would be appropriate in relation to social, physical and environmental capacity. The 5 clusters of dispersed development are not considered to be sustainable locations or suitable for additional growth and it is recommended that the settlement development boundaries around these areas are removed.

### **Copford and Copford Green**

#### Settlement shape and form

Development is currently concentrated within 2 areas defined with settlement boundaries; Copford and Copford Green. Both are considered sustainable settlements. In the Copford settlement area, development has grown in a linear manner along London Road and extends southwards along School Road. Development also extends south-eastwards towards Stanway. In contrast Copford

Green has developed in a triangular built form where development has grown around the School Road, Rectory Road and Church Road junction. It is much more rural in character and has a high concentration of older buildings which fall within a Conservation Area.

#### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- The main health facilities are located at the Tollgate Medical Centre in Stanway which is located approximately 2.5km from Copford.
- Copford's primary school will have capacity issues (- 8 places by 2020). The closest secondary school is The Stanway School which is located approximately 3km from Copford. Stanway School will have capacity issues by 2020 however there are plans to expand the school.
- Copford does not have a village shop. The nearest shops are at Marks Tey, approximately 2km west of Copford, or Sainsburys which is located 2km to the east.
- Anglian Water has identified significant water supply and waste water infrastructure issues at Copford Sewage Treatment works. In the future waste and sewage treatment from Copford will be directed to Colchester Water Recycling Centre.
- A Conservation Area designation covers part of the north west of Copford Green.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- There is good access to Marks Tey railway station which is approximately 1km from the main Copford Settlement. Copford Green is slightly further away.
- Copford Green has a Primary School and public house, The Alma.
- There is a village hall which is located off School Road between Copford and Copford Green.

#### Parish Council /Neighbourhood Plan group view

In the early stages of work on the Settlement Boundary Review Copford Parish Council were preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, however, the current position is that work on this is no longer progressing. Allocations for Copford will now therefore be considered in the Local Plan.

Copford and Easthorpe Parish Council objected to the Preferred Options consultation in relation to the West Tey garden community and housing sites in Copford. Their points of concern in relation to the housing sites in Copford were:

- Number of houses / density;
- Capacity of infrastructure. Improvements should be in place before any houses built.
- Queensbury Ave - policy should seek protection of mature trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Concern about access and pedestrian safety.
- Hall Road – Concern about the safety of the pedestrian access and question sustainability. Concern about sprawl into countryside especially Pitts Wood. Policy to seek protection of heritage assets including archaeology. Policy

detailing very low density development in keeping with its surroundings also required.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

There are currently 635 households within Copford/Copford Green Parish. 518 of these are located within the Copford/Copford Green settlement boundaries, with 456 in Copford and 62 in Copford Green.

As part of the settlement boundary review the potential to link Copford & Copford Green settlement boundaries was explored. Even though there is scattered development between the two settlement areas, along School Road, Copford Green has a very different, more rural character to Copford. It is therefore considered appropriate to retain Copford and Copford Green as two distinct development areas.

The growth planned at sites in Copford should contribute towards the replacement of the relocatable classrooms at Copford Primary School at a cost of approximately £440,000.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** - This area covers northwest, north and north east Copford and land to the south of London Road. 7 sites being considered for allocation fall within this area. These are STN01, STN16, STN18, STN25, STN 26, STN27 and STN28. Development is constrained to the north of Copford by the A12 and the railway line and by the fact that the land south and east of the railway is quite well wooded and classed as being in flood zone 2. To the North West one field divides Copford and Marks Tey and the importance of retaining this green gap has been expressed by both parish councils in the recent past.

**Broad Area 2** - This area includes the land to east of School Road, Copford. Two large sites, STN11 and STN 19 are being considered for allocation in Area 2 which could deliver 225 new homes. This is considered too high a level of growth for the village to sustain. Development to the east of Copford is limited by its open rural character, by Local Wildlife Site Co49 and by Copford Sewage Treatment Works.

**Broad Area 3** - This covers the land between Copford and Copford Green. 2 sites, STN10 & STN17 were considered for allocation within this area. The land is adjacent to the Conservation Area which would need to be taken into account if any development was undertaken. It is not obvious how either site will access the public highway because of insufficient highway frontage.

### Summary of Green/Amber SLAA sites (19)

|        |  |           |       |
|--------|--|-----------|-------|
| STN01  | London Road, Copford/Marks Tey           | 215       | Amber |
| *STN10 | Tyhurst, Copford Green                   | see STN17 | Amber |
| STN11  | School Road, Copford                     | 70        | Amber |
| STN16  | The Willows, Foundry Lane, Copford       | 135       | Amber |
| *STN17 | Green Farmhouse, School Rd Copford Green | 36        | Amber |

|       |                                 |     |       |
|-------|---------------------------------|-----|-------|
| STN18 | Hall Road, Copford              | 48  | Amber |
| STN19 | School Road, Copford            | 155 | Amber |
| STN25 | West Queensbury Avenue, Copford | 35  | Amber |
| STN26 | East Queensbury Avenue, Copford | 70  | Amber |
| STN27 | London Road (south), Copford    | 29  | Red   |
| STN28 | Land off Allendale Drive        | 8   | Green |

\*combined assessment for STN10 & STN17

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

STN18- This land in Hall Lane is being promoted for approximately 50 houses. The site is located just off the main London Road which provides good access to shops, services and facilities in both Stanway and Marks Tey, including the train station. There are bus stops along London Road. Improvements to the primary school will be required which will require a contribution towards replacing relocatable classrooms. Anglian Water have confirmed there are no objections regarding water supply, drainage & flood risk. The Highway Authority were satisfied that there appeared to be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards. Initial concerns about the lack of footways in Hall Road have been addressed by the promoter who has confirmed to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority that they have control over sufficient land to deliver a safe pedestrian access.

STN 26 – this site to the East of Queensbury Avenue has the potential to deliver 70 dwellings. It shows suitability for development given its location adjacent to an existing development boundary and being surrounded by development on three sides. The site was identified through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment but its availability has been confirmed by the land owners. Any future development would need to consider the public right of way running adjacent to the site. The site is located just off the main London Road which provides good access to shops, services and facilities in both Stanway and Marks Tey, including the train station. There are bus stops along London Road. Improvements to the primary school will be required which will require a contribution towards replacing relocatable classrooms. Anglian Water have confirmed there are no objections regarding water supply, drainage & flood risk. Policy should include reference to access from London road if possible and encouragement will be given to a care home/retirement type village on the site.

#### SLAA sites to discount

STN01 – Car Boot Sale site - The Highway Authority has confirmed that there is sufficient frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required standard at this location. However, developing this site would cause coalescence with the eastern edge of Marks Tey, so it should not be allocated for development. The site is also partly in Marks Tey and it would be premature to allocate it in advance of the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan and further detail about the Colchester/Braintree Border Garden Community.

STN 10 & STN17 – together these sites could potentially deliver an additional 35 dwellings which would equate to a 56% increase in the number of houses in Copford Green. The sites are located adjacent to the Copford Green settlement boundary,

Conservation Area and the primary school. 35 dwellings on the edge of Conservation Area are considered inappropriate in terms of density and out of keeping with the surrounding rural character. Furthermore, the Highway Authority has questioned whether there would be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards at this location. For these reason the sites should be discounted.

STN11 – East of School Road - this site could potentially deliver 70 dwellings. The site has some issues with suitability, sustainability and a lack of information regarding achievability and availability, therefore there are concerns regarding deliverability at this stage. It is located close to a sewage pumping station therefore not all of it would be suitable for allocation. Furthermore, whilst the Highway Authority has confirmed that there would be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards, a number of Public Rights of Way within and/or immediately adjacent to the site, would need to be permanently diverted and/or upgraded as part of any future development. The site is located close to STN19.

STN16 – south of the A12 - this site is predominantly wooded. The northern section also lies in flood zone 2. No access issues have been identified by the Highway Authority, but it is recommended that the site is discounted on flood grounds and also because the woodland forms a useful acoustic and visual barrier to the railway line and A12 which runs due north of the site.

STN 19 – East of School Road - this site could potentially deliver up to 155 dwellings. However it is located close to Copford sewage pumping station therefore not all of it would be suitable for allocation. Also, the Highway Authority has also questioned whether there is sufficient frontage to enable an access to be delivered that would meet the required highways standards. The site is located close to STN 16 and taken together the two sites could deliver 225 units which is considered excessive for Copford.

STN25 – West of Queensbury Avenue - this site has the potential to deliver 35 dwellings on the edge of the existing development boundary. There are issues in relation to landscape impact and agricultural land classification, Availability and achievability are also key issues in relation to the possibility of the site being developed. Most importantly, there is play equipment and goal posts on part of this site which provides an important informal play area in Copford.

STN27 – although the site has not been promoted through the Call for Sites process, the landowner is unknown and it is grade 2 agricultural land. The site forms part of the garden curtilage to properties on London Road. There is no obvious road frontage for access. The site has a Red RAG rating in the SLAA, so is not therefore considered appropriate for allocation.

### Summary

Copford is a sustainable settlement with a limited range of facilities. There are good services and facilities nearby in Stanway and Marks Tey, including good access to Marks Tey railway station. There are currently 635 households within the parish and land is allocated for the delivery of 120 new dwellings, which is an increase of 18%.

This is considered an appropriate level of growth in relation to the constraints and opportunities and the relative sustainability of Copford.

## **Dedham**

Following further consideration it will be recommended that the residential allocations in Dedham Heath are removed from the Local Plan on the basis that they are located within or adjacent to the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and it is not considered to be justifiable given the availability of additional residential land in areas of lower landscape value elsewhere in the Borough. Furthermore the sites are some distance from the nearest services and facilities in Dedham village and development of the scale previously proposed is not able to adequately mitigate against this important sustainability indicator.

Representations have been received promoting land on the southern boundary of the existing settlement however development at this location is considered to have worse sustainability credentials than the previously promoted sites given that the settlement's core services and facilities are located in Dedham village, to the north of Dedham Heath.

For the purposes of consistency with the Local Plan spatial strategy it will also be recommended that Dedham Heath will be classed as an 'Other Village' in recognition of its unsuitability and lower sustainability for further residential allocations and ability to support sustainable growth.

### Settlement shape and form

Most of the Dedham parish area falls within the Dedham Vale 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.

Dedham village developed around the High Street and has spread southwards along Brook Street and Crown Street. Dedham Heath has developed around a crossroads at the junction of Long Road West, Long Road East, The Heath and Coggeshall Road and is located approx. 1km to the south of Dedham village.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- All of Dedham village and the northern half of Dedham Heath are located within the Dedham Vale AONB it is important that any growth does not compromise the overall important function and purpose of the AONB designation.
- No sites have been promoted in or around Dedham village in the SLAA and there are no obvious opportunities for growth beyond existing boundaries but some sites have been promoted in and around Dedham Heath.

- Dedham Heath is a sustainable settlement but is located some distance away from a secondary school (5.1km) and Colchester town centre (approx. 8.8km). It has limited train links – Manningtree being the nearest station. It is therefore not suitable for large-scale growth.
- Evidence from Anglian Water suggests that upgrades or treatments are likely to be needed to serve any proposed growth.
- Dedham Heath is a fairly small settlement with limited services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough and it looks to Dedham village (approx 1km away) for most facilities including a GP, Post Office, primary school and a number of shops and services.
- Further ribbon development should be prevented to the north (along The Heath – to prevent Dedham Heath merging with Dedham), to the west (along Long Road West – to discourage merging with Lamb Corner) to the east (along Long Road East – to discourage merging with Bargate Lane) and to the south to discourage further development which is located away from existing village services and facilities and where character is more rural
- Development that would not represent a logical extension to the existing built up area would not be supported

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Dedham Heath represents the only obvious location for some growth in Dedham (due to environmental constraints and lack of promoted land around the main part of Dedham and because the smaller settlements of Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane are not considered to be sustainable or suitable for additional growth).
- The primary school (Dedham Church of England Primary School) is located to the north in Dedham village, which is forecast to have a surplus of 21 places at 2019/20.
- The Parish Council has identified a need for a number of smaller dwellings/bungalows in the Parish.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

The Parish Council do not support new allocations within the AONB. The Parish Council suggest between 5 and 15 new homes would be appropriate over the plan period (not on each site). There is a perceived need for housing comprising of starter homes for younger people and smaller homes for the elderly to downsize.

Dedham Parish Council responded to the Preferred Options consultation questioning the need for the development planned for the Borough and the impact this has on Dedham AONB and key services. The Parish Council recognise the need for housing stock, which should be limited to 1-3 bedroom homes. The current area planned for development has problems with surface water drainage and sewerage and the Parish Council will not support development here until existing problems are resolved. They do not support development within the AONB other than for downsizing within the main village envelope. Any other development should be spread more evenly across Dedham and they do not accept the proposed changes to the current village envelopes. There is a local need for additional car parking in Dedham village.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

- There are 795 households currently in the wider Dedham parish area of which 169 dwellings are within the current settlement development boundary of Dedham Heath.
- Dedham Heath is close to Dedham and its community facilities (including its own primary school). Dedham Heath is served by a rural bus service connecting it to both Dedham and Colchester.
- Physical constraints and the lack of land promoted in or around Dedham village limits the opportunity for expansion around Dedham. Whereas, Dedham Heath is less constrained and some sites have been promoted.
- There are major concerns about existing drainage/sewage capacity in the village – any development will need to contribute to any upgrades/expansion required.
- The local primary school is forecasted to have a surplus by 2019 so is capable of accommodating some growth.
- A rural exception site has recently been delivered in Dedham to address local housing needs.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

#### **Broad area 1** – Expansion south-westwards to the west of Coggeshall Road

This broad area contains SLAA site RNE15. This size of site is not considered to represent an appropriate level of growth in this part of Dedham. It would also extend the settlement further southwards away from existing services and facilities. Land is currently heavily vegetated which contributes to the rural character of the area.

#### **Broad area 2** – Expansion eastwards to the south of Long Road East

This broad area is SLAA site RNE13. Whilst this site would extend the settlement eastwards along Long Road East development would be contained by an existing dwelling and track to the east, which represents a logical barrier to contain eastwards expansion to avoid the merging of Dedham Heath with the neighbouring Bargate Lane area. This site would be a continuation of existing development to the west and so in this respect it represents a logical extension to the built up area. No obvious physical boundaries to define the site to the south so it would need suitable landscaping to provide an appropriate settlement edge.

#### **Broad area 3** – Expansion northwards to the north of Long Road West and west of The Heath

This broad area is SLAA site RNE07. Whilst the site is within the AONB, it represents a sensible and logical extension to the built up area at the centre of Dedham Heath on the main bus route and is well contained by existing development to the west and roads to the south and east and its development would cause no more harm to the wider AONB designation than existing development to the west and north so should not automatically be discounted on the grounds of being within the AONB.

Development would need suitable landscaping to the west and north to minimise any wider impacts on the AONB.

#### **Broad area 4 – Expansion to the north of Long Road East**

This broad area is SLAA site RNE53. Whilst site is within the AONB, it represents a sensible and logical extension to the built up area at the centre of Dedham Heath, development would mirror the character and form of development opposite and would cause no more harm to the wider AONB designation than this development or development to the west. Development would need suitable landscaping to the north to minimise any wider impacts on the AONB.

#### Summary of Green/Amber SLAA sites promoted in Dedham Heath (5)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                                | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATIN G |
|----------|---|--------------------------|-------------|
| RNE05    | Sun Downe, The Heath, Dedham Heath          | 32                       | Amber       |
| RNE07    | Long Road West & The Heath, Dedham Heath    | 13                       | Amber       |
| RNE13    | Long Road East, Dedham Heath                | 10                       | Amber       |
| RNE15    | Coggeshall Road, Dedham Heath               | 74                       | Amber       |
| RNE53    | Long Road East (smaller site), Dedham Heath | 12                       | Amber       |

No sites were promoted/identified in Dedham village itself, but are located close to the Dedham Heath area. 3 of the sites are also in the AONB.

A number of other sites were submitted which were assessed in the SLAA and received a red rating so have not been considered further as part of the Settlement Boundary Review.

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

None

#### SLAA sites to discount

- RNE05 – Development would not represent a logical extension to the existing built up area as it would result in the protrusion of the settlement into surrounding open countryside and is likely to have an adverse impact on the AONB landscape due to its location. There does not appear to be sufficient road frontage to enable a suitable access to be achieved.
- RNE15 – would result in development further away from existing services and facilities in Dedham. It is also of a size which would not be proportional within Dedham Heath. There is no footpath to the bus stop.
- RNE07 – Land north of Long Road West and west of The Heath – comprises a site that is well enclosed by existing development and would mirror

development opposite. There appears to be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards but this would require the removal of a portion of protected hedgerow. The site is within the AONB, where it has been determined no development should take place because of the availability of other less important land.

- RNE13 – Land south of Long Road East – This represents a continuation of the existing settlement form. There appears to be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards but development would need to provide suitable footpaths into Dedham Heath. The site is adjacent to the AONB and development could have a negative impact on the AONB.
- RNE53 – Land north of Long Road East – This site is adjacent to existing development and would mirror development opposite. There appears to be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards but this would require the removal of a portion of protected hedgerow. Only a single access point would be supported to keep the loss of hedgerow to a minimum. Development would need to provide suitable footpaths into Dedham Heath. The site is within the AONB, where it has been determined no development should take place because of the availability of other less important land. There is a listed building adjacent the site.

The Council acknowledges that sites RNE07, RNE13, RNE53 have some merit and are preferable to other sites in Dedham Heath considered as part of the SLAA, however as an 'Other Village' which is within and adjacent the AONB, no land will be allocated and policy OV1 will apply. There is potential for these sites to come forward through the development management process as rural exception sites.

### Summary

There are no obvious locations for growth around Dedham village centre, which is highly constrained due to it being well within the Dedham Vale AONB and because of its historic character. It is recommended that growth here should be limited to small-scale infill development within the existing settlement boundary.

For the purposes of consistency with the Local Plan spatial strategy Dedham Heath will be classed as an 'Other Village' in recognition of its unsuitability and lower sustainability for further residential allocations and ability to support sustainable growth.

It is proposed to remove the settlement boundaries from the two smaller clusters of properties either side of Dedham Heath known as Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane, to discourage development in these locations which are not considered to be sustainable or suitable for further development.

## Eight Ash Green

### Settlement shape and form

Development is currently concentrated in 3 areas defined with settlement boundaries. Only 2 are considered sustainable; Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green /Choats Corner. The Seven Star Green settlement boundary 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.

In the Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath settlement area, development has grown in a linear manner around the Halstead Road/Spring Lane junction and northwards along Spring Lane. It extends south-eastwards to the roundabout adjacent to the Holiday Inn.

The Eight Ash Green/ Choats Corner settlement area has grown predominantly northwards around the Halstead Road, Wood Lane, Heath Road and Fiddlers Hill highways junctions in an almost rectangular growth pattern.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Eight Ash Green has limited access to Marks Tey or Colchester train stations which are approximately 5km and 6km away respectively.
- The main Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath settlement boundary is constrained to the North West by Fordham Heath which is an important open space in the village and the arable land beyond that. The village allotments are also located on the heath along with the village cricket ground and pavilion. There is a pub and restaurant overlooking the green.
- Heath Road is a physical barrier to the expansion of Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green Choats Corner northwards as this would extend new development northwards into open countryside.
- Development is also constrained northwards beyond Fordham Heath which is a designated Local Wildlife Site Co60.
- Halstead Road is a barrier to extending growth southwards from Choats Corner as new development would be physically separated from existing and new facilities.
- Development to the northwest of Choats Corner is limited by Local Site (Fiddlers Wood). Developing Eight Ash Green/ Choats Corner to the north west would extend new development away from existing key facilities and into open countryside which would not be considered sustainable.
- Development to the south and south east of Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath is constrained by residential & leisure developments i.e. Holiday Inn.
- The closest secondary school is at Stanway which is located approximately 2km from Eight Ash Green village. Stanway School will have a deficit by 2020. The closest health facilities and Strategic Economic Area are also located approximately 2km away at Tollgate Medical Centre.
- Eight Ash Green has a primary school, however it will only have a small amount of capacity (14 places) by 2020 and the site is surrounded by housing therefore it has limited capacity to expand.

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Eight Ash Green village is reasonably well served by facilities including a village hall, 3 shops (a farm shop, a shop within a garage and a mobile shop) and a pub. There is also a primary school located within the Choats Corner settlement boundary. There is also a takeaway, convenience store and beauty salon.
- Opportunity to improve links and to provide new community facilities that could be shared between the 2 existing sustainable settlement areas in Eight Ash Green.
- Opportunities to improve accessibility between Eight Ash Green and the school
- Opportunity to improve Spring Lane junction (issue identified in the Eight Ash Green Village Design Statement).

### Parish Council views

Key Issues for the parish include protecting green breaks around the village to prevent coalescence with Stanway and protection of open space. The need for a play area was also highlighted. The Parish Council has also spoken about the dispersed pattern of development in the village and how the potential for new housing to help link the two parts better warrants further consideration if this becomes an objective of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Eight Ash Green Parish Council is currently developing a Neighbourhood Plan. They have indicated that they are generally supportive of the principle of some growth in the village and they intend to allocate sites in their Neighbourhood Plan.

As the Neighbourhood Plan will allocate sites, the more detailed consideration of the site allocation assessments will be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group as it progresses through the next stages of plan preparation. For the purposes of informing the emerging Local Plan a level of assessment has been carried out by the Borough Council with discussions with the Neighbourhood Plan Group to agree an appropriate level of growth. This is summarised below with a more detailed assessment of the relative merits and recommendations on sites to be addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan. Any site references made in the summary below relates to the Council's SLAA assessment.

Eight Ash Green Parish Council did not submit a representation to the Preferred Options consultation, but the Neighbourhood Plan group submitted representations of support.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

There are currently 680 households in Eight Ash Green Parish. These dwellings are concentrated in 3 defined settlement boundaries around Fordham Heath, Choats Corner and Seven Star Green. Seven Star Green has been identified as a less sustainable settlement therefore no additional growth will be directed to this part of Eight Ash Green. The main residential development areas are located within the Eight Ash Green / Fordham Heath settlement boundary & Choats Corner settlement boundary. Within these 2 areas there are currently 569 dwellings with 285 located around Eight Ash Green /Fordham Heath and 284 within the Choats Corner settlement

boundary. Following discussion between the Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Group, taking into account the relevant planning constraints and opportunities in Eight Ash Green it has been agreed that an appropriate level of Growth for the settlement is around 150 additional dwellings during the plan period up to 2033.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** – essentially includes the network of arable fields centrally located between Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green/Choats Hill settlement boundaries and bound to the north and south by Heath Road and Halstead Road respectively. This includes sites RNW02 and RNW46.

**Broad Area 2** – includes land between Eight Ash Green and Stanway near the junction to the A12. The area includes sites STN14, STN38, STN20.

**Broad Area 3** – this includes sites RNW 01, RNW 09, RNW70 and RNW19 located to the south of Halstead Road.

**Broad Area 4** – this broad area is located to the north west of Choats Hill settlement boundary and includes site RNW67.

Green/Amber SLAA sites (8)

|       |  |     |       |
|-------|--|-----|-------|
| RNW01 | Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green         | 174 | Amber |
| RNW02 | Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green         | 177 | Amber |
| RNW09 | Seven Star Green, Eight Ash Green      | 213 | Amber |
| RNW19 | Halstead Road (south) Eight Ash Green  | 20  | Amber |
| RNW46 | Heath Road (south), Eight Ash Green    | 394 | Amber |
| RNW67 | Fiddlers Hill Fordham Heath            | 204 | Amber |
| RNW70 | Seven Star Green, Eight Ash Green      | 152 | Amber |
| STN14 | Halstead Road (north), Eight Ash Green | 134 | Amber |

RNW67 – this site abuts Choats Hill settlement boundary and is close to Holy Trinity Primary School. The Highway Authority has raised concerns about the lack of an obvious highway access to the part of the site, and it is apparent that any development would have to be accessed via Fiddlers Farm. There are no highway issues raised (including footways) in relation to accessing this larger part of the site from Halstead Road. Developing this site would extend development north westwards away from Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath Area and other key facilities. This site has been promoted for approximately 200 dwellings, which is above the level supported via the Neighbourhood Plan of around 150. More detailed consideration of the options via the NHP could refine the site area if favoured for allocation and the policy considerations which may influence the number of dwellings which could be delivered.

RNW02- If the Neighbourhood Plan concludes that there is a desire to link the two parts of the settlement then this site has potential for further consideration for potential allocation – this site comprises 2 arable fields covering an area of 6.94ha. The fields are located between the 2 defined sustainable settlement areas in Eight Ash Green.

The site is bound to the east by residential development and a single dwelling abuts the western boundary of the fields.

The northern boundary is delineated by a strip of woodland while Halstead Road demarks the southern boundary. Development at this location would help link the two distinct parts of Eight Ash Green better and have the potential to create a more cohesive settlement. Off road linkages to the school could be provided. There is a strip of woodland to the north of this site which should be retained as greenspace in the village. If developed site RNW02 could deliver up to 177 dwellings.

RNW01 – this site is located outside the 2 sustainable settlements areas in Eight Ash Green to the south of Halstead Road. Whilst the Highway Authority has not identified any access issues, new development at this location may not be considered sustainable as it would in effect deliver housing in open countryside and separate new residents from the key facilities in Eight Ash Green by Halstead Road which is extremely busy. Any further development in this area would need to ensure adequate safe crossing which would need further consideration and agreement with the Highway Authority.

RNW 09 – this site is located to the south of Halstead Road some distance away from the 2 sustainable settlements areas in Eight Ash Green. Whilst the Highway Authority is happy that there is sufficient frontage to provide an access at the required standard, they have raised concerns about the owner's potential lack of control over sufficient land to provide safe pedestrian access off Turkey Cock Lane. New development at this location may not be considered sustainable as it would in effect start to spread development towards open countryside, with an urbanising effect and separate new residents from the key facilities in Eight Ash Green by Halstead Road which is extremely busy. Any further development in this area would need to ensure adequate safe crossing which would need further consideration and agreement with the Highway Authority.

RNW19 – this site is located outside the 2 sustainable settlements areas in Eight Ash Green to the south of Halstead Road. Whilst the Highway Authority has not identified any access issues, new development at this location may not be considered sustainable as it would in effect start to spread development towards open countryside, with an urbanising effect and separate new residents from the key facilities in Eight Ash Green by Halstead Road which is extremely busy. Any further development in this area would need to ensure adequate safe crossing which would need further consideration and agreement with the Highway Authority.

RNW 46 – this site could deliver an additional 394 units which would equate to a 69% increase in the number of dwellings in Eight Ash Green if supported in full. This is considered too large an increase for Eight Ash Green considering its relative sustainability, the available facilities and constraints in terms of their ability to expand and the level of housing supported by the Neighbourhood Plan Group. Although the Highway Authority has not raised any issues related to access via Heath Road, they have raised concerns about the lack of footways in Heath Road and the lack of the promoter's potential control over sufficient land to deliver a footway or footways. The Highway Authority is unable to support a residential development with no safe means of access for pedestrians and has suggested that the site could only come forward as

part of more comprehensive larger scale growth (or through a joint master plan) associated with other sites including RNW02 and RNW46.

RNW70 - this site is located outside the 2 sustainable settlements areas in Eight Ash Green to the south of Halstead Road. The Highway Authority has raised concerns about the lack of an obvious highway access off Halstead Road. New development at this location may not be considered sustainable as it would in effect start to spread development towards open countryside, with an urbanising effect and separate new residents from the key facilities in Eight Ash Green by Halstead Road which is extremely busy. Any further development in this area would need to ensure adequate safe crossing which would need further consideration and agreement with the Highway Authority.

STN14 – developing this site could lead to settlement coalescence with Stanway which the Parish Council has identified as a concern. The Highway Authority has also raised concerns regarding access which would require further consideration. In addition it is located away from most of the key facilities in the village and in particular is remote from the primary school and any development here would need to ensure it provides good and safe connectivity between the site and existing key facilities, in particular the primary school. There may also be noise issues from the A12 and railway line.

### Summary

Site specific allocations will be made through the Neighbourhood Plan. As part of this process the Neighbourhood Plan group has recently undertaken community consultations on the list of sites under consideration. In response to this a preferred area of growth has been identified around Fiddlers Hill, close to the primary school. However, if the Neighbourhood Plan incorporates objectives which seek to enhance the physical links and cohesiveness between the 2 main built up areas of Eight Ash Green, then sites between these areas have clear benefits and provide the opportunity to help achieve this objective, as well as accessibility to existing and any new facilities.

## **Fordham**

### Settlement shape and form

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 and a convenience shop / post office are located within the core of the concentrated area of development. 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.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- The liner form of the settlement has the potential to lead to continuous ribbon development which could have an impact on the character of the village.
- Further extension to the north or south in particular may lead to unacceptable ribbon development.
- The Primary school is located at the southern extremity of the village which as an important community facility has an impact on accessibility/sustainability in some parts of the settlement.
- Land to the south to the settlement towards the Primary School is constrained by a group of listed buildings including the church and a local wildlife site.
- The two areas of the settlement are separated by open countryside to the east including the community orchard and a significant listed property set in mature landscaped garden to the west.
- Land to the west around the Moat Hall and Plummers Road lead onto an extensive area of community woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- With the Primary school located on the southern periphery of the settlement and other services further north there is potential to enhance connectivity and physically enhance links between the separated areas of the village.
- The school itself is a little detached from the southern end of the settlement, there is therefore the opportunity to better connect the settlement with the Primary school.
- An attractive and effective pedestrian link between Plummers Road and the rest of Fordham has recently been established. This could be further enhanced and utilised through extending the area in the north to the east of Plummers Road.

### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Fordham Parish Council submitted a representation to the Preferred Options stating that 20 homes on this site is approximately the right number and represents a fair proportion of growth for this rural village. The Parish Council consider that given the existing problems with traffic and speeding through the Village careful thought should be given to road layouts, access and egress to any new development site and that developer contributions should be used for traffic calming measures and to make walking through the Village safer for pedestrians. There is also concern about there being sufficient school places for new families.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

- The current population of Fordham is 528, with 220 households within the defined built up area and a total of 315 including the dispersed development within the wider Parish.
- The settlement as a whole is sustainable supporting many key community facilities including a school, shop, village hall, public house and playing field. Extensive areas of community woodland also provide informal open space in the centre of the village;

- The linear character of the village limits the opportunities for sustainable expansion, where ribbon development may locate houses remotely from the key services;
- The character and setting of the settlement and location of listed buildings and established community woodland restrict opportunities for development to the west of the village.
- The Primary school at Fordham is currently at capacity and is projected to remain so up to 2019.
- There are concerns regarding the capacity of water infrastructure. There are issues related to poor capacity to manage surface water and foul water. AW has identified a major constraint regarding managing surface water flooding in Fordham.
- The constraints linked to limiting further ribbon development, the capacity of social and physical infrastructure and the impact on the character of listed buildings and wooded areas within the centre of the village to the west and to the south together impact on the potential capacity for future growth.
- Approximately 20 dwellings (2-3 houses a year) is considered to be incremental and appropriate to the environmental and physical capacity of the village, subject to suitable sites being available in areas of highest constraint.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad area 1** – Land east of Church Road between the Primary School and Fossets Lane / Allotments. Additional land to the east of Church Road north and south of Fossets Lane would add a strong connection between the school and the village without the barrier of a busy road. No sites have been promoted or assessed in this area.

**Broad area 2** – Land opposite Moat Hall – this area is in the centre between the two parts of the village. It is home to the community orchard and is otherwise open and contributes to the setting of Moat Hall on the opposite side of the village. A good pedestrian connection already runs alongside the agriculture land from Plummers Road through this area. Although development here would provide a physical link it would impact on the open character which is prominent in this part of the village. No sites have been promoted or assessed on this area.

**Broad Area 4** Land to the east of Plummers Road. This area is grade 2 agricultural land which appears fairly enclosed by residential development to the south, north and west. Land has been submitted in part as SLAA site RNW03 as well as a larger area including RNW04. These are the only sites promoted and assessed in Fordham. A logical boundary to the east would be to follow the line of the existing development to the south and north.

#### Green/Amber SLAA sites

RNW 03 and 04 - Plummers Road submitted as one large site of 2.1 hectares which could accommodate 53 units. Could be developed in part for a smaller number of units.

## SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RNW03 and RNW04 - assessed together as combined sites total area 2.1ha max 53 dwellings. Although on grade 2 agriculture land, this is the only area where land is promoted and it is located away from the areas constrained by woodland and the potential impact on the setting of listed buildings. The site is defined to the south, north and west by residential development. A boundary to the west could be defined following the existing extent of development to the south and north. Only partial development of this area could therefore be supported for approximately 20 dwellings.

### Summary

Opportunities to expand Fordham are limited. It is already a long linear settlement which would be undesirable to further extend by ribbon development. Expansion may be appropriate to the east or west but the undeveloped areas to the west are the most sensitive environmentally with potential harmful impacts on the character and setting of listed buildings and on established community woodland. Land to the north east around Plummers Road is away from these key constraints and is also the only area where sites have been submitted. Two sites have been submitted but only partial development in this area for up to 20 dwellings is recommended as being a suitable level of growth representing incremental growth to support the existing sustainable community and having regard to the key constraints which apply.

## **Great Horkesley**

### Settlement shape and form

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 is a primary school and dental surgery within the main village and a petrol station, post office, village hall and a number of public houses along the A134.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Land to the south of Great Horkesley slopes down and is within the flood zone.
- It is desirable to prevent coalescence of Great Horkesley with the main Colchester urban area to the south to retain the individual identity of Great Horkesley.
- It is desirable to prevent further ribbon development to the west to discourage further development away from existing village services and facilities and where character is more rural/or is open countryside.
- Sewerage/drainage/mains issues – existing facilities at West Bergholt STW at capacity.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Great Horkesley is a sustainable village (558 dwellings) located close to the main Colchester urban area on a key transport route with a good bus service which serves the railway station. It is just over 4km from the town centre and just under 4km from a secondary school. It has its own primary school, post office and a number of other facilities.
- Great Horkesley is the only settlement in the Great Horkesley Parish area and so is the main community focus within the parish
- A large number of sites have been promoted/identified around the village which suggests there is developer interest and land available for development.
- The primary school in the village (Bishop William Ward Primary School), is forecast to have a surplus of 18 places at 2019/20 and there appears to be physical space to accommodate any expansion required.
- Potential to enhance community facilities including improved scouting facilities and allotments.

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Great Horkesley Parish Council does not appear to have made any specific comments regarding the sites promoted through the call for sites process but is keen for any new development to fund improvements/extension to the village hall and to provide land for new allotments and the relocation/refurbishment of the scout hut.

The Parish Council submitted a representation of support to the Preferred Options consultation in relation to the proposed housing sites in Great Horkesley. They also stated that they reserve the right to change the community benefits being sought.

Discussion on appropriate growth

- There are 930 households currently in the wider Great Horkesley Parish area of which 558 dwellings are within the current settlement development boundary of the main part of the village.
- Great Horkesley has a number of key community facilities (including its own primary school) and is close to the main Colchester urban area via a main road and bus route, which has a wide range of services and facilities.
- A large amount of land has been promoted around the village which demonstrates there is interest in development and land available.
- Taking into account the above constraints approximately 90 new dwellings, is considered to be incremental and appropriate given the environmental and physical capacity of the village and its size and relative sustainability. Growth would need to be able to contribute to any additional social infrastructure required to support this level of growth (in particular any improvements to the local primary school, scout hut or sewerage provision). This level may be supplemented by small-scale infill development within the village.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities**Broad area 1** – Expansion north of Coach Road

Two large sites have been promoted in this area. The land is currently in arable use and development would be particularly visible in the landscape. Site RNE46 is defined by existing housing to the east and south whereas RNE45 is more remote and extends into open countryside. Whilst one of the sites is close to the primary school, both sites are more remote from other services and facilities, including bus stops. Additional development in this area would result in more traffic passing the village school and using the walking route used by pupils. The size of these sites would not represent an appropriate level of development.

**Broad area 2** – Expansion east of A134 (Nayland Road)

Land to the east of the A134 includes the grounds of Great Horkesley Manor (which currently operates as a care home) and arable land beyond. Growth in this area would introduce housing at the heart of the village, although it would breach the A134. Whilst the site is close to the primary school it would require pupils to cross a busy main road and so would require suitable crossing points. This broad area contains SLAA site RNE10 but the size of the whole site is too large and would not represent an appropriate level of development, if it was all developed. To avoid over-development and the continuous expansion of the village eastwards, development should be limited to extend no further east than the present Great Horkesley Manor (beyond which lies a belt of trees/woodland and a small brook) or the extent of existing development to the north along Ivy Lodge Road. This site would be defined by the A134 and housing development to the west, housing development to the south and north and a belt of trees to the east.

**Broad area 3** – Expansion west/southwards – This broad area of land contains two large SLAA sites (RNW47 and RNE48). The size of both of these sites are not considered to represent an appropriate level of development. Vehicular access would also appear to be an issue as Brick Kiln Lane would not be a suitable access road for the scale of development that could be accommodated on these sites. This land is currently in arable use and there is woodland to the south and east.

**Other Areas-** Small scale expansion around School Lane may create the potential to facilitate improvements to the old village hall and the scout hut if comprehensive development were considered. A small site (RNE02) may enable this opportunity to be further explored.

Green/Amber SLAA sites promoted in Great Horkesley (12)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS   | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|--|--------------------------|------------|
| RNE02    | School Lane, Great Horkesley                                   | 13                       | Amber      |
| RNE10    | Horkesley Manor, Great Horkesley                               | 537                      | Green      |
| RNE33    | Cedar Brook, Great Horkesley                                   | 46                       | Amber      |
| RNE36    | Ivy Lodge (site 1) Great Horkesley Nursery, London Road, Great | 60                       | Amber      |
| RNE38    | Horkesley Park   | 22                       | Amber      |

|       |   |     |       |
|-------|---|-----|-------|
| RNE42 | East Infill, Great Horkesley              | 129 | Amber |
| RNE45 | Old House Road, Great Horkesley           | 411 | Amber |
| RNE46 | Land north of Coach Road, Great Horkesley | 195 | Amber |
| RNE47 | Land south of Coach Road, Great Horkesley | 411 | Amber |
| RNE48 | Green Lane, Great Horkesley               | 170 | Amber |
| RNE49 | Ivy Lodge (Site 3), Great Horkesley       | 233 | Amber |

A further site RNE35 received a red SLAA rating.

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RNE02 – Land off School Lane to the north of the village offers the opportunity for comprehensive development which includes the redevelopment of a brownfield site and could improve access to the old village hall and the scout hut. The site includes a listed building and care will need to be taken to safeguard its setting. This site could provide approximately 13 new dwellings which together with the larger site close to Great Horkesley Manor is considered to represent an appropriate level of growth over the plan period. The existing scout hut is in poor condition and development proposals should look to replace and/or contribute to its relocation.

RNE10 – Great Horkesley Manor (western portion of the site) – Whilst development would breach the A134 (which is a busy main road) the western portion of the site represents a logical extension to the village as development would fill a large gap between existing dwellings at the heart of the village and would be contained within the wider landscape by a belt of trees and small brook to the east. The site would be directly served by existing bus routes, would have direct vehicular access onto the A134 and would be significantly closer - for some within walking/cycling distance - to the local services to be provided just south of the A12 as part of the Chesterwell development. There is potential for up to 80 dwellings on this part of the site which would accord with what is considered to be appropriate for Great Horkesley together with a small site of School Lane. Development would need to be capable of financially contributing to the expansion of the primary school and any provision required to address sewerage/drainage issues. Access points off Nayland Road would need to be kept to a minimum to avoid disrupting the flow of traffic along this busy main road but the principal of access off this road is supported and there appears to be sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway design standards. Suitable traffic management and crossing opportunities would be needed as development here would require pupils to cross the main road. Appropriate design and landscaping would be required to preserve the setting of the existing Manor building and the tree-lined approach road from the main road – whilst not listed, it is considered to be a visually prominent local building set within large, open grounds.

#### SLAA sites to discount

- RNE33 – part of the site is within a flood zone and development would extend the village too far south. Development might require the diversion of an existing public right of way.

- RNE42, RNE49 and RNE36 – these sites would extend the built up area northwards along the A134 away from the main part of the village, the primary school and the Colchester urban area. The Highway Authority has indicated concerns regarding access issues for RNE49.
- RNE38 – the site would ordinarily be excluded from consideration as it lies well outside the settlement boundary, but in this instance an appeal decision points to the acceptability in general terms of some form of development given the existence of disused buildings on the site and the potential for development to improve the overall appearance of the site. Any development would, however, be constrained by the site's location adjacent to the Dedham Vale AONB and listed buildings. No specific allocation will be made however reflecting the sites remote location away from the village. A current planning application has been approved subject to the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement.
- RNE45 & 46 – would not represent an appropriate level of growth, and would extend the settlement too far north and west into open countryside. There is no obvious vehicular access to RNE45. There are no footways in Old House Road or Coach Road and there are serious doubts about the suitability of the surrounding road network to cater for a development that could come forward on a site of this size. A site north of Coach Road would inevitably result in more traffic passing the village school and across the walking route used by the majority of residents to access the school, village green, playground and hall. It would be comparatively remote from the more regular bus services and even more remote from the other. The sites would be highly visible on the edge of the settlement and would impact on landscape character.
- RNE47 and RNE48 – these sites would not represent an appropriate level of growth (taken together or individually) and would extend the settlement too far west and south into open countryside with an impact on landscape character and reduce the separation between Great Horkelesley and the A12/Colchester. Access could be an issue as there does not appear to be any road frontage. Brick Kiln Lane would be unsuitable and there are no footways or sufficient likelihood of them being delivered. RNE48 would involve the loss of an area of mature trees.

### Summary

Great Horkelesley is a sustainable settlement located close to the Colchester urban area. A large area of land has been promoted for development around the periphery of the village but a large proportion of this can be discounted in order to encourage an appropriate level of growth (taking into account recent development levels), to help discourage inappropriate forms of development, prevent expansion northwards away from the primary school and the sprawl of the village into the open countryside where it is more rural in character. Two sites appear to be suitable (in principle) and would be in accordance with what is considered appropriate for the village.

It is proposed to remove the settlement boundary from the small cluster of dwellings known as The Crescent, between the two areas of Great Horkelesley as it supports no

community facilities and is detached from the other parts of the village. Its Settlement Development Boundary is therefore recommended to be removed.

## **Great Tey**

### Settlement shape and form

The village 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.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Although the village is amongst the smallest sustainable settlements and does not have some of the limited services and facilities, these are at a lower level compared to larger, more sustainable settlements in the borough. Large scale growth is accordingly not considered appropriate.
- Great Tey lies off the main road network, although is close to the A1124, A12 and A120. The village has an amber rating for train and bus access.
- There is a need to prevent further ribbon development to the north and south beyond the existing extent of Great Tey to discourage further development located away from existing village services and facilities and where character is more rural/or is open countryside
- The southern quarter of the village lies within a Conservation Area, which includes the church and the pub. The Conservation Area boundary extends into RNW63 (East Infill).
- Northern half of village lacks defensible boundaries with surrounding arable countryside, with one section including a school playing field.
- Scope for inclusion in West Tey Garden Community, depending on its boundaries

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

Great Tey has a sufficient population base to allow for small scale appropriate growth at a lower level to successfully support expansion of infrastructure and community facilities.

### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

The Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) completed a Rural Housing Needs Survey in 2012 which indicated a need for 4 affordable units. The response to the Issues and Options consultation noted that they were conscious that there is a modest need for lower cost/smaller houses in the village and as such would consider reviewing the village envelope to accommodate this.

Great Tey Parish Council submitted a representation to the Preferred Options consultation objecting to the West Tey Garden Community. They submitted a representation in support of the proposed housing site (RNW05) subject to:

- Consideration should be given to investigate traffic calming measures for example priority traffic flow (as in Chappel).
- Ensure that there is a continuous footpath/footway on the west side of Brook Road.
- A mix of housing to include low cost and "affordable" housing; and suitable access with off road parking, so that there is no additional parking on the east side of Brook Road.
- The PC indicated that they would be interested in further discussions regarding future development on a small scale that would bring sustainability to existing village amenities.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- Great Tey has been classified as sustainable and a level of growth can be physically accommodated without compromising the existing settlement shape, form and character.
- Growth needs to be supported with adequate infrastructure.
- There are concerns about existing drainage/sewage capacity at Great Tey which is currently served by treatment works at Earls Colne, adequate provision / improvements would be essential for development to be delivered.
- The primary school has capacity but there are constraints on capacity at the secondary school at Stanway School.
- The 2012 Housing Needs Survey indicates that there is a local affordable housing need within the village.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad area 1** – Expansion to the southeast opposite development on Brook Road across from the pub and church. Development would, however need to protect the character of the Conservation Area which extends across both sides of the road. This area includes two sites RNW63, which was not submitted via the Call for Sites, and RNW05, which was submitted via the Call for Sites. These two sites were estimated in the SLAA table to have potential for approx. 106 dwellings (at a density of 30 dph). This number, however, is likely to prove an over-estimate given that in addition to the availability question on RNW63, there are a number of trees that have TPOs on them along the western boundary as well as significant mature tree cover on the southern half of the site that would be lost if development occurred. The southern part of the site also includes large established existing buildings. This part of the village is characterised by frontage only development. A lower figure would accordingly be expected given the expectation that buildings and trees would need to be retained.

**Broad Area 2** – Expansion to the south. Development of RNW11 would be constrained by the potential amenity issues of development adjacent to the small sewage treatment works. It also represents ribbon development and extends the built form into open countryside further away from the village core.

**Broad Area 3** – Small amount of land behind churchyard, back gardens, farm and allotments appears available but not a SLAA site – could accommodate possibly 10 houses but could be too constrained by existing uses.

#### Green/Amber SLAA sites (3)

|       |                  |                       |       |
|-------|------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| RNW05 | Brook Road       | 17 potential units    | Amber |
| RNW63 | East Infill      | 89 potential units    | Amber |
| RNW75 | Greenfield Drive | 30/40 potential units | Green |

A further site- RNW11 Brook Road (73 potential units) received a Red SLAA rating.

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RNW05 – This site lies directly opposite the existing settlement boundary, with no identified risk of flooding or impact on biological or heritage assets. There is a row of housing opposite the road and development of this site would not extend the settlement any further south. The site is available immediately.

RNW75 – Greenfield Drive, Great Tey – The allocation of this site provides the opportunity to expand the play fields by 1ha. This site is in a location relatively free of constraints and therefore more suited to a further allocation than other locations within the Borough. This site was submitted late therefore was not assessed as a Broad Area as part of the Settlement Boundary Review. However, based on settlement shape, level of growth and opportunities for expanding the playing fields it would make a sustainable addition to the village.

#### SLAA sites to discount

RNW11 and RNW43 – sites achieved a red rating in the SLAA.

RNW63 – The land has not been promoted by the land owner through the Call for Sites process and there are no details, therefore, of land ownership. For these reasons it is not clear if this land would be available or deliverable.

#### Summary

Great Tey has been classified as a sustainable settlement and is capable of accommodating some additional growth. The amount of growth depends on what can be accommodated within existing infrastructure constraints (drainage and sewage) or the level of upgrades/expansion that can be secured. The site at Greenfield Drive provides the opportunity to expand the playing fields.

It is proposed to remove the settlement boundary from the hamlet of Little Tey, to the south of Great Tey, as it supports no community facilities and is detached from Great Tey and Marks Tey. It is not suitable for further development.

Great Tey Parish Council have recently confirmed their intention to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. This is expected to add detail to any allocations made in the Local Plan.

## Langham

### Settlement shape and form

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.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Consideration of strategic growth by way of a potential Garden Community is assessed through the Garden Community options work.
- Langham has limited access to public transport access.
- There are some existing capacity and access issues re secondary education and healthcare.
- Dedham Vale AONB adjoins the village to the north and east, although it is separated by the A12 to the east.
- The site is served by Langham Sewage Treatment Works which currently has capacity issues. Other key issues relate to poor capacity to manage surface water and foul water.

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- For its size, Langham provides a reasonable number of facilities including a community centre and shop, and a primary school with capacity.
- Scope for proportionate growth to provide infill to bring together two separate parts of the village.
- There are local employment opportunities in the village.
- Proximity to the A12.

### Parish Council/neighbourhood plan group view

Langham Parish Council carried out a survey in October 2015 asking for opinions on fourteen sites put forward by landowners. 174 responses were received, a 43% response rate. Based on the responses and their analysis of the sites, the Parish Council concluded that an appropriate proportion of growth in Langham would constitute 85 additional units up to 2033 which represents 19% growth. They considered areas within Call for Sites 049 (50% of area) and 050 should be selected to provide 20 units for a first phase of development. Backfill development was not supported, so sites were only supported if they had road frontage and good access.

The Parish Council submitted a representation to the Preferred Options stating that the growth proposed was grossly disproportionate compared with other villages. The following issues were raised:

- Unsustainable infrastructure; School Road overloaded.
- Inadequate waste water sewage facilities.
- Urban solution of backfill imposed on rural solution of infill development.

- Destruction of special rural historic character of Langham; creeping suburbanisation.
- Up to 50 dwellings constructed over the Plan period is proportionate, balanced and reasonable growth.
- Concern about proximity of 115 dwellings abutting a heavy engineering site, with problems of noise, safety, HGV movements and other pollutants.
- Historic character of Boxted Airfield affected.
- Inaccuracy of information in CBC documentation.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- There are 419 households in Langham.
- Langham is sustainable and some growth can be physically accommodated without compromising the existing settlement shape, form and character
- Growth needs to be supported by appropriate levels of infrastructure
- It is not considered appropriate for Langham to take a large level of growth such as that put forward under the Call for Sites for a new garden community.
- Any new development would need to address concerns about existing drainage/sewage capacity at Langham.

#### Potential areas of search/settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities (excluding strategic growth via Garden Communities)

Broad area 1 – Infill between A12 and Wick Road. This area has been given a Green rating and there could be potential for development of a portion of the site at the western end of site RNE04 to maximise distance from the A12. Development of the area, however, would entail a cul-de-sac layout that would not be as well-connected to the rest of the village as sites on School Road. This site is not supported by the Parish Council as they view it as being backland development.

Broad area 2 – Infill south of School Road between the community centre/field, the employment zone and existing settlement boundary. This area has been given a Green rating and development along School Road could represent a logical infill location. The Parish Council supports development of the top half of this site but would prefer frontage development. Development of this area would link the two separate settlement boundaries of Langham Moor and St. Margaret's Cross although would take away the view of the airfield and open space. Part of the area forms part of the large Garden Community site submission, but subsequent discussions have indicated a smaller parcel of land could be considered.

Broad area 3 – Langham Moor – This area lies at the periphery of the village and would represent a less logical form of growth than infill further within the village, along with loss of the historic field patterns and tree cover. The Parish Council has not supported development in this area.

Broad area 4 – Development to the north of School Road. Two sites have been put forward but neither benefit from obvious vehicular access. The area is not supported by the Parish Council as it would involve backland development.

Broad area 5 – Development along Wick Road adjacent to existing settlement. Development of RNE01 along Wick Road across from existing housing would involve a reasonable amount of small scale infill development.

#### Green/Amber SLAA sites

|       |                            |                     |       |
|-------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| RNE01 | Wick Road                  | 47 potential units  | Amber |
| RNE04 | Motts Farm, Birchwood Road | 190 potential units | Green |
| RNE06 | Perry Grove, Grove Hill    | 13 potential units  | Green |
| RNE08 | Park Lane                  | 971 potential units | Amber |
| RNE09 | Land adj A12               | 220 potential units | Amber |
| RNE11 | School Road                | 55 potential units  | Green |
| RNE23 | Park Lane                  | 19 potential units  | Amber |
| RNE25 | Land off Chapel Road       | 47 potential units  | Amber |
| RNE26 | Land south of High Street  | 230 potential units | Red   |
| RNE27 | High Street                | 17 potential units  | Amber |
| RNE44 | Rig, School Road           | 26 potential units  | Green |

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RNE01 – The site, put forward in the Call for Sites, was supported for development of 10 units by the Parish Council. Development of a larger estate/green layout would allow development of up to 47 units, but given that the adjacent development comprises of frontage development only, a similar approach would be most appropriate to ensure it is in keeping. There is sufficient road frontage to enable the delivery of satisfactory access. The site abuts the former airfield, and development would need to have regard to both its landscape character and to access to footpaths through the area. This site is recommended as an allocation for frontage development only.

RNE11 – Development of this site would represent a logical extension to the village as it lies between existing housing and employment sites and is well located for the school and community centre/shop. There is potential for 55 units on the site at a medium density. The Parish Council supports lower density for the top half of the site alone, providing 10 units for an initial development phase fronting the road. It is considered, however, that there is potential for an estate or village green approach to layout at this site given that it is at the heart of the village adjacent to mixed uses and there is development in depth on the adjacent employment site. There is sufficient road frontage to enable the delivery of satisfactory access, although the mix of school, employment and housing uses in the area would require highways and traffic management improvements. The site abuts the former airfield, and development would need to have regard to both its landscape character and to access to footpaths through the area. Within these constraints it is considered that this site can accommodate approximately 40 dwellings.

RNE08 – This site was promoted as part of a larger scale development linked to a potential new Garden Community development. As the principle of Langham as a location for a new garden community is not a preferred option for strategic growth, a portion of the large site submitted for consideration as a Garden Community could be allocated for small scale development for Langham. This would involve development

of a limited amount of land fronting School Road. If similar in scale to RNE11, this could involve development of between 10-60 units, depending on density, layout and mix of development. As with the other site on School Road, it is considered that there is potential for an estate or village green approach to layout at this site given that it is at the heart of the village adjacent to mixed uses. There is sufficient road frontage to enable the delivery of satisfactory access, although the mix of school, employment and housing uses in the area would require highways and traffic management improvements. The site abuts the former airfield, and development would need to have regard to both its landscape character and to access to footpaths through the area. It is recommended that the site be allocated for up to 35 dwellings and the provision of an extension to the playing fields.

### SLAA sites to discount

RNE04 – This site could deliver 192 dwellings, which is in excess of what is considered appropriate for Langham. The preferred sites, which are also recommended by the Parish Council, are better related to existing development. There may be noise issues from the A12.

RNE06 and 44 – These sites are located to the rear of existing development and do not seem to benefit from road frontage or suitable vehicular access.

RNE09 – This site could deliver 220 dwellings, which is in excess of what is considered appropriate for Langham. The preferred sites are better related to existing development. Furthermore, there may be issues with the site's impact on the Birch Wood local wildlife site and the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There may be noise issues from the A12.

RNE23 – This site is remote from the settlement boundary and has been promoted for employment use and therefore not considered suitable for housing allocation.

RNE25 – This site appears to have a high level of tree cover and retains landscape character of previous use and therefore is not considered suitable for allocation.

RNE26 – Site achieved a red rating in the SLAA and therefore not considered suitable for allocation. The red rating was given to reflect the site's location adjacent to a settlement with sustainability constraints; and the fact that provision of up to 230 dwellings on the site would not be proportionate to the scale of the existing settlement. On the part of the site not in agricultural use, there are both existing dwellings and curtilage or high levels of tree/vegetation cover so there would be concerns about landscape impact and loss of habitat. Evidence of historic agricultural use patterns. Finally the site has not been promoted therefore it cannot be considered available at this time.

RNE27 – The site appears to have a high level of tree cover and its loss would be detrimental to habitat protection, landscape character and residential amenity and therefore not considered suitable for allocation.

## Summary

Langham is a sustainable settlement capable of accommodating some additional growth. The amount of growth is informed by the constraints and opportunities and on what can be accommodated within existing infrastructure constraints. There are particular concerns about sewage infrastructure. The sites recommended would deliver appropriate growth in Langham and are adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and well related to existing development. They also offer the opportunity to improve community facilities including a school car park, playing field extension and improved off road footpaths. The site on Wick Road for frontage development is supported by the Parish Council, as well as the principle of expansion along School Lane to the east of Powerplus, although in this instance a lower number to accommodate frontage development only was favoured by the Parish Council. The third site to the west of Powerplus along School Lane was not considered directly by the Parish Council as it was part of a much larger submission related to a potential new garden community. However it is considered to represent a logical extension to the settlement associated with the other sites proposed and together totals an increase of 85 dwellings which could be accommodated within Langham if phased over the plan period and adequately supported by infrastructure.

## **Layer de la Haye**

### Settlement shape and form

Development in Layer de la Haye is concentrated within 2 settlement areas; Layer village and Malting Green. The 2 areas are physically separated by a large grass sward also 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 2 settlement areas. To preserve this character the Council is of the opinion that the 2 settlement areas should remain physically separate.

Layer village is the larger of the 2 defined settlement areas. Development has grown from the Church Road, Birch Road, High Road and Abberton Road crossroads. From the crossroads, ribbon development has extended north eastwards along High Road (B1026) as far as the Donkey and Buskin public house. A second band of ribbon development extends eastwards from the crossroads to the western boundary of Malting Green open space. There has been extensive infill between High Road and Abberton Road.

The Malting Green settlement boundary extends in a linear fashion as ribbon development from the eastern edge of Malting Green open space to just before the Abberton/Bounsted Road junction.

Given its small size, lack of facilities and physical separation from Layer village, Malting Green is not considered to be a sustainable location for future growth. To reflect this it is proposed that the settlement boundary is removed from Malting Green.

High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Development in Layer village is constrained to the north and west by Chest Wood which is a designated Local Site (ref Co 85).
- Development is constrained to the south west by the water treatment works.
- The Roman River valley runs north east of Layer village. Land in this area falls within flood zone 2. Parts of the Roman River valley are steep and undulating.
- The Folley is a constraint to higher density development particularly on the eastern side of the road. The character of the land to the east of the Folley is more open and rural in nature. It is characterised by low density development typically large detached rural dwellings with spacious gardens, farms/arable fields and small blocks of deciduous woodland. This area would not be considered suitable for higher density development as it would not be in keeping with the existing rural character of this part of the parish.
- The land to the south east of Malting Green is very open and rural in character with views over Abberton Reservoir.
- Bus and train services are somewhat limited. The closest station is in Colchester, approximately 7km from Layer village.
- The closest Secondary School is Stanway School which is approximately 6.5km from Layer village.
- Malting Green is physically separated from the key facilities available in Layer village and there are no footpaths between the 2 locations.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Layer is well located in relation to the town centre.
- Layer is served by a number of buses which run between Colchester Town and other villages
- Layer village has a primary school, a village shop/ post office, a GP surgery (Winstree Medical Centre), a water treatment plant and 2 pubs. The GP surgery is at capacity however and the school capacity report indicates that the school will have a small capacity of 3 places in 2020.

Parish Council /Neighbourhood Plan group view

Layer de la Haye Parish Council provided a detailed response on the various sites submitted through the Call for Sites processes. Their main concerns relate to lack of capacity at the primary school to accommodate new pupils, limited public transport services between Layer and Colchester, lack of capacity at the GP surgery, the need to deliver a mix of housing, the need to protect village character and concern over the densities proposed in the call for sites which they felt were too high. The Parish Council also raised concerns about the removal of the village envelope and were strongly opposed to this happening.

The Parish Council submitted representations to the Preferred Options consultation objecting to planned development, which they believe is unsustainable at present. Concerns were raised over infrastructure (schools, health facilities are at capacity), there is no GP and a poor bus service. The Parish Council consider that if

development is necessary, 42 dwellings as originally proposed is more appropriate. Their other detailed comments relate to the following;

- A preference for bungalows and small family homes ( mix of 2 & 3 beds).
- Identified need for 8 small properties (up to 3 beds) for local people/families.
- Proposed access via Hawfinch Road is unsuitable. This is not the most sustainable route.
- Concerns raised about safety for school children crossing High Road.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

There are 710 dwellings in Layer de la Haye Parish, with development concentrated in the two separate built up areas. Layer village, the larger of the 2 built up areas, has 494 dwellings while Malting Green only has approximately 50 dwellings. The 2 developed areas are physically separated by the large Malting Green Local Wildlife Site. The 2 areas should remain separated to help protect their individual character and to ensure the development is directed to the most sustainable settlements.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** – this area covers land to the south west of the main Layer de la Haye settlement boundary around High Road /New Cut and Birch Road. It includes sites RSE 34 and RSE 35. Site RSE 35 comprises the village playing fields and has been excluded from consideration. Site RSE34 would extend built development into the open countryside.

**Broad Area 2** – this broad area covers land located to the south of the main Layer de la Haye settlement boundary. This includes sites RSE 07 located off Malting Green Road and site RSE 12 which is located off Church Road. This land is at a higher level than the surrounding countryside which slopes down towards the reservoir. Development would be highly visible in the landscape.

**Broad Area 3** – this broad area covers land in the centre of Layer de la Haye. Sites RSE13, RSE33 and RSE 40 are all located within this area of search between The Folley and the High Road. The three parcels of land have been submitted separately but taken together could deliver 163 new dwellings. The site closest to the existing concentration of development is considered the most appropriate because of its location in relation to village services and facilities and vehicular access options. The Folley is not considered suitable for a new vehicular access serving a major development. It does not have pedestrian footpaths and to introduce them would urbanise the existing rural character.

**Broad Area 4** - this area covers the Maltings Green settlement area. It includes sites RSE09 and RSE30 which are located to the south of Malting Green Road/Abberton Road and RSE 19 which is located to the north of this road. This area is not considered to be a sustainable settlement in its own right and the settlement boundary designation is proposed for deletion. No growth is therefore allocated in this area which is remote from village services and facilities.

Green/Amber SLAA sites

|                                    |                     |              |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| RSE 07 Malting Green Road (south)  | 40 dwellings        | Green        |
| RSE 09 Maltings Green Road (south) | 10 dwellings        | Amber        |
| RSE 12 Church Road                 | 9 dwellings         | Green        |
| RSE 13 The Folley                  | 50 dwellings        | Green        |
| RSE19 Maltings Green Road (north)  | 43 dwellings        | Amber        |
| RSE 33 The Folley                  | 90 dwellings        | Amber        |
| RSE 34 Birch Road                  | 60 dwellings        | Amber        |
| <b>RSE 35 Recreation Ground</b>    | <b>44 dwellings</b> | <b>Amber</b> |
| RSE 40 The Folley                  | 23 dwellings        | Green        |

SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RSE 13 The Folley – this site located to the west of the Folley has been put forward to deliver 41 dwellings. It is achievable, available, and is considered a suitable and sustainable location for development. The site is well located in relation to existing residential properties in Layer and is adjacent to the settlement boundary. The Council considers that this site could accommodate up to 50 dwellings. This would equate to a 10% increase in growth in Layer village which would be considered an appropriate amount of growth for Layer village to accommodate. Layer de la Haye Parish Council and local residents have raised a number of issues associated with developing this site including loss of amenity, impacts on village infrastructure (GP and schools), loss of open space and traffic impacts. Discussions have taken place to determine the most appropriate development for the site, including the need for an area of open space and local affordable housing.

SLAA sites to discount

RSE07 – This site has the potential to deliver approximately 40 dwellings. It is located to the south of Malting Green Road. Rye Lane which is privately owned runs immediately west of the site. The site has a history of failed planning applications and appeals mainly to do with its rural location. Any development at this location would be out of keeping with the existing pattern of development in this part of the village which comprises frontage properties along Abberton Road. The proposal would also extend development southwards from the village into open countryside. The site is in a high and prominent location overlooking the Abberton reservoir and would be visible across a wide landscape. Allocation of this site is not therefore recommended.

RSE09 and 30 – These sites are in the Malting Green area of Layer, where the Council is proposing removing the settlement boundary due to its relative sustainability and being detached from the core part of Layer. It is not therefore considered to be sustainable to direct new development to Malting Green. Even if the settlement boundary at Malting Green is retained these proposals would extend new development eastwards into open countryside which would be physically separated from key facilities available in Layer Village. The sites are also located on high ground and would be very visible in the landscape to south.

RSE 12 – this is a small site which has the potential to deliver 9 dwellings between existing residential properties and the Layer de la Haye sewage treatment works. The

site appears to comprise the curtilage of Cross House Cottage and a large part of the site is vegetated. Therefore the developable area available for development is likely to be quite small. The site is on the very edge of the village and both this site and the rural nature of the land on the opposite side of the road contribute to the open character of the area which it would not be desirable to lose. Layer de la Haye Parish Council does not support the allocation of this site.

RSE 19 – Layer de la Haye Parish Council and local residents support the principle of some small development on this site (5 units), particularly on the land where the farm buildings currently stand. This site is located to the north of Abberton Road, and abuts the current Malting Green settlement area. An application for residential development was rejected 2 years ago but prior approval has been granted for change of use of the agricultural buildings to 3 dwellings, under permitted development. The Council is proposing to remove the settlement boundary at Malting Green due to its relative sustainability and being detached from the core part of Layer. It is not therefore considered to be sustainable to direct new development to Malting Green.

RSE 33 - this site is located half way along and to the west of The Folley in Layer village. The site has been proposed for 90 dwellings which would equate to an 18 % increase in growth if developed on its own. The site is in arable use and has not been promoted by the owner or a developer. It is not as well related to existing residential development in Layer as other sites. Vehicular access would have to be taken from The Folley which is unsuitable for additional major development. There are no footpaths within the Folley and to create them would urbanise the lane which is rural in character. The site has therefore been discounted.

RSE 34 – This site is located to the north of Birch Road on the western edge of Layer Village. The site is currently open grassland interspersed with trees and shrubs. It is a former SHLAA site (S0189) and has not been promoted therefore it is not known if it is achievable or available. The parish council has not clarified if there is support for developing this site locally but have indicated that the site has a history of refused planning applications. The site would extend development into the countryside.

RSE 35 – this site is not considered as a suitable location for housing development. It is the recreation ground for Layer village. It should be retained as a recreation pitch which is a position supported by Layer de la Haye Parish Council.

RSE 40 – this site is a triangular piece of land located towards the north end of The Folley. It is located at the northern edge of the village well away from the key village facilities. Allocating this site on its own would not create a logical extension to the existing settlement boundary. If taken together with RSE 33, which then links with the Council's preferred site (RSE 13) it would result in an increase of 163 dwellings (which represents an increase of almost 25%). Layer Parish Council has already indicated that an increase of this scale would not be appropriate for the parish, a view shared by the Council. It is also unlikely that satisfactory access arrangements can be provided for a larger site. On its own, access would need to be taken from The Folley which is unsuitable for additional major development. There are no footpaths within the Folley and to create them would urbanise the lane which is rural in character. The site has therefore been discounted.

## Summary

Layer de la Haye is a reasonable sized village located approximately 2.5km from the southern edge of Colchester. It is a sustainable location for limited growth. Growth on the periphery of Layer is restricted by environmental constraints to the north west and north east, the need to avoid creating coalescence between Layer village and Malting Green and the need to discourage sprawl into the wider countryside away from existing facilities. Given the above constraints, only one site RSE 13 is considered suitable for allocation in the emerging Local Plan. Additional growth could be supplemented by small-scale infill development within existing settlement boundaries or a rural exception site.

## **Marks Tey**

### Settlement shape and form

Marks Tey is the largest settlement located at the centre of the Marks Tey parish area, located at the busy junction of the A12 with the A120. It is essentially a fragmented, linear settlement that has been bisected by the railway, the A12 and A120. There are a number of community facilities including a railway station to the east and a larger area of modern housing and the primary school in the centre, the separate hamlet of Little Tey to the west and a retail and residential area to the east separated by the A12.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- The settlement is divided by the busy A12/A120 and railway line – facilities and services are not easy to reach on foot from the main residential area to the west. Work undertaken by the consultants AECOM to consider potential garden community options for the surrounding area has highlighted the following transport constraints:  
*The road network is currently congested - something that is anticipated to worsen without major upgrades. The availability of road infrastructure to the east of the A12 is also limited. The A12 and GEML bisect the site along similar but separate axis. The GEML (Great Eastern main Line) is constrained in terms of current and future capacity, whilst the current location of the rail station is poorly positioned a) for the current local population and b) for development over a site which is predominantly on land to the south. Therefore, it can be considered that the major connectivity benefits of the current multi-modal transport infrastructure also act as a major constraint to current localised movements<sup>1</sup>*
- The A12/A120 inhibits resident's vehicle movements, is dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists, and adversely impacts the community through pollution, vibration, and noise.
- There are designated areas including SSSI / Local Wildlife Sites / Minerals and waste safeguarded zone to the north.

<sup>1</sup> AECOM, North Essex Garden Communities Concept Framework, Volume 2, Constraints and Opportunities, p. 36

- Potential surface water and foul water capacity issues will need to be addressed to ensure capacity of facilities at Copford Sewage Treatment Works to cope with growth and carry out any improvements as necessary.
- Desirable to preserve the separate identities of and prevent the coalescence of Marks Tey with neighbouring Copford.
- Desirable to prevent further ribbon development to the west along the A120 beyond the existing extent of the built up area to discourage further development away from existing village services and facilities and where character is more rural/or is open countryside.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Marks Tey is a highly sustainable location as it has its own mainline railway station and good bus links, is located at a key junction of two busy strategic routes (A12 and A120) and has a number of shops, sources of employment and services and facilities with potential to be made more sustainable.
- Opportunity for major strategic growth / potential garden community (large areas of land have been promoted around Marks Tey) with potential to establish new schools and other services and facilities – this is a preferred option for growth in the new Local Plan. Opportunity to consider linking all the separate fragments of the settlement within one boundary.
- St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School is forecast to have a surplus of 23 places at 2019/20 and there appears to be space for small-scale expansion (but there does not appear to be physical space without extending current site boundaries for major expansion to cope with major growth – new education provision would be required for larger-scale strategic growth).
- The Marks Tey estate is the major settlement in Marks Tey Parish area and so is the main community centre within the parish and a likely location for some growth.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

There is local concern about the lack of facilities and the truncation of the settlement by the A12, A120 and railway. Marks Tey is central to the broad area for growth identified for a new garden community to the west of Colchester. Marks Tey Parish Council wrote to CBC in May 2016 stating that they felt that some development in Marks Tey is necessary to make it sustainable and to create a heart. They noted that the growth that it has to encompass creates considerable worry but also enormous opportunity for the community of Colchester, and accordingly they plead for vision, leadership and excellence, (i.e. bold proposals that gain widespread and local community support) from the Borough in its chosen Development Option. The Parish Council are also preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The relationship between the future Neighbourhood Plan, any Joint Local Plan for strategic growth and the new Colchester Local Plan is complicated by the uncertainty of a new garden community. More work is required to find innovative ways to integrate all of the respective plans in the future.

As part of the consultation on this review the Parish Council stressed its view that no substantive development can take place along the A120 without significant improvement/remedy of the highway infrastructure deficit that the village is currently subject to. This should be by temporary or permanent removal of heavy traffic and

HGVs for the village and opportunities should be sought for the early achievement of this with any residential growth allocated within or adjacent to Marks Tey in the proposed Local Plan.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth (outside of the context of strategic growth)

- There are 1,055 households currently in the wider Marks Tey Parish area of which 944 dwellings are within the current settlement development boundaries.
- Marks Tey has a number of key community facilities including its own primary school, railway station and significant community halls and playing fields, and is within easy reach of the main Colchester urban area by train and by bus/car (via the A120/A133), which has a wide range of services and facilities.
- Large areas of land have been promoted/identified by landowners/developers for growth around Marks Tey which demonstrates there is potential for development and land available.
- Marks Tey Primary School has a forecast surplus at 2019/20 and physical space for expansion (but larger-scale growth would require new education provision).
- There are concerns about existing drainage/sewage capacity and a need to ensure any necessary expansion or improvements are carried out to support the level of growth proposed.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

Note: larger, more strategic options are not assessed in detail at this stage as these will be explored in more detail separately as potential strategic growth options.

#### **Broad area 1** – Expansion west of Wilson’s Lane

This broad area is comprised of two small SLAA sites (WST02 and WST10). WST02 is currently undeveloped land lying between Wilson’s Lane and the car park of a commercial nursery. The site is defined by the A120 to the north, Wilson’s Lane and existing housing to the east, housing to the south and the nursery car park to the west. WST10 is currently a small arable field. This site is defined by housing to the north, Wilson’s Lane and housing to the east and field boundaries to the south and west. Both sites are located on the edge of the built up area close to the primary school.

**Broad area 2** – Redevelopment of former Timber Yard and land to the east, between railway line and the A12. This broad area includes SLAA site WST03 (which is currently a vacant commercial site that has been promoted for redevelopment and vacant land to the east). The site is defined by the railway line to the north, Wilson’s Lane to the west, the A12 and a small area of existing housing to the south and a recreation ground/community centre to the east. Access to the site can be achieved via Old London Road but is restricted and difficult. There is also problematic non standard direct access from the A12 north bound. The site is currently safeguarded for employment use but the fact it is vacant and has been promoted for redevelopment suggests it is no longer commercially viable or suitable wholly as an employment site and there is the option to consider a mix of uses or loss of the whole site for residential use.

**Broad area 3** – East of A12 behind current retail, business and residential area. This broad area SLAA site WST08 has access from London Road and is in close proximity to A12 Junction 25 and the railway station. It does not directly impose additional load on the overloaded A120 and could offer potential to relieve parking pressures and A12 southern access conflicts with the retail, business, and residential accommodation in adjacent London Road. It thus may have early development potential (at a small scale).

Green/Amber SLAA sites promoted in Marks Tey (11)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                               | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|--|--------------------------|------------|
| WST01    | London Road, Marks Tey                     | 79                       | Amber      |
| WST02    | Wilsons Lane, Marks Tey                    | 15                       | Amber      |
| WST03    | Old London Road, Marks Tey                 | 225                      | Amber      |
| WST04    | Mill Road, Marks Tey                       | 11                       | Amber      |
| WST05    | Gateway 120, Marks Tey                     | 16,942*                  | Amber      |
| WST08    | Land adjacent to A12, Marks Tey            | 8,219*                   | Amber      |
| WST10    | Land south west of Wilsons Lane, Marks Tey | 16                       | Amber      |
| WST12    | North West Infill, Marks Tey               | 4,279*                   | Amber      |
| WST15    | Church Farm, Church Lane, Marks Tey        | 35                       | Amber      |
| WST17    | Brickworks, Church Lane, Marks Tey         | 969                      | Amber      |
| WST19    | Motts Lane, Marks Tey                      | 31                       | Amber      |

\* large sites promoting the strategic expansion of Marks Tey

As Marks Tey is central to the broad area for growth identified for a new garden community to the west of Colchester and the Parish Council are also preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP), the relationship between the future NP, any Joint Local Plan for strategic growth and the new Colchester Local Plan is important. Site allocations and other area specific policies will be determined by more work on all of the respective plans in the future. Marks Tey is thus in something of a unique position and no allocations or indicative broad directions for growth are proposed in the draft Local Plan at this stage and the Settlement Boundaries are currently left as existing, other than an indicative area of search for a potential new garden community. The summary below however indicates the Council's initial high level assessment of potential opportunities for local growth which may potentially inform emerging plans including a Neighbourhood Plan, and / or the New Local Plan Submission Draft. Any site references made in the summary below relate to the Council's SLAA assessment;

- WST02 – Land between Wilson's Lane and nursery – This site has potential to be a logical extension to the built up area that fills a gap between the existing settlement edge and a commercial nursery. Development in this location would be close to the primary school and can be easily accessed off Wilson's Lane. The site has the potential for up to 15 dwellings.

- WST03 – Site is currently allocated for employment use but it is partially vacant and being promoted for redevelopment and land to the east remains undeveloped. As a current employment use it is likely that a mixed-use scheme could be considered. Such a mix could have the potential for up to 150 dwellings, which also enables retention of a portion of the site for employment use, given its prominent position on the strategic network which is likely to be commercially attractive.
- WST04 – Land off Mill Lane – Whilst not within a broad area of growth this is a small site that is previously developed that has the potential to provide up to 5 dwellings.
- WST10 – Land west of Wilson’s Lane – Site represents an opportunity to expand the existing built up area close to the primary school without resulting in the village protruding too far west into open countryside. The site has the potential to deliver up to 16 dwellings – which together with the sites above would be in accordance with what is considered appropriate for Marks Tey.
- WST01 – Land behind Old London Road – This site is previously developed land, however, its suitability for development needs further consideration in particular in respect of site access. It would introduce a large area of housing accessed by a narrow road behind an established frontage of dwellings. The suitability of this site for housing will need to be considered as part of a larger development.
- WST05 – This site is promoted on a strategic scale and as such relates to a potential opportunity for a new garden community.
- WST08 - This site is promoted on a strategic scale and as such relates to a potential opportunity for a new garden community but could have potential for partial early development to relieve local pressures.
- WST12 - This site is promoted on a strategic scale and as such relates to a potential opportunity for a new garden community.
- WST15 – Development of this site would breach the A120 which currently serves as a strong defensible boundary and has potential to impact the setting of the church. Consideration of the boundary treatment and the outcome of further work informing the potential definition for a new garden community will be relevant to determine the suitability of this site for development.
- WST17 – This site proposes a scale of development which may only be suited to the area if comprehensively planned as part of strategic growth at Marks Tey. Development would breach the A120 which currently serves as a strong defensible boundary and would result in development of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which would need to be considered if any development is proposed on this site.

- WST19 – Development of this site would breach the A120 which currently serves as a strong defensible boundary. Consideration of the boundary treatment and the outcome of further work informing the potential definition for a new garden community will be relevant to determine the suitability of this site for development.

### Summary

Marks Tey is a sustainable settlement with the potential of accommodating additional growth subject to the provision of appropriate infrastructure. It is located on the strategic road network, has a railway station, its own primary school and a number of other key community services and facilities and suitable sites around its periphery capable of accommodating development without compromising key defensible barriers (the A12 and A120) and surrounding environmental constraints. Work on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan will further explore the potential for smaller scale growth associated with the existing settlement and existing infrastructure capacity constraints, also responding to future evidence emerging from the garden communities work which will help inform these considerations.

There is also potential for this location to accommodate strategic growth due to its strategically important location on the mainline railway and at the junction of two strategic routes (A12 and A120). Major growth, however, will need to be accompanied by major infrastructure provision. This will be determined through the Local Plan process.

## **Rowhedge**

### Settlement shape and form

Rowhedge lies within the parish of East Donyland which covers the south east of the Borough. The settlement was historically centred around the shipbuilding and fishing industries of the River Colne but now it is predominately a dormitory village with little local employment. 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. The village has good public transport and road links to nearby Colchester and contains its own primary school, post office and recreational facilities.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Rowhedge is situated in close geographical proximity to Colchester being less than 800m away from each other at their closest point. To maintain Rowhedge as a distinct settlement it is therefore important this separation is preserved.
- The settlement is bordered by the River Colne to the east. In addition to the physical boundary the river presents there are also other associated constraints such as the Coastal Protection Belt (which due to topography covers a significant amount of inland areas including all the land south of Rowhedge). The European level designations further down the Colne estuary may cause an issue when cumulative impact is taken into account which is subject to testing via the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

- St Lawrence Primary School is operating at capacity and forecast to be over capacity by 2020.
- Flood zone to the north east of the settlement, particularly around Hythe Marshes, prevents further development in that direction.
- Recent permission for 256 dwellings at Rowhedge Wharf will result in additional pressure on local infrastructure and should be taken account of when considering future growth options.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Rowhedge is a relatively sustainable settlement with good road links and frequent bus services to Colchester. It benefits from having a primary school, GP surgery and recreational facilities including open space provision.
- There is an opportunity (subject to feasibility and funding) for a footbridge to be constructed which would connect Rowhedge with Wivenhoe. This would be advantageous for both settlements but especially so for Rowhedge because it would make Wivenhoe train station a sustainable travel option for many residents. Wivenhoe would benefit from such an arrangement through increased footfall making public facing businesses more viable.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Rowhedge PC has not indicated that they plan to produce a neighbourhood plan. Concerns have been expressed by the parish council and local residents about development at Battleswick Farm. An officer attended a parish council meeting in 2015 and concerns over coalescence with Colchester and impact of new development on the highway network were raised. A proposal for a footbridge connecting Rowhedge with Wivenhoe was also raised.

East Donyland Parish Council submitted a representation to the Preferred Options objecting to the proposed housing site at Battleswick Farm.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- Rowhedge currently has 828 households, and an additional 256 dwellings have been permitted at Rowhedge Wharf meaning that the total dwelling stock will amount to 1,084.
- The Call for Sites submissions could accommodate approximately 400 dwellings if allocated in their entirety but this is not a desirable or sustainable option; it would represent almost a 50% increase on existing dwelling stock.
- The primary school is at capacity and before further growth can be permitted this situation needs to be reviewed with the school/ECC as there is no room for expansion on the existing site.
- Development is constrained to the south and east by the river, the coastal protection belt and a local wildlife site.
- Given that the local primary school is currently operating at capacity it is likely that any future development will be required to make contributions towards infrastructure improvements.

- There is a strong desire to prevent the coalescence of Rowhedge and Colchester

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad area 1** - Expansion to the north and west, towards Donyland Farm/Birch Grove. This area contains all the Call for Sites submissions. Part of the area lies within the Coastal Protection Belt. Other land around Rowhedge is more heavily constrained by the river, flood zone 3 areas and a local wildlife site. The most fundamental issue with growth in this direction is the risk of coalescence with Colchester at Old Heath. Therefore any development should be restricted to infill, and not take the edge of development any further north. Some of the land is also important for its landscape value which should be protected.

**Broad area 2** – Land to the south/east including the former port. This comprises Site RSE36 which has now been omitted following the granting of planning permission at the site.

Green/Amber SLAA sites (3)

|       |                                  |     |       |
|-------|----------------------------------|-----|-------|
| RSE03 | Battleswick Farm, Rowhedge       | 375 | Amber |
| RSE08 | Rowhedge Business Park           | 100 | Amber |
|       | Battleswick Farm/Hillview Close, | 400 | Amber |
| RSE17 | Rowhedge                         |     |       |

RSE03 and RSE17 are separate submissions but largely cover the same area of land, therefore they have been assessed under RSE03 only.

An additional site, RSE36, recently received planning permission for 170 dwellings and because it is inside the settlement boundary, it has been omitted from the Settlement Boundary Review.

SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

RSE08 - The Council was previously concerned about growth westwards into the current Rowhedge Business Park, because of the loss of an employment site. Development of the site would avoid the coalescence issue and result in the redevelopment of brownfield land as opposed to greenfield. New evidence has been presented in relation to the site which demonstrates the inherent unsuitability of the site for any enhanced role for employment. In addition, the site promoter has sought to address improvements to health care provision identified as a key infrastructure problem in Rowhedge which is able to be improved by the provision of land for a new GP surgery. This has been met with support by the North East Essex Clinical Care Commissioning Group. The site could accommodate approximately 100 dwellings in its entirety applying the standard density formula. However given that a significant part of the site consists of woodland a figure of 40 dwellings is likely to be more appropriate.

### SLAA sites to discount

RSE03/RSE17 – These sites have been assessed as one and are promoted for a significantly higher number of dwellings than is considered appropriate for Rowhedge to accommodate, particularly when taking into account the committed development at Rowhedge Wharf. In 2016 a smaller part of the site was included in the Preferred Options, and a planning application was submitted for the whole site. Representations made in response to both raised a range of issues, which included concerns which relate specifically to the site location and potential coalescence with Old Heath, flood risk, landscape impact and potential impact on nearby residents. In the meantime Historic England have indicated that they intend to list Battleswick Farm itself, which would represent another constraint to development.

### Summary

Rowhedge is a sustainable settlement with good transport links to Colchester. It has basic services and facilities to serve its population. The site at Rowhedge Business Park will help to improve healthcare facilities through the provision of land for a new GP surgery, which is supported by the North East Essex Clinical Care Commissioning Group. Any future growth would have to contribute to infrastructure improvements to mitigate the impact of new households on the village. Education capacity needs to be addressed and the redevelopment of the site will be phased to ensure that the impact on primary school places is properly mitigated before any additional residential development is built.

## **Tiptree**

### Settlement shape and form

Tiptree has a roughly triangular built form where development has grown up around key highway intersections; Kelvedon Road & Maldon Road to the west/north west, around Station Road and Church Road in the middle of the village, Factory Hill and Chapel Road to the south, Grove Road to the east and Colchester Road to the north/north east. Recently there has been new growth around Grange Road in the west of the village. A small separate area of development also exists around Tiptree Heath.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Expansion to the north east of Tiptree is constrained by Thurstable School and Warriors Rest (a sports facility).
- Development to the south east is constrained by Tiptree Jam Factory land and Birch Wood Local Wildlife Site. Development in this direction would reduce the green gap between Tiptree and Tolleshunt Knights and is also constrained by Layer Brook which is Flood Zone 2.
- The closest railway station is in Kelvedon approximately 5km from Tiptree.
- Tiptree health facility is at capacity and an allocation for new premises will need to be considered to accommodate proposed growth. This will need to be reflected in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

- Water supply and treatment and waste water management infrastructure is likely to be needed to serve additional development in Tiptree. Further discussion will be needed with Anglian Water as the Neighbourhood Plan develops proposed allocations.
- Although reasonably well served by public transport there is a need to improve bus routes within Tiptree.
- Future development will need to take account of road infrastructure in Kelvedon and Feering.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Although there are some bus services to Maldon, Colchester and Essex University there is an opportunity to enhance them.
- The Neighbourhood Plan Group are keen to explore developing a community transport initiative to improve sustainable transport links between Tiptree, Kelvedon train station, schools and surrounding villages.
- Tiptree has 4 primary schools – Tiptree Heath, St Lukes, Mildene & Baynards.
- Tiptree has a secondary school (Thurstable) which has capacity.
- Hastoe's Housing Association is interested in providing affordable housing on a site in Tiptree – they have expressed an interest in site TIP15 which is located behind the Water Works.
- A Housing Needs Survey is being commissioned through the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan process. The Rural Community Council of Essex is also involved in this process.
- Tiptree has a good range of facilities – the major local employer is the Jam Factory, there are 2 supermarkets, a number of independent retailers and businesses.

#### Parish Council /Neighbourhood Plan group view

Tiptree Parish Council (PC) and the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan (NP) working group have expressed their preference for directing new development to the north west and west of Tiptree to prevent increasing traffic congestion in the centre of Tiptree.

They are also keen to allocate new employment land in North west Tiptree opposite Tower Business Park which is a Local Economic Area.

The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan is expected to allocate sites – Colchester Borough Council, Tiptree Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan group will agree the extent of any revisions to the settlement boundary and housing numbers.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

There are 3545 dwellings within Tiptree's current settlement boundary. The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan group have indicated that they will plan for approximately 600 new houses as stated in their Mission Statement which has been agreed by the Parish Council and Borough Council. 600 new houses equates to a 16% increase in new dwellings.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** - located to the north west/west Tiptree. This includes site TIP33 which has been promoted by Tiptree PC and sites, TIP08, TIP15 and TIP16, which have been promoted individually by the site owners. Hastoe's Housing Provider are interested in delivering an affordable housing scheme in Tiptree and they have expressed an interest in site TIP15. Sites TIP04 and TIP17 are also located within this area to the north of Tiptree village.

**Broad Area 2** - located to the west/south west of Tiptree. This area includes sites TIP01, TIP03, TIP09, TIP12 and TIP27.

**Broad Area 3** - includes sites TIP02, TIP10, TIP25 and TIP38 which are located on the southern boundary of Tiptree's settlement boundary. Site TIP25 was approved for enabling residential development as part of the expansion plans for Tiptree Jam factory but it has not been promoted through the Call for Sites.

Green/Amber SLAA sites (19)

|       |                         |     |       |
|-------|-------------------------|-----|-------|
| TIP01 | Peakes Maldon Road      | 200 | Green |
| TIP02 | Rowans Newbridge Road   | 5   | Amber |
| TIP03 | Pennsylvania Lane       | 284 | Green |
| TIP04 | Oak Road                | 65  | Amber |
| TIP08 | Kelvedon Road           | 39  | Amber |
| TIP09 | Maldon Road             | 200 | Green |
| TIP10 | Bull Lane               | 100 | Amber |
| TIP12 | Ship Field              | 80  | Amber |
| TIP15 | Water Works Grange Road | 64  | Amber |
| TIP16 | Towerend Kelvedon Road  | 50  | Amber |
| TIP17 | Oak Road                | 60  | Amber |
| TIP21 | Pennsylvania Lane       | 17  | Amber |
| TIP25 | North Factory Hill      | 118 | Amber |
| TIP27 | North Maldon Road       | 12  | Green |
| TIP33 | North west Tiptree      | 516 | Amber |
| TIP34 | Pennsylvania Lane       | 31  | Amber |
| TIP38 | Newbridge Road          | 70  | Amber |

Sites at Station Road and Maypole Road (TIP28 and TIP 29 respectively) were both assessed in the SLAA as Red due to constraints linked to their availability.

The emerging Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will make site allocations and as such will carry out detailed site assessments to inform this. For the purposes of the new Colchester Local Plan an indicative level and broad direction for growth are identified which have been agreed with the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Parish Council. The assessment summary below is the Council's initial assessment through the SLAA which may inform future work of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and also help determine an appropriate level and direction for growth. The decision to allocate these

or other sites within the agreed broad direction will be one for the Neighbourhood Plan, rather than the Local Plan.

**TIP01 Peakes Maldon Road** could potentially deliver 200 dwellings and there is developer interest in the site. Access potentially off Maldon Road but needs further assessment by the Highway Authority. If site TIP09 is allocated and developed it may be possible to share access from this development into site TIP01.

**TIP03 Pennsylvania Lane** – has the potential to deliver 284 dwellings. This site is ecologically very rich and satisfies the criteria to be designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Parts of the site support extensive colonies of orchids with 6 different species recorded recently. This could constrain development altogether on this site or prevent development on certain parts of it. Further consideration and assessment is needed of the ecological value of this plot. There are potential access issues too as access has been proposed via Pennsylvania Lane. This is a narrow restricted byway and access to site TIP03 would not be straightforward.

**TIP08 Kelvedon Road, TIP15 Water Works, Grange Road, TIP16 Tower End, Kelvedon Road** - Individually, these sites may represent a piecemeal approach if they were to be developed separately. The sites fall within a larger site, TIP33, being promoted for development by Tiptree Parish Council. Further consideration for these to be delivered comprehensively should be explored.

**TIP09 Maldon Road** has the potential to deliver 200 dwellings. This is the only site with direct access to it from Maldon Road.

**TIP12 Ship Lane** – site could potentially deliver 80 dwellings. Tiptree Parish Council has concerns about this site being developed on highway safety grounds. The Neighbourhood Plan WG are of the opinion that this site offers potential but only if the highway problems on West End Road are resolved (if part of it could be used to provide a new road off West End/Maldon Road). Further discussion with the Highway Authority is required to consider the suitability of this site for development

**TIP27 North of Maldon Road** - this is a former SLAA site and is promoted by Tiptree Parish Council and supported by the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. The site is located adjacent to the existing development boundary in Tiptree. In principle, if developed on its own it could form a logical extension to the Tiptree settlement boundary but it could also form a logical extension to the settlement boundary in conjunction with sites TIP01, TIP09 and TIP03. It is a sustainable location given its reasonable proximity to key services. There are however some issues to be addressed; connectivity between the site and village centre and key facilities could be improved.

**TIP 2 & TIP29** are already within the settlement boundary therefore they could come forward for development anyway, without any need for specific allocations (18 dwellings).

This whole area has been proposed by Tiptree PC as site TIP33. These sites could potentially deliver all the housing needed (there is capacity for approximately 764 dwellings) reasonably close to Tiptree village centre while retaining the triangular built

form of Tiptree. While this is over 600, if favoured by the Neighbourhood Plan Group following further assessment, it builds in some flexibility if part of site TIP03 is excluded due to its potentially important ecological value. Further ecological assessment will be needed to assess this value more thoroughly. It also has the potential to release a reasonable amount of S106 /CIL to pay for infrastructure upgrades being sought in the Neighbourhood Plan.

If site TIP12 is allocated, it makes sense to retain the settlement boundary around Tiptree Heath. However, the suggested broad area of growth does not naturally include the area around Tiptree Heath and as such it is recommended in the Preferred Options Local Plan that the settlement boundary around Tiptree Heath be removed given its relative sustainability and the fact that it is separate from the core area of Tiptree.

**TIP02 Rowans Newbridge Road & TIP38** - this site could deliver 75 houses. It is located to the south of Tiptree, outside of the area favoured for new growth by the parish council /neighbourhood plan group.

**TIP04- Oak Road** – Any proposed allocation of this site would need to ensure access can be provided adequately as it is considered that this access to this site could be difficult. It is however outside of the area of Tiptree favoured by the parish council/neighbourhood plan group.

**TIP10** – this site has potential to deliver 100 houses and it could potentially form an extension to the settlement boundary, although it would extend built development into the countryside. Access to the site could be an issue which would need to be further considered if this site were to be considered for allocation. It is located to the south of Tiptree, outside of the area favoured for new growth by the parish council/neighbourhood plan group.

**TIP17-** Any proposed allocation of this site would need to ensure access can be provided adequately as it is considered that this access to this site could be difficult. It is however outside of the area of Tiptree the area favoured by the parish council/neighbourhood plan group.

**TIP21-** Any development proposed on this site must ensure adequate provision and capacity exists to accommodate growth as there are limited utilities on the site and access could also be difficult as it would have to be accessed off Pennsylvania Lane which is a restricted byway.

**TIP 34** –Any development proposed on this site must ensure adequate provision and capacity exist to accommodate growth as there are limited utilities on the site and access could also be difficult as it would have to be accessed off Pennsylvania Lane which is a restricted byway.

**Land opposite Tower Business Park** - Tiptree PC & NP group are keen to allocate new employment land in north west Tiptree opposite Tower Business Park. The NP group will be consulting businesses as part of their NP to find out about their future business needs and scope to relocate. An aspiration of moving businesses out of the village centre to reduce HGV traffic levels, has been identified as an issue and the

proposal will also provide development opportunities in the village centre. This will be further explored through the Neighbourhood Plan.

**TIP 25 North Factory Hill** is already allocated in the Tiptree Jam Factory Plan and the current planning status of this site suggests there is an existing commitment to delivering development so would not be the subject of further consideration at this stage.

**TIP08, TIP15, TIP16**, - these sites together could be considered further for their suitability for allocation and should be explored comprehensively. Collectively they have the potential to deliver 150 units. Hastoe Housing Association has expressed interest in delivering affordable housing on site TIP15.

### Summary

The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan group have indicated they are willing to accept in the region of 600 new houses, which equates to a 16% increase in new dwellings.

Delivery of this level of development would also release a reasonable amount of S106 /CIL to pay for infrastructure upgrades being sought in the Neighbourhood Plan, bringing benefits to the existing community and providing the opportunity to deliver key objectives identified in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

## **West Bergholt**

### Settlement Shape and Form

West Bergholt is a medium scale nucleated village situated approximately 1km to the north-west of Colchester. The village is centred around a triangle of roads: the B1508 Colchester Road, Chapel 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 new development has occurred on the northern side of Colchester Road, notably on the site of the old brewery. The old brewery buildings have been converted to flats and houses with additional housing built to the rear.

### High Level Constraints (at settlement level)

- Maintain current settlement pattern around the three main roads with facilities located centrally where possible.
- Seek to prevent development further along Colchester Road towards Colchester. There is currently little inter-visibility between Colchester and West Bergholt, there is an almost continuous belt of arable fields from the A12 to the south-western edge of West Bergholt and the southern areas of the village are softened by mature hedgerows along field boundaries. However, the location of both settlements is such that there is a relatively high potential for visual coalescence of settlements. Any new built development on this land may

undermine the sense of settlement separation and a high potential of visual coalescence.

- Seek to prevent ribbon development north of the village on Colchester Road/Nayland Road to discourage further development away from the existing village services and facilities, and where the character is changes and becomes rural/open countryside. There is a distinct entrance to the village from Nayland Road/Colchester Road junction into West Bergholt.
- Most facilities are located within the village core, and any large scale development on the edge of the village could be more than 400m to the main facilities and school.
- There are surface water and foul water capacity issues identified and Anglian Water have indicated that there are major constraints in the area.
- Heathlands Primary School has recently been expanded but there is a forecast deficit of 12 spaces in the school by 2018/19 (this includes adjustment for new housing). There may however be physical space for further expansion.
- Located some distance from closest secondary schools (the closest are St Helena & the Stanway School), all of which forecast a deficit of places by 2018/19.
- Majority of village on Grade 2 agricultural land.

#### High Level Opportunities (at settlement level)

- A sustainable settlement located on a key transport route (B1508) to Colchester with good public transport links.
- West Bergholt has a sufficient population base to allow for appropriate growth at a lower level to successfully support expansion of infrastructure and community facilities.
- Good local facilities including Co-op food-store, post office, doctors' surgery, pharmacy.
- Good provision of open space, allotments and village hall located centrally in the village. However, there may be a need for more sports facilities.
- Opportunity to provide more sports facilities with development.
- The village is fairly well located for the main railway line and has good public transport links to Colchester station.

#### Parish Council/Neighbourhood Plan Group view

A Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for West Bergholt with the intention to allocate sites for development.

West Bergholt Parish Council submitted a representation to the Preferred Options stating that they generally support the Draft Local Plan. However, they disagree with some of the proposals eg. the number of dwellings proposed and the areas/class of the business parks. They also require the Draft Local Plan to empower the Parish Council to set criteria for Areas of both Special Character and to resist inappropriate development. Finally, the Parish Council wish to object to the developments proposed for Braiswick on the other side of the A12, in order to ensure there is no coalescence of West Bergholt with adjacent parishes and localities.

## Potential areas of search/settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** – Expansion to the north east of B1508 Colchester Road (within limits of existing built development boundaries opposite playing fields/Treble Tile pub). This broad area contains 1 green SLAA site: WBG09 which was submitted as part of the Call for Sites. It also contains 1 amber SLAA site: WBG14 which was not submitted as part of the Call for Sites and is a large area of land which was estimated in the SLAA table to have potential for up to 900 dwellings. However, only part of the site is considered to be suitable to maintain a more appropriate settlement shape. This has potential for up to approximately 65 dwellings. WBG09 has potential for up to approximately 65 dwellings.

Development in this area, within the limits of the existing built development to the north-west and south-east, would fill in gaps along Colchester Road. Development would be closest to the existing facilities and services in the village although there would need to be provision made for safe crossing of Colchester Road. Development in this location could also provide additional sports pitches (understood to be an identified need by the Parish Council) in the same area as the existing Cricket Club Ground, with the potential to share some facilities.

## **Broad Area 2** – Expansion to the south/south-east of West Bergholt

Development in this area could be considered to fill in gaps along the existing settlement boundary. For example, small areas of land with access off existing roads to the south of the village could be considered. However, due to identified constraints, larger scale expansion beyond the existing settlement boundary and built-up limits towards Colchester is not considered suitable.

- The broad area contains 1 green SLAA site to the south of West Bergholt: WBG01 which is a small site located to the south of West Bergholt and accessed off Valley Crescent. Development of WBG01 has potential for approximately 12 dwellings.
- It also contains 2 amber sites: WBG04 is located to the south-east of the village between existing development on the old Brewery site; and WBG05 which is located to the immediate south-east of West Bergholt and accessed off Colchester Road.
- There are also 2 other amber SLAA sites to the south-east of West Bergholt: WBG02; and WBG03. These are outside of this broad area of search as development of these sites could contribute to visual coalescence.
- WBG04 has a potential for up to approximately 30 dwellings. The site is promoted by the same owner as WBG03 and developer believes there is potential for combining the sites to address the development needs of the area. However, WBG03 falls into an area not considered as part of this broad location of search due to visual coalescence with Colchester and it is not clear if the developer would consider development of one site alone. In addition, highway issues have been raised with regard to the suitability of pedestrian access to the site via Armoury Road, intensification of traffic on Armoury Road, and the ability of the current highway network around the site to cater for the additional traffic.

- The development of WBG05 would need to take into account the Listed Buildings adjacent to the site. Access to the site between existing development would need to be assessed, particularly as it is adjacent to Listed Buildings, and it is questioned whether there is sufficient road frontage to enable an access to be delivered to the required highway standards.

### **Broad Area 3 – Expansion to the west of West Bergholt**

This area has been considered, similar to the areas above, as any potential development would be located around one of the three main roads in West Bergholt. Development to this side of West Bergholt would be within 400m of the main facilities in the village. However, it is not clear if access to the land is possible without taking access off Cooks Hall Road or Hall Road, which are both rural roads located at the southern and northern ends of the broad area of search.

- No green/amber SLAA sites in this area.
- Due to access constraints no additional sites have been considered.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

- West Bergholt has been classified as a sustainable settlement and an appropriate level of growth can be physically accommodated without compromising the existing settlement shape, form and character but suitability depends on capability of this level of growth being supported with adequate infrastructure.
- The current population of West Bergholt is 2,885 with 1,202 dwellings within the defined built up area of the village, and a total of 1,365 dwellings within the wider Parish area.
- Development of Broad Area 1 alone (up to approximately 130 dwellings if part of WBG14 came forward) would equate to up to an 11% increase in growth in the defined built up area of West Bergholt.
- Development of Broad Areas 1 and 2 (up to 220 dwellings) would involve a higher level of growth than that anticipated to be provided for through the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- If SLAA site WBG14 was not available (this site was not submitted through the Call for Sites) the development of Broad Areas 1 (WBG09) and sites WBG01 & WBG04 in Broad Area 2 (up to 155 dwellings in total) would equate to up to a 13% increase in growth in the defined built up area of West Bergholt. WBG03 could also be considered as part of a more comprehensive area of growth if this broad area is preferred in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Based on discussions with the Neighbourhood Plan Group, and the constraints and opportunities within the village it is felt that between a 10% and 13% level of growth could be accommodated within the village if the infrastructure (see below) is sufficient.
- There are concerns about existing surface water and foul water capacity and adequate enhancements would be necessary to enable development to be supported. West Bergholt is served by West Bergholt Sewage Treatment Works. The primary school also has capacity constraints which would need to be addressed by any proposed development.

- A Housing Needs Survey was undertaken in West Bergholt in 2015. The recommendations from the survey were as follows:
  - 5 x 1 Bedroom units at affordable rent
  - 3 x 2 Bedroom units at affordable rent
  - 1 x 3 bedroom units at affordable rent
  - 1 x 1 bedroom unit for shared ownership
  - 2 x 2 bedroom units for shared ownership
- Eighteen respondents indicated a need for open market housing in the parish, of these fifteen respondents indicated a need for smaller accommodation suitable for older people, mainly bungalows. This contributed to a significant number of overall responses.

### Green/Amber SLAA Sites (9)

|       |                   |   |       |
|-------|-------------------|---|-------|
| WBG01 | Valley Crescent   | 12-14 potential dwellings   | Green |
| WBG02 | Colchester Road   | 80-90 potential dwellings   | Amber |
| WBG03 | Colchester Road   | 60 potential dwellings  | Amber |
| WBG04 | Armoury Road      | 30 potential dwellings  | Amber |
| WBG05 | Colchester Road   | Estimate 48 potential dwellings   | Amber |
| WBG07 | Colchester Road   | Estimate 77 potential dwellings   | Amber |
| WBG09 | Colchester Road   | 65 potential dwellings  | Green |
| WBG10 | High Trees Farm   | Estimate 168 potential dwellings  | Amber |
| WBG14 | North East Infill | Up to 900 dwellings on entire site; estimate 65 potential dwellings on front part of site | Amber |

### SLAA sites - potential allocations to inform the Neighbourhood Plan

The emerging West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will make site allocations and as such will carry out detailed site assessments to inform this. For the purposes of the Local Plan an indicative level and broad direction for growth are identified which have been considered informally with the Neighbourhood Plan Group. The assessment summary below is the Council's high level assessment through the SLAA which may inform future work of the Neighbourhood Plan Group and also has helped determine an appropriate level and direction for growth. The decision to allocate these or other sites within the agreed broad direction will be one for the Neighbourhood Plan, rather than the Local Plan.

10-13% growth is considered appropriate and so not all of the SLAA sites should be allocated. The sites in Broad Area 1, which are closest to existing facilities (WBG09; and part of WBG14) fall within the broad direction of growth proposed in the Local Plan. WBG09 and part of WBG14 are adjacent to the existing settlement boundary, and can be accessed via the public highway. WBG1 and WBG04 would both effectively fill in a gap close to the settlement boundary. Any potential highway issues would need to be investigated and should be further explored by the Neighbourhood Plan Group as detailed consideration for site allocations is made.

WBG02 - The site is located on the southern edge of the West Bergholt and it only touches the settlement boundary at its northern tip and amending the settlement boundary to include this site would only make sense if site WBG05 was also included.

WBG03 – Consideration for development could also consider more comprehensive development together with WBG04.

WBG05 – Any development proposed on this site will need to have regard to Listed Buildings and potential access issues.

WBG07 - the site is not situated adjacent to the settlement boundary and would extend the boundary in a fashion which realistically would be likely to need to incorporate a larger area of land within the boundary. If any development were to be proposed in this area it will also be necessary to ensure that adequate protection from surface water flooding is in place as this site is at high risk from this type of flooding.

WBG10 – the site only just touches the settlement boundary. Amending the settlement boundary to include this site alone would require extending it in a fashion which realistically would be likely to need to incorporate a larger area of land within the boundary. The site is currently situated in open countryside and is currently farmed.

### Summary

West Bergholt has been classified as a sustainable settlement and is capable of accommodating some additional growth without compromising the existing settlement shape. The broad area on the north eastern edge of the existing settlement encompasses land that would form logical amendments to the settlement boundary and has the potential to deliver an appropriate level of growth (approximately 120 dwellings); the sites for which will be determined by the Neighbourhood Plan within the broad area defined in the Local Plan.

## **West Mersea**

### Settlement shape and form

West Mersea is the larger of two settlements on Mersea Island, the other being the much smaller village/hamlet of East Mersea. West Mersea was originally formed around the harbour and nearby oyster pits to the south east of the island and has since expanded to the north and west. The shape of the settlement is concentrated within a well-defined and defensible northern boundary. The settlement boundary to the east is less well-defined and existing development is very loose knit.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Natural coastal boundary to the south and west of the town and sloping topography to the north west of the island deem expansion in those directions impossible or unlikely.
- Land to the north of the existing built up area is in a prominent location in the landscape and further development that extends beyond the existing development line would tend not to be appropriate.
- The estuarine and coastal areas of the island are covered by European wildlife designations, Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation

designations. These designations may be a constraining factor to settlement expansion especially when cumulative impact is taken account of.

- Additionally all of the undeveloped areas of the island are covered by the local Coastal Protection Belt designation. This also has the potential effect of constraining development if it impacts on the landscape character of the area.
- West Mersea is located a significant distance from the nearest train station (12km) and although bus services to Colchester are good, travel by car is necessary for most journeys.
- East Mersea is not considered suitable for future development other than infill and rural exception housing (should a need be demonstrated). Public transport is severely restricted, the area lacks foot and cycleways and there are few services and facilities. No sites are considered suitable for new residential development.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- There are opportunities to facilitate some logical expansion of the West Mersea settlement without compromising the existing character of the area. Expansion in appropriate locations is also likely to result in a more defensible boundary being formed.
- West Mersea is currently designated as a district settlement and as such has a high level of existing services to support its population and the surrounding rural areas south of the borough.
- The Mersea Island School has current capacity and is also capable of some expansion (as stated by the school in the Issues and Options consultation).

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

West Mersea Town Council (WMTC) submitted a representation to the Preferred Options consultation objecting to the two Mersea housing sites. The Town Council stated that West Mersea is a proud and unique community within the Colchester Borough, and whilst WMTC appreciates that Colchester has an obligation to build additional dwellings to house a growing national population the TC would contend that the areas shown for development in the Local Plan may be suitable for additional dwellings but only if all the issues raised are addressed in full. The Town Council urged CBC to consult further with WMTC and to take into full consideration the heart felt views of the local community. They indicated they would be pleased to work with CBC to find solutions that protect the unique environment in Mersea and that go in some way to providing more housing and local amenities to meet the growing and changing needs of the population.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- West Mersea currently has approximately 3,200 dwellings within its settlement. An additional 350 dwellings would therefore represent an approximate 11% increase in the existing housing stock. However, owing to the capacity of infrastructure a lower figure of 200 would be more appropriate.
- West Mersea is one of three district centres in the Borough and is a preferred location for some housing growth based on its existing infrastructure provision.

- The area for new development is limited by the environmental constraints outlined above.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad Area 1** - Expansion to the east of the settlement. This area includes three sites, MER18, MER20 and MER24. Although this area is covered by the Coastal Protection Belt (as all undeveloped areas of Mersea Island are) the current settlement shape does allow for some infill opportunities. Such infill would include MER18 and MER20 and to a lesser extent MER24. MER18 is the largest of the sites and also represents the best infill location because development could incorporate access from Cross Lane and Seaview Avenue as well as East Road. Furthermore Cross Lane represents a defensible boundary for the eastern edge of West Mersea. MER18 is capable of accommodating 100 new dwellings which could be phased over a longer period. MER20 has not been promoted and currently forms part of a private residential garden, furthermore it has little relation to MER18 being separated by hedgerow and it offers no highway access to the south of the site. MER20 is therefore not a logical or deliverable extension to the settlement boundary. MER24 is located further along East Road to MER18, also falling within the Coastal Protection Belt. Although MER24 could form an extension to the settlement boundary the capacity that could be achieved at MER18 would mean that extending farther east on to MER24 is not necessary and can therefore be discounted.

**Broad Area 2** - Expansion to the north east of the settlement. This area contains MER02. The site is also covered by the Coastal Protection Belt but is free from other constraints. MER02 as submitted is a large site which if allocated in its entirety would extend West Mersea's northern boundary much further northwards than the rest of the existing settlement. For this reason only half of the site should be allocated to bring it level with residential areas to the west. The southern half of the site would accommodate 100 new dwellings.

### Green/Amber SLAA sites (4)

|         |   |     |       |
|---------|---|-----|-------|
| • MER02 | Dawes Lane, West Mersea                 | 250 | Amber |
| • MER18 | Brierley Paddocks, East Rd, West Mersea | 231 | Amber |
| • MER20 | Land north of Estuary Rd, West Mersea   | 20  | Amber |
| • MER24 | East Rd, West Mersea                    | 48  | Amber |

All other sites/broad locations were not considered suitable or scored a red RAG rating and have not been assessed.

### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

MER02 (in part) – 100 dwellings could be accommodated in the southern part of the site nearest East Road which is considered suitable for development with the remainder of the site delivering open space and associated benefits to the community.

Safe access will need to be agreed with the Highways Authority. There will also be a need to undertake a pre-determination archaeological evaluation with an agreed mitigation strategy as necessary. The design, layout and landscaping of any proposed development will need to minimise the impact on the surrounding landscape, protecting the character of the area and the Coastal Protection Belt.

MER18 – has the potential to deliver 100 dwellings across the entire site. Because of the scale of the site it may be more suitable for only part of the site to be brought forward for development during the plan period. Safe access will need to be agreed with the Highways Authority. In addition it will be necessary to ensure that safe pedestrian access is provided and opportunities to enhance connectivity between the site and West Mersea centre are secured. Development on this site will also be required to deliver necessary improvements to community infrastructure.

Allocation of the two sites will be dependent on there being adequate infrastructure which includes primary school capacity. Contributions to improve capacity may be required. It will be necessary to ensure that the cumulative impacts of proposed development on the European designated wildlife sites is adequately considered and mitigation agreed and managed if required.

#### SLAA sites to discount

- MER20 – the site has not been promoted for development and would not provide a logical extension due to a lack of highways access at this end of the site and further development beyond the two preferred sites identified is not necessary.
- MER24 – the site does not represent the most logical extension of the town and there are issues regarding highways access. Given the capacity that could be achieved at MER02 and MER18, it is not necessary to allocate additional land at this site.

#### Summary

West Mersea is heavily constrained by its coastal boundaries and the associated wildlife and landscape designations that come with an estuarine location. Future expansion is only really possible to the east of the town where previous development has left some opportunities to expand the settlement boundary. Overall the town is well served by infrastructure and there is an active community in the town providing many services to residents. The capacity at the local primary school and the option to expand is an advantage. Distance to secondary schools and train stations are the most significant issues affecting growth in the settlement but the frequent bus routes which service the town mitigate these issues to some degree.

West Mersea Town Council have decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and the area has been designated. The two suitable sites referred to above will be allocated in the Local Plan because of the advanced stage it has reached, but details regarding the allocations will be made in the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Wivenhoe

### Settlement shape and form

Originally Wivenhoe was made up of two separate settlements: Wivenhoe Cross which was centred around the crossroads of Colchester Road, Rectory Road and The Avenue; and Wivenhoe to the south which was centred around the quay. Wivenhoe until recently still comprised two separate wards which reflected this historic settlement pattern. Development has since seen these two settlements coalesce into one settlement. Recent significant 'estate' development has included Dene Park to the east which was built in the 1970s; Broomgrove to the west, in the 1970/80s; Ferry Marsh in the 2000s and most recently Cook's Shipyard to the south. The town benefits from good infrastructure provision including a mainline train station, GP surgery, two primary schools, numerous shops and restaurants and abundant open space provision.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- The town lacks a secondary school with most children attending Colne Academy in Brightlingsea or Colchester Academy in Greenstead.
- The settlement is bordered by the River Colne to the west and south. In addition to the physical boundary the river presents there are also other associated constraints such as EA Flood Zone 3 areas, SSSI, SPA and the Coastal Protection Belt (which due to topography covers a significant amount of inland areas). The European level designations may cause an issue when cumulative impact is taken into account. To the east of the settlement is a Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Zone.
- Broomgrove and Millfields schools are operating at capacity but currently accept some pupils from outside of Wivenhoe, therefore there is capacity for some additional residential development.
- The emerging Neighbourhood Plan, which is at an advanced stage, seeks to prevent further development towards other settlement locations including the University of Essex, the main Colchester conurbation and Alresford. To this end the land in between Wivenhoe and Colchester has been designated as a 'coalescence break' between the current settlement and the grounds of the University of Essex at Wivenhoe Park.
- There are numerous listed buildings, locally listed buildings and a conservation area in Wivenhoe.

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Opportunity to facilitate some logical infill locations on the edge of the town without compromising the existing character of the settlement.
- Wivenhoe is currently designated as a district settlement and as such has a good level of existing services and facilities to support its population
- It is a sustainable settlement with good public transport links (mainline train station and frequent bus services).
- The presence of a mainline train station, frequent bus services and a newly constructed cycle path to the university (the town's biggest employer) as well as a well used footpath to Colchester along the River Colne, increases the

sustainable nature of the settlement and makes it suitable for proportional growth.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Wivenhoe is currently preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and are seeking to allocate sites for development. All of the four sites detailed below were also received by the neighbourhood plan group and have been subject to their own site assessment process and public consultation. The neighbourhood plan is at an advanced stage and includes the allocation of the sites below for housing subject to detailed site considerations including housing numbers and planning gain. The Neighbourhood Plan is at a more advanced stage of preparation than the Local Plan so the Settlement Boundary Review has limited scope to consider alternative locations for growth and reflects the intentions of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Wivenhoe Town Council submitted representations to the Preferred Options expressing concern over the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community, and development in Weeley, Frating and Middlewick Ranges.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- Wivenhoe currently has approximately 3,200 dwellings. An increase of 250 dwellings in the Wivenhoe settlement would therefore represent an 8% increase to the existing stock.
- Although this is probably less than what would be considered 'proportionate' elsewhere, Wivenhoe has a number of constraints both geographically and also in terms of primary school provision (250 dwellings represents the maximum number of new dwellings before new form provision would be required in Wivenhoe).
- Part of Wivenhoe is also expected to form part of a new garden community to the east of Colchester and therefore allowance has been made for this in agreeing a lower number/percentage of units in Wivenhoe itself (when compared to other towns and villages.)
- As with most areas in the Borough, there are concerns about the impact of new housing on the existing highway network however this has been allayed to some extent through requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan to accommodate more car-intensive family housing on the edge of town and less car-intensive development (care homes and bungalows) closer to the centre. The Garden Community also offers the opportunity to deliver a new link road between the A133 and the A120.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad area 1** - Expansion eastwards towards Wivenhoe Quarry. This broad area contains one of the submitted Call for Sites: WIV01 near Croquet Gardens (off Rectory Road). The site represents a good opportunity for some housing growth by building upon the existing highway created as part of the Croquet Gardens development. The site differs from land to the north of the site because it has lower wildlife value and the land is more suitable for development (more stable/settled) compared to the former

gravel extraction site to the north of WIV01. There is capacity for approximately 25 dwellings and a care home as proposed in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

**Broad area 2** - Expansion to the north west between Broomgrove School and the fire station. This area contains site WIV02 with proposed access from Colchester Road. Following the review of the Coastal Protection Belt this area is no longer within this landscape protection designation. It is therefore considered a good opportunity area to provide housing growth on a logical area of infill with little landscape character value. The site could accommodate approximately 80 dwellings and a care home as proposed in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

**Broad area 3** - Expansion to the north and north east along Elmstead Road. This area includes two SLAA sites, WIV03 (north of Elmstead Road) and WIV04 (Broadfields, south of Elmstead Road). WIV03 would not normally be considered a logical direction of expansion however residential development has already taken place north of Elmstead Road and as a result WIV03 represents an extension of this settlement pattern. Furthermore the site offers the added benefit of being able to accommodate a new cemetery which would act as a defensible boundary to further development north of Elmstead Road. The site has the capacity for approximately 25 dwellings as proposed in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. WIV04 is a logical area of infill only because of the benefits that could be secured through linking Wivenhoe with sporting facilities at Broad Lane Sports Ground. It would result in expanding the settlement boundary northwards and away from existing services and facilities in the centre, so the benefits that can be secured through some new housing need to outweigh the concerns about development in this location. The site could accommodate approximately 120 dwellings, additional sport pitches and improved access, as proposed in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

#### Green/Amber SLAA sites (4)

|       |                           |     |       |
|-------|---------------------------|-----|-------|
| WIV01 | Croquet Gardens, Wivenhoe | 25  | Green |
| WIV02 | Colchester Road, Wivenhoe | 80  | Green |
| WIV03 | Elmstead Road, Wivenhoe   | 25  | Green |
| WIV04 | Broadfields, Wivenhoe     | 120 | Green |

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

- WIV01 – approximately 25 dwellings. Greenfield location. Impact upon wildlife designations/Waste and Minerals Safeguarding Zone which are in close proximity to site. Cumulative impact on European designations.
- WIV02 – approximately 80 dwellings. Greenfield location. Landscape impact on Coastal Protection Belt. Highways issues regarding access on to Colchester Road. High agricultural land value. Cumulative impact on European designations.
- WIV03 – approximately 25 dwellings. Greenfield location. Risk of surface water flooding. The need to provide a defensible boundary to prevent development spreading too far away from the settlement centre. Cumulative impact on European designations.

- WIV04 – approximately 120 dwellings. Greenfield location. There is a need to provide a defensible boundary to prevent development spreading too far away from the settlement centre. Power lines running over site. Cumulative impact on European designations.

### Summary

Wivenhoe is considered a sustainable and well-serviced settlement. Accordingly it can accommodate growth specific to its constraints. Fundamentally, there is a Neighbourhood Plan being prepared for the area which is at a more advanced stage than the Local Plan. As a result there have already been extensive discussions between the neighbourhood plan group and land owners, as well as public consultation and engagement. For this reason the Settlement Boundary Review has limited scope to consider alternative growth locations without being in contravention of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, therefore the Local Plan reflects the emerging Neighbourhood Plan Proposals.

## 6. Other Villages and Countryside

### Aldham

#### Settlement shape and form

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 the main settlement within the Aldham parish area, with a small cluster of properties known as Ford Street to the north. Aldham is rural in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes but is close to the A12/A120 and A1124.

#### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 120 dwellings) with limited services and facilities, rural in character, has poor bus links and is located some distance away from secondary school (5km) and Colchester town centre (approx 7.8km) although Aldham is only 1.8km away from Marks Tey, which has a mainline railway station but access to this by road, bus, bike or on foot is poor.
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would be likely to constitute ribbon development.
- No sites have been promoted/identified for development in Aldham with a green/amber RAG rating in the SLAA.
- Lack of services and facilities; including no primary school – the nearest one is approx 2km away in Eight Ash Green and access to this is poor.
- Settlement is rural in character and as such is more appropriate designated as an 'other village' within the settlement hierarchy.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Aldham is the largest settlement in the Aldham Parish area.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

A need for 1 additional affordable home in the village to meet local need has been identified.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Aldham should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development which could help deliver the affordable housing need identified by the parish council.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

Summary of sites promoted/identified in Aldham in the SLAA (1)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                     | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RNW56    | Checkleys Farm, Tey Road, Aldham | 14                       | Red        |

RNW56 – The site scored a red RAG rating in the SLAA and was excluded at the early stage of the process because it is physically separate from an established settlement boundary and is therefore considered to be unsuitable/unsustainable for development.

Summary

Aldham is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the Borough, in particular due to the lack of a primary school. It is therefore defined as an ‘other village’ in the hierarchy.

**Easthorpe**Settlement shape and form

Easthorpe is a small settlement, which has developed along an old Roman road. It is close to Copford and Marks Tey.

High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is very small (only approximately 35 dwellings within the current settlement boundary).
- There are very limited services and facilities, poor bus links and the village is located some distance away from primary and secondary schools and Colchester town centre.
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would represent ribbon development and not be appropriate.
- Settlement is rural in character.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- SLAA site achieved an amber score.

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

None available at the time of writing

### Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Easthorpe should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

### Summary of sites promoted/identified in Easthorpe in the SLAA (1)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS              | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| WST14    | Easthorpe Road, Easthorpe | 81                       | Amber      |

WST14 - The site is made up of three different parcels of land in Easthorpe. The most significant issues with the site's suitability are its greenfield nature and the potential for the site to impact upon the landscape value of the area, particularly the north eastern parcel of the site. In terms of sustainability the site suffers from being a significant distance from key services and facilities including primary school and health centre. There is also a lack of capacity at the nearest secondary school and health centre. 81 dwellings would be out of character with the existing settlement. As Easthorpe is defined as an 'Other' village due to relative sustainability, it is not recommended that any allocation for growth be made in the preferred options Local Plan.

### Summary

Easthorpe is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (in particular due to the lack of a primary school). It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the settlement hierarchy.

## **East Mersea**

### Settlement shape and form

East Mersea is a small settlement, close to the larger settlement of West Mersea. It is predominantly linear, with most dwellings located along East Road. There are 125 dwellings within the parish, including 10 caravans/temporary accommodation.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently incorporates a Settlement Development Boundary but the sustainability of East Mersea is questionable as it is relatively small with limited

services and facilities, it has very poor bus links and is located some distance away from a secondary school (6.4km), a GP surgery (4.9km) and Colchester town centre.

- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would alter the settlement shape or represent ribbon development.
- There is no primary school.
- Settlement is rural in character.
- The settlement is within the coastal protection belt.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- SLAA housing sites achieved an amber score.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

A meeting with the Parish Council and a representative from the Council has occurred at which a number of issues were discussed including settlement boundaries and issues linked to caravan sites.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above East Mersea should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development. Due to its relative sustainability East Mersea is identified as an 'Other Village' which supports the conclusion that it is not an appropriate location for growth over and above any small scale infill / exceptions opportunities.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

#### Summary of sites promoted/identified in East Mersea in the SLAA (3)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                       | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| MER01    | North Barn, East Road, East Mersea | 14                       | Amber      |
| MER05    | East Road, East Mersea             | 102                      | Amber      |
| MER25    | Coopers Beach Holiday Park         | -                        | Amber      |

MER01 - The site is located a significant distance from services and facilities including secondary schools, train stations and employment zones. Public transport is poor.

MER05 - While this site touches the settlement boundary on one part the site can be considered to be remote from the village. The site is many times the size of the existing

village and so development of this site could be deemed inappropriate. The site is a significant distance from secondary schools, train stations and employment zones.

MER25 – The area proposed as an extension to Coopers Beach holiday park lies within an area of high flood risk. Whilst the owners of the holiday park constructed a clay sea wall following a major sea wall breach in January 2014 the Environment Agency is seeking additional hard revetments to the sea wall face to strengthen it.

### Summary

East Mersea is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

## **Fingringhoe**

### Settlement shape and form

Fingringhoe is the only settlement within the wider Fingringhoe parish. It 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. An area of ribbon development along Abberton Road lies to the west and a more nucleated cluster known as High Park Corner lies to the east. Each part of the village is located approx. 0.5km away from the historic core in the centre.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- All of High Park Corner area of village and land to the south of Abberton Road is within the Coastal Protection Belt.
- Land to the north of Fingringhoe is within a flood zone.
- Land to the east of High Park Corner is a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and much of this land is woodland.
- Conservation Area and Local Wildlife Site around the central historic core of the village.
- Sewerage/drainage/mains issues – existing facilities at Fingringhoe Sewage Treatment Works at capacity.
- Fairly small village (221 dwellings) with limited services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements in the borough – although it does have its own primary school and post office and is close to services and facilities in Rowhedge (approx. 1km away). Located some distance away from secondary school (5.1km) and Colchester town centre (approx. 5.7km)
- Seek to prevent the coalescence of both halves of the village with the historic core in the centre to preserve its rural and historic character and gaps of open countryside.
- Seek to prevent further ribbon development along the peripheries of the settlement beyond easily defensible points – to discourage further development

away from existing village services and facilities and where character is more rural/or is open countryside and to protect the surrounding coastal landscape.

- Seek to discourage development that would not represent a logical or sensible extension to the existing built up area

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Fingringhoe is the only settlement in the Fingringhoe Parish area and so is the main community focus within the parish and if considered appropriate in principle would be the location for growth.
- Fingringhoe has a number of key services and facilities (Primary School and post office) and is close (approx. 1km) to facilities in Rowhedge.
- Primary school (Fingringhoe Church of England Primary School) is located in the historic core of the village between the two residential halves of the village, which is forecast to have a surplus of 5 places at 2019/20.
- Land has been promoted for housing development which suggests there is developer interest.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Parish Council do not support any of the sites due to lack of services and facilities in the village.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- 320 households currently in the wider Fingringhoe Parish area of which 221 dwellings are within the current settlement development boundaries.
- Fingringhoe has limited key community facilities and is close to services and is situated reasonably close to facilities nearby in Rowhedge.
- The above physical constraints linked to the linear shape of the village, avoiding surrounding environmental constraints, avoiding the joining up of both parts of the village and avoiding further ribbon development away from the village centre, limits the opportunity for expansion around the village.
- The primary school is forecast to have a small surplus by 2019 so only small-scale growth is likely to be capable of being accommodated without expansion of the school.
- There are also concerns regarding the capacity of water infrastructure in the village (AW has identified a constraint regarding the capacity of existing facilities) and any development will be required to contribute to improvements.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

##### **Broad area 1 – Expansion south of Abberton Road**

This broad area of land lies in an obvious gap in the road frontage between existing residential properties on the south side of Abberton Road and development could potentially be contained within existing field boundaries. However, no land within this area has been promoted for housing so availability is unknown.

**Broad area 2 – Expansion east of Abberton Road (The Lindens)**

This broad area of land is comprised of an existing residential property and an area of arable land to the rear. The site is well defined by existing housing development to the south and west and a field boundary to the east. To the east is open countryside and the land is within the Coastal Protection Belt which would need to be considered if any development were to be proposed.

Green/Amber SLAA sites promoted in Fingringhoe (4)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                            | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|---|--------------------------|------------|
| RSE15    | Clay Barn, Abberton Road, Fingringhoe   | 24                       | Amber      |
| RSE25    | The Lindens, Chapel Road, Fingringhoe   | 19                       | Amber      |
| RSE20    | Land off Ballast Quay Road, Fingringhoe | 1,867*                   | Amber      |
| RSE42    | Picketts Fm (A), Church Ln, Fingringhoe | 81                       | Amber      |

\* A mix of residential, employment, sport and leisure uses have been promoted – large number relates to overall site size

All the sites were given an amber rating due to the lack of services and facilities in Fingringhoe and the relative sustainability of the settlement compared to larger, more sustainable settlements in the borough.

- RSE15 – Development of the site would extend the village too far west away from existing services and facilities in the village centre (in particular the primary school) and reduce the gap between the village and the neighbouring village of Abberton. The size of the site would be too large and over and above what is considered proportionate for the village. Access is likely to be difficult to achieve.
- RSE20 – The site is too large for a countryside location and is affected by environmental constraints. Major road upgrades would be required to serve a development of the size suggested by the site area.
- RSE25 – The site would be accessed via existing residential property (to be demolished to enable access into the site). This site is unlikely to meet highways standards due to potentially not having sufficient control over land to achieve an acceptable visibility splay. Land ownership is unknown.
- RSE42 – Whilst the site is close to the primary school, part of the site is within the flood zone and development would reduce the gap between the historic core of the village and the High Park Corner area to the east. The size of the

site would be too large and over and above what is considered appropriate for the village. Access is likely to be difficult to achieve.

### Summary

Fingringhoe is a small settlement and the scope for expansion around its periphery is limited due to the linear shape of the settlement, surrounding environmental constraints, the need to discourage inappropriate forms of development, the need to avoid the merging of both halves of the village, the need to avoid further sprawl into surrounding open countryside away from existing services and facilities in the village centre and the relative lack of services and facilities and poor access to these, compared to more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the Borough. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

## **Great Wigborough**

### Settlement shape and form

Great Wigborough is a small, rural settlement. It currently has two settlement boundaries around the two linear settlement areas. The small cluster of houses to the south of the main settlement is known as South Maldon Road.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently incorporates a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 100 households within the parish)
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would alter the settlement shape or represent ribbon development.
- Lack of services and facilities and there is no primary school.
- Poor bus links and located some distance away from secondary school (8.6km), a GP surgery (5 km) and Colchester town centre.
- Settlement is rural in character.
- The southern part of the settlement is within the coastal protection belt.

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Both SLAA housing sites achieved an amber score.

### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Winstred Hundred Parish Council commented as part of the Issues and Options consultation that any development within Great and Little Wigborough and Salcott should be within existing settlement boundaries. See text under Peldon for more details on the points raised in their response.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Great Wigborough should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

### Summary of sites promoted/identified in Great Wigborough in the SLAA (2)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                  | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RSW07    | School Lane, Great Wigborough | 76                       | Amber      |
| RSW13    | School Lane, Great Wigborough | 39                       | Amber      |

RSW07 and RSW13 – There are very limited facilities and infrastructure in the small settlement of Great Wigborough. Additionally, its location is remote from larger more sustainable settlements offering a wider range of services and opportunities. The sites are considered too large for the existing settlement and would be out of keeping.

### Summary

Great Wigborough is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (in particular due to the lack of a primary school and distance of 5 km to the nearest). It is defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

The settlement boundary will be removed from the small cluster of houses to the south of the main settlement known as South Maldon Road.

## **Layer Breton**

### Settlement shape and form

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 the only settlement within the parish but is close to neighbouring Birch Green. Layer Breton is rural in character, poorly connected to the strategic road network and is accessed by narrow country lanes.

High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 71 dwellings) with no services and facilities, rural in character, has poor train and bus links and is located some distance away from secondary school (6.7km) and Colchester town centre (approx 8.5km).
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery due to the inaccessibility of land, surrounding environmental constraints and in order to maintain the existing settlement shape and to discourage further ribbon development.
- Sewerage/drainage/surface water flooding issues – existing STW facilities at Birch is at capacity.
- Lack of services and facilities and there is no primary school – the nearest one is in Birch to the north, which is 1.5km away – but not easily accessible on foot due to lack of footpaths along Birch Street.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Both SLAA housing sites achieved an amber score.
- Primary school at Birch is able to accommodate some growth (12 place surplus forecast at 2018/19).

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

No comment available at the time of writing.

Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Layer Breton should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development which could help deliver any local need that may exist.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

Green/Amber SLAA sites promoted in Layer Breton (3)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                 | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RSW05    | Shatters Road, Layer Breton  | 6                        | Amber      |
| RSW11    | Bumblebee Farm, Layer Breton | 17                       | Amber      |
| RSW15    | Shatters Road, Layer Breton  | 11                       | Amber      |

All 3 sites are amber due to the low sustainability of Layer Breton also 2 of the sites do not currently immediately adjoin the existing Settlement Development Boundary.

#### SLAA sites to discount

RSW05, RSW11 and RSW15 – as Layer Breton is not considered to be sustainable or suitable for planned housing growth and development of these sites would represent ribbon development and the expansion of the settlement further away from existing services and facilities into the surrounding open countryside.

#### Summary

Layer Breton is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the Borough, in particular the lack of a primary school. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

### **Little Horkesley**

#### Settlement shape and form

Little Horkesley is a small, rural, linear settlement. It is located within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

#### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 75 households within the parish)
- has poor bus links and is located some distance away from
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would alter the settlement shape or represent ribbon development.
- Lack of services and facilities and there is no primary school. The nearest secondary school is 6.3 km away, a GP surgery (3.4 km) and Colchester town centre 11.5km away.
- Settlement is rural in character.
- The entire settlement is within the Dedham Vale AONB.
- The southern part of the settlement is within a Historic Park and Garden.
- The only SLAA site achieved a red RAG rating.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

None

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Little Horkesley Parish Council responded to the Issues and Options document; of relevance to this review is the comment that piecemeal development in smaller rural communities that do not have sufficient infrastructure to support an increase in population cannot achieve housing targets.

The Parish Council also submitted representations to the Preferred Options consultation stating that Little Horkesley is a small parish with a very tightly drawn settlement boundary and little likelihood of growth. Larger houses predominate and the village's housing provision will therefore tend to preclude younger (and other) sections of the population from being able to afford to stay in the parish. More strategic planning needs to be undertaken across the Borough to address this long term impact on this and other parishes.

Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Little Horkesley should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development. This would address the comments made by the Parish Council.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

Summary of sites promoted/identified in Little Horkesley in the SLAA (1)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RNE40    | Home Farm, Little Horkesley | 104                      | Red        |

RNE40 - The site is well outside of the settlement boundary and is given a red rating as development would not have accessibility to a range of services and facilities. It is also within the AONB.

Summary

Little Horkesley is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (in particular due to the lack of a primary school). It is also entirely within the Dedham Vale AONB. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

## Messing

### Settlement shape and form

Messing is the largest settlement within the Messing cum Inworth parish, located in the centre of the parish, north of Tiptree, with the smaller cluster of properties at Inworth to the west of the parish. Messing is very rural and historic in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 75 dwellings) with limited services and facilities,
- Messing cum Inworth is rural in character.
- Public transport links are poor and the parish is located some distance away from Colchester town centre (approx 11.5km)
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery due to the inaccessibility of land, rural and historic character, surrounding environmental constraints and in order to maintain the existing settlement shape and to discourage further ribbon development.
- There are Sewerage/drainage/surface water capacity and flooding issues which would need to be addressed if any development were proposed.
- Lack of services and facilities (but Messing does have its own, albeit small, primary school).

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Close to Tiptree (good services and facilities, including a secondary school) and Kelvedon (rail station).
- Has a primary school (Messing Cum Inworth Community School) which has potential to accommodate some growth – 39 place surplus forecast at 2018/19.

### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Messing cum Inworth Parish Council commented as part of the Issues and Options consultation that rural villages should remain rural, with only development to meet local need. A recent planning application delivered the need for 2 affordable dwellings within the parish.

### Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Messing should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. An additional rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development which could help deliver any further affordable housing need that might be identified by the parish council.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

Summary of SLAA sites promoted in Messing (1)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                     | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RSW18    | Appletrees, School Road, Messing | 21                       | Red        |

RSW18 – as Messing is not considered to be sustainable or suitable for planned housing growth and the size of this site would be too large and vehicular access would be difficult to achieve.

Summary

Messing is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the Borough. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

**Mount Bures**Settlement shape and form

Mount Bures is a small, linear settlement bounded to the east by the railway line.

High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 90 households within the parish)
- Poor bus links and located some distance away from secondary school (9.1 km) and Colchester town centre.
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would alter the settlement shape or represent ribbon development.
- Lack of services and facilities and there is no primary school.
- Settlement is rural in character.
- No sites within the parish were submitted as part of the call for sites.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

None

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

None available at the time of writing

Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Mount Bures should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

Summary

Mount Bures is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (in particular due to the lack of a primary school). No sites within the parish were submitted as part of the call for sites. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

**Peldon**Settlement shape and form

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. Lower Road includes 88 households and Church Road includes 68 households. The village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt, with the exception of the northern part of Church Road.

High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Small settlement (only 157 dwellings) with limited services and facilities, located some distance away from schools and Colchester town centre– therefore not suitable for large-scale growth (in principle).
- Seek to prevent further ribbon development extending the village to discourage further development away from the existing village where character is more rural/or is open countryside.
- Seek to maintain existing settlement shape by discouraging areas of backland development behind established frontages where there is poor vehicular access, ribbon development and the expansion of the settlement into open countryside beyond existing defensible, physical boundaries.

- Site is served by Fingringhoe Sewage Treatment Works which currently has capacity issues and would need to be addressed if any development were proposed.
- Lack of defensible boundaries as village is surrounded by largely flat arable fields.
- Coastal Protection Belt.

#### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

- Peldon is the largest settlement in Winstred Hundred so some small-scale growth in principle could possibly be justified.
- The community will soon be benefitting from a new village hall (built using Abberton Reservoir funds).
- Potential for some infill to bring together two separate parts of village.

#### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

General response from Issues and Options consultation, Winstred Hundred PC which includes Peldon:

- Development of land in between the 3 villages should be prevented to help maintain their individual characters.
- New developments should only take place within the existing Village Envelopes.
- New development should be restricted to infill, individual dwellings or small clusters of no more than 5 properties.
- Ribbon or backland development should be avoided in all areas.
- Any development should reflect the individual characteristics of the villages, ie their rural and isolated nature, the open countryside adjacent to the villages, the open spaces and mature trees, small clusters of housing separated by countryside, the historic country buildings and their rural setting.
- Off street parking should be provided wherever possible for all new development.
- There should be no further expansion of light industry in the Parish beyond the Local Employment Zone allocation on Lower Road and St Ives Hill, and in Lodge Lane, Peldon.
- Development of redundant farm buildings as dwellings would be supported if current planning policy were to change.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

- Village facilities are limited to a pub and a church, and there is limited access to other facilities.
- Given the limited relative sustainability of Peldon planned growth is not considered appropriate
- There are concerns about existing drainage/sewage capacity at Peldon which is currently served by treatment works at Fingringhoe – unclear what level of development could be accommodated before additional facilities would be essential.
-

### Potential areas of search/settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

**Broad area 1** – Expansion to the southeast along Mersea Road – This would involve extending the village into the countryside. While there is built development on the other side of the road, there are no defensible boundaries and additional dwellings in this location could be considered to be ribbon development. It is considered that more sustainable locations are preferred.

**Broad area 2** – Development of St. Ives Farm to the east of Mersea Road, linking the two existing settlement areas. Development of 74 units on the farm would imply loss of a working farm and its replacement by an unacceptably high level of development – approximately 50% increase which would change the character of the settlement and in an area which has limited sustainability.

**Broad area 3** – Infilling the settlement boundary in the triangular area defined by Lower Road, Church Road and Mersea Road. This would consolidate the existing more built-up area of Peldon, but would involve backland development, particularly in the case of RSE21 which would not have any street frontage and is covered by trees which are important to the character of this part of the village.

**Broad area 4** – Development to the south of Lower Road. RSE05 is constrained by a narrow road access. The access would dictate development of a cul-de-sac development which would not have a relationship with the adjoining development.

### Summary of Green/Amber SLAA sites

|       |                         |                    |       |
|-------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| RSE04 | Mersea Road             | 31 potential units | Amber |
| RSE05 | Lower Road              | 27 potential units | Amber |
| RSE21 | Lower Road              | 19 potential units | Amber |
| RSE24 | Hosplant, St. Ives Road | 74 potential units | Amber |
| RSE39 | St. Ives Road           | 42 potential units | Green |

### Summary

Peldon is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the Borough. There may be opportunities for small-scale infill development within the built up area or a rural exception site. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

## **Salcott**

### Settlement shape and form

Salcott is a small, linear settlement. It is located within the coastal protection belt and a large part of the settlement lies within an area of high flood risk.

High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 120 households within the parish)
- Poor bus links and is located some distance away from secondary school and Colchester town centre.
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would alter the settlement shape or represent ribbon development.
- Lack of services and facilities and there is no primary school.
- Settlement is rural in character.
- Settlement is within the coastal protection belt.
- A large part of the settlement lies within an area of high flood risk.
- Settlement is very close to a Special Area of Conservation.
- All sites submitted as part of the call for sites achieved a red RAG rating.

High level opportunities (at settlement level)

None

Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Winstred Hundred Parish Council commented as part of the Issues and Options consultation that any development within Great and Little Wigborough and Salcott should be within existing settlement boundaries. See text under Peldon for more details on the points raised in their response.

Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Salcott should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

Summary of sites promoted/identified in Salcott in the SLAA (3)

| SITE REF | SITE ADDRESS                    | SITE CAPACITY (AT 30DPH) | RAG RATING |
|----------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| RSW01    | Whitehouse Hill, Salcott        | 13                       | Red        |
| RSW02    | Salcott Street, Salcott         | 8                        | Red        |
| RSW17/21 | Tavistock Farm, Colchester Road | 65                       | Red        |

### SLAA sites to discount

RSW01 - While the site adjoins a row of a dozen houses, these houses are outside the existing settlement boundary of Salcott. Salcott is, furthermore, a very small settlement lacking in infrastructure and services to support further development.

RSW02 - Most of site lies within flood zone 3.

RSW17/21 - Site does not adjoin settlement boundary and is in open countryside.

### Summary

Salcott is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (in particular due to the lack of a primary school and high flood risk). No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

## **Wormingford**

### Settlement shape and form

The main built up area of Wormingford follows part of Main Road and then extends northwards along Church Road. Immediately to the north is a Local Wildlife Site and the Dedham Vale AONB is located to the east of the settlement.

### High level constraints (at settlement level)

- Currently includes a Settlement Development Boundary but has limited sustainability and is relatively small (only 185 households within the parish)
- Limited bus links and located some distance away from secondary school (8.5 km) a GP surgery (4.5 km) and Colchester town centre.
- There are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion around the periphery as any growth would alter the settlement shape or represent ribbon development.
- Lack of services and facilities and there is no primary school.
- Settlement is rural in character.
- AONB to the north and east.
- No sites were submitted as part of the call for sites.

### High level opportunities (at settlement level)

None

### Parish council/neighbourhood plan group view

Wormingford Parish Council commented as part of the Issues and Options consultation that infill development would continue to be appropriate within existing

settlement boundaries. Any extension to the settlement boundary would threaten the very essence of the village and would be inappropriate when taking into account the lack of services available within the village.

Wormingford Parish Council submitted a representation to the Preferred Options consultation stating that they have no comment to make.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth

For the reasons detailed above Wormingford should only be considered for limited small-scale growth. A rural exception site might be the most appropriate form of development.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

For the reasons given above there are no obvious opportunities for settlement expansion.

#### Summary

Wormingford is not considered to be a sustainable settlement due to the lack of suitable opportunities for growth around the periphery and lack of services and facilities compared to larger, more sustainable settlements elsewhere in the borough (in particular due to the lack of a primary school). No sites were submitted as part of the call for sites, indicating a lack of developer interest. No amendments to the village boundary are proposed and no site allocations are recommended. It is therefore defined as an 'Other Village' in the hierarchy.

### **Countryside**

The following settlements are classed as countryside, where countryside policies will apply and there will be a general presumption against new development, unless it accords with the special circumstances set out in the Local Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework. They have previously been included within settlement boundaries but it is intended to remove them. Whilst they provide a community function for the small groups of residents living within these areas, as their location is physically detached and sometimes remote from the core villages to which they relate, these clusters of housing/ hamlets will no longer be defined by a settlement boundary. The justification is included in the relevant settlement, or 'core village' summary.

- Boxted - Mill Road & Workhouse Hill
- Chappel - Rose Green, Swan Street & Wakes Street
- Dedham - Bargate Lane & Lamb Corner
- Ford Street
- Great Horkesley – The Crescent
- Great Wigborough – South Maldon Road
- Hardy's Green
- Langenhoe
- Layer de la Haye – Maltings Green

- Layer Marney
- Little Tey
- Seven Star Green
- Tiptree Heath
- Wakes Colne - Inworth Lane & Middle Green

## 7. Colchester Town

The settlement boundary of Colchester Town, including Stanway, has been reviewed as part of the SLAA and work on the Preferred Options Local Plan. However, this work has not been documented. Therefore, for completeness this section of the settlement boundary review outlines the findings of the review of the settlement boundary of Colchester.

### North Colchester

#### High level constraints

- The A12 defines the northern boundary of Colchester town.
- Great Horkesley and West Bergholt are located closest to Colchester Town, to the north, and it is important to avoid settlement coalescence.

#### High level opportunities

- The Northern Gateway masterplan offers the opportunity for a sport and leisure focused development on land within the boundary and also to the north of the A12.

#### Discussion on appropriate growth in north Colchester

The north of Colchester has been the subject of various planning applications and development in recent years and this is expected to continue in this plan period. Many of the SLAA sites are already included within the settlement boundary. These are not listed in the SLAA sites table, below. The road infrastructure has seen significant change and this has included the opening of the A12 junction 28 and the Northern Approaches Road (Via Urbis Romanae). The settlement boundary has not altered from the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map and the sport and leisure development proposed in the Local Plan is outside of the settlement boundary. Whilst development has occurred and is proposed north of the A12, it continues to act as a strong boundary. Development to the north is predominantly of an open nature, requiring large areas of land.

#### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

##### **Broad area 1 – land north of Chesterwell**

This broad area includes land north of the A12, which follows the boundary of Chesterwell. This area of land was considered as part of the Site Allocations DPD in 2010 but it was considered at that time that the A12 should remain the northern

boundary of Colchester. This broad area includes SLAA site COL63, which scored a red rating in the SLAA and thus was not further considered. Development here would erode the settlement break between Colchester and Great Horkelesley.

### **Broad area 2 – land adjacent to the park and ride**

This broad area includes land allocated in the pre submission Local Plan for sport and recreation as part of the Northern Gateway. It also includes SLAA site COL03.

#### Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in the SLAA

| <u>SITE REF</u> | <u>SITE ADDRESS</u> | <u>SITE CAPACITY (35 DPH)</u> | <u>RAG RATING</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| COL93           | Northern Gateway    | 2817*                         | Amber             |

\* Proposed for sport & leisure, employment, residential, community, retail & open space. Only a small element is proposed for residential so site capacity is significantly lower than figure above suggests.

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

COL93 - Overall it is considered that the site has development potential. The site is partly within the settlement boundary and this is the area where built development will be concentrated. Part of the site lies north of the A12 which is a strong defensible boundary. If this part of the site were to come forward for development it should be open in character, i.e. sports pitches. Only ancillary buildings should be permitted. It will be important to reinforce or introduce a new defensible boundary, to avoid development encroaching into the countryside towards some of the villages in the rural north of the Borough. Associated with this is the landscape impact of development on the area of the site which lies to the north of the A12. The Open Countryside Study shows that the landscape in this location makes an important contribution to the separation of settlements.

#### SLAA sites to discount

None

#### Summary

The A12 is a strong defensible boundary to north Colchester. However, in recent years some development has occurred, namely the park and ride, the service station and gypsy site. Land is allocated adjacent to these uses for sport and recreation as part of the comprehensive masterplanning of the Northern Gateway. However, this opens up the possibility for further development and encroachment into the countryside towards some of the villages in the rural north. To maintain the A12 as a strong boundary and to avoid coalescence with Great Horkelesley and other villages the settlement boundary should not be amended.

## North West Colchester

### High level constraints

- The A12 defines the northern boundary of Colchester town.
- The railway line runs from east to west,
- There is a large area of protected open space, which includes areas at high risk of flooding.

### High level opportunities

- Development has the potential to fill in gaps between existing development.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

#### **Broad area 1 – Braiswick**

Sites have been proposed in Braiswick, adjacent to the golf club. This is a peripheral location on the edge of Colchester. It is some distance from services and facilities but there is a good bus service and the mainline railway is close. Development is likely to be visible as ground is high but is well contained by existing development. Development at this location can be contained by the A12 to the north west and the golf club and Chesterwell to the north.

#### **Broad area 2 – west along the railway line**

This area includes a large area of public open space, including allotments. Part of the area is also at high risk of flooding. Development in this broad area should not be explored.

### Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in the SLAA

| <u>SITE REF</u> | <u>SITE ADDRESS</u>                | <u>SITE CAPACITY (30DPH)</u> | <u>RAG RATING</u> |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| COL10           | St Botolph's Farm, North Braiswick | 50                           | Amber             |
| COL11           | Braiswick Golf Club Site A         | 30                           | Green             |
| COL12           | Braiswick Golf Club Site B         | 6                            | Green             |
| COL91           | Ramparts, Bakers Lane              | 30                           | Amber             |

### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

COL10 - Site is considered to be available and achievable subject to sewerage/drainage and noise issues being resolved.

COL12 - Site is located on the edge of the Colchester urban area and is within easy reach via public transport of Colchester's wide range of jobs, shops and services. Development is likely to be visible as ground is high but is well contained by existing development. Site is considered to be suitable, available and achievable. The proposal

for 5 units does not represent the most efficient use of land and opportunities should be explored for an alternative vehicular access to address this.

### SLAA sites to discount

COL11 – Site was considered acceptable in principle. However, the site is no longer available.

COL91 - The site was not put forward through the Call for Sites and appears to be in private use so it cannot be considered available for development.

### Summary

The settlement boundary for North West Colchester has been amended from the Preferred Options draft to reflect allocations and the correct boundary of Chesterwell. Limited development in Braiswick is suitable, available and achievable and can be contained by the A12, the golf club, existing houses and proposed development at Chesterwell.

## **North East Colchester**

### High level constraints

- Consideration of strategic growth by way of a potential Garden Community is assessed through the Garden Community options work.
- The A12 defines the northern boundary of Colchester town.
- The railway line runs through this area.
- The Tendring boundary is close to Colchester's North East settlement boundary.

### High level opportunities

- Potential for growth as part of the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community.
- Potential for growth linked to the University of Essex.

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

#### **Broad area 1 – North East of Colchester around Plains Farm**

This area is close to the A12/ A120 Crown Interchange and close to Colchester Business Park. The Tendring boundary is close to the Colchester settlement boundary and much of this area is located within Tendring district. Bullock Wood SSSI lies within this broad area and land is grade 2 agricultural. There is also an area of designated open space. This broad area includes SLAA sites EST04 and EST08. The SLAA shows that development in this location is likely to be achievable, although work would be required to determine infrastructure requirements. Given the nearby proposals for a garden community it may be more appropriate for land in this area to be retained as open space/a green break.

**Broad area 2 – Development around Crockleford Heath**

This location is more rural in character and not as accessible as other areas. This location includes SLAA site EST05, which is partly within Tendring District. It is made up land in various ownerships and its availability is unknown.

**Broad area 3 – Development East, towards Elmstead Market**

Development in this location has the potential to benefit from its close proximity to the University of Essex. There is however the threat of settlement coalescence with Wivenhoe and Elmstead Market. This broad area includes SLAA sites EST06 and EST09. In terms of suitability, this area is largely suitable, in a location identified as a potential location for growth and offers the opportunity to build in facilities, services and employment opportunities. There are some issues that will need considering and/or mitigating in relation to suitability, including coalescence, the proximity of Wivenhoe Historic Parks and Gardens and the site's agricultural land quality, most of which is grade 1.

Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in the SLAA

| <u>SITE REF</u> | <u>SITE ADDRESS</u>        | <u>SITE CAPACITY (30DPH)</u> | <u>RAG RATING</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| EST01           | Shaw's Farm, Parsons Heath | 150                          | Amber/ red        |
| EST04           | West Tendring site 1       | 3300                         | Amber             |
| EST05           | West Tendring site 2       | 3900                         | Amber             |
| EST06           | St Andrew's Avenue         | 6000                         | Amber             |
| EST07           | North of Bromley Road      | 273                          | Green             |
| EST08           | St John's Road             | 700                          | Amber             |
| EST09           | St Andrews Avenue          | 1500                         | Amber             |

SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

None in Section 2. Allocations in this area fall within the Broad Area of Search for the Garden Community.

SLAA sites to discount

EST01 - In the event that the site was incorporated within a wider growth area then this site would be largely suitable, with its grade 2 agricultural land value, its greenfield status and the distance to the nearest strategic employment zone being the only points that are unfavourable / less favourable. The assessment shows that the site is both available and achievable. On this basis, as part of a wider growth area, the site has been given an amber rating. In the event that the site would not form part of a wider growth area, then the assessment shows that the site would not be suitable for development as it is largely detached from the settlement boundary and would effectively be an isolated site sitting alongside an A road. The site is not well linked to facilities and services. On this basis, as a standalone site, the site has been given a red rating.

EST04 – This is a broad location rather than a site. As a broad location the SLAA shows that this location is largely suitable for development, with the key issues being the existence of Bullock Wood SSSI within the site and the grade 2 agricultural land value of this greenfield location. The assessment shows that development in this location is likely to be achievable, although work would be required to determine infrastructure requirements. The key issue with this location is availability - it is not clear what land might be available for development within the whole area identified.

EST05 - This is a broad location rather than a site. The assessment shows that the location is largely suitable for development, with some areas to investigate or that may require mitigation, including landscape impact, agricultural land value, the presence of PRow and access to employment and a secondary school. The assessment shows that development in this location is likely to be achievable, although work would be required to determine infrastructure requirements. Ownership and availability is unknown.

EST06 & 09 - In terms of suitability, the sites are largely suitable, in an area identified as a potential location for growth and offers the opportunity to build in facilities, services and employment opportunities as well as opportunities for sustainable travel.. There are some issues that will need considering and or mitigating in relation to suitability, including coalescence, the proximity of Wivenhoe Historic Parks and Gardens and the site's agricultural land quality, most of which is grade 1. With regards to achievability the assessment shows that the site is likely to be achievable although there will be a need to determine infrastructure requirements (and their costs / funding) for the site in order to ensure that development is achievable.

EST07 - Overall the assessment shows that the site is suitable for development, is available and is achievable. The main issue arising in the assessment is that the Urban Fringe Study annotates the site as a key open space.

EST08 - Development of the site is available and largely achievable. The site is also largely suitable for development. However the site's proximity to a SSSI is an important factor that could impact on the site's suitability for development. Loss of private open space and grade 2 agricultural land are also issues impacting on the site's suitability.

### Summary

The sites promoted in the North East of Colchester are largely broad locations for the Tendring/Colchester Borders garden Community, rather than stand-alone sites. As individual sites as part of Section 2 they have been discounted.

## **West Colchester and Stanway**

### High level constraints

- The A12 defines the northern boundary of Colchester town.
- Copford is located to the west of Stanway and it is important to avoid settlement coalescence.
- There are mineral and waste sites to the south.

High level opportunities

- Close proximity to existing services and facilities in the Stanway area.

Discussion on appropriate growth

The west of Colchester, and Stanway in particular, has been the subject of various planning applications and development in recent years and this is expected to continue in this plan period. Many of the SLAA sites are already included within the settlement boundary. These are not listed in the SLAA sites table below.

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities**Broad Area 1 – Land north of London Road, Stanway**

This broad area is located to the north of London Road, Stanway, west of the A1124 and east of Turkey Cock Lane. Development in this broad area can be contained by the A12 to the north. The area includes Wyvern Farm which has planning permission for 358 dwellings and is currently under construction, and further development along London Road. The broad area includes three SLAA sites (STN09, STN39 and STN42).

**Broad Area 2 – Land West of Stanway Western Bypass**

This broad area is located to the east of the Stanway Western Bypass and to the south of the Tollgate Business Park. The broad area includes two SLAA sites (STN03 and STN06).

**Broad Area 3 – Land between Railway line and Halstead Road**

This broad area is located to the north of Halstead Road. The railway line provides a boundary to the north of the area and Chitts Hill is the boundary to the east. The broad area contains one SLAA site (STN12) and also includes the Railway Sidings development which has planning permission for 123 dwellings and is currently under construction.

**Broad Area 4 – Land north of Halstead Road/London Road**

This broad area is located to the north of Halstead Road and London Road, incorporating Lexden Springs School and the Essex Fire and Rescue Service Fleet Workshop. The broad area does not contain any SLAA sites.

Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in the SLAA

| <u>SITE REF</u> | <u>SITE ADDRESS</u>   | <u>SITE CAPACITY (30DPH)</u> | <u>RAG RATING</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| STN03           | Oldhouse Farm Stanway | 7                            | Green             |
| STN06           | Lakelands NE1         | 212                          | Amber             |

|       |  |      |       |
|-------|--|------|-------|
| STN09 | Land between London Road and A12 Stanway | 1169 | Amber |
| STN12 | Chitts Hill Stanway                      | 171  | Green |
| STN39 | Rosemary Almshouses, London Road         | 18   | Amber |
| STN42 | London Road Stanway                      | 130  | Amber |

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

STN03 – the site is in a logical location as an extension to the settlement boundary. The site has various issues with its suitability and achievability, but although these will require attention, none are so significant to rule the site out from future residential use. The site is available and located within close proximity to a range of jobs, shops and services.

STN06 – The site is located on the edge of Stanway and is considered achievable, sustainable and available. The most significant issue is its partial designation as a local wildlife site and site surveys will need to be carried out to ensure adequate mitigation.

STN09 – The site is located on the edge of Stanway and is close to key services and facilities and it is considered available and achievable. One of the most significant issues is potential for coalescence with Copford. If developed to its entirety the site would essentially result in the coalescence of Copford into the larger Colchester settlement area. Only a smaller site area and number of dwellings are considered appropriate.

STN12 – The site is located adjacent to a housing site currently under construction and adjacent to the current settlement boundary. The site is considered suitable, available and achievable for residential development.

STN39 – The site is located outside the existing settlement boundary. However, it is in an area of growth which could see the settlement boundary redrawn to encompass the site and surrounding land. The site could therefore not be allocated on its own, but it is suitable as part of a larger allocation.

STN42 – The site is located on the edge of Stanway and is close to key services and facilities and it is considered available and achievable. The site is not itself adjacent to the settlement boundary but is surrounded by STN09 which is adjacent to the settlement boundary.

#### SLAA sites to discount

None

## Summary

Development in West Colchester and Stanway is suitable and achievable and can be contained by the A12 and the railway line. The Settlement Boundary in West Colchester and Stanway should be amended to reflect allocations. This includes:

- Extending the Settlement Boundary adjacent to Wyvern Farm to the west to include land between London Road and the A12, to incorporate SLAA sites STN 39, STN42 and part of STN09. The whole of STN09 is not recommended to be included within the Settlement Boundary due to potential for coalescence with Copford.
- Extending the Settlement Boundary to the west of Stanway Western Bypass to include Lakelands Parcel NE1 (STN06) and STN03.
- Extending the Settlement Boundary along the railway line to the north of Halstead Road and west of Chitts Hill to include STN12.
- Amending the Settlement Boundary to include the built up area of land around Lexden Springs School, the Ambulance Station and the Essex Fire and Rescue Fleet Workshop.

## **South West Colchester**

### High level constraints

- Scheduled Ancient Monument and public open space (Gosbecks Archaeological Park) to the south of Gosbecks Road and Cunobelin Way
- Friday woods – large areas of open space

### High level opportunities

- Sustainable location on the edge of Colchester urban area

### Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities

#### **Broad area 1 – South of Berechurch Hall Road**

This broad area includes land to the south of Berechurch Hall Road, west of Layer Road and east of Bounstead Road. The broad area includes 3 SLAA sites (COL04, COL13 and COL95) and the area is bounded by residential development at the western edge, Maypole Farm to the east and open farmland to the south.

#### **Broad Area 2 - South of Gosbecks Road**

This broad area includes land south of Cunobelin Way west of Olivers Lane, and west of Gosbecks Road. The broad area includes SLAA site (COL17).

### Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in the SLAA

| <u>SITE REF</u> | <u>SITE ADDRESS</u>                | <u>SITE CAPACITY (30DPH)</u> | <u>RAG RATING</u> |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| COL04           | Catkins Mews, Berechurch Hall Road | 35                           | Green             |

|       |                          |     |       |
|-------|--------------------------|-----|-------|
| COL13 | Berechurch Hall Road     | 100 | Green |
| COL95 | Melville, Layer Road     | 18  | Amber |
| COL17 | Land at Gosbecks Phase 2 | 150 | Green |

#### SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

COL04 – This site is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and fronts onto Berechurch Hall Road. The site is located in a sustainable location on the edge of Colchester and is accessible to a range of services and facilities. It is suggested that the site is considered in a comprehensive manner alongside the adjacent sites (COL 13 and COL95). Overall, as part of a comprehensive scheme involving adjacent promoted sites the site is considered to be suitable in principle.

COL13 - This site is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and fronts onto Berechurch Hall Road. The site is located in a sustainable location on the edge of Colchester and is accessible to a range of services and facilities. It is suggested that the site is considered in a comprehensive manner alongside the adjacent sites (COL 04 and COL95).

COL95 – The site is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary and could be considered suitable along with the sites referred to above.

COL17 – This site adjoins the settlement boundary and appears suitable for development. The site is open with views across it from the adjacent road. It is in a sustainable location on the edge of the Colchester urban area and is accessible to a range of services and facilities. Care would need to be taken if any development goes ahead because of the archaeological significance of the area.

#### SLAA sites to discount

None

#### Summary

The sites around Berechurch hall Road and Gosbecks can be viewed as a logical 'rounding off' of the settlement boundary and the settlement boundary should be amended to include these sites.

#### **South east Colchester**

##### High level constraints

- Local Wildlife Site
- Well used recreational space
- Potential to contain archaeological finds and contamination
- Located in Critical Drainage Area (Area 01 Colchester Surface Water Management Plan).

High level opportunities

- Sustainable location on the edge of urban Colchester

Potential areas of search / settlement expansion following high level constraints and opportunities**Broad area 1 – South of Abbots Road**

This broad area includes the land to the south of Abbots Road, bordered to the east, east and north by residential development. The broad area is mainly covered by the SLAA site COL71 on Middlewick Ranges.

Summary of green/amber sites promoted/identified in the SLAA

| <u>SITE REF</u> | <u>SITE ADDRESS</u> | <u>SITE CAPACITY (30DPH)</u> | <u>RAG RATING</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| COL71           | Middlewick Ranges   | 1600                         | Amber             |

SLAA sites to recommend as potential allocations

COL71 – the site is considered to be in a suitable location and a logical extension of the Colchester settlement boundary given the surrounding residential land use. The site is available and has been promoted for development. However, due to the identified constraints on the site further survey work would be required before the most suitable developable area and housing numbers can be determined.

SLAA sites to discount

None

Summary

The broad area is a logical extension to the Settlement Boundary and is considered to be a suitable location for residential use. However, the number of dwellings, and extension to the Settlement Boundary, can only be confirmed once the full details of any constraints are known.

## Appendix A: Settlement Boundary Review Principles

1. Playing fields, open spaces and allotments should generally not be within the SB. However, if effectively enclosed by built-up development, they should be included but specifically protected from development.
2. Development which is of a dispersed built form and more loosely knit development should not be included in the SB or have a SB of its own.
3. Where a village hall or sports pavilion is effectively enclosed by the built form of the village, then it should be included in the SB. Any associated playing fields/open space should be specifically protected.
4. Where a village hall or sports pavilion is located on the edge of the village, adjoining the existing main built up part of the village, then these buildings should be included in the SB. Associated playing fields/open space that lies beyond the hall or pavilion should be excluded.
5. Where a village hall or sports pavilion lies beyond the main built up part of a village, it should not be included in the SB. Any associated playing fields/open space should also be excluded.
6. School buildings and associated playgrounds/playing fields that are effectively enclosed by built-up development should be included in the SB and the play areas specifically protected.
7. Where schools are located on the edge of the village and the buildings adjoin the main built-up part of the village then those buildings should be included in the SB. Associated playgrounds/playing fields that lie beyond the school buildings should be excluded.
8. Where schools are located on the edge of the village and the associated playgrounds/playing fields separate the school's buildings from the main built up part of the village then both the buildings and the grounds should be excluded from the SB.
9. Churches and places of worship that are effectively enclosed by the built-up development of the village should be located within the SB. Where these buildings are on the edge or are detached from the main built up part of the village, they should be excluded from the SB.
10. Farms should generally be excluded from the SB except where effectively enclosed by the built-up development of the village.
11. Gardens on the edge of the main built up part of the settlement should generally be included in the SB following recognisable physical features where possible. Exceptions will be made in instances where:
  - The character of the area is considered to have more similarity to open countryside than the built up area; or
  - The area provides an irregularity to the size and shape of the SB. An example would be where one garden in a row extends into the open countryside. The extended area may be excluded from the SB; or
  - Where the garden/grounds of a house/building on the edge of a settlement, extends considerably beyond the main built-up part of this settlement. In such cases this area may be partially or completely excluded from the SB, having regard to 1) and 2).
12. Rural Exception Sites should be excluded.
13. Allocations for market housing, employment development, community use and Gypsy & Traveller sites (and sites with planning permission for these uses) that

are on the edge of the main built up part of the settlement should be included in the SB.

## Appendix B: Late sites submitted as part of the Call for Sites

A number of sites were submitted after the close of the two call for sites consultations. As part of the preparation of the Local Plan these sites have been assessed for their potential for development. Some of these late sites were assessed earlier in the process, despite being put forward outside of the close of the consultation periods. All late sites submitted are listed in the table below.

| Site  | Conclusion  |
|---|---|
| The Old School, School Lane, Great Horkesley                | Assessed - SLAA site RNE02 & allocated for residential development  |
| Tyhurst, Copford Green                                      | Assessed as part of SLAA site STN17   |
| Folkards, Copford Green                                     | Assessed as part of SLAA site STN17   |
| Elmstead Road, Wivenhoe                                     | Assessed as part of SLAA site WIV04 and allocated in part for development   |
| Great Horkesley Manor, Great Horkesley                      | Assessed as part of SLAA site RNE10 and allocated for development   |
| Vernons Road, Chappel                                       | Assessed as part of SLAA site RNW15   |
| High Street, Langham  | Assessed as part of SLAA site RNE26   |
| Heathfields, Fordham Heath                                  | This site lies within the parish of Eight Ash Green, which is a designated neighbourhood plan area. As such the neighbourhood plan group has been passed details of this site.                                      |
| 6 Heath Cottages, Fordham Heath                             | Assessed 9/9/16, red rating   |
| Godbolts Farm, Great Tey                                    | Assessed as part of SLAA site WST12 and in any case site is not adjacent to settlement boundary   |
| Land South of Easthorpe Road, Easthorpe                     | Assessed 9/9/16, red rating   |
| Cooks Hall Farm, West Bergholt                              | Assessed 14/9/16, red rating. However, this site lies within the parish of West Bergholt, which is a designated neighbourhood plan area. As such the neighbourhood plan group has been passed details of this site. |
| Colchester Road Tiptree                                     | Assessed as part of SLAA sites TIP19 and TIP37  |
| Well Cottage, Easthorpe Road                                | Assessed as part of SLAA site WST17   |
| Land east of Field Way & North of Croquet Gardens, Wivenhoe | Assessed as part of SLAA site WIV01 and allocated for development in the Preferred Options  |
| Kingsford Business Centre, Layer Road, Colchester           | Assessed as part of SLAA site RSE44   |
| Sites in Eight Ash Green                                    | Assessed as part of SLAA sites STN38 & STN15  |
| Abbots Dene, Eight Ash Green                                | Site only suitable for 1 dwelling so below the size threshold for consideration   |

|                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Lodge Park, Lodge Lane, Langham | Assessed 14/9/16, red rating |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|

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