

Submission on behalf of the Mersea Island Society to the Local Plan  
Inspection for Section 2 of the Draft Local Plan 2017-2033 - Colchester  
Borough Council

1. The following is respectfully submitted to provide evidence that has become available since the written representations.

2. It is done in the strong belief of the Society and its 400 members to “preserve, safeguard and promote the characteristics of Mersea Island for the benefit of all, to arrange open discussion whenever it appears necessary to obtain a consensus of public opinion and to provide opportunities to gain factual knowledge from lectures, visits and discussion of this great island” (taken from its founding objectives).

3. Main Matter 3 - Environmental Assets Policies (ENV1 to ENV5 and CC1)

Are the Environmental Assets Policies set out in CLP Section 2 justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, including the meeting the requirements of the CS?

We do not believe so. It does not for the following reasons:-

- 1) Non-conformity with the Coastal Protection Belt (CCB). This has long been established and adopted for planning purposes by Essex CC and was confirmed by Colchester Borough Council in April 2017. Its purpose is to protect development outside the settlement boundary and should be applied within the DLP.
- 2) Evidence of Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment by Chris Blandford Associates November 2005. This report in paragraphs 2.46 to 3.3.4 considers the importance of the Marshes and Mudflats surrounding Mersea Island and the need to conserve and enhance. The landscape is a very special feature of the island that is both so attractive to residents and to tourists and the landscape character of the Island approaches or surrounding areas and has in, our view, not been taken account of in the CLP. The EAP as drafted, does not conform in our view to EDV2. The Chris Blandford report is submitted as an appendix.
- 3) Is unsound and will lead in our view to considerable future harm to implement the RAMS policy of providing monies. In our view given the beauty and value of what is a large area spanning two estuaries, it cannot be relied upon as providing a remedy for harmful impact. The opposite will be in our view the case and it will not provide any useful protection.
- 4) No evidence is put forward that the policies, either so far as can establish in this Policy heading or other related Matters, deals sufficiently with the impact of global warming. Specifically, as far as Mersea is concerned (dealing with all parts of the island including East,

West, Coast Road, the Pyefleet area and the Strood) to the rising sea levels. There is an absence of data referring both in the earlier period when the DLP was being prepared, and later when there has been much more attention to the rising of sea levels, to the possible impact of flooding as the only means of entry to the island, and on and sea defences. We believe this is a considerable omission.

#### 4. Main Matter 11 – Policies DM1 to DM4 – Health and Wellbeing, Community Facilities, Education Provision and Sports Provision

Are the policies relating to Health and Wellbeing, Community Facilities, Education Provision and Sports Provision justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context and CLP?

Do policies DM1 to DM4 provide clear direction as to how a decision maker should react to a development proposal?

This cannot in our view be justified by reference to the Policies. We say this since the CCG on behalf of the NHS have indicated in respect to a Planning Application for one of the two allocated sites namely Brierley Paddocks (192136 and 200960) for 100 houses, that the GP Practice does not have capacity for additional growth resulting from development and the proposed development will likely to have an impact on NHS funding programme for delivery of primary care provision within this area and specifically within the health catchment of the North East Essex CCG would therefore expect these impacts to be fully assessed and mitigated.

We wish also to say that there appears to be no reliable statistics in the data shown in the policies about the number of caravan owners that are registered to use the local medical practice. In November 2019 we are aware that 70 people were living on caravan sites on Mersea were registered and nationally we understand there is to be agreed a further change that could enable more to be registered.

4. Data on impact of rising sea levels is crucial to the DLP evidence base and it is not been detailed sufficiently in our view. The impact also goes in our view in particular to the sustainable developments (Matter 1), to transport (Matter 18), to wellbeing (Matter 11), to tourism (Matter 12) and to economic development (Matter 13).

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