



# **Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017 – 2033**

## **Examination in Public**

### **Hearing Statement**

**Main Matter 9 – Sustainable Settlements  
(Policies SS1 to SS16)**

**On behalf of Mersea Homes Ltd**

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**This ‘Main Matter 9 – Sustainable Settlements (Policies SS1 to SS16); Are the Sustainable Settlements policies and site allocations justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, including the meeting the requirements of the CLP 1?**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Written Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mersea Homes Ltd to respond to the Inspector's Matters Issues Questions (MIQs), specifically those questions raised in relation to 'Matter 9 – Sustainable Settlements'.
- 1.2. A Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) between Colchester Borough Council and Mersea Homes Ltd is also to be prepared in relation to Matter 9. This Statement is provided in addition to that SOCG to confirm Mersea Homes' response.
- 1.3. We would like to request our participation at the Examination in respect to discussions relating to Matter 9 and more specifically, policies SS8 and SS14.

This 'Main Matter 9 – Sustainable Settlements (Policies SS1 to SS16); Are the Sustainable Settlements policies and site allocations justified by appropriate available evidence, having regard to national guidance, and local context, including the meeting the requirements of the CLP 1?

**Policy SS1: Abberton and Langenhoe**

- 1.4. The land identified as 'land to the west of Peldon Road' in Policy SS1 has been subject to detailed investigations, a public consultation and preliminary discussions with Colchester Borough Council. A planning application is expected to be submitted in 2021, with occupations expected between 2022/23 onwards.

**Policy SS8: Great Tey**

- 1.5. The site identified as 'Land off Greenfield Drive' has been subject to detailed investigations, a public consultation and preliminary discussions with Colchester Borough Council. The landowner has also been actively engaged in the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 1.6. Through discussions with Colchester Borough Council and Great Tey Parish Council, and Essex County Council, as the highways authority, it has become apparent that the vehicular access to the site should be from Newbarn Road. In addition, the suitability and safety of an access from Newbarn Road has been agreed with the Highway Authority as part of a pre application process. Policy SS8 therefore requires modification and updating as below.
- 1.7. Following a public consultation held by Great Tey Parish Council to inform their Neighbourhood Plan, there is a clear local preference for a linear public open space within the emerging site allocation boundary. Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan group have therefore requested that the update is made and the developer is happy to agree.

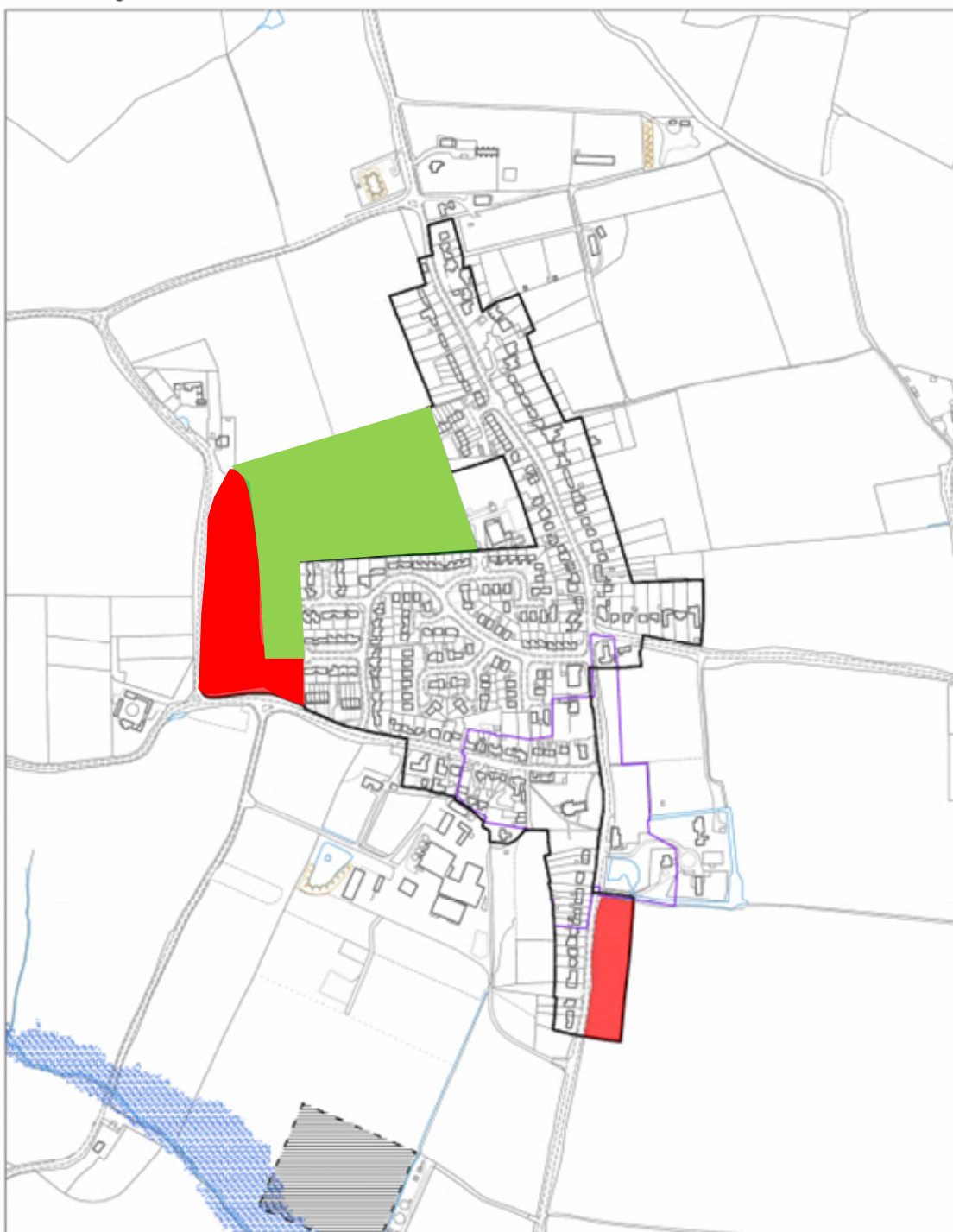
- 1.8. Policy SS8 and the accompany Proposals Map therefore requires modification and updating as below.

*Land off Greenfield Drive*

*In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in policy PP1, development will be supported on land within the policy area identified on the policies map which provides:*

- (i) 30 new dwellings with pedestrian and cycle access off Greenfield Drive (Harvesters' Way and/or Farmfield Road) and vehicle access from Newbarn Road; and*
- (ii) A minimum of 1ha of public open space adjacent to existing public open space.*

## GREAT TEY Policy SS8



### **Policy SS12a: West Mersea**

- 1.9. The land identified as Dawes Lane in Policy SS12a has been subject to detailed investigations and a public consultation and following the submission of an outline planning application (LPA Ref: 200351), planning consent was granted on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Further Reserved Matters applications are expected to be submitted in 2021, with house completions expected from 2023 onwards.

### **Policy SS14: Tiptree**

- 1.10. Mersea Homes Ltd and the landowners of the land to the north of Tiptree at Highland Nursery and Elms Farm had been working closely with the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Working Group through the neighbourhood planning process.
- 1.11. The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Group launched their Call for Sites in April 2017, and given the timings could not be factored into the Publication Draft Local Plan. All previous representations made by Mersea Homes Ltd and the landowners have consequently been made via the neighbourhood plan process. As such, no representations were previously made to Colchester Borough Council in respect to the Local Plan by either Mersea Homes Ltd or the landowners of the land to the north of Tiptree in respect to this land.
- 1.12. The land to the north of Tiptree was promoted and subsequently identified in 'Policy TIP14 – Highland Nursery and Elms Farm' of the Regulation 16 Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. Approximately 220 dwellings were allocated at Highland Nursery and 230 dwellings were allocated at Elms Farm, together with appropriate infrastructure. The land to the north of Tiptree at Highland Nursery and Elms Farm is demonstrated to be a suitable, available, and deliverable site allocation that can deliver the necessary infrastructure.
- 1.13. This Neighbourhood Plan policy also included the identification of a northern link road that had been identified by Tiptree Parish Council as a critical highways infrastructure

project that will deliver traffic benefits for the village and surroundings. The need for this road was identified through consultation responses to the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan, with the key highway issues being centred on Church Road and the key routes through Tiptree, particularly where they are impacted by traffic to and from the A12. The road was found to be a suitable and viable highways infrastructure project. Policy SS14 and its supporting text therefore requires an update to reflect this current position.

- 1.14. A further update is required to Policy SS14 and the Policies Map to reflect the emerging neighbourhood plan and an appeal decision (PINs Ref: APP/A1530/W/20/3248038) in respect to land at Maldon Road, where 255 houses were refused. The Inspector identified the importance of the character of the area towards the west and south west of Tiptree in terms of landscape setting and impact of coalescence between Tiptree and Tiptree Heath. The Local Wildlife Sites evidence has also recently been updated, which has amended the boundaries to these sites. As a consequence of this appeal decision and the updated evidence, the Policies Map where the arrows illustrate the direction of growth in the area directly to the west, should be removed. The preferred direction of growth should now be focussed on the north to reflect the updated strategy in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

- 1.15. In addition, we would suggest the following updates to the policy text.

*Within the broad areas of growth, to the north of Tiptree, as shown on the Tiptree policies map, the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will:*

- (i) Define the extent of a new settlement boundary for Tiptree;*
- (ii) Allocate specific sites for housing allocations to deliver a minimum of 600 dwellings;*
- (iii) Set out any associated policies needed to support this housing delivery i.e.*



*housing mix, type of housing and density for each site allocated for housing;*

- (iv) Set out the policy framework within the Parish to guide the delivery of any infrastructure or community facilities required to support the development, including the first phases of a link road between the B1022 and B1023;*
- (v) Consider strategic cross boundary issues e.g. A12 junction improvements;*
- (vi) Identify other allocations in the Parish, including employment and open space.*

*Proposals for development outside of the identified broad areas to the north of Tiptree and the settlement boundary, as will be defined by the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan once adopted, will not be supported. This policy should be read in conjunction with the generic Neighbourhood Planning policy SG8, policy SG3 and policies in the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan, once it has been adopted.*