

# **Local Development Framework**

## **Core Strategy**

Adopted December 2008

**Selected policies revised July 2014**

**Colchester Borough Council**



## **Preface - Revised Core Strategy following Focused Review July 2014**

This document was updated in July 2014 as a result of Colchester Borough Council's Focused Review of its Local Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published by the Government on 27 March 2012, replaced a considerable amount of planning policy previously contained within a number of national policy documents. The consolidated guidance is intended to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.

The NPPF is a material consideration in the preparation of local plans and also provides guidance in the determination of planning applications. This means that its publication created a need for local authorities to reconsider their intentions for reviewing and developing local planning policies.

The Focused Review was an initial, limited, review of policies which could be readily amended without the need to prepare further extensive evidence in respect of those specific policies. Only those policies that clearly required updating due to non-compliance with the NPPF were included in this stage. Revisions do not include any amendments to the spatial strategy, housing and employment targets, or allocations.

The Focused Review underwent two stages of consultation to allow for widespread involvement in the review process, in compliance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development (England) Regulations 2012). The initial Issues and Options consultation stage, carried out in March – April 2013, provided an opportunity for the Council to outline the areas which it considered needed to be reviewed. The Council then consulted on revised policies, prior to submission to the Secretary of State for examination.

The Council is now developing a new Local Plan which will include amendments to the spatial strategy; housing and employment targets; and site allocations, as these issues require the support of updated evidence base work. The Full Review is programmed for adoption in 2017.

These are the policies that have been amended by the Focused Review:

- **Sustainable development** – the Government's model policy has been added, to reflect the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Core Strategy Policy SD1).
- **Changes to the system of planning obligations and introduction of Community Infrastructure Levy** – the text has been modified to reflect latest guidance on planning contributions in relation to both site specific and strategic infrastructure improvements (Core Strategy Policies SD2 and SD3).

- **Affordable housing** – the policy on affordable housing is modified to comply with the NPPF’s requirements to pay careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking, including the change in economic circumstances since the original policy was adopted in 2008 (Core Strategy Policy H4).
- **Housing density and mix** - tables on density and housing mix have been deleted because they do not adequately reflect particular site constraints and requirements, and, accordingly, may not have fully accorded with the greater flexibility provided in the NPPF (Core Strategy Policies H2 and H3).
- **Gypsies and travellers** –The changes to the Gypsy and Traveller Policy wording clarify how the Local Plan will treat gypsy and traveller applications prior to the adoption of a new Local Plan policy, which will be based on updated evidence (Core Strategy Policy H5).
- **Neighbourhood Planning** – policies now include references, where appropriate, to the new system of Neighbourhood Plans (Core Strategy Policy ENV2).
- **Rural exception sites** – policies have been modified to allow for a limited degree of market housing on rural exception sites to enable the delivery of affordable housing (Core Strategy Policy H4 and ENV2).
- **Rural workers’ housing** – a new Core Strategy Policy on rural workers housing is included, to provide guidance that is no longer provided nationally (Core Strategy Policy H6).
- **Minor changes** – minor changes include updates to ensure consistency with the NPPF; removal of references to superseded Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes.

All other policies remain unchanged, until they are replaced through the Full Review of the Local Plan.

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**\*\* Selected policies revised following July 2014 Focused Review**

# **Executive Summary**

## **Introduction**

Colchester is a diverse and growing Borough, with a vibrant town centre, attractive villages and important natural landscapes. Over the next 15 years the Borough will face many challenges, such as housing growth, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable transportation.

The Borough Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to establish a long-term strategy to manage development, provide services, deliver infrastructure and create sustainable communities. The Core Strategy will be the overarching document in the LDF that sets the strategic context for all the other development plan documents.

## **Stages of the Core Strategy**

The adopted Core Strategy is the result of a 3 stage consultative process. The Core Strategy Issues and Options document (Stage 1) was published in March 2006. This was followed by the Core Strategy Preferred Options document (Stage 2) in November 2006, and an amendment to the preferred options in July 2007. At each of these stages the document has been consulted upon for a 6-7 week period and improvements have been made to the Core Strategy in response to submissions, sustainability appraisal, new evidence and changes to national policy. The submission Core Strategy (Stage 3) was published for consultation in November 2007 with any representations received being considered by the Planning Inspector during Examination in Public. The hearing sessions for Examination in Public were held during June and July 2008, and the Inspector's binding report received in October 2008. The Core Strategy was adopted by full Council on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

## **Vision and Objectives**

The Spatial Vision sets out where we want to be in 2021 and articulates ambitious aspirations for Colchester to become a sustainable and prestigious regional centre, surrounded by thriving villages and countryside. The Spatial Vision is informed by the Sustainable Community Strategy, and the objectives provide more specific direction for the Spatial Strategy and Core Policies.

## **Spatial Strategy**

The Spatial Strategy provides an overview or summary of the Core Strategy and establishes the context for the Core Policies. The spatial elements of the Strategy are also illustrated in the Key Diagrams.

The Spatial Strategy emphasises the importance of the Town Centre and regeneration. The Strategy directs development towards the most accessible and sustainable locations, and plans for the provision of transport, employment and community facilities to support the following growth areas.

The Town Centre will be the focus of regeneration activity to deliver 2000 new homes, 67,000sqm of retail floorspace and 40,000sqm of office floorspace. The regeneration of St Botolphs and the North Station area will also deliver key outcomes, including the Firstsite Building, Cultural Quarter and North Station gateway.

The North Growth Area will accommodate 6200 homes, including a sustainable urban extension and the regeneration of the former Severalls Hospital. This growth area will also deliver the Community Stadium, North Transit Corridor, A12 junction, and Park and Ride.

The East Growth Area will regenerate the former harbour to accommodate 2600 new homes, as well as delivering the East Transit Corridor, Hythe Station improvements, the University Research Park, and expansion of the University itself.

The South Growth Area will deliver a new Army Garrison and regenerate the former garrison to accommodate 3000 homes within an urban village with good links to the Town Centre.

The Stanway Growth Area will also be subject to significant development during the life of the plan, including 1800 homes, employment development, and road improvements.

Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea are the main district settlements outside of Colchester Town. These settlements will accommodate about 1600 homes and provide shops and services to their surrounding rural hinterland. The distinct local character of other villages will be protected and local housing and employment development will be supported to meet community needs.

## **Core Policies**

The policies in the Core Strategy provide the overarching policy direction for the Local Development Framework, and for the delivery of development, infrastructure, facilities and services in Colchester to 2021.

### Sustainable Development

The Strategy establishes a Settlement Hierarchy to guide development towards the most sustainable locations. These development locations will be coordinated with transport infrastructure and the provision of community facilities, shopping, employment and open space to create sustainable communities.

The Core Strategy seeks to provide excellent health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community. Major community facilities (including the University of Essex and the Colchester General Hospital) will form key components of the growth areas and will be better connected by Transit Corridors. The Strategy also seeks to deliver new community facilities, including the Firstsite Building and Community Stadium.

### Centres and Employment

Achieving a prestigious regional centre and sustainable communities requires the enhancement of our Town Centre as well as other local centres. The Core Strategy establishes a hierarchy that secures the important role of the Town Centre and encourages the regeneration of Urban Gateways to Colchester (e.g. North Station). The Core Strategy also promotes the enhancement of District and Local Centres to support communities with local employment, shops and services.

Strategic Employment Zones have also been identified to accommodate business development at locations to the north, east and west of Colchester Town that are well supported with infrastructure.

### Housing

Colchester Borough needs to accommodate a minimum of 17,100 new homes between 2001 and 2021, and at least an additional 1,710 homes by 2023. Over two-thirds of this housing is already accounted for through existing allocations, permissions and completions. In broad terms, the majority of housing development in the Borough will be accommodated at the following locations:

- Town Centre (2000)
- North Growth Area (6200, including 2200 greenfield allocations)
- East Growth Area (2600)
- South Growth Area (3000)
- Stanway Growth Area (1800, including 800 greenfield allocations)

Housing developments will need to provide 35% affordable housing and provide a mixed of housing to meet the diverse needs of the community.

### Urban Renaissance

The Core Strategy seeks to maximise the potential of the existing regeneration areas and stimulate a broader urban renaissance throughout the Town Centre. To help deliver this urban renaissance tourism will be supported and promoted. The Core Strategy also seeks to protect the historic character of the Borough whilst securing high standards of urban design in new developments.

### Public Realm

Creating a high quality public realm, including parks, squares and streets, is integral to the success of sustainable communities, and is therefore a key element of the Core Strategy.

The Strategy seeks to improve the street environment and calm traffic in urban areas to attract residents to local shops, schools, parks and bus stops. Existing parkland and green links will be enhanced, and new open space will be acquired at appropriate locations, to meet the recreational needs of Colchester's growing community.



### Transport and Accessibility

The key aims of the transport strategy and policies are to improve accessibility and promote sustainable travel behaviour. Improved access to shops, employment and services can be achieved through a long-term strategy of coordinating land use and transport. The Strategy seeks to coordinate the following elements in order to improve accessibility and create sustainable communities:

- Support development at accessible locations to reduce the need to travel.
- Create people-friendly streets and encourage walking and cycling.
- Improve the public transport network with Transit Corridors, Park and Ride, and quality gateways/interchanges.
- Improve the strategic road network and manage car traffic and parking in urban areas.
- Support rural communities with demand responsive transport services.
- Travel planning and improved public information

### Environment and Rural Communities

The natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved to protect the Borough's diverse history, archaeology, geology, and biodiversity. Development will be directed away from sites of landscape and conservation importance and land at risk from flooding. The unique character of Colchester villages will be protected, with only limited development supported to meet identified needs for local employment, affordable housing and community facilities. Tourism that is appropriate to the local environment and context will be supported and promoted.

### Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling

Establishing sustainable communities in Colchester requires careful management of our energy, resources and waste. The Strategy will promote environmentally sustainable developments that are designed to:

- Utilise renewable energy sources.
- Reduce household energy and water consumption.
- Encourage the recycling of waste.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

The Spatial Strategy and the Spatial Policies will be implemented through the further development of the Local Development Framework, by Council working with its partners, and through the planned investment of private and public resources.

Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the new planning system. The Borough Council will undertake annual monitoring of the implementation of the Core Strategy, and of other parts of the LDF as they are developed, and will amend documents as required.

# **1. Introduction**

Colchester is a diverse and growing Borough, with a vibrant town centre, attractive villages and important natural landscapes. Over the next 15 years the Borough will face many challenges, such as housing growth, evolving economic trends and the need for more sustainable transportation. To address these challenges, Colchester Borough Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to meet the needs of current and future generations whilst also protecting and enhancing the environment and people's quality of life.

## **1.1 The Local Development Framework**

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will plan, monitor and manage future growth and change in Colchester Borough up to 2021. While the previous Local Plan system focused on development control, the LDF will cover a broader range of spatial issues that contribute towards sustainable communities, including issues such as transport, employment and recycling.

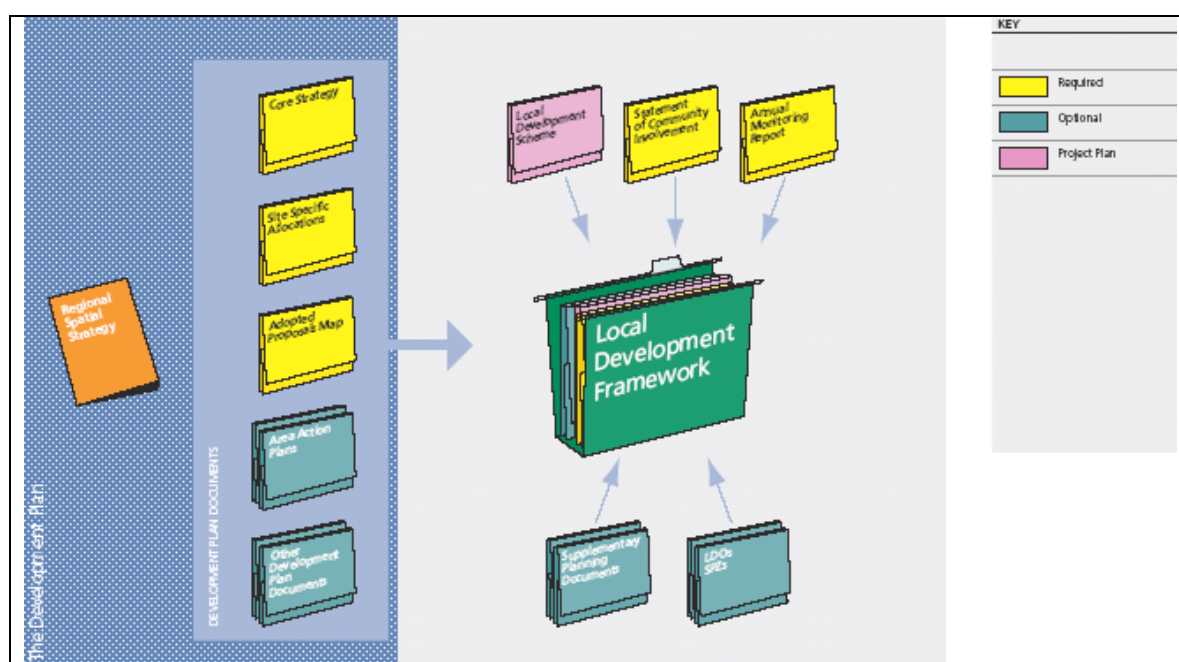
The Colchester LDF will comprise a range of Local Development Documents (see Figure 1), including the following:

- |  |   |                     |
|--|---|---------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local Development Scheme</li><li>• Statement of Community Involvement</li></ul>                                | } | LDF Process         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Core Strategy</li><li>• Development Policies</li><li>• Site Allocations</li><li>• Area Action Plans.</li></ul> | } | Strategy and Policy |

The Core Strategy is the central document of the Local Development Framework, and provides the broad policy directions to guide the other documents in the LDF. The Core Strategy will establish a long-term strategy to manage development, provide services, deliver infrastructure and create sustainable communities. It comprises the spatial vision and objectives, a spatial strategy, core policies and a section setting out how we will implement and monitor the strategy. Its effectiveness will be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report and it will be reviewed when necessary.

The Council has undertaken a Sustainability Appraisal and an Appropriate Assessment of the Core Strategy to evaluate the sustainability of the proposed strategy, policies and options.

**Figure 1. Local Development Framework**



## **1.2 Conformity with Other Policies and Strategies**

The new planning system requires the Core Strategy and the LDF to be consistent with national planning policy, the draft East of England Plan and the Community Strategy. All subsequent Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents in the LDF will also need to be in conformity with the Core Strategy. Accordingly, the Core Strategy has been prepared in conformity with the following policies and strategies.

### **National Planning Policy**

National planning policy is primarily set forth in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) which is progressively being updated and issued as Planning Policy Statements (PPS). PPS 1 summarises six key principles of sustainable planning which this Core Strategy seeks to follow:

- Sustainable communities – Development plans should ensure that economic, social, and environmental objectives are achieved together over time
- Development plans should ensure that they contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change
- Development plans need to take a spatial approach. This means that they need to integrate traditional land use planning policies with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function;
- Planning policies should promote high quality inclusive design;
- Development plans should contain clear, comprehensive, and inclusive access policies

- Community involvement is an essential element of the planning process

### **Regional Planning**

The East of England Plan (EEP) (published May 2008) is the Regional Spatial Strategy for Colchester Borough and the LDF needs to be in general conformity with it. The EEP outlines a range of policies and targets relevant to spatial planning in Colchester. The most notable of these include:

- Identification of Colchester as a Key Centre of Development and Change. (Policy SS3)
- Identification of Colchester as a priority area for regeneration. (Policy SS5)
- The need to facilitate the provision of 20,000 new jobs in the Essex Haven Gateway including approximately 14,200 new jobs in Colchester as specified in earlier drafts of the East of England plan. (Policy E1 and HG2)
- The need to identify Strategic Employment Sites in Colchester. (Policy E3)
- Identification of Colchester's Town Centre as a Regional Centre for retail and other town centre purposes. (Policy E5)
- The need to provide a minimum of 17,100 new homes between 2001 and 2021, and at least 1710 additional homes by 2023. (Policy H1 and HG1)
- Identification of Colchester as a Regional Transport Node. (Policy T5)

The Core Strategy is consistent with the East of England Plan and seeks to implement the policies and targets as they relate to Colchester Borough. Colchester also has many unique spatial issues that are not identified in the draft East of England Plan that will be addressed by the Core Strategy.

Colchester Borough forms part of the Haven Gateway sub region, which has been recognised as a 'New Growth Point'. This special status will help deliver critical funding for vital infrastructure and development projects through a long-term partnership between Colchester Borough, the Haven Gateway Partnership and Communities and Local Government (CLG).

The Core Strategy is also consistent and supportive of the Regional Cities East (RCE) partnership. The RCE objectives for housing, prosperity, jobs and the environment can all be advanced through the Core Strategy and the LDF.

### **Community Strategy**

The LDF provides the primary means of delivering the spatial elements of Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy. The Community Strategy was prepared by the public, private and community partners forming the Colchester Local Strategic Partnership to set a long-term vision for the community of Colchester. The Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework share a commitment to the development of objectives through community consultation and stakeholder involvement.

Accordingly, the Core Strategy builds on the Strategy's Vision for Colchester in 2020:

*Colchester, excelling as a prestigious regional centre that is:*

- *an iconic destination for culture and learning nationally and internationally*
  - *renowned for sustainable economic growth*
- ...and therefore a place where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.*

Reaching across all these goals is a commitment in the Sustainable Community Strategy to carbon reduction. For the Borough Council, this means ensuring that all its strategies, plans and budgets, including the Local Development Framework, are designed with the goal of reducing the Borough's carbon footprint.

More specifically, the Core Strategy will assist in the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities (Table 1) which support the above vision.

**Table 1 – Delivery of the Community Strategy**

<b>Community Strategy Priorities</b>	<b>Core Strategy Policy</b>
Transport	Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour (TA1) Walking and Cycling (TA2) Public Transport (TA3) Roads and Traffic (TA4) Parking (TA5)
Heritage & Culture	Regeneration (UR1) Built Design and Character (UR2) Community Facilities (SD3) Environment (ENV1)
London 2012	Community Facilities (SD3) Open Space (PR1)
Business & Employment	Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy(CE1) Mixed Use Centres (CE2) Employment Zones (CE3)
Life Opportunities	Community Facilities (SD3) Housing Diversity (H3) Affordable Housing (H4)

## **2. Spatial Portrait**

### **2.1 Spatial Portrait**

#### **Location and External Linkages**

The Borough of Colchester lies in a key gateway location between the UK and mainland Europe, with access to the rest of Europe via the nearby Ports of Harwich and Felixstowe to the east and Stansted Airport to the west. The far reaching effect of London as a world city extends to Colchester, 70 miles distant, with some businesses and commuters locating in Colchester due to its access to the jobs and services of London. Colchester's prime identity, however, is as a major regional centre with significant employment activity, cultural facilities, educational institutions, retail outlets and visitor attractions. The main town of Colchester serves as a centre not only for the Borough but for a much wider area of North East Essex, with residents of Braintree, Maldon and Tendring districts travelling into the town to work, shop and use its community facilities. The Borough's identity is also shaped by its extensive valued countryside areas and urban green spaces as well as its historic smaller settlements including Stanway, Tiptree, West Mersea, Wivenhoe, Dedham, and Rowhedge. Colchester has joined with neighbouring Essex and Suffolk authorities in the Haven Gateway partnership to make the most of its locational advantages through targeted programmes of infrastructure provision, new sustainable development, business development and training for local people.

#### **Population**

All People 2001 Census	155,800
All People mid-2006	170,800
- 0-14 years	28,900
- 15-64 years	117,200
- 65 years +	24,800

Mid-2006 Population Estimates, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

#### **Ethnic Groups**

% of resident population in ethnic groups, 2001:	
- White	96.2
- Mixed	1.2
- Asian or Asian British	1.2
- Black or Black British	0.5
- Chinese or other	1.0

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

#### **Population and Households**

Colchester's growing population reflects the overall upward trend in the South East region which has been fuelled by economic growth. In the last five years, the population has increased rapidly by 15,000 as detailed above. The largest growth is expected to be the older age groups (60+), while growth levels are expected to decline in the younger ages groups (19 and under), with consequent effects on the economy and social provision in the Borough. House building rates have recently been high to keep pace with the growing

population pressure, but there remains a gap in delivering sufficient quantities of affordable housing. Designation of the Haven Gateway as a new Growth Point in 2006 reflects the fact that meeting agreed targets is a challenge meriting additional support to ensure sustainable growth is matched with adequate infrastructure provision.

#### **Housing & Households**

Number of households in 2001	63,706
% of households in 2001:	
- Owner occupied	72.34
- Social rented housing	15.28
- Privately rented or living rent free	12.38
Average household size, 2001	2.37

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.

Average number of homes built per annum (between 2001 and 2005)	824
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CBC Housing Trajectory, 2005.

#### **Heritage and Habitat**

Colchester, Britain's 'Oldest Recorded Town', recorded by Pliny the Elder in AD 77, has a rich and diverse history dating back to the Iron Age. The town's present character reflects this heritage, including its period as the Roman capital of Britain, its importance as a wool and cloth centre in medieval and Tudor times, and its focus as a hub for Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century industry. The numerous archaeological sites, historic buildings, and conservation areas in the Borough are a focus for preservation and enhancement. Landmarks that give Colchester its unique character include the remnants of the Town Wall encircling the historic core, the Castle and Castle Park in the heart of the Town Centre, and 'Jumbo', the Victorian water tower. The town is also defined by its hilltop setting and the green corridor through the Town provided by the River Colne.

Surrounding the town of Colchester is an ecologically rich rural and coastal environment. Many sites are recognised for their value by international and national designations, including the coastal and estuary areas in the south east and the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the north of the Borough. The surrounding villages also have a rich historical heritage, including the seafaring communities of Mersea and Wivenhoe, the former wool town of Dedham and the jam-making centre of Tiptree.

#### **Heritage & Habitat**

Number of conservation areas	22
Number of listed buildings	1,600
Number of scheduled monuments	40

CBC Annual Monitoring Report, 2006.

#### **Economic Activity and Prosperity**

In recent years there has been a change in the structure and type of employment within Colchester, in common with many other UK towns, with a move away from manufacturing and agriculture towards the service industry. In rural areas and small towns and villages, economic activity has shifted

away from agriculture towards a more diverse range of small enterprises and tourist related business.

The Garrison and the University of Essex are two noteworthy major employers that will continue to play a major role in the Borough throughout the plan period and beyond. The University of Essex is also promoting a major Research and Science park adjacent to the campus which, when developed in the near future, will be a significant contributor to the borough and sub-regional economy.

While unemployment levels in the Borough as a whole are lower than national averages, there are wide variations in prosperity and there are pockets of deprivation in parts of both the towns and rural areas. Parts of St Anne's, St Andrew's and Harbour wards are classified as 'seriously deprived' because they are amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.

#### **Economic Activity & Prosperity**

All people aged 16 to 74 years, 2001	113,771
Number of 16 to 74 year olds working in the service industry, 2001	59,288
% of 16 to 74 year olds who are:	
- Employed	63.5
- Unemployed	2.3
- students	8.4
- Retired	12.6
- Others	18.7

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007

#### **Community**

The community has access to a wide range of publicly run services and facilities which will need to be enhanced in line with future development. Colchester General Hospital is expanding and consolidating to better serve the needs of the growing population, and its services are complemented by a range of primary care facilities throughout the Borough. The Borough's educational facilities comprise a range of primary and secondary schools, while higher education provision consists of two further education colleges (Colchester Sixth Form College and the Colchester Institute) and the University of Essex. Recreational facilities include a range of parks, a leisure centre, and four multi-activity centres. Regeneration plans include a new football stadium to be built in the North Colchester area and a new Firstsite (Visual Arts Facility) which will provide a focal point for the redevelopment of the St. Botolph's quarter.

#### **Education**

Number of maintained schools	79
- Primaries	64
- Secondary	11
- Special	4

Essex County Council, 2005.

% of population with a degree or other form of higher education, 2001	19%
% of the population with no qualifications, 2001	25%

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007.



## Health

Life Expectancy:	
- Males	78 years
- Females	82 years
% of people describing their health as 'not good'	7.2
% of people with a limiting long-term illness	16.0
% of people providing unpaid care	9.3

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007

## Transportation

Colchester has been designated as a Regional Transport Node in the East of England Plan, which acknowledges the importance of its transport links including those to London, Stansted Airport, and the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe. One of the biggest challenges for Colchester is road traffic growth and the dominance of the car as the main mode of travel. Significant congestion can occur during peak times within Colchester on the limited number of radial routes in and out of the town centre, the A12 and on several of the minor roads to the south of the Borough. Future growth in Colchester hinges on the expansion of alternatives to the car, including improved pedestrian and cycle links, the development of Park and Ride facilities, the implementation of travel management schemes, and enhancement of public transport services in both urban and rural areas.

## Transport

Journey to work by Colchester residents:	
- Car	62.5%
- Bus	6.1%
- Train	7.1%
- Cycle	4.3%
- Walk	10.2%
- Work from home	9.2%

Census 2001, ONS. © Crown Copyright, 2007

## 2.2 Community Consultation

Thorough and on-going community consultation is a key feature of the new planning system. In line with Government regulations on consultation, the Council approved a Statement of Community Involvement in June 2006 which outlines community consultation activities for each component and stage of the LDF.

Community consultation on the Core Strategy to date has included 4 consultation stages. In summer 2005, the Council surveyed community views to frontload the preparation of the Core Strategy, and 470 completed surveys were returned. A community consultation exercise was next carried out in spring 2006 on the Issues and Options Report which involved a survey distributed to stakeholders and every household in the borough; facilitated workshops; and work with a secondary school. A total of 2,024 surveys and submissions were returned.

In November 2006, the Preferred Options report was published, surveys were circulated to every household, and a series of public meetings and workshops were undertaken to gather feedback on the potential options for the Core Strategy. A total of 344 surveys and submissions were received. The Council then published an amendment to the Preferred Options in June 2007 in response to submissions, sustainability appraisal, new evidence and changes to national policy. Another series of public meetings, workshops and questionnaire were arranged to facilitate further feedback on the Preferred Options, and an additional 84 submission were received.

A statement of consultation will be prepared for the Core Strategy submission document outlining the consultation program for each stage of the Core Strategy, the issues raised and how these issues have been addressed in the plan making process.

## **2.3 Evidence Base**

The Evidence Base is a key feature of the LDF as it seeks to ensure that proposals and policies are based on sound information. The Evidence Base contains documents from local, county and regional levels. National guidance is not listed to avoid repetition, given that the Core Strategy has been produced in accordance with national planning policy.

The evidence gathered from the documents below has been employed in the formulation of the Spatial Strategy and Core Policies:

Documents making up the primary Evidence Base include:

- **Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy (2007)** – produced by the Local Strategic Partnership based on local people's views, local needs and Colchester's unique opportunities.
- **Colchester Housing Land Availability Assessment (2007)** – the study provided evidence on housing capacity and land availability in Colchester Borough.
- **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2007)** – an update to the Housing Land Availability Assessment to reflect the latest Government Guidance. This demonstrates housing land supply over the next 15 years.
- **Colchester Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007)** – The SHMA provides Council with a thorough analysis of the housing markets, housing need and affordable housing.
- **District Valuers Report (2007)** - Housing Stock Information for the borough.
- **Landscape Character Assessment (2005)** – provides a complete picture of the Borough's landscape features and is supplemented by reports on the capacity of settlement fringes and a review of countryside conservation areas.

- **Townscape Character Assessment (2006)** – provides a review of the character of various built environments in the Borough to help inform regeneration and the preparation of the LDF.
- **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007)** - the study identifies the highest areas of flood risk where development should not be located.
- **The North Essex Authorities Retail Study (2006)** – Provides an analysis of existing town centre performance, future retail demand projections and guidance for the future scale of retail development and hierarchy of Town Centres in Colchester Borough.
- **The Colchester Employment Land Study (2007)** – Provides evidence on the capacity and quality of existing employment land provision and sets out strategies and guidance for accommodating future employment development in Colchester.
- **The Colchester Hotel Study (2007)** - The study provides an independent hotel market assessment to identify possible gaps in the market and to inform potential hotel investors of development opportunities. The study also provides a sequential site assessment of potential sites for development.
- **Open Space Study (2007)** - a local needs assessment and audit of open space, sport and recreation facilities across the borough in accordance with the requirements of PPG Note 17 and its Companion Guide.
- **North Colchester Studies** – A collection of studies have been prepared to investigate development potential in north Colchester, including an environmental audit and transport study.
- **ECC Transport Model** – Essex County Council have compiled emerging travel data to inform the LDF.
- **Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure (2007)** - a study that identifies green spaces over 2 hectares, areas where there are deficiencies and potential new allocations.
- **Haven Gateway Framework for Growth (2007)** - a non-statutory sub-regional strategy to provide measures needed to deliver growth in a sustainable way and inform the preparation of LDDs, other strategies including coastal issues, and co-ordinated implementation.
- **Haven Gateway Employment Land Study (2005)** - an Employment Land Study to review the supply of, and demand for, employment land and premises across the Haven Gateway sub-region.
- **Haven Gateway Regeneration Study (2005)** - provides the Haven Gateway Partnership with a clear assessment of the strategic fit of the various regeneration proposals being put forward within the sub-region, the potential impact of these proposals on the emerging East of England Plan and their impact on the aspirations of the Regional Economic Strategy.
- **Haven Gateway Strategic Residential and Infrastructure Study (2005)** - provides guidance on the strategic direction, scale and phasing of residential development and associated infrastructure requirements for the Haven Gateway sub-region to 2021.
- **Adopted Review Colchester Borough Local Plan (March 2004)** Most of the policies contained within the plan have been 'saved.'

- **SEA Baseline Study & Environment Report (2004)** – provides a sound evidence base on the main social, environmental and cultural factors influencing the LDF.
- **Local Transport Plan (2006)** – produced by Essex County Council. The Plan identifies wide-reaching schemes to improve the transport network for the whole of the county, puts forward proposals and requests for funding.
- **Vehicle Parking Standards (2001)** – produced by Essex Planning Officers Association.
- **Looking Back, Moving Forward – Assessing the Housing Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Essex (2006)** – Salford University for Essex Planning Officers Association
- **Appropriate Assessment (2007)** – The Core Strategy has been subjected to a Habitats Regulations Assessment in accordance with the Habitats Regulations, to ensure that it will not lead to any adverse effect upon the integrity of any of the important European sites within and close to Colchester Borough. Any future plan developed as part of the Colchester LDF or development arising from this Core Strategy will similarly be assessed in accordance with the Habitats Regulations. Compliance with the Habitats Regulations at this Core Strategy stage of the Colchester LDF is no guarantee that further plans or projects derived from the LDF will be similarly compliant.
- **Essex Biodiversity Action Plan**
- **Essex Coast Protection Subject Plan (1984)** – this outlines the Coastal Protection Belt which will be shown on the proposals map.
- **The Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study** – Phase 1 of this emerging document was completed in March 2008 and Phase 2 is expected Autumn 2008.
- **North East Essex Primary Care Trust Estates Strategy 2008-2011**

## **2.4 Key Issues for Colchester**

The unique characteristics of Colchester create specific issues, opportunities and problems for the future, which need to be addressed by the Core Strategy and LDF. The issues outlined below have been identified through public consultation, the evidence base, national planning policy, the East of England Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy. These issues provide the basis and context for the development of the Vision and Objectives, the Spatial Strategy and the Core Policies.

### **Sustainability**

Current problems:

- Increasing impact of climate change on the environment, particularly flooding and the Borough's coastline, and need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- New development does not consistently achieve best practice in sustainable construction and design.

- Legacy of previous dispersed growth patterns has resulted in high levels of car dependency for travel.
- Construction of office and retail development in unsustainable out-of-centre locations.

#### Future Challenges:

- Development of sustainable land use patterns that maximises accessibility between jobs, homes, services and facilities.
- Developing renewable sources of energy and energy efficient buildings.
- Addressing the long-term impact of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the consumption of scarce natural resources and minimising pollution.

### **Becoming a Prestigious Regional Centre**

#### Current problems:

- Providing appropriate business premises to the continually evolving local economy, with growth in service and knowledge based employment sectors and decline in industrial / manufacturing sectors.
- Rundown buildings and areas in need of renewal, which detract from the character of the townscape and Borough.
- Low quality public spaces in key gateways, such as the main train stations, and primary access points to the town centre.
- Lack of visibility and consistent access to key historic and natural features such as the River Colne and the Town Wall.
- Key facilities dislocated from the Town Centre and transport nodes, such as Essex University and Colchester General Hospital.
- Concern about the real and perceived safety of public areas, particularly in relation to evening entertainment uses.

#### Future Challenges:

- Ensuring increasing prosperity benefits all.
- Development of a high quality built environment that enhances the existing historic context, with new regionally significant facilities such as the Community Stadium and the Firstsite (Visual Arts Facility) which can inspire wider regeneration.
- Provision of high quality, accessible and flexible business premises compatible with the changing profile of Colchester businesses and workforce.
- Retention of University Graduates and skilled workers in local employment.
- Expansion of facilities to provide further and higher education at the Colchester Institute and University of Essex to meet the needs of a growing population and developments in the delivery of education regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Expansion of health care facilities to provide additional hospital services and expanded local health centres to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly aged population and changes in how healthcare is delivered.
- Promoting and supporting tourism.

## **Managing Growth Pressures**

Current problems:

- Colchester is part of the high demand south-east housing market, which places development pressure on the Borough including upon greenfield land.
- Expense involved in regenerating previously developed land, such as the Hythe and St Botolphs.
- Lack of affordable housing and limits on the diversity of housing in terms of tenure, dwelling type and size.
- The provision of infrastructure and facilities is struggling to keep pace with new development.
- Limited capacity within Colchester's historic Town Centre to accommodate new development.

Future Challenges:

- Balance ambitious housing and employment growth targets with the need to conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment.
- Need to ensure that future development incorporates high quality sustainable design and construction appropriate to its context as a legacy for future generations.
- Matching jobs growth with population growth.
- Managing the impact of the increase in smaller and older households and consequent effect on services and housing.
- Meeting the demand for affordable housing, including allocation of sites for gypsies and travellers.
- Preservation of countryside areas and strategic green gaps between settlements.
- Conserving open space and biodiversity in urban areas
- Provision of adequate transport, utilities and social infrastructure to meet existing deficits and to support growth.
- Mitigation of flood risk and contaminated land

## **Improving Accessibility**

Current problems:

- Traffic congestion on key roads and junctions, particularly in the Town Centre.
- Some roads are designed to suit cars at the expense of pedestrians and quality development.
- Buses are obstructed by traffic congestion and thus provide slower and less frequent services.
- Lack of access and connectivity between different parts of the Borough, particularly to and within the Town Centre.
- Shortage of local shops and community facilities at walkable neighbourhood locations.
- Loss of shops and services in villages and lack of frequent public transport services.

Future Challenges:

- Development of an integrated, affordable public transport network.
- Providing fast and frequent bus services.
- Reducing the need to travel and managing the demand for road space.
- Eliminating barriers to access by improving pedestrian and cycle provision and interconnectivity between different transport modes (e.g. bus-rail interchange).
- Improving access in rural areas to jobs and services.

## **3. Vision and Objectives**

The following Vision sets out where we want to be in 2021. The Vision distils feedback from consultation into ambitious aspirations for Colchester to become a sustainable and prestigious regional centre. The objectives that follow address to the issues, opportunities and problems faced by the Borough.

### **3.1 Spatial Vision**

By 2021, Colchester will be a prestigious regional centre. The historic Town Centre will be the cultural and economic heart of the borough, surrounded by thriving suburbs, villages and countryside. New cultural, retail, office and mixed use developments will be delivered through regeneration of the Town Centre and its fringe. Urban Gateways to the Town Centre will be regenerated to present attractive entry points to Colchester and stimulate sustainable development. Key community facilities will be delivered and expanded, including the University of Essex, Visual Arts Facilities, General Hospital, Colchester Institute, and Community Stadium.

The focus of new development will be on Colchester Town and Stanway. Sustainable and inclusive communities will be created through regeneration in the north, east and south, and sustainable urban extensions to the north and south-west of town. These developments will deliver affordable housing, employment, open space, and community facilities and will achieve a high standard of sustainable design and construction. New and existing communities will be supported by a network of district and local centres which will provide local residents with easy access to shopping, employment and services. Public transport, walking and cycling links will be improved to better connect residents with local and regional destinations.

Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea will be key district settlements that provide essential services and facilities to their rural hinterland. The historic character and distinctiveness of these settlements and other villages will be protected and enhanced.

The natural environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved and enhanced and strategic green spaces will be secured to meet the recreational and health needs of Colchester. Sustainable development will also help protect the biodiversity, cultural and amenity value of the countryside and coast and will minimise use of scarce natural resources.



## **3.2 Objectives**

### **Sustainable Development**

- Focus new development at sustainable locations to support existing communities, local businesses, sustainable transport and promote urban regeneration to protect greenfield land.
- Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.
- Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.
- Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture.
- Reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and respond to the effects of climate change.

### **Centres and Employment**

- Create a prestigious regional centre and a vibrant network of district and local centres that stimulate economic activity and provide residents' needs at accessible locations.
- Provide for a balance of new homes and jobs to support economic prosperity of our growing community and reduce the need to travel outside the Borough for employment.
- Support and promote the growth of tourism.

### **Housing**

- Provide high quality and affordable housing at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community.
- Provide a range of different types of new housing to meet the diverse needs of the whole community.

### **Urban Renaissance**

- Revitalise rundown areas and create inclusive and sustainable new communities.
- Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology.

### **Public Realm**

- Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.

**Accessibility and Transportation**

- Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel.
- Develop Colchester as a Regional Transport Node, improving transport connections and gateways within the Borough and to the wider region.
- Provide excellent public transportation, walking and cycling connections between centres, communities and their needs.
- Improve the strategic road network and manage traffic and parking demand.

**Environment and Rural Communities**

- Protect and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline.
- Support appropriate local employment and housing development in villages and rural communities.

**Energy, Resources, Recycling and Waste**

- Encourage renewable energy and the efficient use of scarce resources.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

## **4. Spatial Strategy**

### **4.1 A Strategy for Sustainable Communities in Colchester**

The Spatial Strategy sets out the overall approach for the provision of new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities over the plan period. It sets the context for the Core Policies and outlines how the Vision and Objectives will be achieved.

The Spatial Strategy directs development towards the most sustainable locations, as illustrated by the Key Diagrams, and plans for supporting facilities and infrastructure to create sustainable local communities. The Strategy emphasises the importance of the Town Centre and regeneration to help Colchester to fulfil its potential as a prestigious regional centre for the Haven Gateway sub-region and wider Eastern region, with key links to London and Europe.

#### **Colchester Town**

The Council will focus the majority of future development on the following growth areas, and will work with partners to deliver the infrastructure and facilities needed to support this growth:

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

Focusing development at these locations will support regeneration, promote sustainable lifestyles and preclude large amounts of greenfield development. However, it is essential that development is well designed and supported with transport and utilities infrastructure, open space and community facilities.

#### **Town Centre**

Colchester's historic Town Centre is the cultural and economic heart of the Borough. The Town Centre will be enhanced through regeneration, public realm improvements, and a balanced mix of uses that sustain activity throughout the day and evening. However, the capacity of the historic core is limited and the extent of the functional Town Centre needs to be expanded. Other areas around the Town Centre, including the train station gateways, are highly accessible and currently perform important town centre functions. The Core Strategy seeks to expand our concept of the Town Centre to include these fringe areas and gateways.

Over the plan period it is projected that approximately 2000 new homes will be delivered in the Town Centre, including over 1,500 homes that have already been completed or permitted. In addition, Colchester's Town Centre

needs to accommodate more business, tourism and retail developments, including 67,000sqm of net retail floorspace and 40,000sqm of gross office floorspace between 2006 and 2021. The Town Centre will also be the primary location for the delivery of 270-490 hotel bedrooms between 2006 and 2011, and additional hotel developments beyond this period. These targets reflect the findings of current studies assessing Colchester's retail, business, and hotel requirements. This development will be primarily focused on the Town Centre, and other highly accessible locations, to create a sustainable and prestigious regional centre.

The Council therefore needs to actively promote and facilitate urban renaissance in the Town Centre and the regeneration of the St Botolphs and North Station areas. The regeneration of St Botolphs will deliver the following key projects:

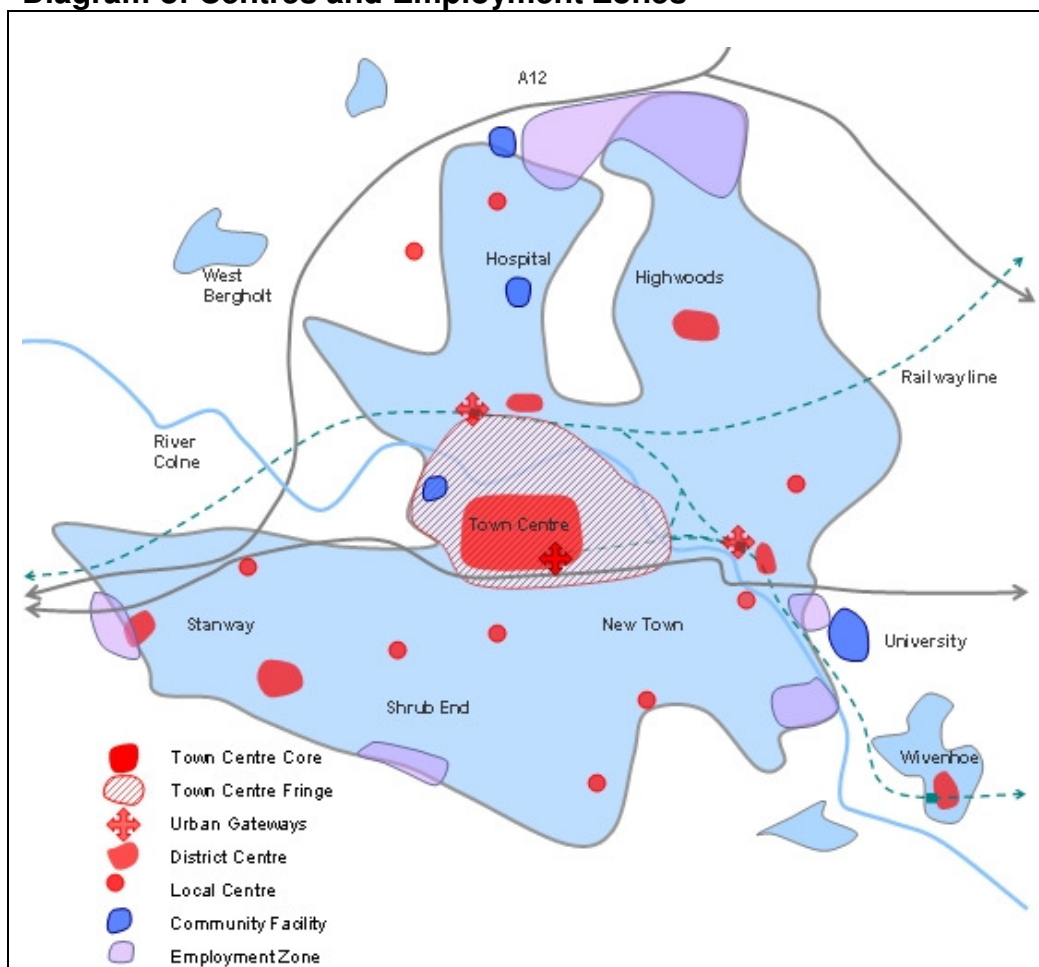
- Firstsite Building (Community arts facility)
- Cultural Quarter
- New bus station
- Town Station improvements
- Magistrates court
- Vineyard Gate (approx 35,000sqm of net retail floor space)
- Pedestrian/cycle bridge
- New open spaces

The regeneration of the North Station area will deliver the following:

- Regenerate the North Station gateway
- North Transit Corridor
- Improved bus-rail interchange
- North-south capacity improvements (A133/A134)
- High density, mixed use developments, including 40,000sqm of gross new office floor space
- Green links between Highwoods Country Park and Castle Park
- Improvements to A133 central corridor

Transport improvements will also be made to the Town Centre's historic core to improve access and manage congestion. The Council seeks to enhance the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic on the High Street, and facilitate better bus access and circulation in the historic core.

## Diagram of Centres and Employment Zones



### North Growth Area

Mile End is a suburban area that has experienced rapid residential growth in the recent past. The area provides good access to the Town Centre, North Station, the A12 (upon completion of a new A12 junction), open space and Colchester General Hospital.

Between 2001 and 2021, approximately 4000 new homes will be delivered in the established urban areas. The majority of this housing (approx 3,500) has already been constructed or permitted. The Core Strategy also identifies additional greenfield land to the west of Mile End Road with capacity for 2,200 homes. It is intended that this land will come forward between 2016 and 2023, although the timing and delivery of the greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time.

North Colchester is also identified as a Strategic Employment Zone. Cuckoo Farm offers approximately 19.8ha of employment land that will provide good access to the A12.

The Core Strategy will coordinate this housing and employment development with the delivery of transport infrastructure, community facilities and open space. Key projects to be delivered within the North Growth Area include:

- Community Stadium
- A12 junction and Northern Approaches
- North Park & Ride
- North Transit Corridor
- North-south capacity improvements (A133/A134)
- Expansion of Colchester General Hospital
- A sustainable urban extension
- Strategic employment site
- Two new primary schools and additional secondary school places are planned.
- Extra pre-school, primary and secondary school places to serve the urban extension (2,200 new homes) through new schools and expansion of existing provision.
- Community hall improvements and new community centre
- Strategic public open space
- Sport, recreation and youth facilities
- Allotments and green links

#### East Growth Area

The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land. Together with the University of Essex and New Town, this eastern area of Colchester has entered a period of significant growth. The area provides good access to Hythe Station, University of Essex and the Town Centre, but is constrained by limited transport infrastructure and flooding issues.

East Colchester is an established Regeneration Area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed use neighbourhoods oriented towards the River Colne and which respect the historic character of the area as the location of the early port. Over the plan period the East Growth Area provides capacity to accommodate at least 2,600 new homes, including over 1,500 homes that have already been completed or permitted. Once local traffic and flooding issues are resolved, then additional development will be encouraged at this highly accessible location. The regeneration of this area therefore needs to be supported by improvements to transport infrastructure, flood mitigation and open space.

Key projects to be delivered within the East Growth Area include:

- Colne Harbour regeneration
- Improvements to Hythe Station
- East Transit Corridor and potential Park & Ride
- University research park (approx 36,000sqm of office/business floorspace)
- Colne River pedestrian/cycle bridge
- University of Essex expansion
- High density, mixed use developments, including over 2,600 homes

- New health centre
- New public open space
- Green links

### South Growth Area

The Garrison area in the south of Colchester is an established regeneration area that provides significant potential for redevelopment within close proximity to the Town Centre. The new Garrison is currently under construction and will provide approximately 5000 direct jobs. A master planned urban village has been approved on the old Army Garrison site to accommodate 2,600 homes. Recently, the progress of development and detailed planning permission indicates that housing delivery is likely to exceed 3000 during the plan period. This additional housing delivery needs to be supported through improvements to transport infrastructure and community facilities.

Key projects to be delivered within the South Growth Area include:

- New Army Garrison
- Master planned urban village (approx 3000 homes)
- New health centre
- New primary school
- Public open space
- Sport and recreation facilities
- Colchester Town Station Improvements
- Pedestrian / cycle links to Town Centre

### Stanway Growth Area

The western and south-western fringes of Stanway will also be subject to significant development during the life of the plan. Existing allocations for both employment and housing will continue to be developed during the plan period. Stanway is identified as a Strategic Employment Zone and provides approximately 16ha of employment land that will provide good access to the strategic road network (A12). Existing housing allocations will deliver approximately 1000 homes by 2021. Furthermore, urban extensions to the west and south west are intended to deliver 800 homes. It is intended that this land will come forward between 2016 and 2023, although the timing and delivery of the greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time. This development will provide protection for sites of archaeological significance as well as facilitate delivery of strategic public open space and road improvements which will improve the highway network to the south and west of the town.

Key projects to be delivered within the Stanway Growth Area include:

- Sustainable urban extensions
- Strategic public open space
- Stanway road improvements
- Improved bus links

- Expanded secondary school provision
- New primary school
- Youth and recreation facilities
- Village hall improvements
- Allotments

### **District Settlements**

Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea are the main district settlements outside of Colchester Town. These settlements provide an important range of shopping, services and facilities to their surrounding rural hinterland.

Tiptree had a population of 8,305 in 2001 and is the largest settlement in the Borough outside of Colchester Town. Over the plan period it is projected that approximately 680 new homes will be developed in Tiptree, including 500 homes (approx) that had already been completed or permitted in 2006. This may also include the reallocation of surplus employment land. An additional 245sqm of net retail floorspace will also be sought in the district centre. All this development will help regenerate Church Road and deliver open space and community facilities. Key facilities to be delivered in Tiptree include a new health centre, expansion of the primary school, new sports pitches and allotments.

Wivenhoe had a population of 7,221 in 2001 and has good connections to the University of Essex, Colchester Town, and regional train services. Over the plan period, approximately 635 homes will be developed in Wivenhoe and across the water in Rowhedge, including recent developments in Wivenhoe the regeneration of Rowhedge Port. An additional 126sqm of net retail floorspace will also be sought in Wivenhoe's district centre. Key facilities to be delivered in Wivenhoe include a new health centre, youth facilities and community hall improvements.

West Mersea, with a population of 6,925 in 2001, is a relatively self-contained coastal community offering quality tourism and recreation opportunities. The West Mersea waterfront will be conserved for its historic maritime character and distinctive maritime-related local businesses. There are some limited development opportunities in West Mersea and approximately 280 new homes will be developed during the plan period, including over 200 homes that have already been approved or completed. An additional 173sqm of net retail floorspace will also be sought to service the residents of Mersea Island. Key facilities to be delivered in West Mersea include allotments and a new health centre.

### **Rural Communities**

The villages in the borough are unlikely to experience significant development during the plan period. Overall, about 705 homes are likely to be developed in rural communities throughout the borough. Approximate 650 of these homes had been completed or approved in 2006, including 150 new homes in Great Horkesley. The priorities in these villages will be protecting the distinct local



character and supporting the provision of affordable housing, open space, rural employment, key services and community facilities.

Separation will be maintained between Colchester and adjoining settlements in order to protect village identity and landscape character.

## **Environment**

The natural environment, countryside and coastline will be conserved and enhanced to protect the Borough's biodiversity, landscape, geology, history and archaeology. Development will be directed away from sites of international, national, regional and local importance, areas of landscape conservation importance and land at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding. Where new development requires a rural location, it will need to enhance the locally distinct character of the landscape, in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected from inappropriate development. The open and undeveloped coast within the Coastal Protection Belt will be protected from development that would harm its open and rural character. Management will focus on balancing the rural land uses that have shaped the landscape with opportunities to enhance and promote tourism and recreation.

The River Colne provides a valuable green corridor, for both wildlife and people, from Colchester Town to the countryside and coastline. Subject to flood risk assessment, the regeneration of previously developed land will be supported at appropriate locations along the river to enhance its recreation and nature conservation values. Strategic open spaces and green links, such as the river corridor, will be maintained and enhanced to support movement, recreation and biodiversity.

The Abberton Reservoir will be expanded to help meet increasing water demands in the region. This expansion will include improved visitor access and a new visitor centre to provide for recreation and education.

## **Transport Strategy**

Accessibility and transport are key elements of the Core Strategy and the Council will prepare Transport Strategy as part of the Local Development Framework to reflect Colchester's role as a Regional Transport Node. This Transport Strategy will accord with the Regional Transport Strategy and the Local Transport Plan, and will aim to achieve the following through partnership working:

- Improve accessibility to services
- Reduce the need to travel and manage congestion
- Achieve more sustainable travel behaviour
- Create safe and sustainable communities
- Minimise impact on the environment

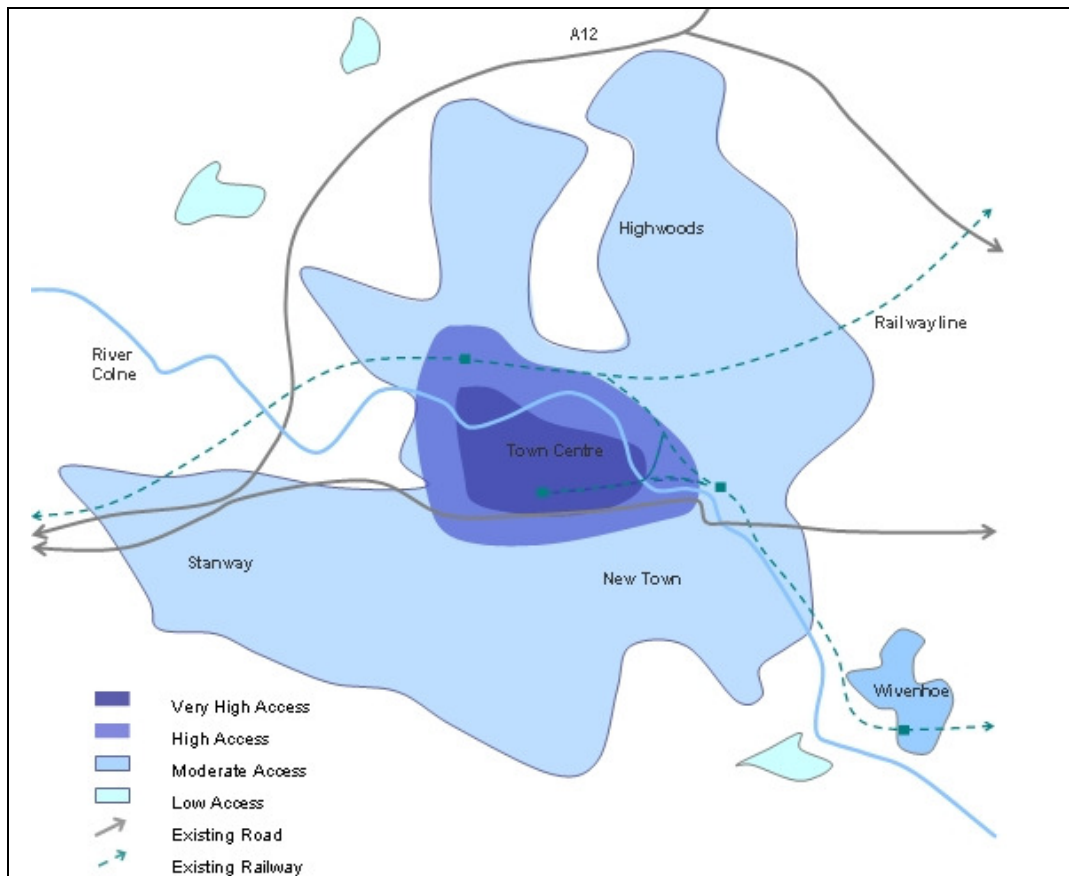
In practice, the achievement of these aims requires a long-term strategy coordinating development and transport to support sustainable lifestyles and address climate change. Accordingly, the Spatial Strategy and Transport Strategy seek to coordinate the following through partnership working:

- Support housing and mixed use development at accessible locations, and therefore reduce the need to travel.
- Create people-friendly streets that encourage walking, cycling and public transport.
- A safe, direct and integrated network of walk/cycle paths and facilities to connect people with key destinations, particularly the Town Centre.
- Promote the use of public transport by providing a fast, frequent, reliable and high quality public transport network.
- Create transit corridors to facilitate high quality public transport services that can bypass traffic congestion.
- Deliver Park and Ride facilities that offer visitors with a high quality connection to Colchester Town.
- Improve the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic on the High Street and facilitate better bus access and circulation in the Town Centre.
- Manage car parking to support the economy and facilitate attractive streetscapes.
- Manage car traffic in urban areas using alternatives and technology to minimise adverse impacts on the streetscape and local environment.
- Improve the strategic road network to support economic growth, sustainable development and reduce pressure on local roads.
- Use of demand management measures to optimise the use of the existing transport networks
- Support rural communities with demand responsive transport services

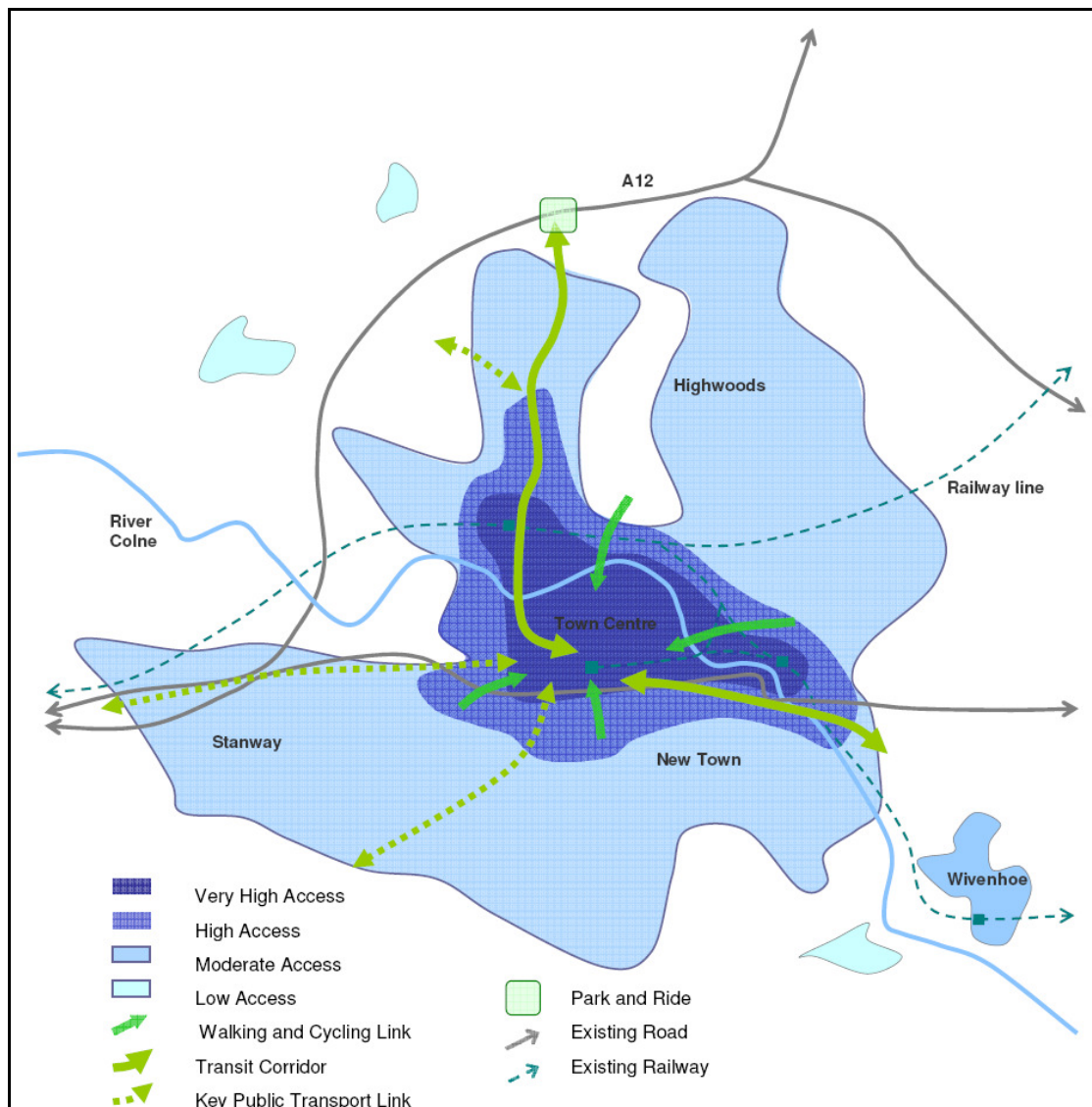
The Transport Strategy will also seek to create attractive and high quality gateways to Colchester to create a prestigious regional centre and promote sustainable travel behaviour. The main public transport interchanges, including North Station, Hythe Station and Town Station, will be regenerated to provide attractive 'urban gateways' to the Town Centre. The new A12 junction, including Park and Ride, will also provide a quality gateway for vehicular access to Colchester Town.

The key transport measures outlined above will substantially improve people's access to jobs, shops, services and facilities in the Borough. The following diagrams below provide a conceptual illustration of the accessibility improvements to be achieved through investment in transport infrastructure and services

## Diagram of Present Accessibility and Transport



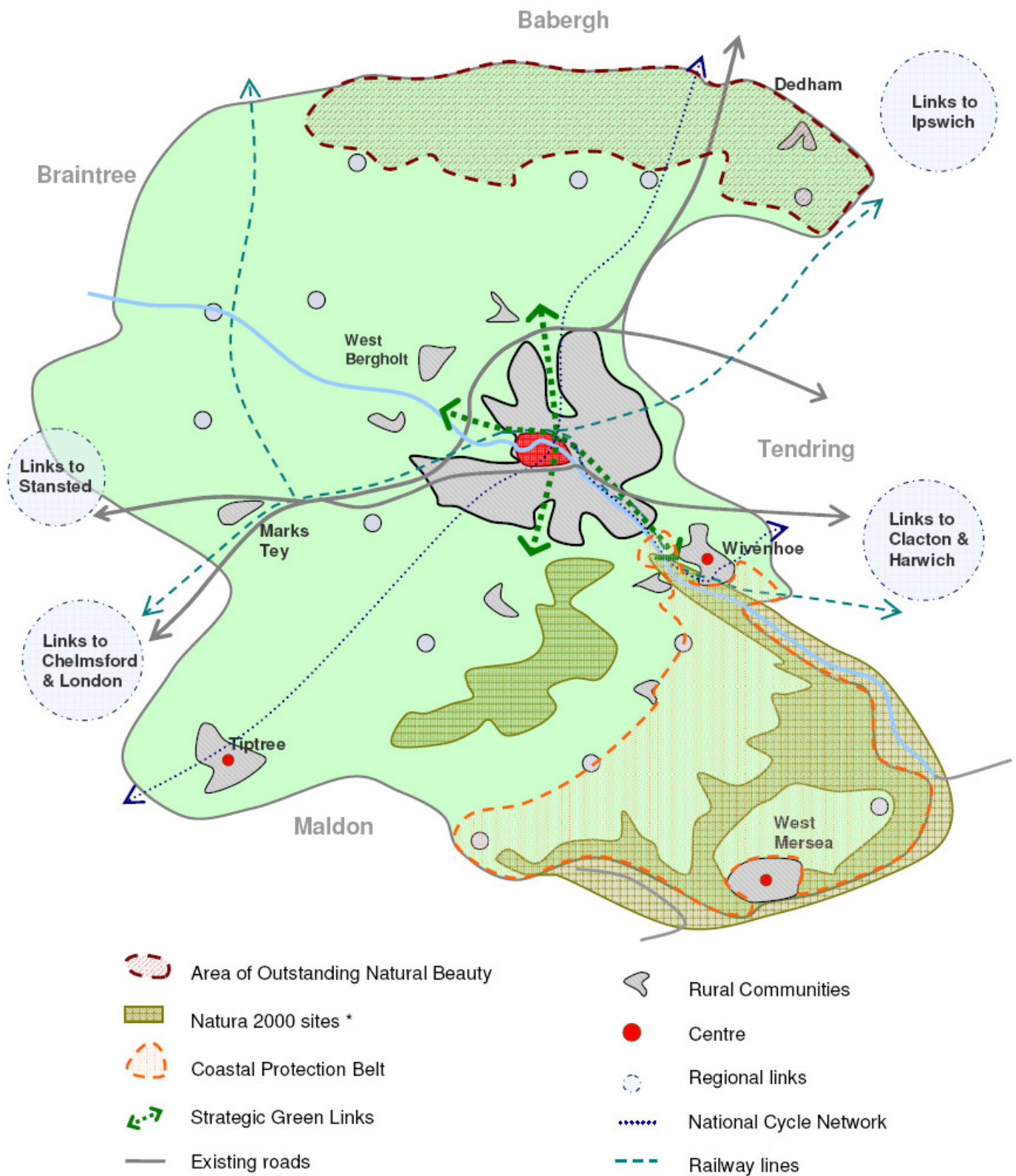
## Diagram of Future Accessibility and Transport



## 4.2 Key Diagrams

The Key Diagrams provide conceptual illustrations of the Core Strategy. The first Key Diagram illustrates the Strategy at a Borough-wide scale, whilst the second Key Diagram focuses on the complexities of Colchester Town. These Diagrams present the spatial principles of the Strategy and identify broad locations that relate to Core Policies, but are not intended to be detailed or site specific.

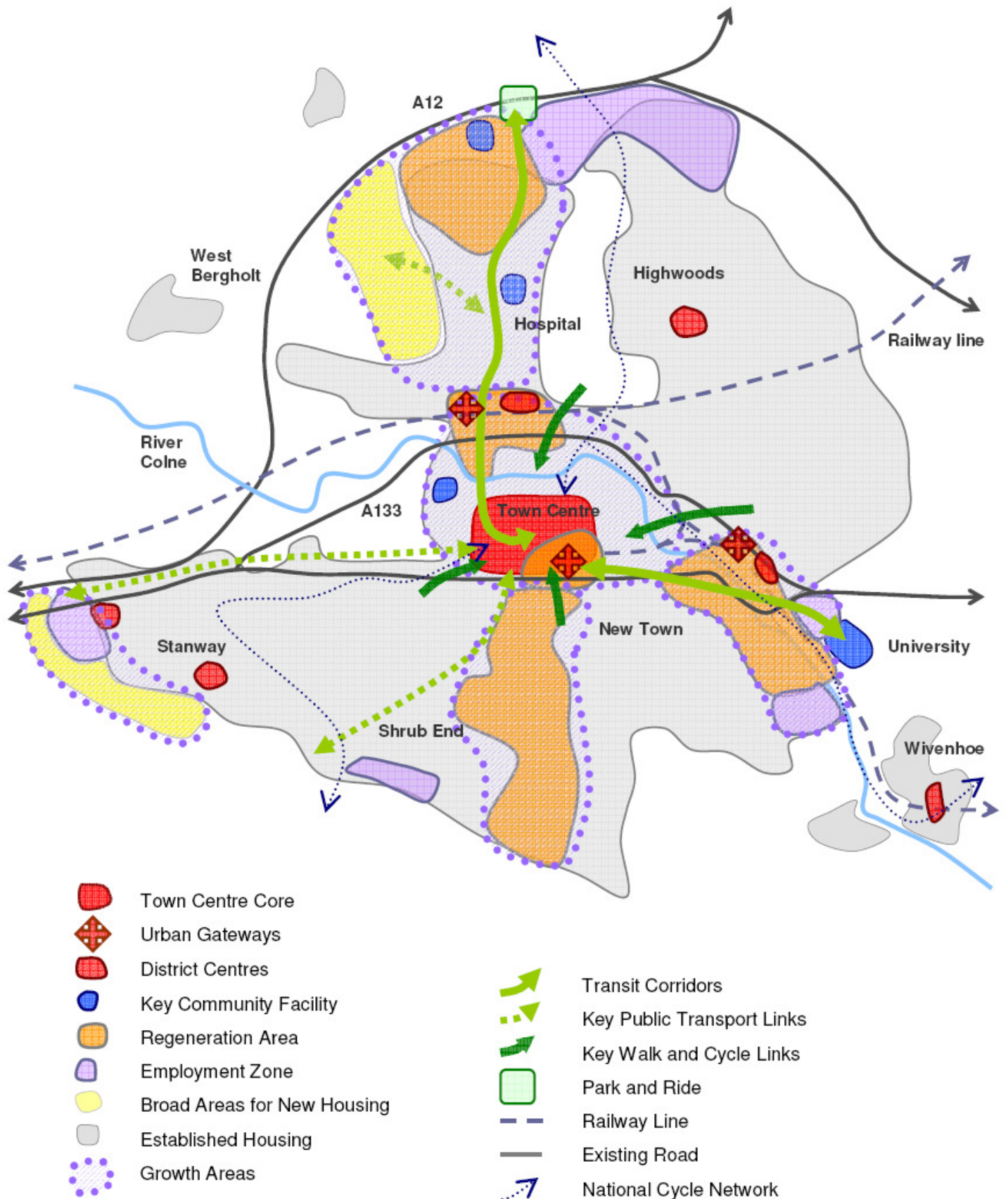
## KD1: Colchester Borough



\* Natura 2000 sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites.



## KD2: Colchester Town



## **5. Core Policies**

The policies in the Core Strategy provide the strategic direction for the Local Development Framework, and for the delivery of development, infrastructure, facilities and services in Colchester to 2021. These policies seek to achieve the Vision and Objectives and should be interpreted within the context of the Spatial Strategy.

### **5.1 Sustainable Development**

#### **SD1 – Sustainable Development Locations (Revised July 2014)**

Colchester Borough Council will promote sustainable development and regeneration to deliver at least 14,200 jobs between 2001 and 2021 and at least 19,000 homes between 2001 and 2023.

Throughout the borough, growth will be located at the most accessible and sustainable locations in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy below and the Key Diagrams. Development proposals will be expected to make efficient use of land and take a sequential approach that gives priority to accessible locations and previously developed land (PDL). Proposals should seek to promote sustainability by minimising and/or mitigating pressure on the natural, built and historic environment, utilities and infrastructure, and areas at risk of flooding.

In support of Colchester's aim to be a prestigious regional centre, the Borough Council will promote high quality design and will focus on enhancing the character and quality of the Town Centre, the Regeneration Areas and key Gateways to Colchester. Development in Colchester Town will be primarily focused on the following broad locations (see Key Diagrams):

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

The Council will also seek to sustain the character and vitality of small towns, villages and the countryside, and development will be expected to achieve a high standard of design, sustainability and compatibility with local character.

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that applications can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole: or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

**Table SD1 – Settlement Hierarchy**

Hierarchy	Settlements
Regional Centre	Colchester Town and Stanway
District Settlements	Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe
Rural Communities	The other villages in the Borough (see Appendix B)

### **Explanation**

The Community Strategy's vision for Colchester is for it to develop as a prestigious regional centre. This can be achieved through regenerating our town centre and regional gateways, whilst protecting and enhancing the character of the countryside and rural communities.

Colchester is a growing borough and needs to provide quality housing and employment opportunities, as well as improving the environment and our quality of life. New development needs to be carefully managed, well-designed and directed towards locations that will stimulate regeneration and support sustainable communities. Development also helps fund improvements to community facilities, transport infrastructure, open space and affordable housing.

The Council is focusing development on areas that are in need of regeneration and are accessible by a range of transport modes. This approach will protect our countryside by minimising the amount of development occurring on greenfield land. It will also help improve accessibility and reduce the need to travel, by ensuring that homes, employment and facilities are well located.

The broad locations for development in Colchester are outlined in the Spatial Strategy and illustrated in the Key Diagrams. These development locations



have been coordinated with transport and utilities infrastructure and the provision of community facilities, shopping, employment and open space to create sustainable communities.

## **SD2 – Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure (Revised July 2014)**

The Borough Council will work with partners to ensure that facilities and infrastructure are provided to support sustainable communities in Colchester. New facilities and infrastructure must be located and designed so that they are accessible and compatible with the character and needs of the local community.

New development will be required to provide the necessary community facilities, open space, transport infrastructure and other requirements to meet the community needs arising from the proposal. Development will also be expected to contribute, as appropriate, to strategic projects that support sustainable development and the wider community.

The Council will seek to ensure that new development makes a reasonable contribution to the provision of related facilities and infrastructure. This will either be through a planning obligation (usually contained within a Section 106 agreement) and/or, if applicable, through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment, following adoption of a CIL charging schedule.

A CIL charging schedule would set a specified charge for each square metre of gross internal floorspace, related to the use class of the development. CIL payments will contribute to the provision of infrastructure to support development. Planning obligations and s278 agreements will continue to be used to make individual applications acceptable. The Council will publish a list of infrastructure to be funded through CIL to ensure developers do not pay twice for the same item of infrastructure. The viability of developments will be considered when determining the extent and priority of development contributions.

### **Explanation**

Supporting development with the necessary community facilities and transport infrastructure is essential to creating sustainable communities. The Borough Council does not have the resources or the necessary powers itself to provide all the facilities and infrastructure. Therefore, the Council will need to work with partners to collect contributions from development through Section 106 agreements and, potentially, CIL payments, ensuring that the contributions requested are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Developments will be required to deliver and contribute towards the following where necessary (not exclusive):

- Affordable housing
- Transport infrastructure and services
- Open space, sport and recreation
- Community facilities
- Primary and secondary schools
- Public realm improvements
- Renewable energy and sustainable construction
- Flood mitigation measures
- Employment and training schemes

The Council will prepare further guidance regarding standard charges and development contributions towards facilities and infrastructure. Additional information on the delivery of infrastructure and facilities is also provided in the following Core Policies:

- SD3 - Community Facilities
- H4 – Affordable Housing
- PR2 – Open Space
- TA3 – Public Transport
- TA4 – Roads and Traffic

### **SD3 – Community Facilities (Revised July 2014)**

The Borough Council will work with partners to deliver key community facilities (see Table SD3) to support the Sustainable Community Strategy and to develop Colchester as a prestigious regional centre.

The Council will also provide facilities for the local communities, based upon an analysis of needs, with particular regard to disadvantaged groups. New development will be required to provide, or contribute towards the provision of community facilities to meet the needs of new communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities. Safe, direct routes for walking and cycling and appropriate bus services will be established to serve existing and new pre-school, primary, and secondary school sites.

Community facilities should be located in centres or other accessible locations to maximise community access and build a sense of local community identity. The Council supports the retention and enhancement of existing community facilities and encourages multi-purpose community facilities that can provide a range of services and facilities to the community at one accessible location. Where existing facilities can be enhanced to serve new development, the Council will work with developers and local partners to audit existing facilities and assess the requirement for additional facilities to deliver comprehensive provision of services to serve these extended communities. The Council will work with local partners, such as Parish Councils or Community Associations, to plan and manage community facilities.

**Table SD3: Delivery of Key Community Facilities**

Growth Areas	Project
Town Centre	Firstsite (Community arts facility)
	Cultural Quarter
	Magistrates' Court
North Growth Area	Community stadium and regional conference centre
	Colchester General Hospital expansion
	4 new primary schools (ie., at Turner Village, Severalls, and two in the urban extension)
	Early years and childcare facilities
	Either new secondary school site (on a precautionary basis); and/or expansion of existing secondary school provision at nearby schools
East Growth Area	University of Essex expansion
General	Facilities to support 2012 Olympics
	7 new health centres
	6 forms of secondary school capacity
	6 new primary schools
	New and improved community halls
	Extra pre-school, primary, and secondary school provision (including new schools where appropriate).

\*refer to policy TA3 & TA4 for transport infrastructure and policy PR2 for open space.

### Explanation

Community facilities are an essential element of sustainable communities providing for education, child care, health, culture, recreation, religion and policing (see Glossary). Policy PR2 also makes provision for open space and recreation facilities.

The Council needs to deliver a comprehensive range of high quality and accessible community facilities to meet the needs of new and existing communities in Colchester. Community projects, such as the Community Stadium and Firstsite (Community arts facility), have regional and national significance and are identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy. Local facilities such as schools and health centres also need to be delivered to support new and existing communities. Table SD3 sets out key community facilities to be delivered in Colchester during the plan period, additional facilities will also be delivered as part of new developments and to meet existing deficiencies.

The Borough Council will safeguard existing facilities and will work with partners including the local community to bring together funding from a variety of public and private sources to deliver new community facilities. Development proposals will be required to review community needs (e.g. Health Impact Assessment) and provide community facilities to meet the needs of the new population and mitigate impacts on existing communities.

## **5.2 Centres and Employment Policies**

### **CE1 – Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy**

The Borough Council will encourage economic development and will plan for the delivery of at least 14,200 jobs in Colchester between 2001 and 2021. The Council will promote employment generating developments through the regeneration and intensification of previously developed land, and through the allocation of land necessary to support employment growth at sustainable locations.

The Council will promote and maintain a Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy (Tables CE1a & CE1b) to coordinate the use and scale of developments with the accessibility and role of the various mixed use Centres and Employment Zones in Colchester. Mixed-use centres will support a wide range of compatible uses, whilst Employment Zones will accommodate other business developments as identified in Table CE1b. Development scales will need to be consistent with the Hierarchy and larger scale development should be focused on the Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Strategic Employment Sites.

Employment developments that conflict with the Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy will not normally be supported. Small scale developments may be acceptable in residential or countryside locations if they have low travel needs and low impacts, such as:

- Small shops and facilities providing for the daily needs of a local residential catchment,
- Rural businesses, recreation and tourist developments to meet local needs and support rural economies.

The Council will seek to protect and enhance employment throughout the borough. Development that will increase employment capacity will be encouraged, whilst development that will result in a loss of employment capacity will not normally be supported.

The Council will also encourage economic diversity and business development to facilitate small and medium enterprises. A mix of business types and premises will be sought in employment developments to provide opportunities for all businesses and create diverse and successful economic environments.

**Table CE1a – Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy**

**Centres Classification and Hierarchy**

	Centre Type		Indicative Location*
	Hierarchy	Classification	
Mixed Use Centres (Policy CE2)	Town Centre	Town Centre core	Colchester's historic Town Centre
	Edge of Centre Locations	Urban Gateways	North Station Colchester Town Station Hythe Station
		Town Centre fringe	Land surrounding the Town Centre core.
	District Centres	Rural District Centres	Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe
		Urban District Centres	Highwoods Tollgate Peartree Road Greenstead Road Turner Rise
	Local Centres	Neighbourhood Centres and Local Shops	Specific sites to be identified in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD) or through master planning within identified growth areas

\*Boundaries to be defined in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD)

**Employment Classification**

	Employment Zone Type	Indicative Location*
Employment Zones (Policy CE3)	Strategic Employment Zones	North Colchester Stanway University Research Park
	Local Employment Zones	Specific sites to be identified in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD)

\*Boundaries to be defined in Adopted Proposal Maps (Site Allocations DPD)

In accordance with PPS6 the historic town centre core will be the primary location for retail, office, leisure and entertainment uses. The sequential approach will be applied and retail uses will then be directed to the sites in the town centre fringe (within 300 metres of the town centre core). Sites within 500 metres or those well connected with good pedestrian access to the Urban Gateways will also be considered suitable for office and mixed use development.

**Table CE1b – Appropriate Land Uses**

	<b>Mixed Use Centres (Policy CE2)</b>	<b>Employment Zones (Policy CE3)</b>
Primary Land Uses	A1 – Shops A2 – Financial and Professional Services A3 – Restaurants and Cafes A4 – Drinking Establishments A5 – Hot Food Take-Away B1a – Offices B1b – Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, Hi-tech C1 – Hotels D1 – Non-residential Institutions D2 – Assembly and Leisure	B1b – Research and Development, Studios, Laboratories, Hi-tech B1c – Light Industry B2 – General Industry B8 – Storage and Distribution
Secondary Land Uses	C2 – Residential Institutions C3 – Dwelling House B1c – Light Industry Sui Generis	B1a – Offices C1 – Hotels D2 – Assembly and Leisure Sui Generis

**Table CE1c – Indicative Employment Delivery 2006 to 2021**

		<b>Retail (2006-2021)</b>	<b>Hotels (2006-2015)</b>	<b>B1: Offices etc (2004-2021)</b>	<b>Industry &amp; Warehousing (2004-2021)</b>
<b>Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Town Centre Fringe</b>		67,000sqm (net)	270-390 rooms (2006-2015)	40,000sqm (gross)	
<b>Strategic Employment Zones</b>	<b>University of Essex</b>			36,000sqm (gross)	
	<b>North Colchester</b>			38,000sqm (gross)	45,000sqm (gross)
	<b>Stanway</b>			36,500sqm (gross)	

**Explanation**

Providing jobs for Colchester's growing community is a central objective of the Core Strategy. The East of England Plan set a target of approximately 14,200 jobs, although many jobs have already been created since 2001. The Council cannot deliver the additional employment directly, but it can protect existing employment, stimulate new employment developments, and accommodate new developments at the most suitable locations.

The Council commissioned studies of projected growth in retail, business and employment, and used this evidence to plan and facilitate future economic development and employment delivery in Colchester. During the 2006 to 2021 period, Colchester will need to accommodate the following development:

- 67,000sqm (net) of retail floorspace, predominantly in the Town Centre (Retail Study 2007)
- 106,000sqm (gross) of office floorspace (Use Class B1), predominantly in the Town Centre and the Strategic Employment Zones. (Employment Land Study 2007)

- 45,000sqm (gross) of business floorspace (excluding B1), predominantly in the Strategic Employment Zones (Employment Land Study 2007)

Development of Colchester as a regional centre includes the enhancement of its visitor facilities, which also serve as a source of local employment. A study of hotel provision in Colchester found demand for 270-390 hotel bed rooms between 2006 and 2015 to serve the leisure and business travel market in Colchester.

Promoting regeneration, higher densities and mixed use developments in existing Centres will build additional capacity to accommodate employment and economic growth at sustainable locations. Strategic Employment Zones will also be enhanced to improve access to strategic roads, capacity for new development and the quality of the built environment.

The Hierarchy for mixed use Centres and Employment Zones complements the Settlement Hierarchy to help guide both housing and employment development. The Centres and Employment Hierarchy directs employment development towards the most sustainable location within the Borough and within Colchester Town.

Centres provide highly accessible locations that can support a wide mix of land uses. The Town Centre and Urban Gateways are well connected by public transport to the rest of the Borough and the Region. Neighbourhood Centres and Local Shops are easily accessible within local neighbourhoods. Land uses that are suited to accessible and mixed use locations, such as shops, services and offices, should be located within Centres.

Employment Zones are located at the fringe of urban areas and are supported by strategic road infrastructure. Employment Zones will accommodate business developments that are less compatible with mixed use areas, such as warehousing and industry.

Table CE1b outlines the land uses that are suited to Centres and Employment Zones. Primary land uses are generally encouraged, whilst secondary land uses may be supported depending on the circumstances.

## **CE2 – Mixed Use Centres**

The Borough Council will promote a mix of development types and scales in accordance with the Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy (Table CE1a & CE1b) and the role of each Centre, as outlined below.

New development in Centres should make efficient use of land, optimise employment delivery and be sympathetic to local character. Centre developments should also present active human-scale frontages and provide adaptable spaces to ensure they can accommodate different uses over time.

The Borough Council will seek to enhance the public realm and sustainable transport in Centres and minimise the impact of traffic and parking.

### **CE2a – Town Centre**

To promote Colchester as a prestigious Regional Centre, the Borough Council will encourage economic development and regeneration in the Town Centre. Main Town Centre uses, including retail, offices, leisure and cultural facilities, should take a sequential approach that gives priority to the regeneration of the Town Centre, followed by the Urban Gateways and the Town Centre Fringe. Accordingly, the Council will seek to deliver over 67,000sqm of net retail floor space and 40,000sqm of gross office floor space in the Town Centre, Urban Gateways and Town Centre Fringe from 2006 to 2021.

To support Colchester's role as a prestigious regional centre the Council will seek to deliver more attractive public spaces and streetscapes in the Town Centre.

The Town Centre Core contains important historic character which must be protected and enhanced by all development. Retail and cultural developments will be focused on the Town Centre Core. The Council will also encourage developments that create safe and attractive public spaces and a more balanced night time economy.

The Urban Gateways in Colchester (North Station, Hythe Station and Town Station) will provide a focal point for developments that will enhance the role of the Town Centre. High density, mixed-use developments will be encouraged to promote regeneration within walking distance of the railway stations.

The Town Centre Fringe will accommodate the growth of the Town Centre beyond the historic core. The Council will encourage a mix of developments that revitalise and make efficient use of land within walking distance to the Town Centre.



## CE2b – District Centres

Rural District Centres will be protected and enhanced to provide shops, services, community facilities and employment to meet the needs of local communities. Additional retail development will be supported in Rural District Centres to provide for the needs of the local catchment. The Council seeks to deliver improved retail provision in the Rural District Centre between 2006 and 2021, as follows:

- Tiptree – 245sqm (net)
- West Mersea – 173sqm (net)
- Wivenhoe – 126sqm (net)

Urban District Centres should provide an improved public realm, urban character and a more diverse mix of uses. New retail proposals (including change of use to retail) will not be supported, unless they meet identified local needs and do not compete with the Town Centre. Expansion of the Urban District Centres will not be supported, but intensification within the Centre will be supported where the quality of the public realm and the built character is improved. Development within the Centres should deliver a more diverse range of uses, including community facilities, services, offices and housing. Development should be oriented towards pedestrians and present active frontages to the street. Development will be encouraged to make more efficient use of land including alternatives to surface car parking.

## CE2c – Local Centres

Neighbourhood Centres will be protected and enhanced to provide small scale shops, services and community facilities for local residents. New housing developments should provide for the enhancement of existing Centres or create new Neighbourhood Centres where appropriate to provide for the needs of existing and new communities. New developments within Neighbourhood Centres should be designed to meet the needs of the local catchment and encourage sustainable travel behaviour.

The provision of local shops and services throughout the Borough will be safeguarded to provide for the needs of local residents.

### Explanation

Colchester's Town Centre incorporates the Town Centre core within the historic wall, as well as surrounding fringe areas and the key rail station gateways. These areas can be accessed from the Borough and the Region by a range of transport modes and can support a wide range of uses. Other Centres, such as Tiptree Town Centre and Highwoods, are moderately accessible and serve a district catchment. Smaller centres provide predominantly for the local community.

Centres provide the surrounding community with shops, community facilities, employment, recreation and urban living opportunities. Mixed use development in Centres can increase the capacity for housing in accessible locations, which can also improve the viability of delivering new employment floor space. It is important to manage the right mix of uses over time to maintain a vibrant and successful Centre.

The Council will need to promote and facilitate new retailing and office development in the Town Centre to provide for the economic growth of Colchester at the most sustainable and accessible location. The regeneration of key locations, such as St Botolphs and North Station, will help deliver new retail and employment floorspace and reduce the pressure for out-of-centre development at less sustainable locations. The Retail Study carried out for north-east Essex identifies the important role Colchester plays as a Sub-regional retail centre whose catchment area includes adjacent districts. Further retail expansion will be required in the Town Centre for it to maintain its competitiveness.

Increasing the mix of compatible uses in Colchester's historic core will also provide a more robust economic environment and will stimulate a greater diversity of evening activities. The Town Centre core will therefore attract people of various ages and interests at different times of the day and night, and when combined with effective Town Centre management policies, will improve safety and inclusiveness.

There are a number of large format retail centres around the Town Centre and Colchester Town, including Tollgate and Turner Rise. These centres comprise large supermarkets, bulky goods retail, and large surface parking areas that could provide space for intensification. Expanding the retail components significantly could undermine the viability of the Town Centre, however it is important to increase the mix of uses and improve the public realm in these centres. These Urban District Centres need to improve the provision of community facilities, office floorspace or housing, as well as enhancing the quality of the public realm and the townscape.

Rural District Centres provide a mix of uses to serve the local residents and the surrounding countryside. The Council is seeking to enhance this important role to protect local businesses and provide services to the community.

Local Centres also play an important role in meeting the needs of local residents in a sustainable way. Accordingly the Council will seek to enhance the viability of Local Centres and protect them from inappropriate development.

## CE3 – Employment Zones

Employment Zones will accommodate business developments that are not suited to Mixed Use Centres, including industry and warehousing (see Table CE1b).

Strategic Employment Zones (SEZ) are identified at North Colchester, Stanway and the University of Essex, which provide ample capacity to accommodate projected business growth during the plan period. The Borough Council will seek to focus business development at these Strategic Employment Zones, and will improve the supporting transport infrastructure.

The Council will seek to deliver approximately 45,100sqm (gross) of industry and warehousing floor space, primarily within the North Colchester and Stanway Strategic Employment Zones. The Council will also support the delivery of existing office commitments in all the Strategic Employment Zones, however further office development will be directed towards the Town Centre in accordance with the sequential approach set out in policy CE2a.

The Council will encourage the provision of incubator units and grow-on space to support the development of small and medium enterprises. Local Employment Zones will be defined in the Site Allocations DPD based on existing and proposed concentrations of rural and local employment in order to support and promote rural enterprise and local employment.

Retail developments will not normally be supported in Employment Zones, except for small scale developments that provide for the needs of the local workforce or are ancillary to an industrial use.

### Explanation

The Employment Zones provide good locations for industry, warehousing and businesses because they are well located in relation to transport infrastructure and minimise impacts on other land uses. Colchester Borough has sufficient employment land to accommodate future business growth, including over 35ha of land available in the Strategic Employment Zones at North Colchester and Stanway.

Employment studies have identified a need to improve the quality of available premises and land in Colchester to meet the needs of modern businesses. The Council is therefore seeking to upgrade the quality of the Strategic Employment Zones by improving the transport infrastructure and services as follows:

- The North Colchester SEZ will be enhanced by the new A12 junction and North Transit Corridor.
- The Stanway SEZ will be improved through the delivery of the Western Bypass.
- The University Research Park will be supported through the East Transit Corridor and improvements to Hythe Station.

New industry, warehousing and businesses will therefore be encouraged to locate at the Strategic Employment Zones, which offer the best road infrastructure and capacity for development. Local Employment Zones will also be maintained to support small to medium scale enterprises, rural businesses and local employment delivery.

Offices and retail developments are less suited to Employment Zones and should be directed towards Mixed Use Centres that provide employees and customers with sustainable transport links and easy access to a range of services. The Borough Council has already supported outline proposals for over 110,000sqm of B1 floor space within the Strategic Employment Zones. The realisation of these existing commitments is supported; however future office development proposals should be directed towards the Town Centre and Urban Gateways in accordance with the sequential approach (see Policy CE2 and PPS6).

## **5.3 Housing Policies**

### **H1 – Housing Delivery**

The Borough Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 19,000 new homes in Colchester Borough between 2001 and 2023. This housing development will be focused on the following key areas:

- Town Centre
- North Growth Area
- East Growth Area
- South Growth Area
- Stanway Growth Area

The majority of housing development will be located within regeneration areas in Colchester Town, but broad greenfield locations to the north and south-west of Colchester Town have also been identified for additional housing provision. The overall distribution of new housing, as shown in Table H1a, will be guided by the Settlement Hierarchy and the Key Diagrams.

Colchester will seek to provide over 80% of housing on previously developed land during the plan period. Accordingly housing development will be expected to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development that gives priority to new development in locations with good public transport accessibility and/or by means other than the private car and previously developed land (PDL).

The Council will also ensure that a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable land is available to deliver over 830 new homes each year.

**Table H1a - Colchester's Housing Provision**

Settlements and Key Development Areas		LDF Housing Provision (2001 – 2021)	Additional Greenfield Land (2016 – 2023)*	Totals
Colchester Town	Town Centre and fringe	2000		16,700
	North Growth Area	4000	2200	
	East Growth Area	2600		
	South Growth Area	3000		
	Stanway Growth Area	1000	800	
	Other areas	1100		
Tiptree			680	2,300
West Mersea		280		
Wivenhoe/Rowhedge		635		
Marks Tey		70		
West Bergholt		50		
Great Horkesley		150		
Other Villages		435		
<b>Approx Total</b>		<b>15,860</b>	<b>3,140</b>	<b>19,000</b>

\* LDF will provide housing with capacity beyond 2021 to ensure a 15 year supply in accordance with PPS3. The figures shown are intended as minimum numbers. The dates shown are subject to change should monitoring prove this is necessary.

**Table H1b – Estimated Housing Delivery and PDL Trajectories**

Area	2001-2006	2006-2011	2011-2016	2016-2021	2021 - 2023
Housing Delivery	4630	4370	4200	4200	1600
PDL%	84%	90%	85%	70%	65%

### Explanation

Colchester needs to make a minimum provision of 17,100 homes between 2001 and 2021 in accordance with the East of England Plan. Overall, this involves a minimum provision of 830 dwellings per year between 2006 and 2021. National Planning Policy also requires the Borough Council to plan for at least 1,710 additional homes between 2021 and 2023.

The majority of this housing is already accounted for by previous Local Plan allocations, housing completions and planning permissions. Colchester has already delivered 4630 new homes between 2001 and 2006 at an average rate of 930 dwellings per year. In 2006, there were outstanding permissions for over 8000 additional homes. Colchester's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment also identified additional capacity within developed areas to accommodate most of the required housing.

National planning policy requires the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework to ensure that the minimum housing requirement can be delivered with confidence. It is therefore necessary to identify broad locations for new housing to supplement the existing completions, permission and allocations.

The majority of housing will be located on previously developed land, to stimulate regeneration, improve accessibility and protect the countryside. It is

projected that over 80% of this housing delivery will occur on previously developed land. In 2006 there was planning permission for over 8,000 homes and 95% of these were on previously developed land. Therefore, housing delivery on PDL is expected to be quite high in the earlier parts of the plan period. As brownfield sites are redeveloped, the proportion of greenfield development will increase towards the end of the plan period.

Broad locations for greenfield land releases have been identified to the north and south-west of Colchester Town, based on the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal. The timing and delivery of the greenfield sites will be kept under review and brought forward if necessary. The achievement of zero carbon development is expected to be in accordance with national planning policy requirements in place at that time. Development at these greenfield locations will be guided by the Site Allocations DPD and supported by Area Action Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents or through master planning. The appropriate method to be determined by the Council and coordinated with the delivery of key transport connections. Overall, the Sustainability Appraisal determined that these locations were considered to be more sustainable than alternate locations for the following reasons:

- They provide good access to the Town Centre and community facilities.
- They provide good access to public transport interchanges and the strategic road network.
- They are not designated as environmental conservation areas or identified as areas of landscape importance.
- They provide sufficient capacity to establish new sustainable communities.
- They will help deliver infrastructure and facilities that will support nearby regeneration areas.

## **H2 – Housing Density (Revised July 2014)**

The Borough Council will seek housing densities that make efficient use of land and relate to the context. New developments must enhance local character and optimise the capacity of accessible locations.

Locations with good access to centres, particularly the Town Centre and the Urban Gateways, are more suited to higher density development, although a flexible approach will be important to ensure that densities are compatible with the surrounding townscape. Other locations with lesser access to centres and public transport should involve more moderate densities. The density of developments also needs to be informed by the provision of open space and parking, the character of the area, and the mix of housing.

### **Explanation**

The density of housing development can have significant implications for sustainability, local character, travel behaviour, development land take, and residential amenity.

Housing development will be focused on the most accessible locations to reduce the need to travel, promote regeneration and protect greenfield land. Higher density developments can accommodate more people at locations with good access to employment, shops and education, and allow residents to easily access their needs by walking, cycling and public transport. This in turn supports the provision of local business, services and infrastructure. However, high density development that is poorly located or poorly designed can have adverse impacts on the local community, built character, traffic and sustainability. High density developments need to have regard to biodiversity and open spaces provided within urban areas and on brownfield sites.

Densities therefore need to be moderated at less accessible locations and to reflect local character. The provision of open space, parking and a mix of housing will also have moderating affect on densities. Areas with lesser access to centres and public transport, such as villages and outer-suburbs are suited to lower densities.

### **H3 – Housing Diversity (Revised July 2014)**

Colchester Borough Council intends to secure a range of housing types and tenures on developments across the Borough in order to create inclusive and sustainable communities. Housing developments should provide a mix of housing types to suit a range of different households, whilst also realising the opportunities presented by accessible locations. The mix of housing types should therefore be informed by an appraisal of community context and housing need.

Housing developments will also need to contribute to the provision of affordable housing and homes that are suitable to the needs of older persons, persons with disabilities and those with special needs.

### **Explanation**

All housing developments in Colchester should be inclusive and accommodate a diverse range of households and housing need to create mixed communities. Housing developments must provide a range of housing types that can accommodate a range of different households, including families, single persons, older persons and low income households.

There is an important relationship between housing diversity, density and the accessibility of the location. Town Centre locations, for example, are highly accessible and can support high density flats, but they also need to accommodate a range of household sizes. Suburban locations have moderate

access and should accommodate a range of housing types and household sizes. Rural locations have low accessibility and will suit low density development, but should also still provide for small and low income households.

In 2011, the average household size was 2.33 persons. Approximately 29% were single person households, roughly 36% were 2 person households, and another 29% of households had dependent children. In 2021, the average household size is projected to shrink to around 2.31 persons, and single person households are likely to grow to about 35% of the total.

In 2001, flats and maisonettes represented about 15% of total housing stock and probably occupied less than 5% of housing land. Between 2000 and 2006, about 31% of new dwellings constructed were flats and maisonettes, whilst 69% were houses or bungalows. In 2006, flats and maisonettes represented about 17% of total housing stock. Although more flats and maisonettes have been constructed in recent years the overall proportion is still relatively low.

### **Housing Delivery**

	<b>Houses</b>			<b>Flats</b>		
	<b>1-2 Bed</b>	<b>3 Bed</b>	<b>4 Bed +</b>	<b>1 Bed</b>	<b>2 Bed</b>	<b>3 Bed +</b>
2000-2006	12%	30%	27%	7%	22%	2%

During the same period, houses with 3 or more bedrooms represented 57% of total completions, whilst 2 bedroom houses represented only 12%. Given that the average price for a 4 bed house was over £300,000 in 2006, there is concern that the mix of housing is not reflecting community need.

All housing developments therefore need to provide a more balanced range of housing types to reflect identified community need. The mix of housing should reflect the housing needs of the community, and therefore higher density developments in the urbanised areas still need to provide accommodation suitable to families and larger households, and low density developments in villages still need to provide housing for small and low income households.

### **H4 – Affordable Housing (Revised July 2014)**

The Borough Council is committed to improving housing affordability in Colchester. The Council will be seeking to secure 20% of new dwellings (including conversions) to be provided as affordable housing (normally on site), as follows:

- In Colchester Town and Stanway, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 10 or more dwellings.
- In the other villages, affordable housing will be required on housing developments for 5 or more dwellings.
- An equivalent financial contribution will also be sought for developments below these thresholds.



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

This level balances the objectively assessed need for affordable housing in the Borough established by the Council's evidence base against the requirement for flexibility to take account of changing market conditions. For sites where an alternative level of affordable housing is proposed below the target, it will need to be supported by evidence in the form of a viability appraisal.

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

Affordable housing development in the villages of rural Colchester Borough will be supported on rural exception sites contiguous with village settlement boundaries, provided a local need is demonstrated by the Town/Parish Council on behalf of their residents based on the evidence gained from an approved local housing needs survey. A proportion of market housing which facilitates the provision of significant additional affordable housing may be appropriate on rural exception sites. Information to demonstrate that the market housing is essential to cross-subsidise the delivery of the affordable housing and that the development would not be viable without this cross-subsidy will be required. At the scheme level, the number of open market units on the rural exception site will be strictly limited to only the number of units required to facilitate the provision of significant affordable housing units on a rural exception site. The number of affordable units on a site should always be greater than the number of open market units delivered in this way. The actual number will be determined on local circumstances, evidence of local need and the overall viability of the scheme. General design of the homes should be comparable regardless of tenure within a single integrated development layout.

The Council will require developments to integrate affordable housing and market housing, with a consistent standard of quality design and public spaces, to create mixed and sustainable communities.

### **Explanation**

The need for affordable housing is high in Colchester, as it is elsewhere in the Eastern region.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007 (SHMA) identified that the average house price in Colchester was approximately £200,000 in 2006, whilst the gross (median) household income was only £23,874. The SHMA observes that few households aspiring to home ownership have access to enough money to purchase a home in Colchester. The SHMA identified a need for 1,104 affordable homes per year.

Affordable housing requirements must be balanced with other requirements for transport infrastructure, community facilities, open space and sustainable construction. The viability of housing delivery also needs to be maintained, particularly in regeneration areas.

As identified in the Affordable Housing Viability Report it is considered that a 20% target maintains a balance between essential housing need and viability. Where 20% is not considered to be viable, applicants will need to submit information on viability as set forth in the Affordable Housing SPD. The Council will expect developers to meet the Council's reasonable costs associated with viability appraisals in instances where the level of affordable housing is disputed. A target of 20% will optimise affordable housing delivery on greenfield land whilst facilitating the regeneration of rundown areas. In instances where the provision of affordable housing is supported by the delivery of some open market units on a rural exception site, it will be essential to ensure that the number of open market units never dominates a particular scheme. In determining the number of open market units required to facilitate the delivery of affordable units, the Council will expect applicants to demonstrate viability calculations starting with 100% affordable housing. The same calculations should then be applied with the introduction of one open market unit at a time until a point is reached where the delivery of the rural exception site becomes viable. The number of open market units on a rural exception site should be less than the number of affordable units delivered.

#### **H5 – Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople (Revised July 2014)**

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

The Council will seek to locate sites within reasonable proximity to existing settlements, and with access to shops, schools and other community facilities. Sites should also provide adequate space for vehicles and appropriate highway access. Any identified need for 'transit' (temporary) sites for gypsies and travellers will be met in appropriate locations related to the current working patterns of the travelling community.

In the intervening period up to the adoption of a new Local Plan, the Borough Council will use the national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites and the National Planning Policy Framework as material considerations in the determination of planning applications for gypsy, traveller and travelling show people accommodation.

## **Explanation**

The Borough Council will seek to provide appropriate sites to meet the needs of the gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the Borough. These sites need to provide gypsy and traveller communities with good access to community facilities, employment and shopping. Additional sites will be identified as necessary through the Site Allocations process.

Following the Government's publication of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites in March 2012, the Essex Planning Officers' Association (EPOA) has commissioned, on behalf of all Essex local planning authorities, a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the period 2013-2033. This new assessment is anticipated to be completed in the Autumn of 2013 and will provide an up-to-date evidence base to inform a Full Review of Colchester Borough Council's adopted development plans.

In advance of the adoption of a new Local Plan, the Council will be able to use national guidance to guide the determination of planning applications for gypsy and traveller accommodation.

## **H6- Rural Workers Dwellings (New Policy)**

### **Permanent Rural Workers Dwellings**

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

- (i) evidence is provided to show that there is an essential functional need for a permanent dwelling
- (ii) the need is related to a full time worker who is primarily employed in agriculture, forestry or some other rural based business
- (iii) the size and design of dwelling is commensurate with the needs of the rural business
- (iv) the business has been established for at least 3 years, has been profitable for at least one of them, is financially viable and is likely to remain so in the future
- (v) the functional need cannot be met by another suitable and available dwelling. Conversion of an existing building should be considered in preference to new build
- (vi) the proposed development satisfies all other Local Plan policy requirements

### **Temporary Rural Workers Dwellings**

Where a new dwelling is essential to support a new activity, whether a newly-created unit or an established one, it will normally, for the first three years, be provided by a caravan or other temporary accommodation.

Applications will need to be supported with the following information:

- (i) clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned (significant investment in new buildings is often a good indication of intentions);
- (ii) essential functional need
- (iii) clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis. The evidence should include a business plan of at least 3 years duration;
- (iv) the functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area
- (v) If permission for temporary accommodation is granted, permission for a permanent dwelling is unlikely to be granted within 3 years. If, after 3 years, a permanent dwelling is approved, the temporary dwelling must be removed from the site.

Conditions will be attached to any permissions granted for new rural workers dwellings to remove permitted development rights and restrict the occupancy to that required for the rural business concerned or other agricultural/rural use nearby.

Where a rural dwelling is no longer needed to support a rural business, applications to remove the occupancy restrictions will have to meet the following criteria. Evidence should be submitted that an essential functional need no longer exists at the property and is unlikely to in the foreseeable future. The applicant will be expected to provide details of instructions to estate agents, and the response to that advertising, demonstrating that:-

- (i) the property has been marketed for rent or sale for at least 18 months and advertised continuously in that period at a price reflecting the occupancy condition; and
- (ii) the advertising should be within both local newspapers and relevant national agricultural magazines; and
- (iii) the property has been offered both for sale and to rent on the same basis as above to all farmers, horticulturalists and other rural businesses where a dwelling may be justified in the locality (i.e. having holdings within a two mile radius of the dwelling)

## Explanation

The NPPF states that one of the few circumstances where a new dwelling within the countryside may be justified is when accommodation is required to enable agricultural or rural workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work. While Colchester Council's preference is for such workers

to live in nearby towns or villages, or suitable existing dwellings to avoid new and potentially intrusive development in the countryside, it acknowledges that there will be some instances where the nature and demands of certain rural businesses will make it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, their place of work.

Such a need however must be essential to the successful operation of the rural business. Any proposal for a new agricultural/rural workers dwelling will be expected to satisfy all the criteria set out in Policy H6.

The need for a rural workers dwelling could be generated by a range of traditional rural land activities such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, rural estate management, certain equestrian businesses and horticulture.

Applications will be subject to a functions test to establish whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the business enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available. Such a requirement might arise where a worker or workers need to be available round the clock to respond to situations where livestock/animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice or emergencies that could otherwise cause a serious loss of crops or products e.g. by frost or failure of automatic systems.

Given the restrictions on the delivery of new dwellings in the countryside, the scale and design of any proposals for rural workers' dwellings should reflect their countryside location and their function as housing for a rural worker.

While many people work in rural areas e.g. in offices, schools, workshops, garages and garden centres, it is unlikely that they will have an essential need to live permanently at or near their place of work. Being employed in a rural location is not considered sufficient justification to qualify as a rural worker with an essential housing need.

Changes in the scale and character of agricultural and forestry businesses have the potential to affect the longer-term requirement for dwellings in the countryside particularly where these had an "agricultural worker occupancy" condition attached when planning permission was granted. In such cases, the Borough Council recognises that it would fulfil no purpose to keep such dwellings vacant, or that existing occupiers should be obliged to remain in occupation simply by virtue of a planning condition that has outlived its usefulness. Nevertheless, the Borough Council will expect applications for the removal of an occupancy condition to demonstrate convincingly that there is no long-term need for an agricultural dwelling in the locality. Such dwellings could be used by other agricultural and rural workers seeking accommodation within the wider surrounding area, therefore it will need to be demonstrated to the Borough Council that the dwelling tied to an occupancy condition has been effectively marketed to likely interested parties in the area concerned, and that no genuine interest has been shown regarding the purchase or rental of the dwelling for a rural worker with an essential need to live in the local community.

## **5.4 Urban Renaissance Policies**

### **UR1 – Regeneration Areas**

To enhance Colchester as a prestigious regional centre, the Borough Council is committed to regeneration in rundown areas, deprived communities and key centres, with the purpose of building successful and sustainable communities. Regeneration will also enhance Colchester's attractiveness as a visitor destination. The Council and its public and private partners will focus on five main areas of regeneration activity in Colchester Borough during the life of the plan:

- North Station
- St Botolphs
- East Colchester
- North Colchester
- The Garrison

The Council will also pursue a broader urban renaissance agenda to revitalise communities throughout the Borough, with a particular emphasis on Centres and Gateways. This urban renaissance will be advanced through redevelopments that promote sustainable urban living, enhance the public realm, improve accessibility, and address social deprivation.

New developments in Regeneration Areas will be encouraged within walking distance of Centres and Transit Corridors. The design and scale of development will need to be sympathetic to the character of the area and enhance historic buildings and features. Developments also need to address local constraints, including flooding and contaminated land. Regeneration developments should contribute toward improvements of the local public realm, infrastructure and community facilities, although the Council will consider the viability of developments in determining these contributions.

**Table UR1: Regeneration Areas**

Regeneration Area	Key Projects
St. Botolphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstsite Building (community arts facility)</li> <li>• Cultural Quarter</li> <li>• Magistrates court</li> <li>• New bus station</li> <li>• Vineyard Gate (35,000sqm of net retail floor space)</li> <li>• New pedestrian/cycle bridge</li> </ul>
North Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regenerate the North Station Gateway</li> <li>• New bus interchange</li> <li>• Deliver 40,000sqm of new office development</li> <li>• North Transit Corridor</li> <li>• North-south capacity improvements (A133/A134)</li> </ul>
East Colchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regenerate the former commercial port into a mixed use community (over 2,600 homes)</li> <li>• University Research Park (36,000sqm of office floorspace)</li> <li>• University of Essex expansion</li> <li>• East Transit Corridor</li> <li>• Improvements to Hythe Station</li> <li>• New pedestrian/cycle bridge</li> </ul>
North Colchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community stadium</li> <li>• Development of strategic employment zone.</li> <li>• Regenerate the former Severalls Hospital</li> <li>• New schools and expansion of existing school provision.</li> <li>• North Transit Corridor</li> <li>• Park and Ride</li> <li>• New A12 junction</li> </ul>
Garrison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Garrison to secure the future of the Army and 5,000 jobs in Colchester</li> <li>• Regeneration of former garrison into urban village (3000 homes)</li> <li>• Improved access to the Town Centre</li> </ul>

**Explanation**

The Council has identified five regeneration areas in Colchester on the basis of their redevelopment potential, economic and social need, proximity to the Town Centre and sustainable transport links. North Station is identified as a new regeneration area, in addition to the other four areas that are already being developed. Regeneration of these areas is a key element of the development of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre; attractive to new investment, visitors, and its own residents. The regeneration of these areas is important to revitalise rundown areas and create quality new communities at sustainable locations. However, these areas also involve challenges that need to be addressed, including flooding, contaminated land, traffic congestion and open space. Each of the five areas presents unique challenges and opportunities (see Table UR1), which will be addressed through area specific master plans and development briefs.

The four established regeneration areas have progressed successfully to date, however a lot of work still needs to be done during the plan period. The major regeneration projects already envisaged for these regeneration areas, including Firstsite and the Community Stadium, have been significantly

advanced and should be completed by the end of the plan period. The Core Strategy also seeks to improve interconnectivity between the regeneration areas and the Town Centre. The North and East Transit Corridors will support the North Colchester and East Colchester Regeneration Areas respectively. Improvements to public transport interchanges/gateways and road improvements in the Stanway area also support the regeneration areas.

The North Station / Cowdray Avenue area is a major gateway to Colchester and is highly accessible by a range of transport modes. The train station offers links to the borough, region and London, whilst the North Transit Corridor will provide easy access to the Town Centre, North Colchester and Park and Ride. Private car access will also be accommodated, via the new A12 junction and the Northern Approaches. This area also contains a range of sites with significant redevelopment potential (e.g. North Station and Cowdray Centre). The Council will manage the regeneration of the North Station Area to deliver:

- An attractive gateway to business, tourists, commuters and residents
- New office and mixed use development at central locations
- Key transport connections between Town Centre and North Colchester.

## **UR 2 – Built Design and Character**

The Borough Council will promote and secure high quality and inclusive design in all developments to make better places for both residents and visitors. The design of development should be informed by context appraisals and should create places that are locally distinctive, people-friendly, provide natural surveillance to design out crime, and which enhance the built character and public realm of the area. High-quality design should also create well-integrated places that are usable, accessible, durable and adaptable. Creative design will be encouraged to inject fresh visual interest into the public realm and to showcase innovative sustainable construction methods. Developments that are discordant with their context and fail to enhance the character, quality and function of an area will not be supported.

The Council is committed to enhancing Colchester's unique historic character which is highly valued by residents and an important tourist attraction. Buildings, Conservation Areas, archaeological sites, parklands, views, the river and other features that contribute positively to the character of the built environment shall be protected from demolition or inappropriate development. Archaeological assessments will be required on development sites that possess known archaeological deposits, or where it is considered that there is good reason for such remains to exist. Important archaeological sites and their settings will be preserved in situ.



**Explanation**

Good quality design ensures attractive and functional places, which can have substantial benefits for the development itself, the residents, the environment and the surrounding community.

Poorly designed developments create unattractive buildings and places. They can reduce the perception of safety, discourage recycling, increase energy consumption and promote unsustainable travel. Developments with low quality design will not be accepted in Colchester.

Quality design will create attractive places for the people of Colchester to live, work and play. Development briefs for sites where significant development is proposed should be informed by national guidance in PPGs 15 and 16 as well as by the Townscape Character Assessment and Historic Environment Characterisation Study work. A well designed development should provide features such as (not exclusive):

- Active and attractive street frontages
- Building design that optimises sunlight
- Passive surveillance of public spaces
- Architecture that is both innovative and sympathetic to local character
- Adaptable commercial spaces
- Green spaces for active recreation
- Convenient storage for waste and recycling

Colchester's historic buildings and features are one of its most valuable assets. The protection and enhancement of these assets is an essential element in the development of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre. The quality of Colchester's townscape relates to the pattern of streets, spaces and buildings and how these relate to land form. New development can help enhance these important assets, by redeveloping unattractive buildings, introducing appropriate contemporary design elements, and funding improvements to the local public realm.

## **5.5 Public Realm Policies**

### **PR1 – Open Space**

The Borough Council aims to provide a network of open spaces, sports facilities and recreational opportunities that meet local community needs and facilitate active lifestyles by providing leisure spaces within walking distance of people's home, school and work. The Council will also aim to provide a network of strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces within Colchester Town. The Council will protect and enhance the existing network of green links, open spaces, and sports facilities and secure additional areas where deficiencies are identified.

The provision of public open space in developments should be informed by an appraisal of local context and community need, with a particular regard to the impact of site development on biodiversity. New development must provide for the recreational needs of new communities and mitigate impacts on existing communities. This open space provision also needs to alleviate recreational pressure on sites of high nature conservation value (e.g. Natura 2000) from the growing population.

The Borough Council will expect all new homes to provide easy access to private/communal open space. The area of open space should be informed by the needs of residents and the accessibility of the location. Private/communal open space must be designed to optimise its use and meet the recreational needs of residents.

**Table PR1 – Open Space and Recreation Facilities**

<b>Growth Areas</b>	<b>New Facilities</b>
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic core / High St improvements</li> <li>• Berryfield Park</li> <li>• Vineyard Gate Square</li> <li>• St Botolphs Square</li> </ul>
North Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Stadium</li> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Sport, recreation and youth facilities</li> <li>• Allotments</li> </ul>
East Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Sport and recreation facilities (Essex University)</li> </ul>
South Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Sport and recreation facilities</li> </ul>
Stanway Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic public open spaces</li> <li>• Youth recreation facilities</li> <li>• Allotments</li> </ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination Facilities to support 2012 Olympics</li> <li>• Green links</li> <li>• Sports pitches (Tiptree)</li> <li>• Youth facilities (Wivenhoe)</li> <li>• Allotments (West Mersea &amp; Tiptree)</li> <li>• Cemetery expansion (Berechurch)</li> <li>• New public open spaces (St John's Wood)</li> </ul>

## **Explanation**

Existing open spaces, sports facilities and green link networks provide the people of Colchester with opportunities for passive and active recreation and encourage healthy and active lifestyles. It is important that all residents have access to open space within walking distance of their home.

Strategic green links provide valuable corridors for the movement of people. The green spaces along the Colne River, for example, connect the town centre, suburbs, countryside, villages and the coast. These corridors provide alternative means for people making journeys into and across Colchester. The Council will therefore seek to protect and enhance these important links. The boundaries of strategic green links will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD.

The Council has undertaken an Open Space Study in accordance with PPG17 to identify areas with deficiencies of open space and recreational facilities. Development will be required to make contributions towards meeting these deficiencies in accordance with Council's adopted SPD for Open Space, Sport and Recreation. This guidance document sets specific targets to guide the provision of different types of open space / recreation facilities across the borough. The Appropriate Assessment also identified the need for this open space provision to alleviate the growing recreational pressures on Natura 2000 sites. Impacts on these sites will also need to be monitored and further site management measures will be employed by the Council as necessary.

All housing developments, including higher density development, should provide new residents with access to private and/or communal open space, in addition to public open space requirements. At least 25sqm per dwelling of private/communal open space will be sought for flats and maisonettes, whilst houses should provide larger private garden. Higher density schemes will be encouraged to utilise innovative design solutions to provide open space on difficult sites.

## PR2 - People-friendly Streets

The Borough Council will promote and secure attractive, safe and people-friendly streets which will encourage more walking, cycling, recreation and local shopping.

Streets are important public spaces that should be designed to suit people of all ages and degrees of mobility. The street environment can be improved with a combination of the following (not exclusive):

- Quality pavements and well-coordinated street furniture
- Improvements to footpaths and cycle routes
- Street trees and well-maintained landscaping
- Clear and minimal signage
- Traffic management schemes
- Shared spaces and home zones
- Cycle paths
- Crime deterrence and safety measures, including lighting and CCTV
- Public art

Centres will be the focus for streetscape improvements to provide attractive environments for people to live, work, shop and relax. In some cases traffic will need to be calmed to provide a safe and attractive street environment. The Town Centre and Urban Gateways will be priority areas for streetscape improvements and traffic management to support the development of a prestigious regional centre.

New developments will be required to contribute towards public realm improvements. They should also provide active street frontages to create attractive and safe street environments. New roads, both public and private, should be designed to meet Manual for Streets specifications and local design guidance.

### Explanation

Streets are much more than traffic arteries and have a wide range of functions as key features of the public realm. Street environments need to be managed as 'shared spaces', so that excessive traffic does not suppress other important street activities such as shopping, walking, playing, relaxing and gathering.

Best practice, as reflected in the Government's Manual for Streets, is increasingly moving away from strictly demarcated spaces for pedestrians and vehicles to design solutions that involve sharing public spaces. The removal of barriers and fences, combined with traffic calming measures has the effect of improving the attractiveness of the overall urban environment as well as managing speed and safety.

Guidance from CABI recommends that development plans include specific strategies to improve and maintain streetscapes. The Urban Place Supplement and Towards Better Street Design provide detailed guidance on the integration of streets, green spaces and the built environment to create attractive, inviting and well-maintained environments. This includes the use of context appraisal to establish levels of provision, the character of the area, an analysis of movement patterns and the potential to create new routes and improve existing conditions. Consistent standards of design for both public and private streets are required to avoid problems with parking and access for emergency, refuse and other large vehicles.

## **5.6 Transport and Accessibility Policies**

### **TA1 - Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour**

The Council will work with partners to improve accessibility and change travel behaviour as part of a comprehensive transport strategy for Colchester.

The Council will improve accessibility by enhancing sustainable transport links and encouraging development that reduces the need to travel. Sustainable transport will be improved to provide better connections between the community and their needs. In congested areas, the Council will seek to prioritise the movement of sustainable transport. Innovative solutions will also be implemented to overcome severance that is currently inflicted by busy roads.

Future development in the Borough will be focused on highly accessible locations, such as centres, to reduce the need to travel. Developments that are car-dependent or promote unsustainable travel behaviour will not be supported.

Travel behaviour change towards sustainable modes will be encouraged through travel plans, improvements to gateways, and by managing travel demand. Major developments, employers and institutions should develop travel plans to promote sustainable travel behaviour. The quality of gateways will be enhanced, whilst traffic and car parking will be carefully managed, to encourage sustainable travel within Colchester.

#### **Explanation**

The Council will in partnership with ECC prepare a comprehensive transport strategy for Colchester to supplement the Core Strategy. This transport strategy will accord with the Regional Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan and seek to implement the core transport policies for transport (TA1 – TA5) in order to improve accessibility and sustainable travel behaviour.

Good accessibility means that the community can access their needs (e.g. shopping, schools, employment) easily and without always needing a car.

Accessibility can be improved by locating development at accessible locations and improving public transport, walking and cycling facilities and services. Providing good accessibility can change travel behaviour towards more sustainable modes, however travel planning, education and demand management are essential elements of the overall transport strategy. It is a priority for the Local Strategic Partnership to change travel behaviour through Travel Planning.

Improving accessibility and reducing car dependence helps to improve equality, reduce congestion, and respond to the challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability. It also helps to promote an active and healthy population in accordance with the aims of Policy PR1.

## **TA2 – Walking and Cycling**

The Council will work with partners to promote walking and cycling as an integral and highly sustainable means of transport. Regional and rural links, including national cycle routes, will be improved and better connected with local destinations. The design and construction of facilities and infrastructure will be improved to make walking and cycling more attractive, direct and safe. Quality and convenient pedestrian crossings will be promoted to facilitate safe and direct movement across busy roads.

Walking and cycling improvements will be focused on centres, schools, workplaces, and public transport interchanges. In particular, the Council will seek to provide excellent walking and cycling connections into and through the Town Centre. Development shall contribute towards these connections and quality cycle parking where appropriate.

### **Explanation**

Walking and cycling are essential and highly sustainable means of transport which also support a healthy lifestyle. Census data shows that 65% of people who live within Colchester town work within the town. The majority of Colchester residents live within 5 kilometres of the Town Centre and therefore walking and cycling has great potential in a town of this size. At present, only 14% of people walk or cycle to work in Colchester. Unfortunately, walking or cycling to the Town Centre is not attractive, because major roads (e.g. Southway) and roundabouts act as barriers to pedestrians and cyclists.

Walking is part of almost every trip, and people are less likely to walk to a local shop or bus stop if the pedestrian environment is poor or appears threatening. Unfortunately some roads and junctions have been designed to place walking and cycling as subordinate to the free flow of traffic. The subways to the town centre, for example, are often indirect, unattractive, and perceived to be unsafe.

Improvements to walking and cycling will be targeted on the Town Centre, (see table TA3), the river corridor and regeneration areas. All new developments will need to provide quality walking and cycling facilities and will need to contribute towards improvements in the surrounding community as appropriate.

Walking and cycling are particularly important in Centres, where there are many people shopping, working, living and playing in close proximity. Centres can accommodate very large numbers of walkers and cyclists, without the congestion, noise and pollution problems that can be created by a relatively small number of motor vehicles.

The Core Strategy therefore seeks to make significant improvements to walking and cycling in the Town Centre, including a bridge across Southway and improvements to the High Street. The Council seeks to enhance the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic on the High Street. The river corridor also provides a good opportunity for improved walking and cycling between the Town Centre, the suburbs and the countryside.

### **TA3 – Public Transport**

The Council will work with partners to further improve public transport and increase modal shift towards sustainable modes. Colchester's role as a Regional Transport Node will be promoted by optimising connections with the regional network and improving the frequency, speed, reliability and promotion of public transport services. Demand responsive services will also be promoted to help rural communities access their needs.

Gateways to Colchester will be enhanced to provide attractive entry points, a sense of place, and excellent onward connections. The Urban Gateways at Colchester North Rail Station, Hythe Rail Station and Colchester Town Rail and Bus Stations at St Botolphs will be improved to facilitate regeneration in the surrounding areas. Improvements to rail stations and bus interchanges will be sought to assist interchange between modes and promote sustainable travel behaviour.

Within Colchester Town, a comprehensive public transport network, including Quality Bus Partnerships will connect communities with growth areas, centres, employment and community facilities. The Council will work with partners to deliver the North and East Transit Corridors to facilitate rapid public transport services and avoid congestion. Park and Ride facilities will also provide visitors with sustainable access to the Town Centre and other major destinations.

**Table TA3 – Key Sustainable Transport Projects - Walking, Cycling and Public Transport Projects**

<b>Growth Areas</b>	<b>New Transport Infrastructure</b>
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Town Centre Improvements</li> <li>• New Bus station</li> <li>• Southway Pedestrian cycle bridge</li> <li>• Colchester North Rail Station improvements</li> <li>• Colchester Town Rail Station Improvements</li> </ul>
North Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Transit Corridor</li> <li>• North Park and Ride</li> </ul>
East Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hythe Rail Station improvements</li> <li>• East Transit Corridor</li> <li>• Colne River Pedestrian Cycle Bridge</li> </ul>
South Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved walk / cycle links to Town Centre</li> </ul>
Stanway Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved bus links</li> </ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colchester to Clacton resignalling</li> <li>• Quality Bus Partnerships and Public Transport Improvements</li> <li>• Green Links and Walking and Cycling improvements</li> </ul>

NB Transport schemes are listed in the area they are located, but will provide benefit to other areas

### **Explanation**

At present, 13% of residents travel to work by public transport. Providing a quality public transport network that offers a genuinely attractive alternative to the car is vital for the sustainability of Colchester. Accordingly, the Council is seeking to deliver a range of key improvements to public transport infrastructure and services in the borough. Transit corridors that prioritise public transport over general traffic will attract people towards more sustainable travel, and keep Colchester moving. Park and Ride facilities that offer easy access to Town via Transit corridors will also help reduce congestion.

The Council is also seeking to deliver improvements to transport interchanges and gateways as part of making Colchester a prestigious regional centre. At present there are over 4 million passenger movements at Colchester's railway stations each year. The new bus station and improvements to Hythe Station, North Station and Town Station will encourage sustainable travel behaviour and stimulate regeneration of the surrounding areas. Improvements to the Historic Town Centre (including the High Street) will improve bus journey time reliability and circulation in the town centre. Enhancing transport interchanges will also present more attractive gateways to business, tourists, commuters and local residents.



## TA4 – Roads and Traffic

The Borough Council will work with partners to accommodate necessary car travel making the best use of the existing network and manage demand for road traffic. Facilities for road/rail freight interchanges and servicing will be accommodated.

The Council will support improvements to the strategic road network (see Table TA4) to facilitate regional travel needs, particularly freight movements in the Haven Gateway, whilst minimising the impacts of traffic on the rural area network. In urban areas, the Council seeks to manage demand for car travel and make the best use of the existing network. Improvements will be made to the urban road network to support sustainable development and to reduce the negative impacts of congestion.

The demand for car travel will be managed to prevent adverse impacts on sustainable transportation, air quality, local amenity and built character. Streets and junctions should be designed to provide people-friendly street environments and to give priority to sustainable transport. Within the Town Centre, through-traffic will be reduced to encourage trips to be undertaken via more sustainable modes, and servicing will be facilitated in a manner that is sensitive to the streetscape.

Development will need to contribute towards transport infrastructure improvements to support the development itself, and to enhance the broader network to mitigate impacts on existing communities.

**Table TA4: Road Network Improvements**

Growth Areas	New Transport Infrastructure
Town Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Historic Town Centre improvements</li><li>• A133 Central Corridor (Stage 1 &amp; 2)</li><li>• North-South Capacity Improvements (A133/A134)</li></ul>
North Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New A12 junction 28</li><li>• Northern Approaches phase 3</li></ul>
Stanway Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stanway road improvements</li></ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A120 Braintree to A12</li><li>• A12 Junction and Capacity improvements</li><li>• A12 Route Management Strategy projects</li></ul>

NB Transport schemes are listed in the area they are located, but will provide benefit to other areas

### Explanation

The private motor car will continue to be a major mode of transportation throughout the plan period. At present 63% of trips to work are made by car and overall traffic is forecast to grow significantly over the next 15 years. This growth needs to be managed to promote a high quality of life, economic growth, a sustainable environment and the development of Colchester as a prestigious regional centre. Accordingly, necessary car trips will be facilitated to dispersed destinations and along strategic roads, however car travel

demand needs to be more carefully managed in urban areas through the use of alternatives and new technologies.

At present deficiencies in the road network inhibit necessary car travel and public transport. In particular access to strategic roads from Colchester Town is limited, resulting in unnecessary trips and exacerbating congestion. The A12 junction, for example, will reduce traffic and freight impacts in urban areas and will also facilitate Park and Ride, keeping the 'right vehicles on the right roads'.

Development provides opportunities to make significant improvements to the road network. Developments must therefore provide for the travel needs of new residents and businesses, as well as facilitating improvements to the broader network.

New developments and roads need to be designed carefully to balance the needs of motorists with, pedestrians, cyclists, bus users, local residents, businesses and the environment. Within urban areas, particularly busy centres, the growing levels of car use and congestion are having a negative impact on all. Historically, some roads and junctions in Colchester have been designed for cars, yet discourage sustainable travel. Combining demand management of car traffic with improvements to sustainable alternatives and improved street design can greatly benefit the local community, businesses and the environment.

Road freight and servicing will be facilitated where appropriate to promote economic and employment growth. Support will be given for improvements to strategic (road and rail) routes to accommodate growth of freight from the Haven Gateway Container Ports at Felixstowe and Bathside Bay.

## **TA5 – Parking**

The Council will work with partners to ensure that car parking is managed to support the economy and sustainable communities. Facilities for freight and servicing will be accommodated.

Within the Town Centre, long stay car parking will be reduced to discourage car trips that could easily be made by more sustainable modes. Short stay parking will be provided where necessary to facilitate the economic and social wellbeing of the Town Centre. Park and Ride will be provided to offer a more sustainable alternative to town centre car parking. Disabled, cycle and motorcycle parking will continue to be provided where appropriate.

Development should manage parking to accord with the accessibility of the location and to ensure people-friendly street environments. Within Centres and other accessible locations, car parking should be minimised and located underground, under deck and behind buildings. Redevelopment of existing surface car parking will also be encouraged to make efficient use of land and improve the townscape.

Business parking for staff, visitors and operational uses will be managed as part of company Travel Plans. Car free and low car development will be encouraged in the Town Centre. Residents parking schemes will be supported in areas where there is a high demand for on-street parking. In areas where there is limited parking supply and good access to alternative transport, the introduction of a 'Car club' will be encouraged.

### **Explanation**

At present there are 3400 short stay and 700 long stay public car parking spaces in the Town Centre, plus a greater number of private non-residential parking spaces. Managing and limiting car traffic and parking in centres can have significant benefits for sustainable transport, the local community and the environment. Managing the supply of car parking is an important tool for managing traffic congestion. Reducing long stay car parking in the Town Centre would reduce traffic congestion in Colchester and encourage commuters to utilise sustainable alternatives, including Park & Ride. Currently there is one Lorry Park in Colchester Town Centre. Provision of freight servicing facilities in the right place can help keep the "right vehicles on the right roads".

There are some large areas of surface car parking in Colchester that are unattractive, exacerbate traffic, and make inefficient use of land. Redeveloping surface car parking to provide more shopping, employment, housing, and community facilities at these accessible locations can regenerate important parts of Colchester. The necessary parking can still be accommodated under ground, under deck and behind building frontages.

The Council has influence over the provision of public car parking through the management and pricing structure of its car parks and through working with the operator of alternative car parks. However there are also a large number of private non-residential parking spaces in the town centre. The provision of these spaces encourages traffic to enter the Town Centre, where perhaps the journey could be made by alternative modes. Users of these car parks could benefit from company travel plans where all aspects of staff and visitor travel is explored.

Car parking should be minimised in accessible locations where high quality alternatives are available. Car free and low car development will be supported in the Town Centre, in coordination with public transport improvements. Car clubs provide another alternative that can help reduce car parking. Members of the Car club will have access to a car for their journeys where alternatives are not an option. Cars supplied to members of the scheme would have priority parking spaces to help make the scheme attractive.

## **5.7 Environment and Rural Communities Policies**

### **ENV1 – Environment**

The Borough Council will conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The Council will safeguard the Borough's biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance. In particular, developments that have an adverse impact on Natura 2000 sites or the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will not be supported.

Within the Coastal Protection Belt development will not be permitted that would adversely affect the open and rural character of the undeveloped coastline, and its historic features, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife habitats.

The network of strategic green links between the rural hinterland, river corridors, and key green spaces and areas of accessible open space that contribute to the green infrastructure across the Borough will be protected and enhanced.

Development will be supported at appropriate locations to improve public access, visual amenity and rehabilitate the natural environment. Development will need to minimise and mitigate adverse impacts on river, coastal and ground water quality.

The Council will seek to direct development away from land at risk of fluvial or coastal flooding in accordance with PPS25, including areas where the risk of flooding is likely to increase as a result of climate change.

Unallocated greenfield land outside of settlement boundaries (to be defined/reviewed in the Site Allocations DPD) will be protected and where possible enhanced, in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment. Within such areas development will be strictly controlled to conserve the environmental assets and open character of the Borough. Where new development needs, or is compatible with, a rural location, it should demonstrably:

- i. be in accord with national, regional and local policies for development within rural areas, including those for European and nationally designated areas; and
- ii. be appropriate in terms of its scale, siting, and design; and
- iii. protect, conserve or enhance landscape and townscape character, including maintaining settlement separation; and
- iv. protect, conserve or enhance the interests of natural and historic assets; and
- v. apply a sequential approach to land at risk of fluvial or coastal flooding in line with the guidance of PPS25; and

- vi. protect habitats and species and conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the Borough; and
- vii. provide for any necessary mitigating or compensatory measures.

### **Explanation**

Colchester's countryside and coastline is extremely diverse and important in terms of its natural environment, biodiversity, landscape character, archaeology and cultural heritage. The countryside provides the attractive landscape setting that defines and characterises the villages and rural communities of Colchester Borough. The countryside and coastal areas also provide important agricultural, tourism and recreational opportunities that support local economies and communities. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends into the northern part of the Borough and has the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

This policy reflects Government Guidance (for example PPS7: *Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, PPS9: *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*, PPG15: *Planning and the Historic Environment*, PPG16: *Archaeology and Planning* and PPS25: *Development and Flood Risk*).

The Council has statutory obligations under the Habitats Directive to protect important habitats and species designated as Natura 2000 sites. This policy aims to protect the undeveloped areas of the Colne Estuary and coast and support regeneration that enhances the river's recreation and nature conservation values.

The Coastal Protection Belt is a county-wide designation that protects the sensitive character of the undeveloped coastline which could be harmed by development that might otherwise be acceptable in a countryside area.

The green infrastructure network of open spaces and links is important in providing alternative areas of accessible natural green space to alleviate pressure on Natura 2000 sites as well as contributing to the landscape character of Colchester Borough. The LDF will make a major contribution towards achieving the objectives of the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

A major threat to these low lying coastal and estuary areas is rising sea levels as a result of climate change. This will be addressed through increasing the network of green corridors and sites to aid the dispersal of species that will need to move as climate change renders their existing habitat unsuitable. Climate change will also be addressed by accommodating future flood waters without harm to the built environment.

The risk from flooding to property and people will be minimised by applying the sequential test in accordance with PPS25. New developments will be directed away from areas at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding, as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Where development occurs

in areas with a known flood risk, practical and safe mitigation measures will need to be adopted to alleviate risk to people and property.

The policy aims to control development outside settlement boundaries to protect open stretches of countryside around and between existing settlements to prevent coalescence and retain settlement identity. The Landscape Character Assessment will inform the detailed application of the relevant policy criteria.

The historic environment will be protected across the Borough with reference to studies including the Townscape Character Assessment, the Urban Archaeological Database and the emerging Historic Environment Characterisation Study.

Detailed policies concerning the control of development, encouragement towards enhancement and design matters will be contained in the Development Policies DPD. The boundaries of specific areas, such as the Coastal Protection Belt will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD and shown on the Proposals Map.

## **ENV2 – Rural Communities (Revised July 2014)**

The Borough Council will enhance the vitality of rural communities by supporting appropriate development of infill sites and previously developed land (PDL) within the settlement development boundaries of villages. The design and construction of new village development must be high quality in all respects, including design, sustainability and compatibility with the distinctive character of the locality. Development should also contribute to the local community through the provision of relevant community needs such as affordable housing, open space, local employment, and community facilities.

Outside village boundaries, the Council will favourably consider sustainable rural business, leisure and tourism schemes that are of an appropriate scale and which help meet local employment needs, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding natural environment. Development outside but contiguous to village settlement boundaries may be supported, primarily where it constitutes an exception to meet identified local affordable housing needs.

Towns and villages are encouraged to plan for the specific needs of their communities by developing Neighbourhood Plans which provide locally-determined policies on future development needs. Communities are also encouraged to continue to develop other plans, where appropriate, such as Community Led Plans, Parish Plans and Village Design Statements, for adoption as guidance.

**Explanation**

Rural communities in Colchester comprise the villages identified in the Settlement Hierarchy (SD1 Appendix B).

National evidence indicates that villages in the catchment area of larger towns struggle to retain facilities, even when more housing is built. Colchester Town is the main provider of shopping, services, employment, and community facilities for the Borough as a whole. Elsewhere in the Borough, only Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea provide a sufficient level of shops, services and employment to maintain a reasonable level of self containment. In general, rural communities do not provide sufficient shops, services and facilities to support significant growth.

Within rural communities, appropriate development that optimises the sustainability of villages by increasing rural employment opportunities, and by contributing towards community facilities, open space will be supported. Affordable housing will also be supported on rural exception sites where supported by a Local Housing Needs Assessment. The Council is also seeking to sustain and enhance local employment and rural enterprises.

Neighbourhood Plans which were introduced through the Localism Act in 2011, will be adopted as part of the Development Plan for Colchester, if they pass a referendum, while Village Design Statements and Parish Plans will continue to be adopted as planning guidance.

## **5.8 Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling**

### **ER1 Energy, Resources, Waste, Water and Recycling**

The Council's commitment to carbon reduction includes the promotion of efficient use of energy and resources, alongside waste minimisation and recycling.

The Council will encourage the delivery of renewable energy projects, including micro-generation, in the Borough to reduce Colchester's carbon footprint. New developments will be encouraged to provide over 15% of energy demand through local renewable and low carbon technology (LCT) sources.

Sustainable construction techniques will also need to be employed in tandem with high quality design and materials to reduce energy demand, waste and the use of natural resources, including the sustainable management of the Borough's water resources. Residential dwellings will be encouraged to achieve a minimum 3 star rating in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes. Non-residential developments will be encouraged to achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Very Good'.

The Council will support housing developments that reduce carbon emissions by 25% from 2010, 44% from 2013 and zero carbon homes from 2016 in accordance with national building regulations.

The Council is seeking to minimise waste and improve reuse and recycling rates through better recycling services and public awareness programs. To assist this aim, new developments will be expected to provide facilities and employ best practice technology to optimise the opportunities for recycling and minimising waste.

#### **Explanation**

Sustainable Development is at the heart of the Local Development Framework, and the Council is seeking to create communities that use natural resources sustainably, and minimise waste. Developments that are sustainably designed and constructed can (not exclusive):

- provide local renewable energy sources
- use less energy
- minimise heat loss
- use less water
- optimise natural light
- facilitate better recycling
- provide sustainable urban drainage systems
- use recycled construction materials



New developments need to help address the challenges of climate change and sustainability, and therefore contribute positively towards the future of Colchester. National policy seeks to achieve zero carbon homes by 2016 with a progressive tightening of the energy efficiency building regulations in 2010 (25%), 2013 (44%) and 2016 (zero carbon). The delivery of zero carbon homes from 2016 will reduce Colchester's greenhouse gas emissions and help stimulate a sustainable economy. The initial targets of a 3 star Code rating and a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating are cost effective and achievable. As the development costs of sustainable homes and buildings are reduced by economies of scale, improved knowledge and technology, the cost of delivering higher standards will also become achievable.

The Water Cycle Study assesses the impact of planned Haven Gateway growth on the area's water resources to ensure its sustainable management. In recognition of the increasing demand for water the Council will encourage developments that incorporate water saving measures, in line with the Code for Sustainable Homes, to help conserve the Borough's water resource.

As part of the Council's Community Strategy commitment to reduce its carbon footprint, the Council will promote the delivery of renewable energy and low carbon technology in the Borough, including micro-generation. Developments will be encouraged to incorporate on-site or local renewable/LCT energy to supply part of their energy demand. Stand alone renewable energy projects that are sympathetic to landscape character and local amenity will also be supported.

The Sustainable Construction SPD provides developers and the broader community with guidance on renewable energy technology and sustainable construction issues to support the implementation of this policy.

The Council also seeks to achieve its aspirational target of 60% recycling of household waste by 2021. At present approximately 31% of household waste is being recycled. The Council will be improving services and information to increase our recycling over the plan period. Development will support this by providing better recycling facilities.

## **6. Implementation and Monitoring**

The Spatial Strategy and the Spatial Policies will be implemented through the further development of the Local Development Framework, by Council working with its partners, and through the planned investment of private and public resources.

### **Local Development Framework**

The Core Strategy sets out the broad direction for the Local Development Framework. The Borough Council will subsequently prepare a range of other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents to take the Strategy forward.

The Core Strategy will be implemented through the following elements of the Local Development Framework:

- Development Policies DPD
- Site Allocations DPD and Adopted Proposal Maps
- Area Action Plans
- Supplementary Planning Documents

### **Working in Partnership**

The Borough Council needs the help of public and private partners to deliver all the housing, facilities and infrastructure required to create sustainable communities. The Local Development Framework will provide a logical and considered plan for development, investment, services and infrastructure for the Borough of Colchester up to 2021. The Borough Council will work with a number of partners, including the following, to implement the Core Strategy and LDF (not exclusive):

**Table 6a – Partners**

<b>Partners</b>		
<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Strategic Partnership</li> <li>• Parish Councils</li> <li>• University of Essex</li> <li>• Colchester Primary Care Trust</li> <li>• Colchester Police</li> <li>• Colchester's Residents Associations</li> <li>• The Garrison</li> <li>• Colchester Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Private developers</li> <li>• Local bus operators</li> <li>• Mercury Theatre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haven Gateway Partnership</li> <li>• Regional Cities East Partnership</li> <li>• Essex County Council</li> <li>• Government Office for the East of England</li> <li>• East of England Regional Assembly</li> <li>• Regional Development Agency</li> <li>• Essex Strategic Health Authority</li> <li>• Essex Rivers Health Care Trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment Agency</li> <li>• English Heritage</li> <li>• Natural England</li> <li>• Highways Agency</li> <li>• Strategic Rail Authority</li> <li>• Network Rail</li> </ul>

## Housing Delivery

Core Policy H1: Housing Delivery sets out the minimum housing provision in order to comply with the East of England Plan (EEP). The EEP states that the Borough should aim to exceed the minimum requirement (830 per year) if housing can be delivered without breaching environmental limits and infrastructure constraints. The Council will therefore plan, monitor and manage housing delivery to ensure it exceeds the minimum provision. Since 2001, Colchester has successfully delivered housing well above the rate required by the EEP, as shown in the table below.

**Table 6b – Housing Completions 2001 - 2008**

Year	House Completions
2001 – 2002	568
2002 – 2003	984
2003 – 2004	916
2004 – 2005	1281
2005 – 2006	901
2006 – 2007	1250
2007 – 2008	1243

PPS3: Housing requires the Local Planning Authority to set out a housing implementation strategy to manage the delivery of housing. The Core Strategy provides the broad context for managing housing delivery in accordance with PPS3. A range of scenarios and options have been considered as part of the Sustainability Appraisal and sufficient land has been identified to comfortably deliver the minimum housing provision.

The Housing Land Availability Assessment identified capacity within established urban areas and previously developed land to accommodate 17,940 to 19,460 homes during the 2001 to 2021 period. Recent planning permissions and development trends indicate this is quite a conservative estimate. In light of the revisions to the East of England Plan and PPS3, the Council considered it necessary to make a more conservative interpretation of the HLAA, which resulted in a capacity for 15,314 new homes in Colchester between 2001 and 2021 (see Housing Topic Paper).

The Core Strategy and LDF therefore seek to identify additional provision of around 3,500 homes to ensure that over 18,760 homes can be confidently delivered between 2001 and 2023. The Core Strategy identifies broad areas of greenfield land with ample capacity for 3000 additional homes, and also identifies broad areas of previously developed land to accommodate further development (e.g. North Station Regeneration Area). It is possible that the housing provision up to 2023 could be delivered without the broad areas of greenfield land, however this land provides both flexibility to housing delivery and an opportunity to deliver sustainable new neighbourhoods that will contribute towards strategic facilities, infrastructure and zero carbon homes. The focus of delivery will remain on the regeneration of brownfield sites. The timing of the release for development of broad areas of greenfield land will be managed through monitoring of housing delivery and it will be released for development before 2016 if required to support housing delivery. Where necessary, the Council will seek to manage the release of land within the

Growth Area Urban Extensions through planning obligations or conditions applied to any grant of planning permission.

PPS 3 requires local planning authorities to provide a 5 year supply of specific deliverable sites, a 6-10 year supply of specific developable sites, and broad locations for an 11-15 years supply of land. At present there are extant planning permissions for over 8000 homes, and existing allocations with capacity for over 1200 new homes. This indicates that there is a sufficient supply of deliverable and developable sites in Colchester already to accommodate a 10 year supply of housing (see Housing Topic Paper). Emerging figures from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, which has taken into account the Core Strategy housing provision and recent development trends, estimates that projected housing delivery between 2001 and 2023 is likely to be approximately 21,500. The Council is therefore confident that housing delivery in the Borough will exceed the minimum housing provision outlined in Policy H1, in accordance with the East of England Plan.

The Site Allocations DPD (to be adopted in 2010) will allocate the additional land required to deliver the housing provision in accordance with the Core Strategy, including greenfield land with capacity for approximately 3000 new homes. In addition to the Site Allocations DPD, the delivery of housing in regeneration areas and growth areas will be facilitated through Area Action Plans, SPDs, masterplans and development briefs, the appropriate method being determined by the Council. The Council monitors annual housing delivery, and in the unlikely event that housing delivery falls significantly short of the EEP's minimum requirements, the Council will act to release identified greenfield land within the Growth Areas and if necessary revise the LDF accordingly.

### **Employment Delivery**

Providing jobs for Colchester's growing community is a central objective of the Core Strategy. The East of England Plan set a target of approximately 14,200 jobs, although many jobs have already been created since 2001. The Haven Gateway Employment Study considered that 14,200 jobs could be provided in Colchester in the following employment sectors:

**Table 6c – Projected Employment Change 2006 - 2021**

<b>Employment Sector</b>	<b>Employment change needed to achieve EEP target</b>
Agriculture	- 500
Manufacturing	- 1500
Electricity gas and water	- 200
Construction	+ 500
Distribution	+ 500
Retail	+ 2400
Hotels and catering	+ 2300
Transport and communication	+ 500
Banking, finance and other business services	+ 3500

The Council cannot deliver this employment directly, but it can protect existing employment, stimulate new employment developments, and accommodate new developments at the most suitable locations.

The Council commissioned studies of projected growth in retail, business and employment, and used this evidence to plan and facilitate future economic development and employment delivery in Colchester. During the 2006 to 2021 period, Colchester will need to accommodate the following development:

- 67,000sqm (net) of retail floor space
- 106,000sqm (gross) of office floor space (Use Class B1)
- 45,000sqm (gross) of other business floor space (excluding B1)
- 270-490 hotel bed spaces by 2011

Promoting regeneration, higher densities and mixed use developments in existing Centres will build additional capacity to accommodate employment and economic growth at sustainable locations. This process will be facilitated through the preparation of Area Action Plans, SPDs and development briefs. The regeneration of St Botolphs is expected to deliver over 35,000sqm of net retail floor space, and an SPD is being prepared for the North Station Regeneration Area to facilitate the delivery of 40,000sqm of office and business floor space.

The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of the main Town Centre land uses, including retail, offices, cultural and entertainment uses and amend the LDF as necessary to ensure that the majority of this development is delivered in the Town Centre and other accessible locations. If the Council determines that the necessary retail and office development cannot be delivered in the Town Centre during the plan period, then this development can be accommodated in District Centres or Strategic Employment Zones, in accordance with the sequential approach (see Policy CE2 & PPS6).

The Strategic Employment Zones offer an ample supply of deliverable land for employment developments, particularly warehousing and industry. The Borough Council has already supported outline proposals for over 110,000sqm of B1 floor space within the Strategic Employment Zones. In addition to these B1 commitments, over 35ha of land is currently available for industry (B2) and warehousing (B8) developments, as follows:

- Cuckoo Farm, North Colchester - 19.8ha
- Tollgate, Stanway – 11.37ha
- London Road, Stanway – 4.75ha

To improve the quality of these SEZ sites, improvements will be made to transport infrastructure to enhance access to the strategic road network and the Town Centre.

### **Delivering Infrastructure and Facilities**

Successful implementation of the Core Strategy and the LDF relies on effective co-ordination between public and private partners to enable the provision of infrastructure and facilities. New development creates a need to provide new infrastructure and facilities, and to mitigate the effect of development on the surrounding area. Financial contributions will be sought

from developers to combine with public funding to deliver the necessary facilities in infrastructure.

The Council will seek to employ standard charges where appropriate to ensure that new development makes a reasonable contribution to the provision of facilities and infrastructure. The Council will prepare further guidance regarding standard charges and development contributions to support the implementation of the LDF.

Key infrastructure and facilities have been identified in Table 6d as important elements of the spatial strategy for Colchester.

**Table 6d – Key Facilities and Infrastructure**

Development Linkage	"Necessary" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
East Growth Area	East Transit Corridor	To be secured	ECC
	Medical Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
North Growth Area	4 new primary schools	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	Developer/ CBC
	A12 junction improvements – Cuckoo Farm (Junction 28)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	Expand secondary school capacity	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	Developer/ECC
	North Transit Corridor	To be secured through the release of the Severalls Hospital Development	Developer
	North/South Capacity Improvements (A133/A134)	To be secured	ECC
	Northern Approaches (phase 3) and new A12 Junction (junction 28)	Secured through Section 106 Agreement Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2) bid submitted	Developer / Highways Agency
	North Park and Ride (permanent) <sup>1</sup>	Project identified in Regional Funding Allocation as a Priority 1b scheme	ECC
South Growth Area	Medical Centre	Secured	PCT

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Necessary" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
	New Primary School	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	ECC
Stanway Growth Area	New Primary School	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard changes	ECC
	Western Bypass - Northern and Southern sections	Secured through Section 106 agreement	Developer
	Stanway Road Improvements Warren Lane	To be secured	Developer
Town Centre Growth Area	A133 Central Corridor Improvements (Stage 1 short term measures) <sup>2</sup>	Essex County Council (ECC) Local Transport Plan (LTP) funds allocated, Community Infrastructure Funding (CIF2) bid submitted	ECC
Supports all growth areas	A12 junction improvements - Crown Interchange (Junction 29)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	A12 junction improvements - Eight Ash Green (Junction 26)	To be secured	Developer/ Highways Agency
	A12 junction improvements - Marks Tey (junction 25)	To be secured	Developer / Highways Agency
	A133 Central Corridor (Stage 2 long term measures)	To be secured	ECC

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Local and wider benefit" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
East Growth Area	Colne River Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Developer
	Hythe Rail Station improvements	GAF allocated	Network Rail/ ECC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	University of Essex expansion	To be secured	University
	University Research Park (Access improvements)	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Developer
North Growth Area	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community Hall improvements and new Community Centre	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community stadium	Secured	CBC
	Electricity Sub Station	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Electricity Provider
	Sport, recreation and youth facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
South Growth Area	Gym Facilities Garrison	Secured	Developer/ CBC
Stanway Growth Area	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Expand secondary school	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	ECC



Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	Improved Bus Links	To be secured	ECC
	Strategic public open space	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Village Hall improvements	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Youth recreation facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
Town Centre Growth Area	Cultural Quarter (Public Realm)	Development team selected, Growth Point Funding Secured	CBC/ Developer
	Firstsite New site (Community Arts Facility)	Secured	CBC
	Historic Town Centre Improvements	Growth Area Funding (GAF) allocated	ECC/CBC
	Magistrates' court	Dept for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) PFI funding decision imminent	DCA
	New Bus Station	To be secured through development	Developer
	Colchester North Rail Station Improvements <sup>3</sup>	To be secured	Network Rail/ECC/CBC
	Colchester Town Rail Station Improvements <sup>4</sup>	Secured through Section 106 Agreements	Network Rail/ ECC
	Southway Pedestrian/cycle bridge <sup>5</sup>	To be secured through development	Developer
Tiptree	Expand primary school	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	ECC
	Sports pitches and allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC

<b>Development Linkage</b>	<b>"Local and wider benefit" Projects</b>	<b>Funding status</b>	<b>Delivery Body</b>
	Tiptree Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
West Mersea	West Mersea Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
Wivenhoe	Allotments	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Community Hall improvements	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Wivenhoe Health Centre	To be secured	PCT/LIFT Strategic Partnership Board
	Youth facilities	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
Supports all growth areas	A120 Braintree to A12	Partial allocation in Regional Funding Allocation	HA
	Cemetery expansion - Berechurch	To be secured	CBC
	Colchester-Clacton branch line re-signalling	Secured	Network Rail
	Essex Police facilities	To be secured	Essex Police
	Facilities to support 2012 Olympics	To be secured	Developer/ CBC
	Green Links and Walking and Cycling improvements	Funding secured	ECC/CBC
	New public open space - St John's	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
	Quality Bus Partnerships and Public Transport Improvements	Secured through LTP allocation	ECC

Development Linkage	"Local and wider benefit" Projects	Funding status	Delivery Body
	Village Hall improvements - Rowhedge	To be linked to new development through planning obligations/ standard charges	Developer/ CBC
<sup>1</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the Town Centre Growth Area <sup>2</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the North Growth Area <sup>3</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the North Growth Area <sup>4</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the South Growth Area <sup>5</sup> Transport project also supporting development in the South Growth Area			

## Monitoring

Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the new planning system. It is important to check that the plan is being implemented correctly, ensure that outcomes match objectives, and to change the plan if they are not. The new planning system provides for separation of components of the LDF to allow each part to be reviewed and amended individually which enables a more rapid and responsive system. The Borough Council will undertake annual monitoring of the implementation of the Core Strategy, and of other parts of the LDF as they are developed, and will amend documents as required.

Appendix C identifies indicators that will be used to monitor the implementation of the Core Policies by the responsible authorities. The indicators provide a means of measuring how well the Borough Council and its partners have performed in achieving the objectives of the Core Strategy. These indicators are also consistent with those employed in the Sustainability Appraisal and the Annual Monitoring Report.

## **Appendix A – Glossary**

(Updated July 2014)

**Affordable Housing (or sub-market housing)** - This breaks down into 2 subcategories: social housing where rent levels are set in line with the Government's rent influencing regime. And intermediate housing: a mix of low cost home ownership products (e.g. shared ownership) and other reduced cost rental products primarily in the form of key worker housing.

**Area Action Plan (AAP)** - These are Development Plan Documents that will be used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. They can be used in many ways to help deliver planned growth areas, stimulate regeneration, protect areas that are sensitive to change, resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures and/or focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiative. They will also focus on the implementation of policies and proposals and will provide an important way of ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change and conservation in the Borough.

**Brownfield Site (also known as Previously Developed Land)** - Previously developed land that is unused or may be available for development. It includes both vacant and derelict land and land currently in use with known potential for redevelopment. It excludes land that was previously developed where the remains have blended into the landscape over time.

**Community Facilities** - Are buildings, which enable a variety of local activity to take place including, but not limited to, the following:

- Schools, Universities and other educational facilities
- Libraries and community centres
- Doctors surgeries, medical centres and hospitals
- Museums and art galleries
- Child care centres
- Sport and recreational facilities
- Youth clubs
- Playgrounds
- Places of worship
- Emergency services

Some community activities can also be provided via privately run facilities (eg pubs and village shops).

**Community Strategy** - All local planning authorities have a duty to prepare community strategies under the Local Government Act 2000 in conjunction with other public, private and community sector organisations. Community Strategies should promote the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The intention is that Local Development Frameworks will provide the spatial expression to those elements of the Community Strategy that relate to the use

and development of land. Copies of the Colchester Community Strategy can be viewed at [www.colchester2020.com](http://www.colchester2020.com)

**Core Strategy** - The Core Strategy will set out the long-term vision for Colchester and the strategic policies required to deliver that vision. Its main aim is to promote sustainable development. It will also seek to protect and enhance the environment, as well as defining the general locations for delivering strategic development including housing, employment, retail, leisure, community and transport.

**Countryside Stewardship Schemes** - A UK Government grant scheme offering payments to farmers and other land managers in England to carry out management that enhances and conserves landscapes, habitats and wildlife, and (where appropriate) to improve access to them. It aims to make conservation part of farming and land management practice.

**Development Plan Document (DPD)** - Development Plan Documents that the council are required to prepare include the core strategy, site specific allocations of land and area action plans. There will also be a proposals map, which will illustrate the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all development plan documents. All Development Plan Documents must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report.

**Development Policies** – A document that the council have produced to guide future development of the Borough. The Policies contained within this DPD will eventually replace the Local Plan Policies and be used to determine planning applications in the future. The Development Policies DPD is currently at Issues and Options Stage.

**Green Links** – Areas of land which are a vital part of the public realm. Green links provide attractive, safe and accessible spaces which contribute to positive social, economic and environmental benefits, improving public health, well-being and quality of life. Green links also provide the opportunity for sustainable travel between areas and are also rich in biodiversity. Strategic green links provide a buffer between urban areas and ensure these areas do not become one. Strategic green links are shown on the Core Strategy Key Diagrams.

**Greenfield Site** - Land which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

**Growth Area** – An area broadly identified for future housing and employment growth. A growth area may include both regeneration areas with potential for brownfield land redevelopment or the use of greenfield sites as indicated on the key diagram (KD2 Colchester Town).

**Industrial Sites** – Sites within the Borough that are considered appropriate for uses which fall within the B1, B2 and B8 Class.

**Life Time Homes** - Lifetime Homes make life as easy as possible, for as long as possible because they are thoughtfully designed. They are homes for everyone and bring benefits to anyone who lives in them because of the individual choices that they make possible. The flexibility and adaptability of Lifetime Homes accommodate life events quickly, cost-effectively and without upheaval. ([www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk)).

**Local Development Framework (LDF)** - This is the term given to the portfolio of Local Development Documents (see above), which will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the area.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)** - This is the project plan for a three year period for the production of all documents that will comprise the Local Development Framework. It identifies each Local Development Document stating which are to be Development Plan Documents (see above) and which are to be Supplementary Planning Documents, and establishes a timetable for preparing each.

**Mixed Use Development** - A well integrated mix of land uses (retail, employment, leisure and other service uses) with decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.

**Natura 2000 network** - The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes SPA, SAC, Ramsar).

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - Government planning policy which replaces a large number of Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements with one single document. It sets out new planning requirements and objectives in relation to issues such as housing, employment, transport and the historic and natural environment amongst others.

**Neighbourhood Centre** - Centres are mixed use places where we shop, work, learn, relax and live. A Neighbourhood Centre is a collection of local shops, services and community facilities at the centre of both villages and urban neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood Centres could range from a small parade of shops through to larger commercial areas providing a variety of services and facilities.

**Neighbourhood Plan** - A plan prepared by a Parish Council, Neighbourhood Forum, or other locally constituted community group, for a particular neighbourhood.

**Planning Gain** – the principle of a developer agreeing to provide additional benefits or safeguards, often for the benefit of the community, usually in the form of related development supplied at the developer's expense.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL) (also known as Brown field land) -**

Previously developed land that is unused or may be available for development. It includes both vacant and derelict land and land currently in use with known potential for redevelopment. It excludes land that was previously developed where the remains have blended into the landscape over time.

**Ramsar Site** – An area identified by international agreement on endangered habitats.

**Regeneration Areas** – An area in the Borough identified on the basis of potential for brownfield land redevelopment, economic and social need and proximity to the Town Centre. The Regeneration Areas are key element in the aim of Colchester becoming a prestigious regional centre. Five Regeneration Areas have been identified across the Borough – St Botolphs, North Station, East Colchester, North Colchester and Garrison.

**Retail Frontages** – A term given to areas within the Town Centre where shopping is the primary function. The front of the shopping facing the street is used to calculate the retail frontages within the Development Policies DPD.

**Rural Diversification (also known as Farm Diversification)** – The alternative use of land or buildings which were once used for farming purposes or rural activity such as grain store, stables or poultry shed. The Local Plan definition is “alternative use of land or buildings that remains within the farming unit in the ownership of the farmer and run from the existing house.

**Site Specific Allocations** - Land allocated for specific uses will be identified in specific Development Plan Documents. Specific policies that relate to these designations will be set out in a Development Plan Document and will cover principles such as design or specific requirements for implementation. Policies relating to the delivery of the Site Specific Allocations, such as any critical access requirements, any broad design principles or any planning obligations, which may be sought, must be set out in a development plan document.

**Spatial Planning** – “Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use, for example, by influencing the demands on or needs for development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission and may be delivered through other means.” (PPS 1 ODPM, 2004, pp3).

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** - A site of European Community importance designated by the member states, where necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at favourable conservation status, of the habitats and/or species for which the site is designated.

**Special Protection Area (SPA)** - A site designated under the Birds Directive by the member states where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site is designated.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** - This will set out the standards that the council intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the local planning authority intends to achieve those standards. The Statement of Community Involvement will not be a Development Plan Document (see above) but will be subject to independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Development Documents.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – A document produced by the Council to add further detailed guidance and information on a particular subject such as Sustainable Construction or Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities. An SPD is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - An appraisal of the economic, social and environmental effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, so that decisions can be made that accord with sustainable development.

**Sustainable Communities** are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

**Sustainable Construction** – is the name given to building in an energy efficient way. The incorporation of many new technologies and energy saving techniques into a building can dramatically reduce the CO2 emissions and carbon foot print of a building. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling, wind turbines and ground water heating systems. Full details can be found in the Council's Sustainable Construction SPD.

**Sustainable Development** - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Sustainable Transport** - Sustainable Transport refers to walking, cycling and public transport, including train and bus. Sustainable Transport is transport that makes efficient use of natural resources and minimises pollution. In particular, Sustainable Transport seeks to minimise the emissions of carbon dioxide – a greenhouse gas associated with climate change – as well as



nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, carbon monoxide and particulates, all of which affect local air quality.

**Town Centre** - The Town Centre is cultural and commercial heart of the Borough. Colchester's Town Centre includes the historic core of Colchester, as well as the surrounding fringe areas that are characterised by a mix of retail, residential, office, community facilities and other uses often found in other Centres. North Station and Hythe Station will be major gateways to Colchester and are therefore considered to be another important element of the Town Centre.

**Transit Corridor** - A rapid transit corridor provides a corridor for the fast and frequent movement of high quality public transport. Colchester's rapid transport corridors will provide unimpeded travel for express buses to bypass traffic congestion and link key facilities, centres, transport nodes and neighbourhoods. These corridors will also provide quality walking and cycling paths.

**Urban Renaissance** - Urban Renaissance is about renewing towns and cities in a sustainable way. It aims to make towns and cities vibrant and successful and, in doing so, protect the countryside from development pressure. It is about offering a high quality of life to people by:

- enabling them to shape the future of their community;
- providing attractive places to live that use space and buildings well;
- encouraging good design and planning to support a more environmentally sustainable way of life; and
- meeting people's needs with good quality services.

## Appendix B – Settlement Hierarchy

Hierarchy	Settlements	
Regional Centre	Colchester Town and Stanway	
District Settlements	Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe	
Villages	Abberton – Langenhoe Aldham Aldham – Ford Street Birch Birch – Hardy's Green Boxted Cross Boxted – Workhouse Hill Chappel and Wakes Colne Chappel – Swan Street Copford – London Road Copford Green Dedham Dedham Heath Dedham – Lamb Corner Dedham – Bargate Lane/Long Road East Mersea Easthorpe Eight Ash Green (including Choats Corner and Fordham Heath) Fingringhoe – Abberton Rd Fingringhoe – High Park Corner Fordham	Great Horkesley (including Horkesley Heath) Great Tey Great Wigborough Langham – St Margaret's Cross Langham – Langham Moor Layer de la Haye (including Malting Green) Layer Breton Layer Marney – Smythes Green, Little Horkesley Little Tey Marks Tey (including Coggeshall Road and London Road) Messing Mount Bures Peldon Rowhedge Salcott and Virley A/B Wakes Colne/ Middle Green West Bergholt Wormingford

## Appendix C – Monitoring Targets and Indicators

	CS Objectives	Targets	Key Indicators
SD	Focus new development at sustainable locations to support existing communities, local businesses, provide sustainable transport and promote urban regeneration to protect greenfield land.	National target 60% of new development on Previously Developed Land (Policies SD1, CE1, H1 and UR1)	Number of new homes completed on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator) - Amount of new employment development on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)
	Provide the necessary community facilities and infrastructure to support new and existing communities.	100% of new permitted developments to comply with SPD on Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Community Facilities (Policies SD2 and PR1)	New AMR Local Indicator to be developed based on Community Facilities Audit and regular updates.
	Provide excellent and accessible health, education, culture and leisure facilities to meet the needs of Colchester's growing community.	100% of major new development to be accessible to health, education and employment facilities (Policies SD1 and SD2)	% of new development within 30 minutes public transport travel time of health, education and employment facilities (AMR Core Indicator)
	Promote active and healthy lifestyles and strive for excellence in education and culture.	0% of applications to result in the overall loss of community facilities (Policy SD2)	Number of applications resulting in the loss of community facilities (AMR Local Indicator)
	Reduce the Borough's carbon footprint and respond to the effects of climate change.	Delivery of infrastructure schemes identified in the LDF (Policy SD2, Table UR1, Table PR1, Table TA3, Table TA4, Table 6d)	Key infrastructure projects delivered (AMR Infrastructure Trajectory)
		General contribution of new development to national targets on educational attainment by improving job opportunities and life chances (Policy SD1)	Percentage of population of working age qualified to NVQ level 3 or equivalent (AMR Significant Effects Indicators)
			Percentage of adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills (AMR Significant Effects Indicators)
CE	Create a prestigious regional centre and a vibrant network of district and local centres that stimulate economic activity and provide residents' needs at accessible locations.	Contribute to East of England Plan Haven Gateway target of 20,000 jobs to 2021 (Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3)	Amount of floorspace development for employment and leisure by type (AMR Core Indicator)-Number of jobs (AMR Contextual Indicator)
	Provide for a balance of new homes and jobs to support economic prosperity of our growing community and reduce the		Amount of employment development delivered in Growth or Regeneration areas (AMR Core Indicator)

	need to travel outside the Borough for employment.		Number of new businesses setting up in the Borough- VAT registrations (AMR Significant Effects Indicator)
<b>H</b>	Provide high quality and affordable housing at accessible locations to accommodate our growing community  Provide a range of housing options to meet the diverse needs of the whole community.	Contribute to East of England Plan target for Colchester of 17,100 houses to 2021 (Policies H1 and SD1)	Housing completions per annum (net) - Housing Trajectory (AMR Core Indicator) Number of new and converted dwellings completed on previously developed land (AMR Core Indicator)
		Homelessness - Monitored by Strategic Housing Team – precise target inappropriate for this cross-cutting issue (Policies H1, H3, H4 and SD1)	Number of households accepted as full homeless (AMR Contextual Indicator)
		East of England Plan and Core Strategy target of 35% of new dwellings to be affordable (Policy H4)	Affordable housing completions (AMR Core Indicator).
		Ensure that new residential development makes efficient use of land (Policies H2, H1, UR1, and SD1)	Percentages of new dwellings completed at the following density bands – less than 30 dwelling per hectare, between 30-50 dph and above 50 dph
<b>UR</b>	Revitalise rundown areas and create inclusive and sustainable new communities.  Promote high quality design and sustain Colchester's historic character, found in its buildings, townscape and archaeology	Meet Core Strategy housing and employment housing targets for Growth/Regeneration areas to contribute to East of England Plan target for Colchester of 17,100 houses and 20,000 new jobs to be created in the Haven Gateway to 2021 (Policy UR1)	Number of new homes and employment development completed at ward level within Growth/Regeneration Areas (New AMR indicator)
		0% of new developments to result in loss of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk. Year on year reduction in number of buildings on Buildings at Risk register. Monitored through the planning applications process (Policy UR2)	Buildings of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk (AMR Local Indicator)

<b>PR</b>	Improve streetscapes, open spaces and green links to provide attractive and accessible spaces for residents to live, work and play.	New development to contribute to open space, green links and streetscape improvements ( <i>Policies PR1, PR2, and SD2</i> )	Increase in areas of public open space ( AMR Local Indicator to be developed)
			Contributions secured towards streetscape improvements ( AMR Local Outputs Indicator to be developed)
		100% of all new permitted developments to deliver adequate areas of private/communal space in accordance with the standards set out in the Essex Design Guide and Urban Place Supplement. ( <i>Policy PR1</i> )	Number of homes with provision of private/communal open space. (New AMR Local Indicator).
		Reduce crime rates across the Borough. Delivered in partnership with Essex Police. These targets will be monitored through the Colchester Community Safety Crime and Disorder Reduction ( <i>Policies PR2 and UR2</i> )	All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum ( AMR Significant Effects Indicator)
			Number of Domestic Burglaries per 1000 Households ( AMR Significant Effects Indicator)
<b>TA</b>	Focus development at accessible locations which support public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need to travel.	Cycling – increase by 75% in urban area by 2010/11 ( <i>Policies TA2, TA1 and PR2</i> )	Annualised Indicator of Cycling Trips linked to LTP* Performance Indicator 10 (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed) – Increased to reflect Colchester's cycle town status
	Provide excellent public transportation, walking and cycling connections between centres, communities and their needs.		
	Develop Colchester as a Regional Transport Node, improving transport connections and gateways within the Borough and to the wider region.	Motor Vehicles – to control peak period traffic entering the Colchester urban area to 33,400 vehicles by 2010/11 ( <i>Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and TA5</i> )	Motor Vehicles entering Colchester on the main radial corridors – LTP* Performance Indicator 12a (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)
	Improve the strategic road network and manage traffic and parking demand.	To reduce the percentage of pupils aged 5-16 travelling by car ** ( <i>Policies TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and PR2</i> )	Mode Share of Journeys to School linked to LTP* Performance indicator 13 (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)

		Increase use the of public transport on selected routes in Colchester (Policies TA3 and TA1)	Number of bus passenger journeys on selected routes linked to LTP* Performance indicator 17 (AMR Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)
		To obtain an agreed travel plan for all major commercial/community developments (Policy TA1)	Encourage modal shift through Travel Plan and planning application processes (AMR Local Indicator)
		Reduce the proportion of long stay in comparison with short stay parking (Policy TA5)	Comparison of long and short stay car parking demand and duration in public car parks in the Town Centre (local indicator)
		Percentage of completed non-residential development(within Use Class Orders A, B and D) complying with parking standards as set out in the LDF (Policies TA5 and TA1)	Percentage of completed non-residential development(within Use Class Orders A, B and D) complying with parking standards as set out in the LDF (AMR Core Indicator)
		**Targets related to LTP indicators are generally reported at County level and therefore data and targets will need to be developed.	*LTP indicators are only set to 2010/11 and therefore indicators and targets related to LTP will be reviewed as the LTP is updated

<b>ENV</b>	Protect and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. Support appropriate local employment and housing development in villages and rural communities.	40% or less new houses to be built on greenfield land (AMR Core Indicator) (Policies ENV1, ENV2, SD1, CE1, H1, and UR1)	Number of homes completed on greenfield land (AMR Local Indicator)
		Minimise impact of new development in areas designated due to their environmental importance (Policy ENV1)	Amount of development in designated areas.
		95% of nationally designated SSSI's are to be in favourable condition or recovering by 2010. (Policy ENV1)	Condition of internationally and nationally important wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC & RAMSAR) (Significant Effects Indicator to be developed)
		Manage visitor numbers at European Sites at levels that do not cause damage or affect site integrity. (Policy ENV1)	Number of visitors to Natura 2000 sites ( new AMR indicator)
		No increase in number of Air Quality Management Districts (AQMDs) (Policies ENV1, TA1, UR2)	Number of AQMDs (New AMR Contextual Indicator)

		All developments to incorporate water management schemes including Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) (Policies ENV1 and ER1)	Number of schemes incorporating water management schemes (New AMR Local Indicator)
		0% net loss of Local Sites (formerly Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) & Local Nature Reserves (LNR) (Policy ENV1)	Number and area of SINC's and LNR's within the Borough ( AMR Core Indicator)
		0% loss of ancient woodland (Policy ENV1)	Area of ancient woodland within the Borough (New AMR indicator)
		0% net loss of priority habitats and species (Policy ENV1)	Change in priority habitats and species (AMR Core Indicator)
		0 applications to be approved contrary to EA advice (Policies ENV1 and SD1)	Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA on flood risk/flood defence grounds (AMR Core Indicator)
		Assist villages in the preparation of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements and achieve 100% adoption rate. (Policy ENV2)	Number of Parish Plans/Village Design Statements adopted as guidance. (New Local AMR Indicator)
		Provide 35% of all housing in rural areas as affordable housing (Policies ENV2 and H4)	Percentage of affordable housing units provided in rural wards
		Ensure rural areas contribute their proportionate share to the overall jobs target (Policy ENV2)	Number of jobs in rural areas (New Local AMR Indicator)
<b>ER</b>	Encouraging renewable energy and the efficient use of scarce resources.  Reduce, reuse and recycle waste.	Contribute to national target of 100% zero carbon by 2016. Data for this will be more readily available from 2010 onwards in line with interim targets for a 25% carbon reduction by 2010, 44% by 2013 & zero carbon by 2016 as defined in Building Regulations (Part L). (Policy ER1)	Number of zero-carbon homes completed (National target). AMR Indicator to be developed in line with evolving national targets and policies

		Contribute to Regional targets in the East of England Plan set out below to increase energy production from renewables sources : 10% by 2010, 17% by 2020 -excluding offshore wind energy, 14% by 2010, 44% by 2020 – including offshore wind energy (Policy ER1)	Renewable energy capacity installed by type (AMR Core Indicator)
		Contribute to Colchester Borough Council's Local Area Agreement domestic waste recycling targets set out below: 21% by 2008/09, 22% by 2009/10 & 26% recycled by 2010/11 (Policy ER1)	Percentage of domestic waste recycled ( AMR Contextual Indicator)
		Contribute to Colchester Borough Council's Local Area Agreement domestic waste composting targets as set out below: 13% by 2008/09, 13% by 2009/10 & 14 % recycled by 2010/11. (Policy ER1)	Percentage of domestic waste composted ( AMR Contextual Indicator)
		Contribute to national targets for reduced water consumption/person between 120 litres/person (level 1) and 80 litres/person (level 6) as defined in The Code for Sustainable Homes (Policy ER1)	Per capita consumption of water (AMR Contextual Indicator)



## Appendix D – References

### National Planning Guidance

Planning Policy Guidance and Statements:

- 1 – *Sustainable Development* (February 2005)
- 3 – *Housing* (November 2006)
- 4 – *Industrial, commercial development and small firms* (November 1992)
- 6 – *Town centres* (March 2005)
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- 9 – *Biodiversity* August 2005
- 12 – *Local Development Frameworks* (September 2004)
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- 15 – *Planning and the historic environment* (September 1994)
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- 20 – *Coastal planning* (September 1992)
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### **Colchester Policy Documents**

Colchester 2020, *Community Strategy*, December 2003

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Supplementary Planning Documents –

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*Affordable Housing* – March 2004

*Community Facilities* – March 2004

*Essex Design Guide* – 1997

*Vehicle Parking Standards* – 2001

*Core Strategy Issues and Options*, March 2006

*Core Strategy Preferred Options*, November 2006

*Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal of the Preferred Options*, November 2006

*Draft Parks and Green Spaces Strategy*, 2007

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Fordham Associates, *Strategic Housing Market Assessment Topic Papers*, September 2007

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Humberts Leisure, *Hotel Market Demand Appraisal and Sequential Site Assessment*, April 2007

Lambert Smith Hampton, *Employment Land Study*, May 2007

PMP Consultants, *Colchester Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study*, November 2007

Roger Tym and Partners, *Housing Land Availability Study*, March 2007

Royal Haskoning, *Colchester Appropriate Assessment*, November 2007

Scott Wilson, *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment*, November 2007

## Appendix E – Saved Local Plan policies superseded by the Core Strategy

Local Plan Policy		Core Strategy Policy
CE1	The Open and Undeveloped Coastline	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy ENV1 (Environment)
CO1	Countryside – general policy	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies ENV1 and ENV2 (Environment)
CF1	Infrastructure and Community Facilities Provision	Replaced by Policy SD2 (Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure)
CF7	Schools	Replaced by Policy SD2 (Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure)
L12	Woodland, trees and hedgerows	Replaced by Policy PR1 (Open Space) which requires open space provision in developments to be informed by an appraisal of local context and community need giving particular regard to biodiversity.
L17	Colchester United	Replaced by Policy UR1 (Regeneration Areas) sets out the key projects to be delivered in the regeneration areas
T1&2	Pedestrian networks and cycle parking requirements	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies TA1 (Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour) and TA2 (Walking and Cycling)
T4	Non car housing	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy TA5 (Parking)
H1	Housing allocations	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H1 (Housing Delivery) and table H1a set out the overall distribution of new housing to deliver at least 19,000 new homes in the Colchester Borough between 2001 and 2023. The Local Plan only covers the period to 2011.
H2	Meeting different needs	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H3 (Housing Diversity)
H4	Affordable housing	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H4 (Affordable Housing) sets new targets and thresholds for affordable housing sites.
H13	Density	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy H2 (Housing Density)
EMP1	Employment land provision	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3 (Centres and Employment)
EMP2	Development outside employment zones	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1 and CE2(b) (Centres and Employment)
TCS1	Town centre vitality	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3 (Centres and Employment)
TCS2	New comparison shopping	Replaced by Core Strategy Policy CE2a (Centres and Employment)
TCS3	Food shopping	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, CE2 and CE3 (Centres and Employment)
TCS11	Bulky goods	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE1, 2 and 3 (Centres and Employment)
TCS12	Local shopping centres	Replaced by Core Strategy Policies CE2b (District Centres) and CE2c (Local Centres)