

COLCHESTER LOCAL PLAN ISSUES & OPTIONS

2023 - 2024



Colchester
Local Plan Review



Colchester City Council New Local Plan Issues and Options Report

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Introduction

The Council adopted the current Colchester Local Plan Section 1 in February 2021 and Section 2 in July 2022. The Local Plan guides growth and development across Colchester to 2033. To ensure plans remain effective, they require reviewing and updating at least every five years. The new Local Plan will consider new national policy and ensure the Council's current and future development needs are met.

The Council published an [Engagement and Consultation Strategy](#) as work commenced on the new Local Plan. The Engagement and Consultation Strategy outlines how we will engage and communicate with various stakeholders in order to help produce a new Local Plan for Colchester.

Rather than the Issues and Options consultation consisting of one consultation document which is consulted upon for a 6-week period, the Council wanted the Issues and Options to be an iterative process focussed on different themes. We carried out various engagement activities, which were all hosted on the Council's website, under a new [Engagement and Consultation webpage](#). Consultees were notified by email and some themes included workshops with the Residents Panel, Councillors, the Health and Wellbeing Alliance and with Senior Officers. The engagement themes were:

- Green network and waterways
- Call for Sites, including offsite biodiversity net gain (BNG) sites
- Vision for the city district
- Net zero carbon homes and buildings
- Placemaking
- Health and wellbeing

This report summarises what we did for each of the themed engagements and includes a summary of comments received. Full responses to all the engagements are available to view on our consultation portal: [Colchester City Council - Consultations \(oc2.uk\)](#). All comments have been considered and will be taken into account as work progresses on the new Local Plan, ensuring that the new Local Plan is developed taking into account the views of our stakeholders.

Stakeholders

The Council recognises how important it is to involve our communities and stakeholders in the development of the new Local Plan. Our various audiences will play a very important role in contributing to the preparation of the new Local Plan.

We have a statutory Duty to Cooperate¹ with the following organisations, on strategic planning issues: Office of Rail and Road; Environment Agency; Highways Agencies; Historic England; Integrated Transport Authorities; Natural England; Sport England;

¹ In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Highway Authorities; Civil Aviation Authority; Marine Management Organisation; Homes England; The South East Local Enterprise Partnership; Clinical Commissioning Groups; Neighbouring Local Authorities; NHS England; and Essex County Council.

We are also required to consult 'specific' and 'general' consultation bodies and other consultees including the community, neighbourhood plan groups, businesses and third sector groups. The following list of organisations are informed of any consultation being undertaken, as appropriate:

Specific Consultation Bodies: Neighbouring Local Authorities; All Parish Councils within and adjoining the boundary of Colchester Borough as appropriate; Essex Police; The Environment Agency; Historic England; Natural England; The Secretary of State for Transport; Electronic Communication Providers; Telephone Operators; Electricity Suppliers; Gas undertakers; Sewage Undertakers; The Homes and Communities Agency; The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government; Marine Management Organisations; Network Rail; National Highways; Public Health England; Electricity and Gas Suppliers; Sport England.

General Consulting Bodies: Voluntary Bodies; Ethnic / Racial / National Groups; Religious Groups and Churches; Disabled Groups; Local Business Support Agencies
Other Consultees: Health Agencies; Learning Agencies; Schools; Transport Bodies and Groups; Sports Clubs; Recreation Bodies; Infrastructure and Service Providers; Design, Town Planning, Conservation and Landscape and Nature Conservation Bodies; Environmental Groups; Planning Consultants and Agents; The Development Industry; Other miscellaneous bodies.

We also engaged and consulted with individual residents who requested to be added to the consultation database; local community/hobby/interest groups of all kinds; local action groups; local schools, Colleges and the University; local charities; audiences from diverse groups and backgrounds; disabled people and access groups; and people who expressed interest in previous consultation/engagement exercises, among others.

[Local Plan Committee](#) agreed to each of the iterative engagement opportunities / consultations as well as receiving feedback on an ongoing basis. The Committee will agree to the formal consultations for each of the statutory processes with agreement at the time of the details for those consultations.

What we mean by engagement and consultation

We want to be clear on how we define 'engagement' and 'consultation' and the roles that each will have. For this strategy we have adopted the following definitions, which are compatible with the definitions in the Tendring Colchester Borders Engagement and Consultation Strategy:

Engagement: A variety of online activities we will run as part of an iterative Issues and Options stage, to have conversations and gather ideas and insights from a wide range of stakeholders including local organisations, businesses, charities and individuals to help contribute to the preparation of the new Local Plan.

Consultation: Statutory consultations we will run for the Local Plan, prior to it being examined. This will encourage formal feedback and representations (comments) on draft plans. This type of consultation is in accordance with our duties to the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. For the new Local Plan, it will involve consultation on a Preferred Options Plan (or draft plan) in accordance with Regulation 18: Preparation of a local plan of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012; and consultation on the Publication Draft (the plan the Council will submit for examination) in accordance with Regulation 19: Publication of a local plan of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The range of consultation methods appropriate for each stage of plan making will be explored and considered further at the relevant stage, taking into account the issues, the statutory requirements and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Green Network and Waterways Engagement

Engagement on the green network and waterways was intended to be the first engagement as part of the iterative Issues and Options engagement. However, the call for sites was published prior to the green network and waterways engagement commencing. Both engagements ended on the same day - 5 January 2024. This engagement and the subsequent development of Guiding Principles, which establishes the green infrastructure framework across the Council, was a joint project between the Council's Planning Policy, Parks and Open Spaces, and Sustainability teams.

The green network and waterways engagement ran between 9 November 2023 – 5 January 2024. Stakeholders and the public were asked to comment on how they use existing green spaces and waterways; views about the current condition of spaces and suggest any improvements which could be made; and to suggest ideas for new green spaces. The majority of comments (373 comments) received were about the existing green network. 13 comments were made about waterways. 82 comments were made suggesting ideas for new green spaces. Many of the comments received, both about existing spaces and suggesting new spaces, related to Middlewick Ranges – a residential allocation in the adopted Local Plan.

Green infrastructure is multi-functional and part of the work of many Council teams. Planners were mindful that not all comments received to this engagement would be directly relevant to Planning and the new Local Plan and some respondents questioned what Planning can do in terms of improvements to existing open spaces. However, the Council wanted to carry out a wide engagement with relevance to different Council teams.

Some comments to the engagement questioned the inclusion of private land. The Council included private land in the green network and waterways map as this forms part of the green network. As recognised by Natural England, green infrastructure can include private land. Whilst private land may not be accessible for social benefits, green infrastructure delivers multiple benefits including benefits to the natural environment. Natural England recognises that green infrastructure works alongside biodiversity net gain and state on their website that 'delivering high quality, well designed and maintained green infrastructure can help grow the natural capital ... and can be seen as a collection of connected natural capital assets managed to provide ecosystem services and benefits for people and nature.'

Engagement summary

As part of this engagement, stakeholders were asked for their comments on:

1. the existing green network
2. existing waterways
3. ideas for new green spaces and waterways.

The engagement was held on JDi and Opus Maps and users could view the existing green network and waterways map and plot ideas for improvements/ new open spaces. All comments can be viewed [online](#).

The majority of comments (373 comments) received were about the existing green network. 13 comments were made about waterways. 82 comments were made suggesting ideas for new green spaces.

The existing green network



The majority of comments to this part of the engagement are more relevant to the work of the Parks and Open Spaces team rather than Planning. The Parks and Open Spaces team welcomes the feedback from the consultation and will consider the comments and suggestions received regarding existing sites under the Council's management. If appropriate, these will be incorporated into future management plans for the sites as these come up for review. All comments can be viewed [online](#).

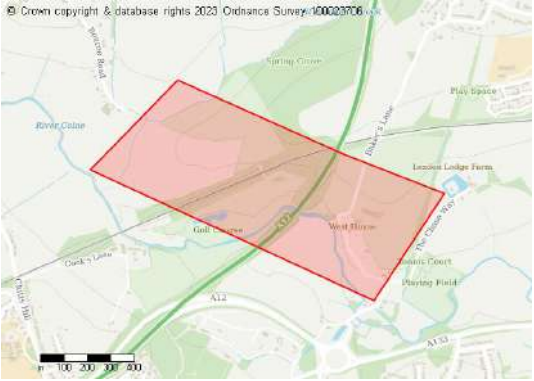

Existing waterways



13 comments were made about waterways. Most of the comments are not relevant to Planning. One of the comments suggests that the Hythe section of the River Colne is very under-utilised and could have been turned into a wonderful place for recreation, history and nature, making the most out of a natural feature within an urban centre. This is something that will be considered as part of the development of the spatial strategy.



Ideas for new green spaces and waterways


The table, below, sets out the various ideas and suggestions for new green spaces around Colchester. Where comments are lengthy, an Officer summary has been included in the table below. Full comments are available to view [online](#). All these comments will be taken into account as work progresses on the Local Plan. As stated previously, many comments to this engagement related to Middlewick Ranges, which is a residential allocation in the adopted Local Plan. A summary of comments made by 39 respondents is included in the table.



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
Allotments					
7845/10131	Kieran Franklin	Land south of Berechurch Hall Road and William Harris roundabout South Colchester	allotment	Population growth in Colchester has outstripped allotment supply. This site is of limited use for built developments because of the power lines, but would be a great allotment site.	
8129/10546	Chris Lacey	Leisure World overflow carpark Colchester	allotments	Extension of the allotments to allow more people to grow, and enhance the biodiversity of the area	



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
Park and greenway (access & ecological benefits)					
7968/10158	Mr N Catchpole	Play Golf/Spring Lane North Colchester	greenway	Restoring access to rights of way which have been cut off by road building and golf courses. Important crossing of the A12. Possibly commuter route for satellite villages. Continuous link between other green spaces (Cymbeline Meadows to Hillhouse Wood).	
7968/10168	Mr N Catchpole	Vacant industrial land next to Haven Road Hythe	Permanent Rowhedge Trail diversion	The Rowhedge Trail is currently closed due to sever erosion damage next to the sewage works outlet, with no timeline for repair. It has been diverted through a vacant industrial site, however this is between high security fencing, and it is not immediately obvious that there is a diversion until you are very close. The area between the current diversion and the Colne should be opened up and rewilded.	



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7968/10169	Mr N Catchpole	Hythe Quay Hythe	Miniature park / promenade	<p>This section of the river is a mixture of car parking, light industrial use and waste ground including a large concrete wall which blocks most of the view of the river. There is either no footway, or narrow footway on the southbound side of Hythe Quay and only a narrow footway on the northern side. By removing the parking, concrete wall, and tyre dealership, the full length between Hythe Station Road and Colne Causeway could be made pedestrian accessible, potentially with improved cycle accessibility, environment improvements to the river bank and improved sightlines to the river. Potentially combined with improvements to the existing houseboat moorings too. This would integrate with the existing topsail footbridge and could be linked to Paxman's walk via a new crossing point</p>	 <p>A map of the Hythe Quay area in Colchester, showing a red highlighted section along the riverbank. The map includes labels for 'Hythe Quay', 'Hythe Station Road', 'Colne Causeway', and 'Paxman's Walk'. A scale bar at the bottom indicates 0, 50, 100, 150, and 200 meters. The copyright notice at the top reads '© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706'.</p>
7968/10159	Mr N Catchpole	Love Hill Walk / Nicholl's Grove Hythe, Colchester	Linear park and greenway	<p>This currently consists of what appears to be an overgrown ex-industrial site, with an existing footpath right of way, but with the woodland fenced off by 2m high metal fencing. The footpath is narrow and overgrown. The woodland site could be reclaimed, possibly still some kind of fence or hedging if there are remaining safety concerns. Then the footpath widened into a shared cycle/walking route. This would then provide a continuous and pleasant walking route from Hythe Hill, which is currently cut off from most green space in Colchester by the transport network, down to Bourne Valley. There could also be an improved connection and crossing to the Moors.</p>	 <p>A map of the Love Hill Walk / Nicholl's Grove area in Colchester, showing a red highlighted section of an overgrown site. The map includes labels for 'Love Hill Walk', 'Nicholl's Grove', 'Bourne Valley', and 'The Moors'. A scale bar at the bottom indicates 0, 25, 50, 75, and 100 meters. The copyright notice at the top reads '© Crown copyright & database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 100023706'.</p>

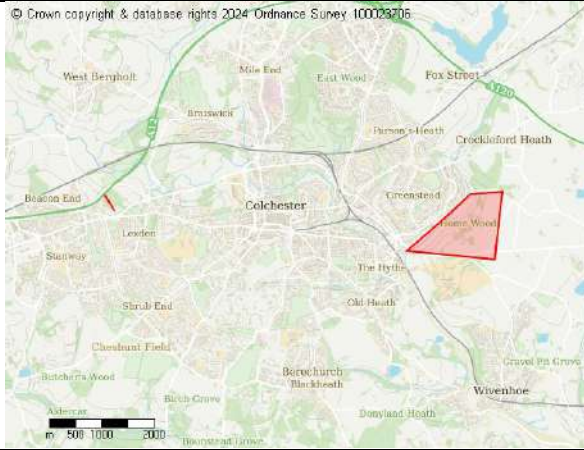
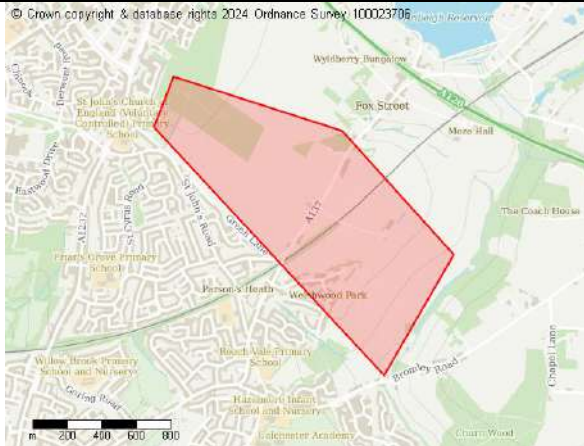
ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7968/10160	Mr N Catchpole	Industrial land adjacent to King Edward Quay Hythe, Colchester	small park space (entrance to Rowhedge Trail)	This is currently empty industrial land adjacent to King Edward Quay. The Rowhedge trail has been diverted through this plot for several months after the collapse of the section by the Colne. Rather than relying on a repair, the land between the diversion and the river could be reclaimed to a small park space, this would provide a much nicer entrance/exit to the Rowhedge trail	 <p>The map shows a red-shaded area of industrial land located between King Edward Quay and the Colne river. The area is bounded by Whitehall Road to the west and Commerce Way to the south. A scale bar at the bottom indicates 0, 50, 100, 150, and 200 meters.</p>
7968/10162	Mr N Catchpole	Land between Terrace Hall Chase, Salary Brook, A12, and Boxted Road North Colchester	Small park or wildlife area connecting the A134 to Boxted Road including pedestrian and cycle access	There is currently not a good walking link parallel to the A12 between Horkesley and Boxted Road. this would link Horkesley to the park and ride and sports park, and enable pedestrian and cycle connections between Boxted and West Bergholt, making existing footpath and lane networks more contiguous. There is a lot of heavy development in this area and this would then reserve some green space	 <p>The map shows a red-shaded area of land situated between Terrace Hall Chase to the west and Boxted Road to the east. The A12 road runs parallel to the south of the area. The map also shows Salary Brook and various residential streets. A scale bar at the bottom indicates 0, 50, 100, 150, and 200 meters.</p>



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7968/10163	Mr N Catchpole	Colchester Golf Course North Colchester	Country park and improved walking and cycle routes between Braiswick and Myland	<p>Proposed use: Country park and improved walking and cycle routes between Braiswick and Myland</p> <p>This is a major area of green space which is currently only accessible to golfers. It divides Braiswick and Myland and the public rights of way are in places very poor quality - for example having to go around three sides of a square, between a fence and a hedge. Areas of rewilding would significantly improve its environmental impact compared to golf lawns. Very close to the new Chesterwell development</p>	 <p>The map shows a satellite view of the Colchester Golf Club area. A large, irregularly shaped area is highlighted in red, representing the proposed site. The site is bounded by Braiswick to the north and Myland to the east. The map includes labels for 'Colchester Golf Club', 'Braiswick', 'Myland', 'A12', 'St Nicholas' Church', 'Braiswick Lane', 'Myland Lane', 'Braiswick Primary School', and 'Frimley'. A scale bar at the bottom left indicates distances up to 400 meters. Copyright information at the top left reads '© Crown copyright & database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 100023705'.</p>
7968/10166	Mr N Catchpole	Land between Church Lane and School Road in Stanway West Colchester	Country park	<p>There is very heavy development around this area but little access to green space, especially due to the A12. The site already has natural features such as the Roman River and Gravel Pit Wood. It is in close proximity to London Road which is very busy, and proper pedestrian and cycle links between Church Lane and School Lane would provide an alternative, green route as well as onward connections to other rights of way.</p>	No site plotted



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7968/10170	Mr N Catchpole	Cymbeline Way North Colchester	Meadow with footpaths	<p>This field is between the underpass under station way and 'The Chase Way' part of the existing Cymbeline Meadows wildlife area. It is used for occasional sheep grazing, as well as touring funfairs and the circus. Pedestrian access here is very limited and historic rights of way have been blocked by fencing, to the point where Colchester Civic Society put out an appeal for people who had used the links which are still not official public footpaths. There should be improved access between the station way underpass with a path following the line of the river, joining to the existing shared footway along Cymbeline Way / A133, and providing a circular route around the field, with access also directly to 'The Chase Way' and from there the rest of Cymbeline Meadows. It would dramatically improve connections and improve cycle and wheelchair access and safety.</p>	
7968/10172	Mr N Catchpole	Alderwood Care Home, Cymbeline Way North Colchester	Meadow/woodland + footpaths	<p>There is currently no access from Station Way / Essex Hall Road to Cymbeline Meadows. This small parcel of land could join the two existing footpaths to enable pedestrian access to a large area of green space from very close to Colchester Rail Station and local residences. There may also be potential to allow the woodland to naturally expand by self-seeding.</p>	


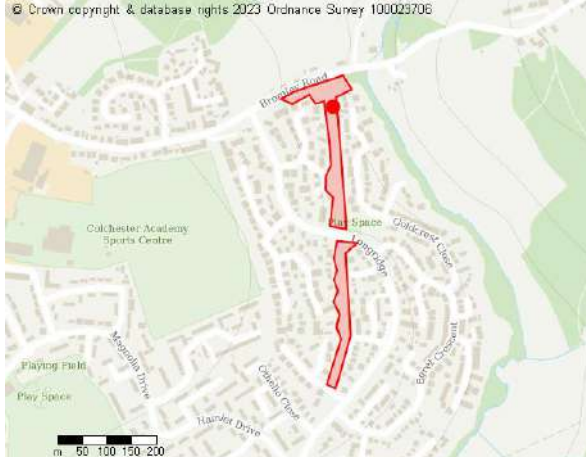
ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7968/10234	Nathaniel Catchpole	Former Bus station Propose: Covered Market City Centre	Public square / covered market / street food / public seating / skate park	This is part of the new proposed route from St Botolph's station, through the priory, up to the castle identified in Colchester's masterplan document. The land has a covenant on it and has been derelict for years. Having market stalls here would take pressure off the high street and allow people to eat without as much air pollution from traffic. A small skate park would provide a city-centre attraction and remove some of the conflict in the immediately vicinity of first site.	
8027/10252	Andrew Ransome	Land at Stanway Nurseries West Colchester	Public open space, including allotment	This land could provide attractive amenity land for both the residents of Stanway and Copford. Propose Use: The Roman River runs along the western boundary. This part of the site could be provided as public open space. The land to the east of Turkey Cock Lane is currently designated as public open space on the adopted Proposals Map. However, this land is in private ownership, with no public access. Residential Development to the east of Turkey Cock Lane provides the opportunity to deliver public access to this land. In particular there is an opportunity to create a circa 1.8ha public allotment on this land.	



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
6315/1028 5	Colchester East Action Group	East of Salary Brook and Slopes TCB Garden Community	Country park	It would be an important extension of the proposed Salary Brook Country Park. Proposed: This should be a country park, in addition to what is planned in the Salary Brook (and slopes) area. Wivenhoe have a much larger buffer with the garden community, housing should be built nearer to Wivenhoe.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>This map shows a red-shaded area in the eastern part of Wivenhoe, bounded by the Salary Brook to the west and the slopes to the south. The area includes Crookleford Heath and is situated east of Elmstead Market. A scale bar indicates 0 to 2000 meters.</p>
6315/1028 6	Colchester East Action Group	Salary Brook Country Park TCB Garden Community	Protected for biodiversity	The Salary Brook area, and its slopes, should be protected because they are very important for biodiversity.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>This map shows a red-shaded area in the central part of Wivenhoe, primarily along the Salary Brook and its slopes. The area includes Wivenhoe New Park and Horse Farm. A scale bar indicates 0 to 400 meters.</p>

ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7063/10593	Enform	Salary Brook TCB Garden Community	Buffer zone	The best way to achieve biodiversity targets apart from protecting existing wildlife sites is to expand and enhance those existing sites with the benefit of increasing total ecology in an area. This site offers scope to preserve the existing sites increase their effectiveness and act as a buffer zone	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>This map shows a red-shaded area in the eastern part of Colchester, near Salary Brook and TCB Garden. The area is bounded by a red line. The map includes labels for various locations such as West Bergholt, Mile End, East Wood, Fox Street, Farm's Heath, Crockleford Heath, Beacon End, Colchester, Crensted, The Hythe, Old Heath, Clenshant Field, Butechurch Blackheath, Butechurch Wood, Ashurst, Birch Grove, Donyland Heath, Wivenhoe, and Gravel Pit Grove. A scale bar indicates 0, 500, 1000, and 2000 meters.</p>
6315/10290	Colchester East Action Group	Woods + Green area near Welsh wood Park North Colchester	Green area for walking , cycling. Biodiversity	General comment: all green areas and woodland should be preserved for the above reasons.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>This map shows a red-shaded area in the northern part of Colchester, near Welsh Wood Park. The area is bounded by a red line. The map includes labels for various locations such as St John's Church, English Methodist Central Hall, St John's School, Fox Street, Moss Hall, The Coach House, Welsh Wood Park, Wood Ash Primary School, Wood Ash Primary School and Nursery, Hazards Hill School and Nursery, Lechliffe Academy, and Church Wood. A scale bar indicates 0, 200, 400, 600, and 800 meters.</p>

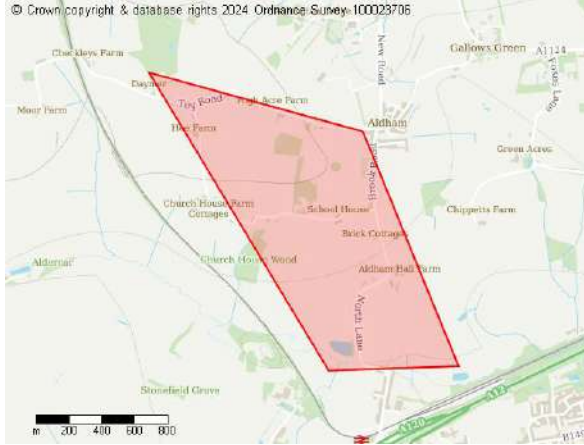
ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
8092/10469	Rachel Bosler	Crouch Street City Centre	Green space	This is the entryway to Colchester from the West and currently it is incredibly unwelcoming with large cars constantly blocking cyclists and walking trying to use the pathways in to town. A small green space here with wildlife would dramatically improve the look and feel of entering town. Turning this into a green space would also stop cars from illegally parking here and could help clean the air up a bit in this notoriously smoggy area and make up for the way the residents of this area were abandoned by the city when the plan to improve our section of the city was vetoed. Given there is plenty of parking - and the space I am recommending is NOT currently supposed to be parking the local businesses should not have an issue with improving the beauty of their local area with a mini green space.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p>
6485/10489	Judith Sorrell	The Mount Marlow Way West Colchester	green open space & wildlife stepping stone	It should become part of Colchester's green network because it is half way between Lexden Park and the protected green area at the entrance to Marlowe Way and is therefore a stepping stone for wildlife on their way to this area. I would like to see this site being used by wildlife and residents. This area needs protecting as there have been two previous planning applications and there is one application which is current. This has been a public open space for the last 50 years and it needs protecting	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p>


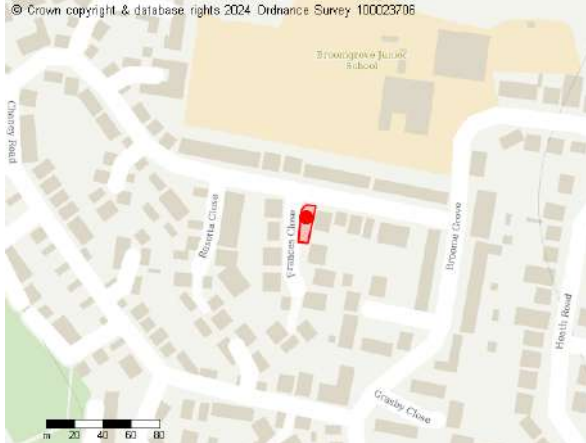
ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7063/10580	Enform	Hill house Wood West Bergholt	Wildlife friendly buffer connecting two LoWS	To help Colchester achieve its biodiversity objectives it is important that wildlife sites form part of a strategic plan. The most effective way to achieve these objectives is to preserve, enhance and increase the area of existing wildlife sites and particularly to join existing sites. This area would link two important woodland areas allowing both sites wildlife value to be enhanced	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>A map showing a red-shaded area connecting two woodland sites. The map includes a scale bar from 0 to 200 meters.</p>
7063/10595	Enform	Pods Wood + Layer Wood Tiptree	rewilding to connect 2 large Local Wildlife Sites with Ancient Woodland	The most effective way of increasing biodiversity is to connect existing wildlife sites. Assessing whether this site could be used for rewilding would connect two important Local Wildlife Sites with Ancient woodland which would significantly increase biodiversity within the area.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>A map showing a red-shaded area connecting two woodland sites. The map includes labels for 'Pods Wood', 'Layer Wood', 'Haynes Green Cottages', 'Haynes Green', and 'Kempes Cottages'. It also includes a scale bar from 0 to 400 meters.</p>

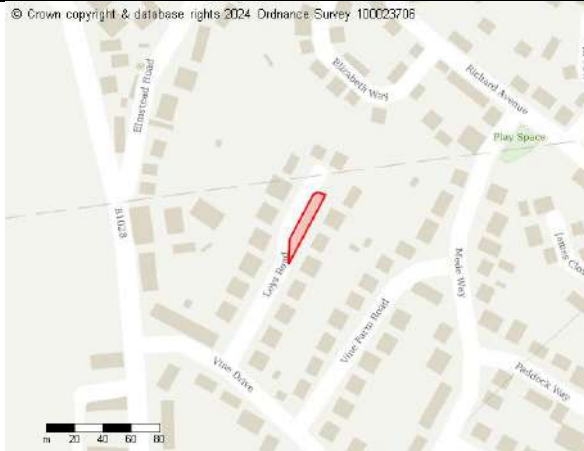
ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
1046/1045/10607	Walk Colchester	Middleborough to Remembrance Avenue City Centre	An off-road route between town and (almost) station, certainly town and Cymbeline Meadows	I don't know about land ownership along here, and whether that's a reason this area gets ignored, and is not included as a blue or green route, but it always seems to me a sad oversight, this stretch of river and river bank (however skinny on the 'green'). An off-road route (save parking but could be better designed) between town and (almost) station, certainly town and Cymbeline Meadows, that has so much potential for utility and leisure, if the riverbank biodiversity was better nurtured and the opportunity for walkers to enjoy proper connection with it was more creatively envisioned, shielded from cars. Surely we want to extend continuity of access and enjoyment along our full river?	
Ecological					
7922/10153	Mr Mark Halladay	Longridge Ride, Bromley Road Colchester	Ecological value	The site is well used by dog walkers and for recreational activities. That should continue. Where mowing has been patchy, the sward is rich in native wildflower species including Speedwells, Hedgerow and other Crane's-bills, Buttercups, Weld, Campion, Wild Mignonette and Lesser Stitchwort - to name but a few noted on a wildflower survey trip in June 2023. The full comment explains how to achieve the additional "ecological value" without interfering with current recreational uses.	



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7449/10189	Edward Barratt	Abbey Gardens Garrison	Nature reserve	<p>This beautiful site forms part of the old Abbey gardens and is the site of the Mound (or Mount), understood to be the burial site of several thousand victims of the plague in the C17. It has never been built on or cultivated. Sections of the site are within the boundary of the buffer area of the Roman Circus, referred to in the Council's recently adopted 'Roman Circus Management Plan'. It was purchased by Taylor Wimpey from the MOD in 2004 and then, later, given to CCC by Taylor Wimpey (see planning application 131935 31936). It is referred to as a 'nature reserve' in the planning application (131935 31936, paragraph 16. 51) for the Arena Place Development. Today, the site is an important 'carbon sink' for this particularly polluted part of town - Mersea Road and St Botolph's Circus being situated in an AQMA. Importantly, it can also be viewed as the centre of a potential 'nature recovery network' - connected to the Abbey Gardens, St Johns Green and the ABRO site - within which wildlife populations can readily move and multiply, enabling biodiversity and satisfying a key aim of the forthcoming Environment Bill (expected to become law in Autumn 2021).</p>	
7449/10444	Edward Barratt	Abbey Gardens Garrison	centre of a potential 'nature recovery network'	<p>Sections of the site are within the boundary of the buffer area of the Roman Circus, referred to in the Council's recently adopted 'Roman Circus Management Plan'. It was purchased by Taylor Wimpey from the MOD in 2004 and then, later, given to CBC by Taylor Wimpey (see planning application 131935 31936). It is referred to as a 'nature reserve' in the planning application (131935 31936, paragraph 16. 51) for the Arena Place Development. This site appears to include 'the Mound' (thought to be a burial site for C17 plague victims) and the remains of Roman dead have also been found there. The site has apparently never been built on or cultivated.</p>	



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
				<p>Today, the site is an important 'carbon sink' for this particularly polluted part of town - Mersea Road, close to St Botolph's Roundabout - being situated in an AQMA. Importantly, it can also be viewed as the centre of a potential 'nature recovery network' - connecting Abbeyfields, the Abbey Gardens, St Johns Green and the ABRO site - within which wildlife populations can readily move and multiply, enabling biodiversity and satisfying a key aim of the Environment Bill (expected to become law in Autumn 2021).</p>	
743/10192	Penny Lang	Roman River Corridor	multi-parish nature green space / local nature recovery corridor	<p>The attached proposal is for a multi-parish nature green space / local nature recovery corridor: the Roman River corridor. Parishes: Aldham, Great Tey and Marks Tey. As an Aldham resident of long-standing it seems to me a wonderful opportunity to help preserve and connect parts of the existing local countryside. In view of so many threats - climate change (this could in a small way help to ease the Colchester climate emergency), house building and the current major threat of 112 miles of pylons rampaging through our countryside unnecessarily from Norwich to Tilbury.</p> <p>We'd be very grateful if you could give this your serious consideration, and enjoy a glimpse of the lovely countryside we all have on our doorstep</p>	



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
8145/10568	Iain Wicks	Roman River Corridor	Nature recovery area	<p>The corridor includes mature hedgerows and trees, pastureland, floodplain, a reservoir and some arable land. Much of the Roman River is followed by a public right of way. Just to the north of the river is the 'Gainsborough Line', also a linear habitat, with trees the length of it. Some of the wooded areas are already designated priority habitats and it is likely that others should be. The Natural England green infrastructure website 3 shows the areas as follows: The Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI, designated for its important Pleistocene lake sediments, sits across the Roman River. The area is designated 5 as a Mineral Safeguarding Area for sand and gravel extraction.</p>	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p>
38/10206	Marks Tey Parish Council	Roman River Corridor	multi-parish nature green space / local nature recovery corridor	<p>Marks Tey Parish Council would support the Roman River Corridor Proposal (please see attached) on the Call for Sites, and would like to take this opportunity to remind Colchester Planning Department of the Protected Views and Sites as detailed in the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan, as accepted by Colchester City Council.</p>	No map plotted
6264/10570	Marian Hammer Gt.Tey NHP Group	Roman River Corridor	multi-parish nature green space / local nature recovery corridor	<p>As chair of the Great Tey Neighbourhood Plan group we support the proposal for a Roman River corridor put forward by the parish councils of Great Tey, Aldham, Marks/Little Tey as it reflects the views of our community gathered during our community engagement process, specifically that the rural nature of the parish should be maintained and surrounding countryside, wildlife and fauna should be protected and encouraged to thrive</p>	No map plotted



ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
8006/10215	Steve Waters	Pitchbury Wood Great Horkesley	A forest area, for walks and a rampart for history	It is unspoilt at present and private but would make a splendid recreational area.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey AC0000817586</p> <p>This map shows the Pitchbury Wood area in Great Horkesley, Essex. The wood is highlighted in a light brown color and is bounded by a red line. Surrounding roads include Northland Road, Pitchbury Farm, Old House Road, and Newhouse Farm. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances up to 200 meters.</p>
7922/10268	Mark Halladay	Frances Close feature verge Wivenhoe	Public open space	The Frances Close site is a small residential roadside feature verge comprising grassland and two mature almond street trees. It is surrounded on all sides by dense housing. Since 2021 it has been part of the Wivenhoe Green Spaces project. It remains as testament and fragment of Wivenhoe's ecological and cultural heritage, an accidental relic of a managed landscape now long gone and one which was once rich in endemic flora and fauna.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p> <p>This map shows the Frances Close area in Wivenhoe, Essex. The site is highlighted in a light orange color and is marked with a red pin. It is a small roadside feature verge. Surrounding roads include Church Road, Riverside Close, Francis Close, Drooping Grove, Heath Road, and Grassie Close. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances up to 80 meters.</p>


ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7922/10365	Mark Halladay	Leys Rd feature verge Wivenhoe	Use to remain but managed for its ecological value	For the last two growing seasons Leys Rd verge has been part of the Wivenhoe Green Spaces project and subject to a twice a year cut and collect mow in July and October. This regime has been adopted to encourage wildflower growth and to encourage a “re-acquaintance” of people with everyday nature. In the two years that it has not been mowed, 37 species of wildflower have been found on the site.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p>
7922/10613	Mark Halladay	Tarmac Keelars Lane Wivenhoe	wildlife site	<p>The site should be developed as a wildlife site with controlled public access. Its main functions would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide on-site habitat to locally endemic and internationally important migrating species. To create green connectivity with adjacent wildlife spaces under separate ownership, different designations and across local authority boundaries. This would be part of a putative landscape scale nature recovery area. To extend access to open land for local people through controlled access for public recreation and leisure. <p>The Tarmac/Keelars Lane site is a recently worked-out quarry now entered its decommissioning phase. It is already an important site for wildlife and offers important strategic connectivity. The site itself already offers mixed habitat comprising sand and gravel substrate, wooded areas and freshwater lakes and lagoons as well as a boundary brook. Together they offer great potential for a mixed wetland/dry heathland area. It would be a major addition to residents’ green infrastructure amenity as well as to the area’s biodiversity</p>	No map plotted

ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7964/10597	Graham Sutton	The Tarmac Keelers Lane Wivenhoe	Nature reserve	<p>The Tarmac/Keelers Lane site is already an important biodiversity site with an all year round wealth of wildlife. When left to rewild and remediated in accordance with biodiversity priorities, and under management as a nature reserve, the benefits increase disproportionately due to location and potential connections to other sites. It also has scope to offer much more, including important strategic connectivity and wildlife corridors. The site itself already has mixed habitat with gravel/sand, wet wooded areas and freshwater lakes and lagoons as well as a brook. Together they offer great potential for a mixed wetland/dry heathland area. Existing buildings on the site offer an opportunity for development of a low cost visitor resource/information centre, with huge benefits for health, education and leisure, as well as the huge boost to biodiversity, air quality and green space.</p>	
7922/10474	Mark Halladay	Egret Road Open space East Colchester		<p>The site is currently left to “naturalise” according to the CCC website. In a survey of the site in 2023 we found 26 species of wildflowers including areas of the sward which were entirely dominated by crane’s-bill, medick and stork’s-bill. The site showed no sign of other recreational use but is crossed by two desire lines. The site might be improved by annual mowing on a cut and collect basis in October with the arisings removed from the site. This will improve the wildflower diversity and abundance over time. Maintained in this way, the site can also provide a green “incursion” into the surrounding residential area, creating a connecting link for wildlife into some of the other green spaces around Greenstead. Explanatory signage should also be erected on site</p>	

ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
6315/1028 4	Colchester East Action Group	Greenstead Ponds East Colchester	Nature	These should just be for nature, no fishing or boating allowed. This is an important water area in Greenstead Ward.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p>
7922/1033 3	Mark Halladay	Footpath, St Andrews Gardens/ Harwich Road Colchester	micro urban nature park	The footpath margin should be used as green space dedicated to urban nature, a micro urban nature park. The site is not suitable for recreational use but does have a small wall to one side to demarcate it from gardens. On a sunny day, with flowers in full bloom it would make a lovely impromptu picnic spot (there are already bins in place).(Note: Colchester has a number of similar footpath margins. These should all be assessed for similar management). The full comment explains how the respondent believes the site should be managed.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p>

ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
8093/10473	Oliver Hall	Wasteland at Bourne Road and Adjacent to Knightsfield East Colchester	Nature reserve area	The site is currently a mess with several abandoned buildings and wasteland. Development in the area for housing is strongly opposed. Residents would be able to enjoy the area rather than just a track through an eye sore.	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p> <p>This map shows the Knightsfield East area in Colchester. A red-shaded rectangular area is highlighted, representing the site at Bourne Road. The map includes labels for Bourne Road, Knightsfield, and other nearby streets like Canterbury Road and Berke Road. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances up to 80 meters.</p>
7996/10714	Michael Padmore	Longridge Open Space East Colchester	A green corridor, supporting a wide range of wildflowers and insects, which is by its nature a space that supports wellbeing and community pride.	Green spaces need to be connected, not fragmented. Greenstead has some wonderful green spaces but they need to be better connected. They can play a vital role in creating a fantastic natural resource, running from Cymbeline Meadows, Castle Park, Cowdray Marsh, Greenstead South Slopes, Magnolia Drive and Longridge, Salary Brook and Wivenhoe Wood	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023705</p> <p>This map shows the Longridge area in Colchester. A red-shaded vertical strip highlights a green corridor. The map includes labels for Longridge, Salary Brook, and other nearby streets like Cymbeline Drive and Castle Park. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances up to 200 meters.</p>

ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
7922/10688	Mark Halladay	Colchester Nature Recovery Area	Colchester Nature Recovery Area	<p>Thank you for the chance to comment on the City's green/blue spaces and for doing so within the framework of the Local Plan. It is good to feel that professional planners are addressing with nature planning. Wigan Council has designated 70% of its Borough as green space. It's an intriguing idea. I would like to propose that Colchester City area should be similarly considered. Nowhere should be left out of nature recovery. Colchester City area could be re-conceptualised as a place of natural as well as economic prosperity to the benefit of both. Two things might be appropriate: at strategic level, create a nature recovery/greenblue infrastructure masterplan for the Colchester area; and operationally, review and continue to implement the City's existing Greening Colchester Policy and Woodland & Biodiversity Project with political ambition and imagination.</p>	 <p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 100023706</p>
	39 respondents	Middlewick Ranges Birch Brook Wood Weir Lane grasslands	Green space / country park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These sites are a continuous ecological unit and incredibly important corridor for species to move between SSSI and LoWS in southern Colchester - as well as habitat in its own right. • These sites are a crucial link in what can be a regionally important ecology corridor of very different but complementary habitats reaching from the heart of Colchester at Abbots Rd eventually to Mersea Island. • This area of acid grassland is the largest left in Essex now and the rich assemblage of invertebrates have led it to become a National Important Invertebrate Area – taking on a national significance. Over 1400 invertebrate species have been recorded and 150 species of those have a conservation status. 	

ID/Rep no	Respondent	Location of Space	Proposed use	Comments	Map
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a natural habitat for birds, and other animals. 25% of Essex butterfly and moth species can be found here. The Birch Brook Woodland Local Wildlife Site appears threatened by the land being put up for sale. Any housing nearby would lead to much disturbance and degradation of the fabric of the wood, to the actual brook, as well to many species including the important breeding population of nightingales. The Weir Lane grasslands are an exceptionally rich set of meadows, currently unspoilt and visited by many locals, as seen by the well-walked network of pathways across them. There can't be an equivalent size of similar grasslands anywhere else in the borough. This whole area is part of the mitigation for the proposed Middlewick development, which will destroy these rich grasslands by ploughing and sulphur application. It is a space of great carbon capture. It is the only large accessible green space within walking distance for most of the population of south Colchester. Colchester needs to become a leading example of how a city council looks after and develops its green spaces. It is already part of Colchester's Green Network and should now be formally designated as such. 	 <p>The top map is a street map of a residential area in Colchester, with a red outline highlighting a specific green space. The bottom map is a satellite-style map of a larger area in Colchester, with a red outline highlighting a large green space, including Weir Lane and surrounding areas like Birch Brook Woodland and Middlewick.</p>

Call for Sites

Call for Sites is an opportunity for the public, Members, landowners, developers and other stakeholders to promote sites for development across the City. This includes land for use of housing, employment, community facilities and/or infrastructure development. This also included a Green Infrastructure category to enable land to be promoted for offsite biodiversity net gain, country parks, open space and other green uses. As with the green network and waterways engagement, JDi and Opus Maps was used.

A total of 195 submissions were received by a mixture of landowners, developers, agents, and members of the public. A full list of submitted sites was reported to [Local Plan Committee](#) in February 2024 and are set out in a [report](#) on the Council's website. The majority of submissions were promoting sites for residential uses; however, some sites were promoted for other uses, including employment, open space, local nature reserve/local wildlife site and biodiversity. In some instances, a site may have been promoted for multiple uses. Similarly, some sites have been promoted by more than one individual, for example Middlewick Ranges as a green use by several members of the public. The list of sites is currently one composite list with brief details and map extract. These are ordered by Site ID reference rather than any geographical distribution. The easiest way to view the complete Call for Site coverage in any one geographical area, is using the [mapping tool](#). This enables the user to zoom in and out and identify further details as required.

Alongside the Call for Sites, the Council published a draft Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) Methodology for consultation, and this was subsequently revised and adopted by [Local Plan Committee](#) on 11 December 2023. In January 2024, Officers commenced a Desktop Review to identify sites in addition to those promoted through the Call for Sites for further assessment.

All sites submitted as part of the Call for Sites and desktop review sites were assessed as part of stage 1 of the SLAA. Those sites that got through this first stage, or 'sieve', were further assessed as part of stage 2 and also appraised as part of the Sustainability Appraisal.

A Report on the SLAA will be finalised and published separately to support the Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan.

Biodiversity net gain (BNG) call for sites

The Council launched an offsite biodiversity net gain (BNG) call for sites in June 2024. Landowners were invited to propose land within the Colchester district for offsite BNG. This supplemented the 'call for sites' that took place from 20 October 2023 – 5 January 2024.

BNG is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. By law, the biodiversity value of a development site will need to increase by 10%. In some cases, the developer will



be able to achieve this within the site itself, for example by creating new natural features. In cases where 10% BNG can't be achieved on the site, developers can pay other landowners elsewhere to carry out habitat improvements on their behalf. BNG provides landowners the opportunity to make money while also supporting nature.


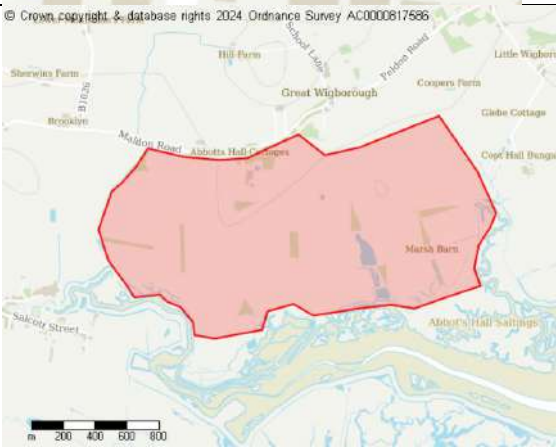
As part of this BNG call for sites, the Council only accepted sites put forward for BNG – proposals for any other uses or general comments were not logged as valid representations. The Council only accepted sites from those who own or have an option on the land. The earlier call for sites and the green network and waterways engagement both provided the opportunity for third parties to suggest sites suitable for green infrastructure or BNG. The following table summarises the offsite BNG sites submitted. All sites will be considered for highlighting in the Local Plan and will be reviewed as part of the Council's Biodiversity and BNG Study.



As part of this BNG call for sites, comments were also received from Natural England and the Rural Community Council. The Rural Community Council asked whether more BNG could be provided through green roofs and on deck/roof top landscapes in urban areas through design policy. Natural England commented:


'Whilst we are not able to provide BNG sites ourselves, we would be happy to work with your authority to identify the most appropriate types of biodiversity enhancements for sites that are put forward. The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) mapping will also help with this. Opportunities should be taken to connect, buffer and enhance ecological networks, and relieve existing and future recreational pressure on designated sites within the local area. Owners of sites put forward for BNG may find it useful to refer to the [Landowner Guidance](#) which includes advice on preparing land for BNG and more details about what is involved.'

Offsite BNG submissions

Name	Admin	Site name	Site size	Site map	Comment
Adrian Hart	11097	Brook Meadows, Tiptree, Essex CO5 0QF	5ha	 <p>The map shows a residential area with a red-shaded polygon highlighting the Brook Meadows site. The site is located near Perry Road and Park Drive. A scale bar at the bottom indicates 0, 50, 100, 150, and 200 meters. The map is credited to Ordnance Survey AC0000817586.</p>	Existing habitat is meadow. No details about biodiversity value and proposed habitats submitted.
Tiptree Parish Council	11098	Park Lane Amenity Land Park Drive Tiptree	6.5 ha	 <p>The map shows a residential area with a red dashed-line polygon highlighting the Park Lane Amenity Land site. The site is located near Park Drive. The map shows a mix of green and brown areas, indicating a mosaic of habitats.</p>	<p>Site is a mosaic of rough neutral / acid grassland currently succeeding to scrub (Blackthorn & Bramble)</p> <p>Maintenance of current habitats proposed.</p> <p>A parish owned site that is for the use of the public in an area where there is a lot of development planned.</p>

Tiptree Parish Council	11099	Grove Lake and nature meadow	4 ha		<p>Habitat on site: Grassland, scrub, pond.</p> <p>Maintenance of current habitats proposed.</p> <p>Amenity land within the village that has a large amount of development within the village planned.</p>
Essex Wildlife Trust	11107	Abbotts Hall, Great Wigborough	287 ha - 70 ha for BNG		<p>Existing habitats on site: Coastal saltmarsh, wetlands - reedbed, cropland, grassland, mixed scrub, ponds, woodland - broadleaved and mixed.</p> <p>Proposed habitats: Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ponds, medium distinctiveness scrub, individual trees, species rich native hedgerow, grassland and ditches, saltmarsh.</p> <p>The creation of a BNG habitat bank at Abbots Hall will contribute to our wider ambitions to rewild the site and establish a nature reserve, which will be open to the public in 2026.</p> <p>The baseline Biodiversity Units for the site's area habitats have been calculated to be 2,767.17, with linear habitats amounting to 182.85 units.</p>

<p>Star Planning & Development on behalf of Welbeck Strategic Land</p>	<p>11108</p>	<p>Land West of Hall Road, Copford</p>	<p>1.5 ha</p>	<p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey AC0000817586</p> 	<p>The identified BNG site forms part of a wider promotion for residential development of land to the east of School Road, Copford. The opportunity exists to create habitat links with the Gravel pit Wood to the south.</p> <p>The site relates well to the woodland habitats of Gravel pit Wood (a LoWS) and the woodland to the east of Hall Road. The habitat types which might be appropriate could be woodland or grassland.</p>
<p>Ceres Property- Peter Cole</p>	<p>11109</p>	<p>Maydays Farm</p>		<p>© Crown copyright & database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey AC0000817586</p> 	<p>The site is currently in arable production but could provide a high uplift in BNG units. Although no formal ecological survey has been carried out, an ecologist and Natural England have both visited the site and agree that it is a superb location. The site is surrounded by National, European and Internationally designated sites. Creating nearly 100 acres of freshwater wetland will be an incredible opportunity for biodiversity in the area. We are currently engaging with other bodies to give support to this scheme. If any officers from Colchester City Council would like to visit to see for themselves the site, they would be very welcome.</p>

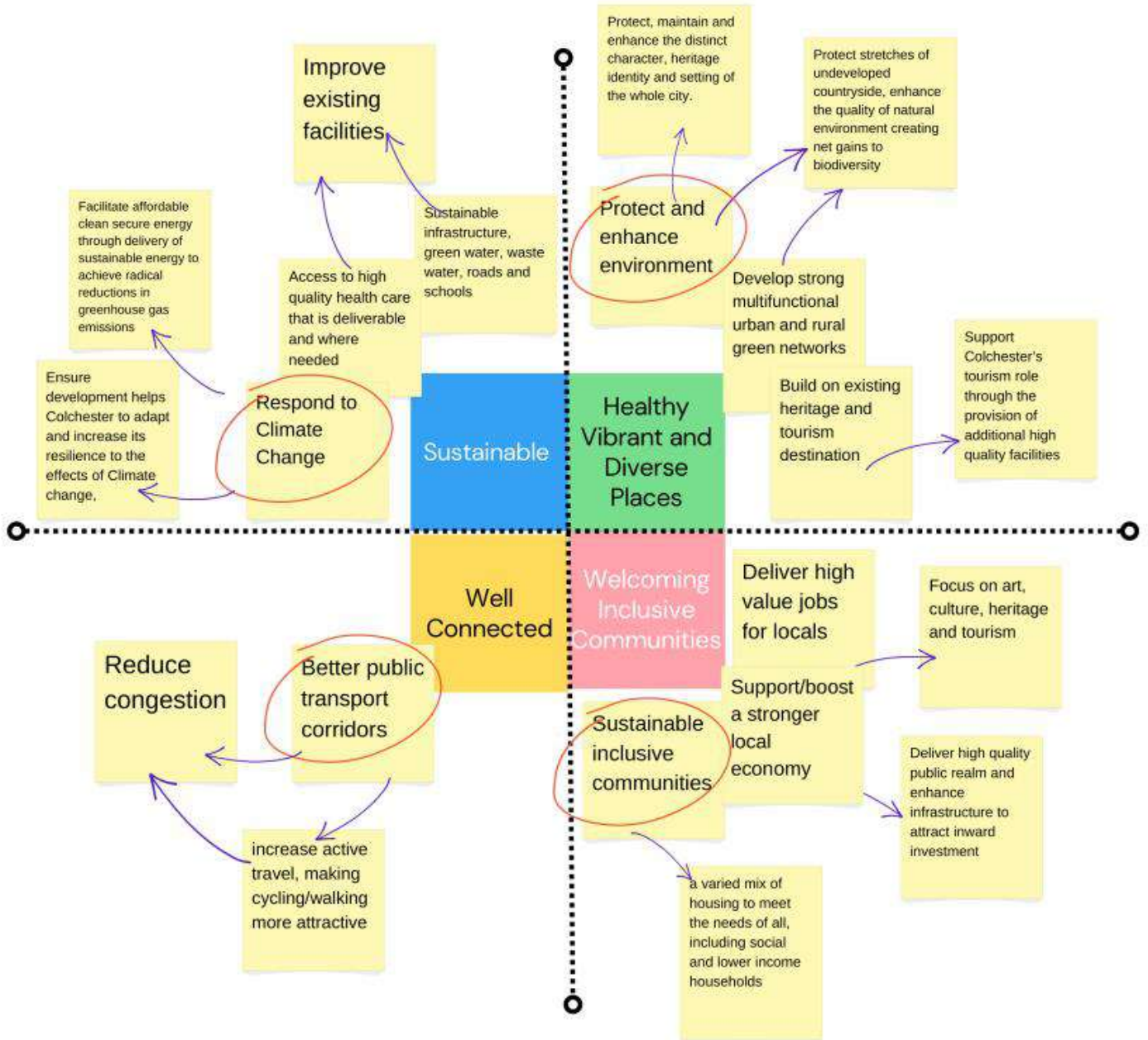
<p>Peter Cole, Ceres Property on behalf of landowner</p>	<p>11112</p>	<p>Mersea Boating Lake, Rewalls Lane</p>				<p>The site in this case provides a particular opportunity for a number of different habitats including improving unmanaged grass, ditches, water and wetland areas. The aim is to create habitats that are of high distinctiveness level within the Biodiversity metric 4.0 and will provide replacement habitats on a local and national level. These high distinctiveness level habitats can be used to replace a number of different lower distinctiveness habitats that are impacted by a development. This flexibility gives the site a unique competitive advantage over other BNG sites in the area. The site is estimated to be capable of delivering c. 35 biodiversity units.</p>
<p>Imogen Payne on behalf of landowner</p>	<p>11110</p>	<p>Maldon Road Field Stanway</p>	<p>8.9 ha</p>			

Imogen Payne on behalf of landowner	11111	Chippetts Farm, Aldham	104 ha		Site currently used for great crested newt ponds as part of Natural England's District Level Licensing for great crested newts.
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Looking at the online engagement comments and comments from the various workshops, themes and objectives have emerged. The key themes include:

- Sustainable
- Healthy vibrant and Diverse Places
- Well connected
- Welcoming and inclusive Communities

The visual, overleaf, has been created to show the themes and objectives and will form the basis of the vision for the Local Plan. This was shared with [Local Plan Committee](#) in June 2024.



Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex

Essex County Council's Climate and Planning Unit has developed planning policies for net zero carbon homes and buildings. These are based on an evidence base and legal opinion and follow best practice. As part of the iterative Issues and Options engagement, the Council published the [Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex](#) document on our website and asked the question: Is the Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex suitable and appropriate to include in the Colchester Local Plan Review? A link to further information and supporting evidence regarding the Essex Net Zero Policy on the [Essex Design Guide](#) was included on the website.

Consultation ran between 16 April - 30 May 2024. 43 comments were received. The table below summarises the comments received. Comments are grouped into support, support with queries, support policy but object to allocation of Middlewick Ranges and object. All comments are available to view in full on the Council's consultation portal: [Colchester City Council - Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex \(oc2.uk\)](#). The Council will consider all comments received and updated technical evidence and legal opinions commissioned by Essex County Council as part of its consideration of whether to include these policies in the Local Plan.

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
Support		
1119/11017	Ms Eileen King	Essential we do everything we can towards net zero emissions.
8475/11020	Jean McNeil	The Essex Net Zero Planning Policy Position represents the most sustainable policy in the country today. It is suitable and appropriate for Colchester to adopt it.
8469/11029	Stanley Bragg (Brandon Clemson)	It's my belief that it's of paramount importance that we address the carbon emissions associated with buildings in a more thorough and comprehensive way than the current Building Regulations - particularly embodied carbon. The evidence suggest that this is achievable from a financial, legal and technical perspective. I also welcome the possibility of Passivhaus being used as a 'deemed to comply' mechanism for operational carbon - as a Certified Passivhaus Designer. The benefits of this approach are numerous, beyond just the climate emergency - better housing for residents, better quality control, more comfort, resilience etc
4007/11023	Natural England	Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development. Natural England is a statutory consultee in Local and Neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft Local and Neighbourhood development plans and associated documents by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made. Natural England does not have any specific comments on the Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex.
2739/8484/ 11031	Environment Agency Natalie Kermath	Thank you for your below email. A full detailed review of your 'Net Zero Carbon Home and Building' document is not within our remit. However, we are encouraged by the inclusion of climate mitigation policies, and we would like to see the inclusion of net zero policies within your document. You may wish to use resources such as the Tyndall Carbon Budget Tool or the LGA/Local Partnerships GHG Accounting tool for help.

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
4101/7585/ 11032	Historic England Andrew Marsh	Historic England strongly advises that the local authority conservation teams and archaeological advisors be closely involved throughout the preparation of the assessment of this Plan. They are best placed to advise on local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER - formerly Sites and Monuments Record); how the proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets. Finally, we should like to stress that this response is based on the information provided by the Council in its consultation. To avoid any doubt, this does not affect our obligation to provide further advice and, potentially, object to specific proposals, which may subsequently arise as a result of this plan, where we consider that these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment
7669/11037	Anglian Water Tessa Saunders	Anglian Water is supportive of the policy position for net zero carbon homes and buildings in Greater Essex, which align with our long-term strategic priorities to become a net zero business by 2030 and reduce the carbon in building and maintaining our assets by 70%. Climate change is one of the most significant impacts for our region with the future outlook identifying high climate change impact in our region with the second lowest rainfall projections, the highest average temperatures in the region, and above average population increase. We support policy measures to enable sustainable and resilient growth.
11056/7702	Shamsui Hogue National Highways	National Highways is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in England on behalf of the Secretary of the State. In the area within Greater Essex, we have responsibility for the motorways M25, M11 and trunk roads A12 and A120. The current planning policy position for tackling Net Zero Carbon Homes and Building is for designing guidance and standards, which do not directly affect the Strategic Road Network. Therefore, we do not have any comment on your net zero consultation.
11063/8496	ECC- Matthew Jerhico	Yes! ECC considers that it is both suitable and entirely appropriate to include the policies set out in the Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex November 2023 (or later update) in the Colchester Local Plan Review. The position document sets out two best practice and evidenced policies: Policy NZ1 covers operational carbon emissions and Policy NZ2 addresses embodied carbon emissions from new build development. The planning policy position has been developed collaboratively through the Essex Planning Officers' Association with the Greater Essex local planning authorities, including Colchester City Council. This work (facilitated by the Climate and Planning Unit at ECC, with funding from the Essex Climate Action Commission) has developed a robust and sound evidence base that supports Policy NZ1 and demonstrates that building to the clearly defined net zero carbon (in operation) standard in Greater Essex is technically feasible, financially viable and legally justified. The consistent, evidence-led policy approach published on the Essex Design Guide is already being used by Greater Essex local authorities in their emerging local plans, for example, Uttlesford Local Plan (Reg 18 (2023) and Reg 19 (scheduled for Summer 2024) consultations), Chelmsford Local Plan (Preferred Options Reg 18 consultation – commencing 3 May 2024) so far. The publication of the 'model' policy approach provides clarity and certainty to the development industry and other stakeholders on what 'net zero' means in Essex in terms of new build development. The approach also aligns with best practice advocated by industry bodies and adopted policies in local plans elsewhere, for example, in Cornwall, Bath and North East Somerset, and Central Lincolnshire. Incorporating Policy NZ1 in the Local Plan Review will ensure that new homes and buildings are built to a net zero carbon (in operation)

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
		<p>standard that delivers net zero carbon emissions from the outset, achieves operational energy balance on site and aligns with local and national climate targets. In terms of the embodied carbon emissions that come from the materials and construction of new homes and buildings, the position document sets out a 'placeholder' policy – Policy NZ2. This placeholder is intended as a marker for early consultation phases of Local Plans to highlight embodied carbon as an issue that will be addressed in Local Plans and will be updated once Essex specific evidence is available. The Essex Embodied Carbon Study is nearing completion, with a draft final report received in April 2024. The intention is to publish the Study in early June 2024. The Study will provide the technical evidence to support detailed policy recommendations. The ECC Climate and Planning Unit will take forward the findings and recommendations of the Study and work collaboratively with the local authorities in Greater Essex to establish an updated policy position for NZ2. The planning policy position document will be updated accordingly. It is recommended that as the Local Plan Review continues and as Colchester City Council prepares its Plan for consultation towards the end of 2024, that policy requirements relating to embodied carbon contained in NZ2, can be updated to reflect the updated model policy and evidence.</p>
Support or comment with queries		
ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
8473/11018	Neil Babbage	<p>The expected life of the building is a material factor in considering whether it is net zero taking into account embodied emissions as these are a one-off carbon cost. Given the vast assumptions that a developer can make in estimating lifetime of a building, in general, for residential developments, the policy should favour construction with materials that have an extremely long life as homes are rarely demolished or replaced. Realistically buildings need to be carbon negative because unregulated power demands always rise over the long term. E.g., the ability to generate enough power to charge an electric vehicle, to run air conditioning. Increasingly home working / hybrid working will increase the regulated demand (e.g., heat on during the day). These power consumption growth factors should be included. Many of the listed resources including https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/climate-change/net-zero-evidence/ and the RICS WLCA template are dead links which is not helpful in trying to review the policy. Policy should be stronger for listed buildings in supporting improvements. For example, the council should consider working with Historic England and its own conservation officers to create standardised rules on what is acceptable. E.g., Solar PV that can be removed and do not damage the building structure should always be approved.</p>
1494/11022	Susan Allen-Shepherd	<p>Page 3 last para: "In Essex, a target for all planning permissions for new buildings to be net zero carbon by 2025 and carbon positive by 2030 was recommended by the Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC) in July 20214 and endorsed by Essex County Council (ECC) in November 2021."</p> <p>Looking up the meaning of carbon positive: "Carbon positive describes most business as usual situations. It means a business entity produces an amount of carbon emissions that is more than zero. All businesses with a carbon footprint are carbon positive and they contribute to climate change." Is this what was intended in the document or is the supplied definition of carbon positive wrong?</p>
8476/8477	NHS Property Services	<p>NHSPS support Policy NZ1 and NZ2 that promote carbon neutral development, and the securing of financial contributions where on-site carbon mitigation requirements cannot be met. In considering the implementation of policies related to net zero, we would highlight that NHS property could benefit from carbon offset funds. This would allow the NHS to fund net zero projects such as decarbonisation (improvement of radiators and</p>

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
		<p>pipework and building insulation), energy efficiency (LED lighting upgrade), and renewable energy (solar PV installation).</p> <p>Given the challenges in obtaining capital funding for NHS physical infrastructure improvements, allowing the access to carbon offset fund would support the NHS to reach the goal of becoming the world's first net zero healthcare provider. Without the carbon offset fund, securing necessary funding to deliver net zero projects will be extremely difficult in short term. If unable to access the carbon offset fund, the implementation of NHS net zero projects may face delays and there might be a need to divert funds from other essential projects to finance this work. Furthermore, allowing the access to carbon offset fund will allow the NHS to deliver a wider social, economic, and environmental benefits, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare Improvements: By securing the carbon offset fund, the NHS can redirect funding to enhance clinical space and improve healthcare facilities. This directly benefits residents and patients. • Fairer Communities: Supporting the local healthcare services contribute to better health and well-being for residents. • Fairer Environment: The healthcare infrastructure reduced carbon emissions and improved energy efficiency align with environmental priorities. • Fairer Council: Increased spending with local organizations strengthens community resilience, recognizing the healthcare infrastructure vital role in serving the community.
11043/7063	Mr Wilkinson Enform (support)	<p>We support the proposals which appear to be quite stringent and concentrate mainly on energy use. However, we note there is nothing in the policy about sustainable use of water and dealing with sewage. This needs to be addressed in other policy documents as water use has a large carbon footprint. Will you be issuing a water policy. Using green spaces, landscaping and retaining wildlife rich spaces is also not mentioned although there are other policies that address these issues. How will monitoring after building be addressed and what will the sanctions be.</p>
11066/7910	Essex Fire & Rescue	<p>Having reviewed the consultation document, at this time Essex County Fire and Rescue Service would ask that the following are considered during the continued development of The Local Plan Review-Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex consultation :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of community spaces as a hub for our Prevention teams to deliver Fire Safety and Education visits, with the shared use of an electric charging point. • Adherence to the requirements of the Fire Safety Order and relevant building regulations, especially approved document B. • Installation of smoke alarms and/or sprinkler systems at suitably spaced locations throughout each building. • Implementation of vision zero principles where there are introductions of or changes to the road network. • Appropriate planning and mitigations to reduce risks around outdoor water sources. • Suitable principles in design to avoid deliberate fire setting. • Consideration for road widths to be accessible whilst not impeding emergency service vehicle response through safe access routes for fire appliances including room to manoeuvre (such as turning circles). • Access for Fire Service purposes must be considered in accordance with the Essex Act 1987 – Section 13, with new roads or surfaces compliant with the table below to withstand the standard 18 tonne fire appliances used by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. • Implementation of a transport strategy to minimise the impact of construction and prevent an increase in the number of road traffic collisions. Any development should not negatively impact on the Service's ability to respond to an incident in the local area. • A risk reduction strategy to cover the construction and completion phases of the project. • Implementation of a land management strategy to minimise the potential spread of fire either from or towards the development site.
Support policy but object to Middlewick Ranges allocation		

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
11062/7794	23 respondents supported the policy but objected to the allocation of Middlewick Ranges	<p>Support Essex's Net Zero Carbon Homes policy but strongly objects to including Middlewick Ranges in the Local Plan. This Local Wildlife Site is a significant carbon sink with over 50 ha of rare acid grassland, scrub and woodland vital for carbon sequestration and biodiversity. Developing Middlewick contradicts Colchester City Council's Climate Emergency declaration (2019) by destroying natural habitats releasing tonnes of carbon, increasing traffic jams/emissions and losing crucial ecological connectivity. Recommends using the Local Plan Review as the opportunity to remove Middlewick from the housing allocation, prioritising lower impact developments and ensuring all developments align with net zero goals to genuinely meet the council's ambitious climate targets ensuring sustainable future planning.</p> <p>Introduction supports the principles outlined in the "Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex," recognising its ambitious goals to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability in building practices. These are vital steps towards addressing the global challenge of climate change.</p> <p>However, expresses specific concerns regarding the inclusion of Middlewick Ranges in the Local Plan for development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contradiction with Carbon Neutrality Goals: Middlewick Ranges, as a substantial carbon sink, currently sequesters a significant amount of CO2. Developing this area contradicts the stated objective of achieving net zero carbon in building operations by disrupting a natural carbon absorption system. 2. Loss of Ecological and Carbon Storage Value: The proposed development would destroy over 50 hectares of rare acid grassland, one of the largest expanses remaining in Essex, releasing stored carbon and reducing future carbon capture capacity. 3. Increased Traffic Emissions: Adding 1000 homes would significantly increase traffic volume, worsening air quality and increasing greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in an area in South Colchester already suffering from traffic congestion and lack of infrastructure. 4. Opportunity Costs in Carbon Sequestration: By developing Middlewick Ranges, we lose the opportunity to enhance its role as a natural carbon sink. This area could absorb hundreds of tonnes of CO2 over the coming decades, a natural service that would be irreplaceably lost. 5. Impact on Local Wildlife and Biodiversity: The development threatens local biodiversity, disrupting habitats integral to the ecological network connecting Roman River, Friday Woods, and the River Colne SSSI, which are crucial for species migration and genetic diversity. 6. Inconsistency with Local Climate Declarations: In 2019, the council declared a climate emergency, committing to significant carbon reductions. Allocating Middlewick Ranges for development undermines this commitment and the council's own policies aimed at mitigating climate change. 7. Recommendation for Plan Revision: recommends that Middlewick Ranges be removed from the housing allocation in the Local Plan. This action would align the plan with both the council's climate emergency declaration and the aspirations of the Net Zero Carbon Policy. 8. Suggesting Alternative Strategies: Encourage the exploration of alternative development sites that have lower environmental and carbon costs. Promote more sustainable options that do not involve building on a biodiversity hotspot and Local Wildlife Site and align with net zero goals. 9. Support for Sustainable Development:

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
		<p>urges the council to prioritise developments that can fully comply with the net zero operation requirements, without compromising key green spaces like Middlewick Ranges, which offer irreplaceable environmental benefits and a vital community asset.</p> <p>10. Call for Strategic Environmental Assessments: Request that any future developments include comprehensive environmental assessments to ensure compatibility with environmental, sustainability, and public health goals. Situations such as the threats to Middlewick Ranges and other key sites for wildlife and biodiversity must be avoided going forward if we are to have any chance to mitigate the climate and biodiversity crisis – and set a better example for residents of Colchester and beyond.</p> <p>Conclusion While we support the overarching goals of the "Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex," it is crucial that the Local Plan reflects these objectives consistently across all decisions, especially in relation to natural spaces like Middlewick Ranges. Only by aligning our local planning strategies with our environmental commitments can we hope to meet our targets and ensure a sustainable future for all residents. Please act to protect Middlewick Ranges Local Wildlife Site as a vital carbon sink and biodiversity hotspot; and use this current Local Plan Review as an opportunity to remove the threat and allocation of 1000 houses – and safeguard as Colchester City's premier nature reserve for people and wildlife.</p>
Object		
7890/11019	Cllr Sunnucks	<p>There is a real risk that these extra regulations / guidelines get adopted without a full understanding of the cost and administrative burden they impose. It already takes many times longer to jump through regulatory hoops than it does to construct buildings. Each extra piece requires more consultants and reports which are widely perceived to add little value. Decision makers need to consider whether an extra Colchester or Essex level set of rules is really needed. There are already building regulations, Bream and Passivhaus regulations to draw on. Why not simply refer to those? They also need to consider whether regulation is the best approach. There are already strong financial incentives to install good insulation and solar panels. Should we not publicise those rather than imposing regulation? Carrots not sticks? Finally they need to consider the impact on housing supply. There is a balance to be struck between the Councils desire to build more and net zero. More regulation will increase cost and reduce supply and its cumulative effective is materially damaging.</p>
8172/6988/ 11030	Mersea Homes/Andrew Ransome ADP	<p>While the proposed "Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex" aligns with broader sustainability goals and the need to reduce carbon emissions in the built environment, there are several areas of concern. Building regulations, not local planning policies, should set detailed construction standards to avoid a patchwork of conflicting requirements across regions. While promoting sustainability is appropriate in a local plan, mandating highly specific net zero carbon construction rules risks contradicting nationally established building regulations. The technical feasibility claims could be strengthened by providing real-world case studies demonstrating the successful implementation of the proposed standards across various construction types. Additionally, a more comprehensive assessment of potential cost implications, incorporating industry input, could help address concerns about financial viability and housing affordability. Clear guidance and stakeholder engagement on implementation, compliance, and post-sale monitoring processes are essential to minimise disruptions and unintended consequences.</p>
6629/11033	L&Q and G120 Consortium Gareth Pritchard	<p>We write on behalf of London and Quadrant New Homes Limited ('L&Q') and the G120 Consortium (collectively 'the Promoter') who are promoting land at Marks Tey for a new settlement known as Tey Green; to the consultation on Net Zero Homes Policy closing 30 May 2024. The Promoters are fully committed to reducing gas emissions to net zero</p>

ID Number	Name	Summary of Comments
	Stantec	by 2025 and recognise the important role the built environment plays in this. However, it is critical there is a consistent approach to this across the country, which is typically addressed through Building Regulations rather than via the Planning System. Recent ministerial statements (Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament) have highlighted the tension between differing standards in planning policy and Building Regulations, which adds to the complexity of delivering new homes. It is our view the Council would need to demonstrate clearly a well-reasoned and robustly costed rationale for policy exceeding Building Regulations which we do not believe the consultation currently does. The policy wording also needs greater flexibility to overcome any viability related issues caused by policy exceeding Building Regulations.
11039/8487/8488	Gleeson (support) Agent – Nathan Turner	The majority of requirements and targets outlined within each Policy within the planning policy position document are anticipated for introduction as part of national deadlines relating to Building Regulations. We therefore consider that, regardless of how suitable they are, it is inappropriate for the Local Plan to double up on Government legislation in the form of Building Regulations, which will be required to be adhered to by developers regardless. The inclusion of policies that reiterate Building Regulations are unnecessary, and we suggest it would be better if the planning policies signposted to these. See rep for full text
11040/6622	House Builders Federation (object) Agent Mark Behrent	HBF consider the proposed policy position to be inconsistent with national policy and unjustified.
11041/7811	Hopkins Homes (object) Agent Mark Edgerley	The policies outlined within the consultation document will have a significant impact on development proposals and how they are brought forward across Colchester and Greater Essex. As a standalone consultation, it is not possible to understand the viability considerations and implications of the draft policies and how they relate to meeting other objectives that the Council and the local communities across Colchester may have. As currently written, we have reservations about the ability of these policies when considered in that light should they reach the Examination stage in this form. We are also concerned about the evidence base supporting the policies and requirements within the consultation document. It would not be appropriate for the Council to set policy in documents which are outside of the Local Plan process and regulations which guide plan making processes. As we have outlined above, we have serious reservations and concerns about the purpose of the policies and how they would relate in practice to the Building Regulations which are in place at the time of construction. The need to address climate change, implement sustainable construction methods and reduce emissions is acknowledged and understood by Hopkins Homes and this is demonstrated by their commitment on all of their sites. However, by introducing policies which go beyond the requirements of Building Regulations leads to issues both at the decision making stages, but also during the construction stages and ultimately this will lead to delays which is not favourable for any interested party – be that the applicant, local authority or the local community. The Government and the development industry is committed to increasing requirements and standards to ensure that the country addresses key environmental issues and delivers developments which are fit for future generations and this is governed by the Building Regulations.

Placemaking

Placemaking is about the pattern, scale, character and design quality of places. It includes the following:

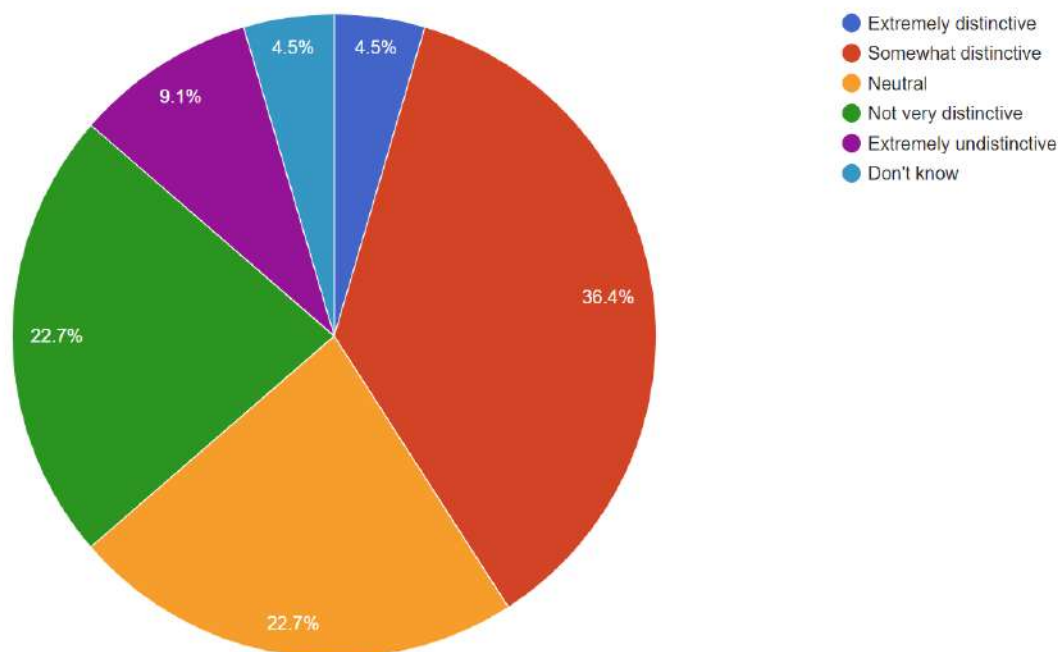
- housing (including affordable housing)
- employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development
- infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including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

A Placemaking questionnaire was published on the Council's website to capture ideas and thoughts on the pattern, scale, character and design quality of places. The engagement took place from 13 June - 25 July 2024. The online engagement was held on JDi and all comments are available to view [online](#). As part of this engagement two questionnaires were published, a community questionnaire aimed at locals who live and work in Colchester and an industry questionnaire aimed at those who deliver development across Colchester including developers/house builders, planning agents, urban designers, architects and other professionals within the built environment.

The questionnaire was divided into the following broad themes and details of the responses are set out below:

- Creating a Place
- Approaches to Future Development and Growth
- Homes
- Communities
- Employment
- Natural and Historic Environment
- Design
- Colchester City Centre
- Health and Wellbeing

**4. to what extent do you consider the character of Colchester to be distinctive?
i.e. you know you are in Colchester by the character of the area.**



4. If you could change one thing about the local area in which you live, what would it be?

In summary, the focus is on enhancing safety, improving public transport, preserving local history and nature, and fostering community engagement while addressing infrastructure challenges.

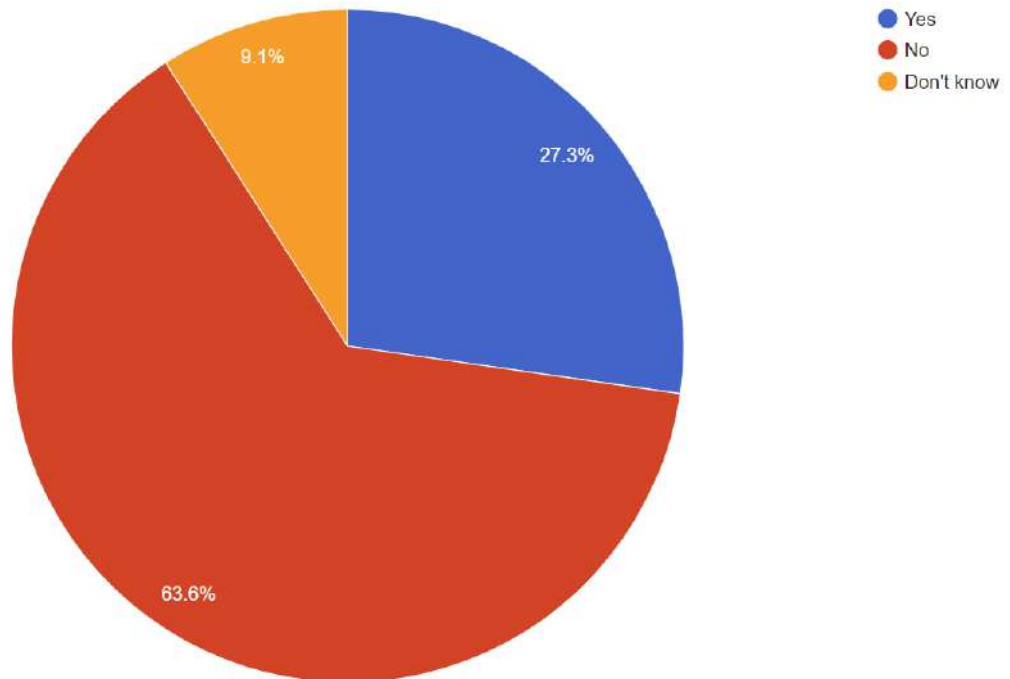
- Improve access paths and install security cameras for safety at night.
- Maintain embankments with greenery instead of weeds.
- Provide more local GP surgeries and pharmacies.
- Enhance public transport: make it efficient, affordable, and reliable to reduce congestion and pollution.
- Address poor current transport options, including buses and the potential return of trams.
- Upgrade pavements for pushchair accessibility and improve road infrastructure.
- Address traffic issues, particularly around North Station, and reduce car dependency.
- Promote local history and wildlife, turning areas like Middlewick into nature reserves.
- Increase green spaces and trees while reducing through road traffic.
- Ensure better design in household extensions and developments.
- Limit new housing to prevent overwhelming existing infrastructure.
- Foster a greater sense of community with more village-like initiatives.
- Increase volunteer opportunities and community involvement.
- Restore historical character to attract tourism and bring back branded shops in the high street.

Approaches to Future Development and Growth

1. Where should growth be located?

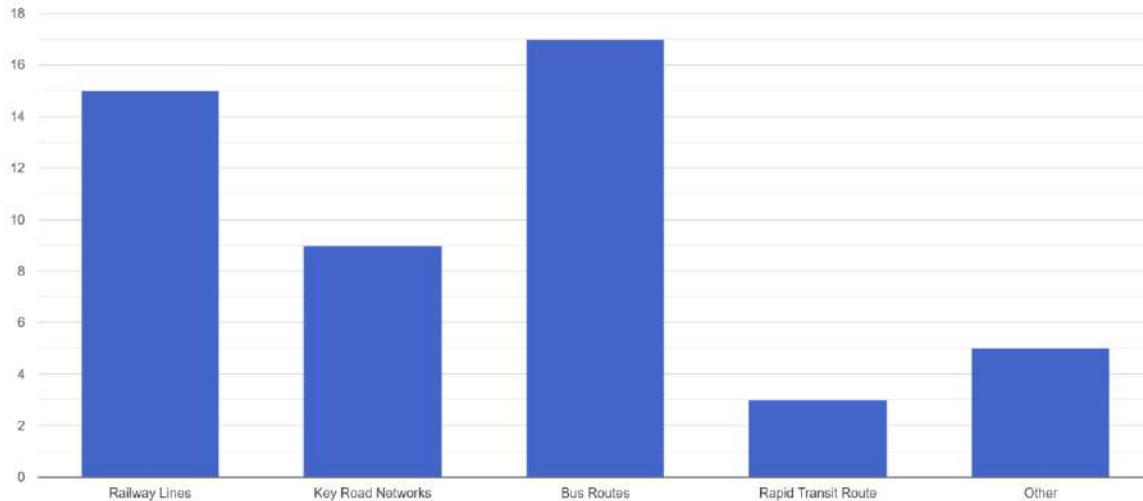
Most responses support an approach to growth based on the current hierarchy with the City Centre and Urban area of Colchester being ranked first. About 50% of the responses also suggest growth in the other towns and villages ranking them sustainably (large – small / hamlets).

2. Should growth be located in a new large scale community?



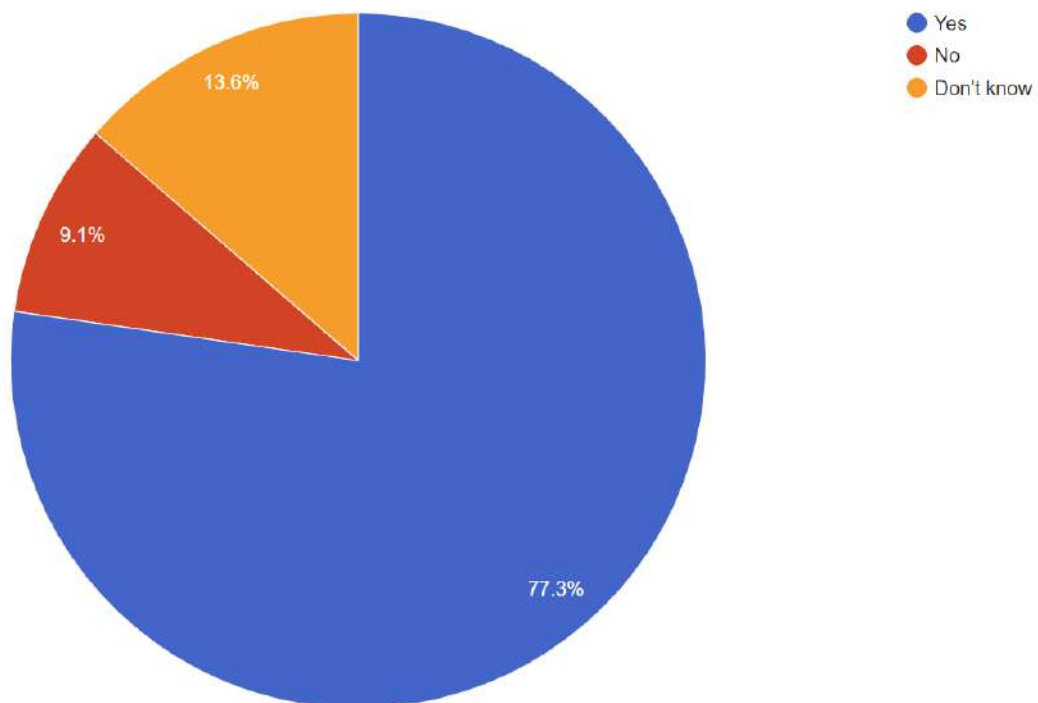
3. Which transport corridors could growth be directed to?

Almost all responses indicated a preference for growth to be located close to the key transport corridors with significant focus on the rail network, bus routes and major roads. A few also added additional transport corridors to include cycle routes.



4. Should there continue to be a strong preference to protect rural communities and only support small scale development (1 or 2 homes) in the most rural areas.

The majority of responses indicate that rural areas should remain protected and limit growth. Comments about green space, food production and ecology as being important in the countryside were made frequently.

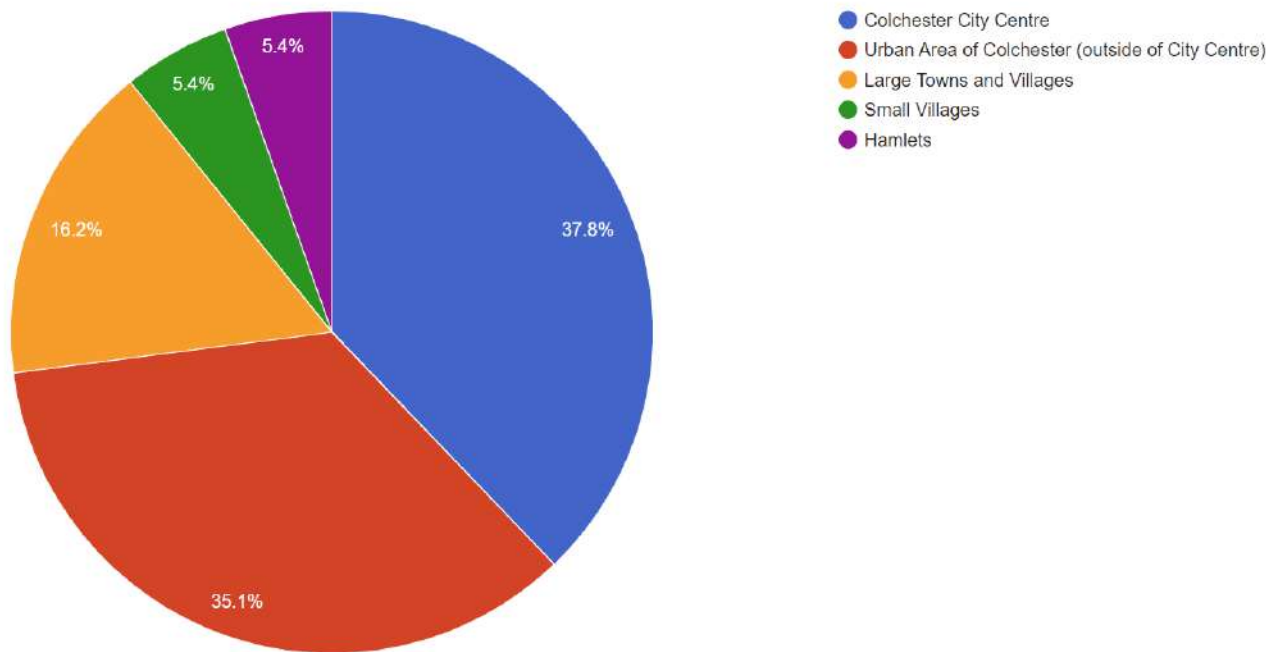


5. Rank these land uses from most to least important, which you think need additional growth in Colchester to 2041.

- Housing
- Employment
- Retail
- Leisure and culture
- Food production
- Education
- Green spaces and Ecology

On average greenspace and ecology ranked the highest, with employment a close second. On average retail ranked the lowest.

6. Which areas of Colchester do you think there are opportunities for higher density housing?



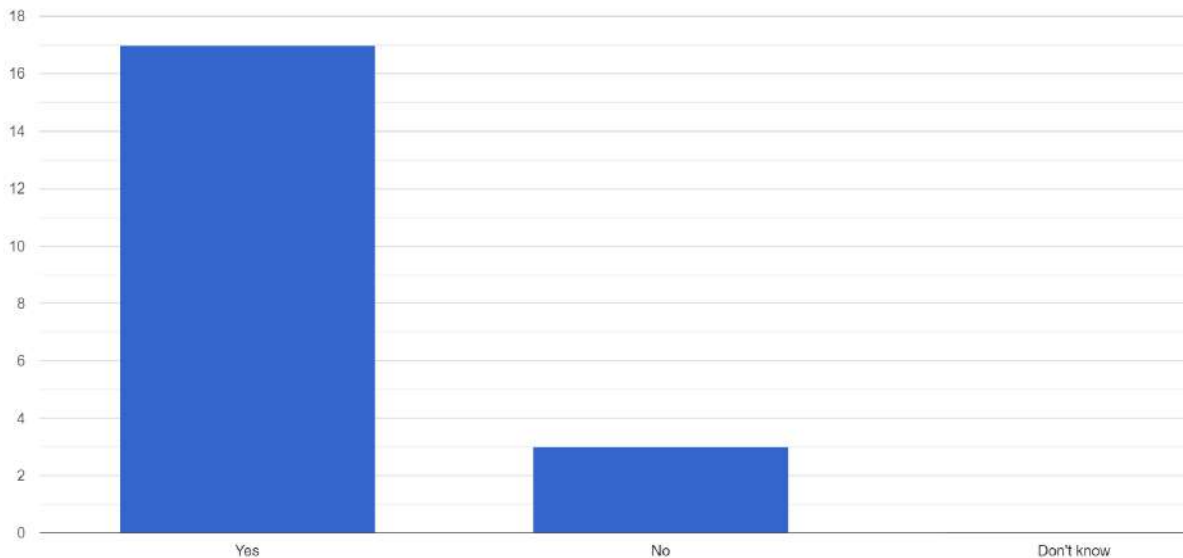
The majority limited this to the city centre and the urban area of Colchester. A few responses stated higher densities would also be appropriate in other locations from large settlements to hamlets.

- Flats
- Maisonette
- Detached
- Semi Detached
- Terrace
- Other – (please state)

Bungalows were the highest-ranking answer, ranking this the most favoured house type. Detached and semi-detached scored the second highest. The lowest ranking answer were flats voted as the least favoured house type to live in, closely followed by terrace house. Other answers included:

- Retirement living
- Sheltered accommodation/Supported living
- Affordable housing
- Cottages
- Community housing
- Eco homes

4. Should the housing of specific groups i.e students, retirement living, aging population etc be integrated alongside other general housing? Why?



Why?

The majority believed communities should be a good mix of housing types and groups to avoid isolated communities and encourage social interaction. A small percentage disagreed and believed that specifically students should be separated from elderly or retired communities as they have differing needs. There were some concerns of student housing not being looked after, potentially bringing the look of the neighborhood down.

5. What makes a good quality home?

Overall comments advocate for affordable, well-designed homes that meet the needs of families while being mindful of environmental impacts.

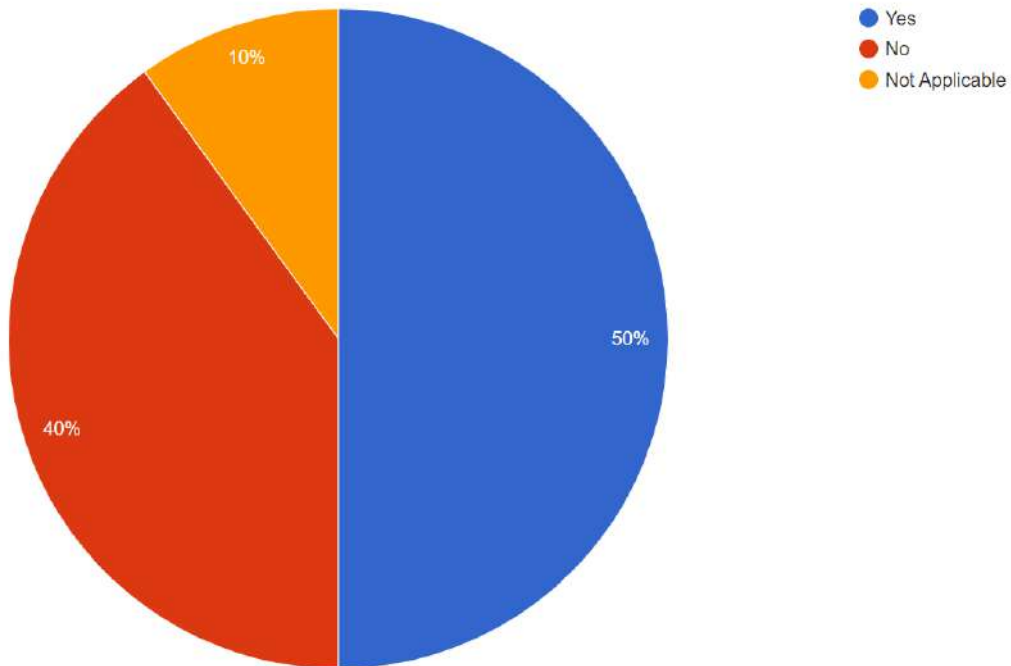
- Energy efficient
- Good design
- Space
- Warm in winter/cool in summer
- Affordable
- Visually appealing
- Good construction
- Natural light
- Location

6. Rank these qualities of a home from most important to least important

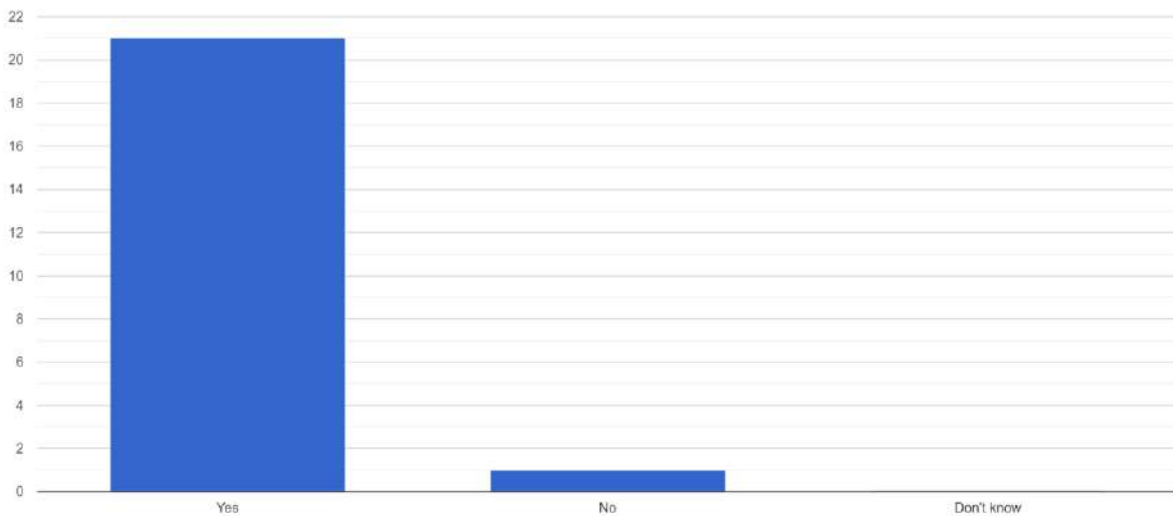
- Safe
- Warm in winter and cool in summer
- Affordable to rent/buy
- Affordable to run
- Private garden
- Own front door

The top ranked quality of a home was affordable to rent/buy closely followed by safety. The lowest ranked was having their own front door, private garden and affordable to rent/buy.

7. Do you require a separate space or room for home working?



8. Do you need car parking as part of your home?

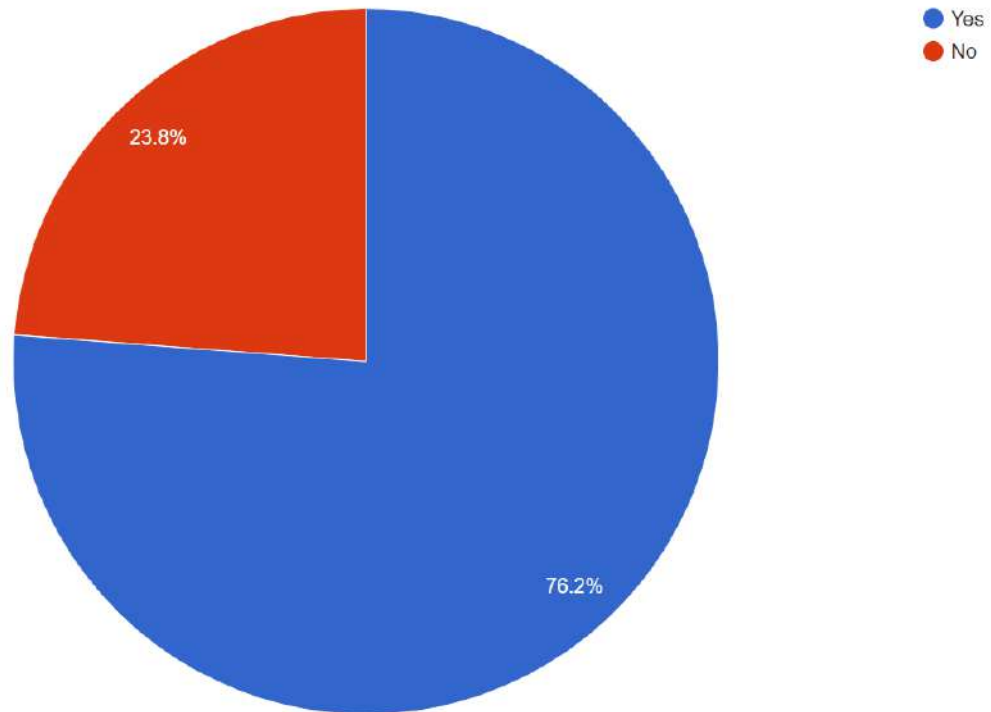


95.5% answered yes that they need a car parking at their home. With only 4.5% answering no.

Why?

Many people live in rural communities which would require a car to get to work or for leisure. There were some concerns over the lack of off-street parking causing congestion and pedestrians being unable to use paths. Concerns over lack of public transport across Colchester especially in rural areas. Some comments from disabled drivers needing close access to a car, as well as families with young children. Other comments included EV charging stations not being suitable on the roads.

9. If you consider car parking is required as part of your home, does this need to be provided within the plot? i.e. directly in front of or adjacent to your home?

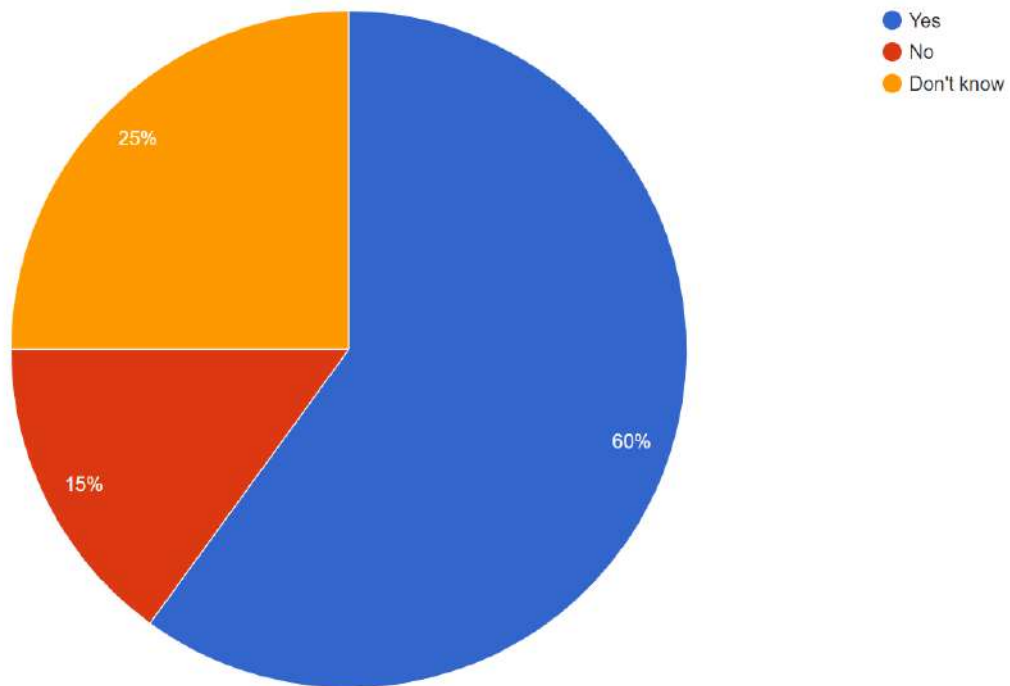


Why?

The majority of those who answered would prefer a parking space next to their house for the following reasons:

- Convenient for disabilities and young children
- Security
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Could increase electric car owners

10. Should all new homes have access to an electric car charging point?



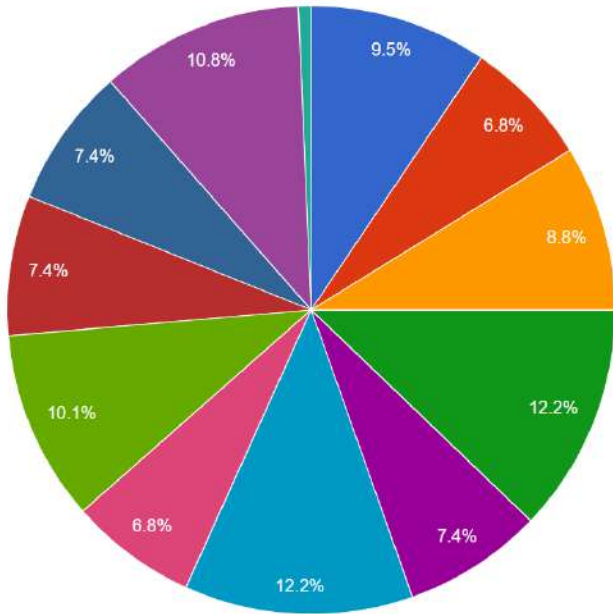
Communities

1. What do you think makes a good community?

Comments include fostering a diverse community with various ages and ethnic backgrounds, ensuring safety, affordable housing, and access to amenities. It highlights the significance of green spaces, local interaction, and community cohesion, as well as the importance of mental and physical health services, good education, and job opportunities. In summary, to create a clean, attractive, and safe environment where residents feel a strong sense of belonging and pride.

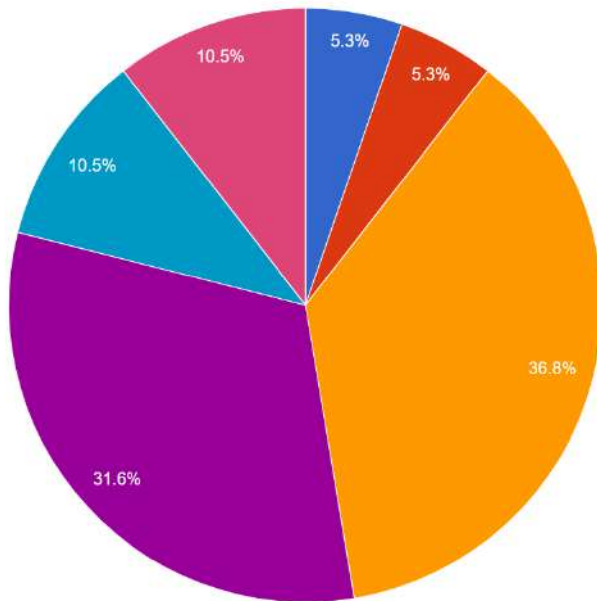
- Safety
- Play areas for mix of ages
- Local amenities
- Accessible
- Green spaces
- People make the community
- Jobs for local people
- Mixed housing

2. Which facilities make a community?



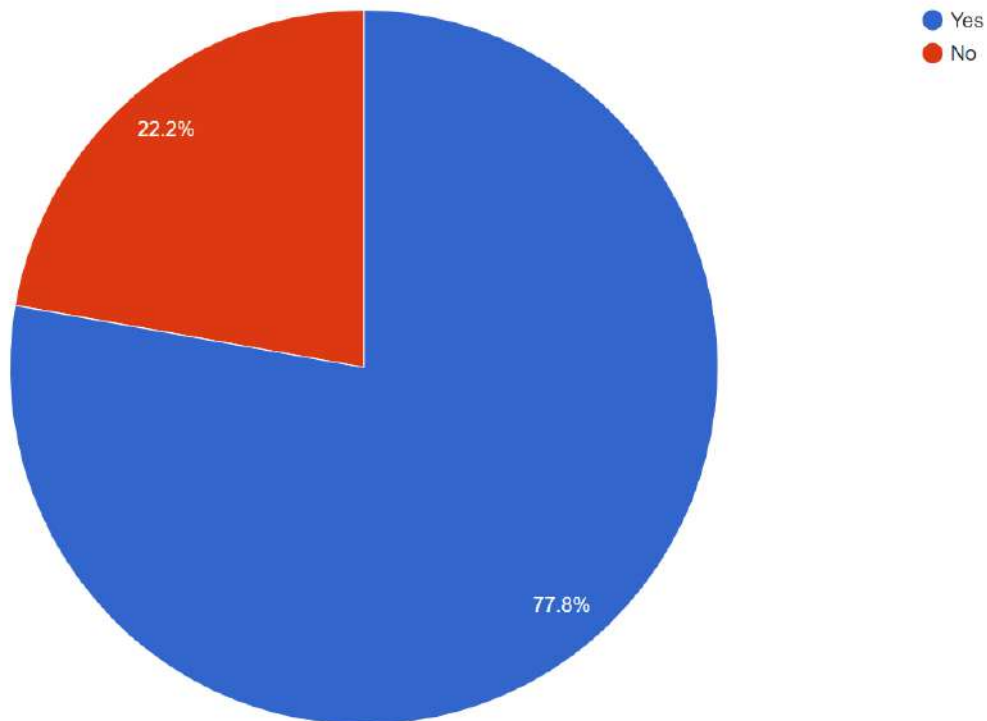
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools, Universities, and other educational facilities
- Community centres/village halls
- Open space, allotments and play areas
- Sports clubs and centres
- Local shops
- Leisure and cultural centres
- Cafes, restaurants, bars and pubs/public house
- Places of worship and cemeteries
- Libraries
- Doctors surgeries, dentists, hospitals and other medical centres
- Other

3. What do you consider to be your community?



- The street in which you live
- A cluster of streets e.g., those which were developed at the same time such as an estate
- Neighbourhood
- The village or town in which you live
- Parish/Ward
- Other

4. Is it important that services and facilities are located close together?



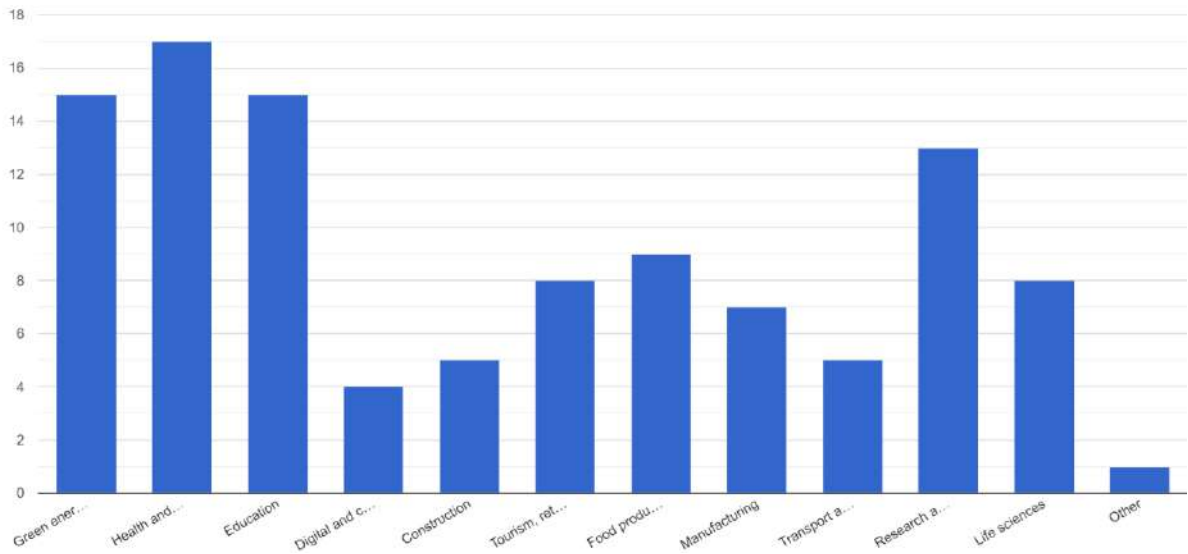
Employment

1. Where do you think jobs should be created? Rank these locations from highest to lowest priority

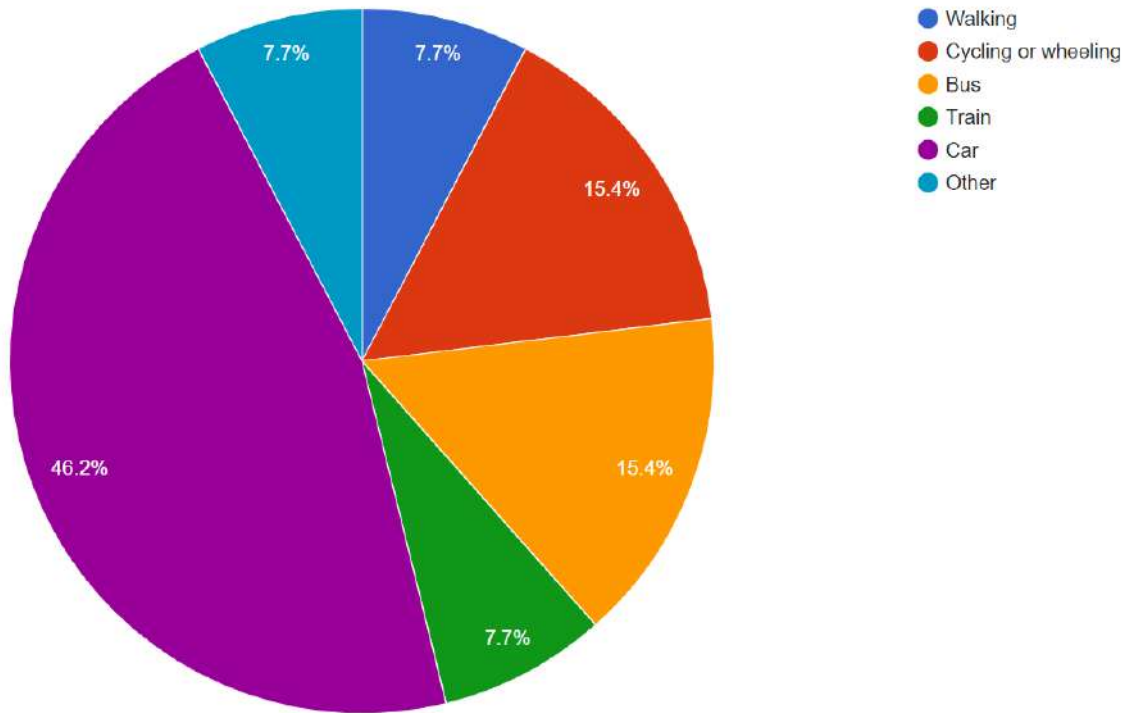
- Colchester City Centre
- Urban Area of Colchester (outside of City Centre)
- Large Settlements
- Small Settlements
- Hamlets

Most responses support the approach to economic growth based on the current hierarchy with the City Centre and Urban area of Colchester being ranked first. The least favoured location for new jobs were hamlets.

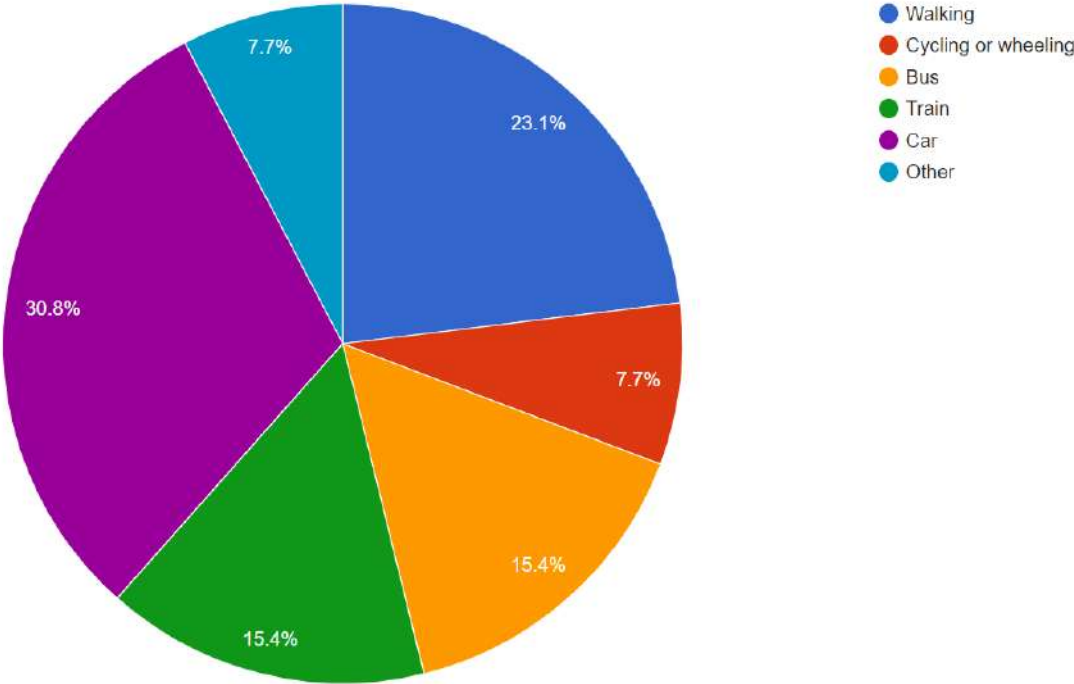
2. Which sectors of employment do you think new jobs are needed?



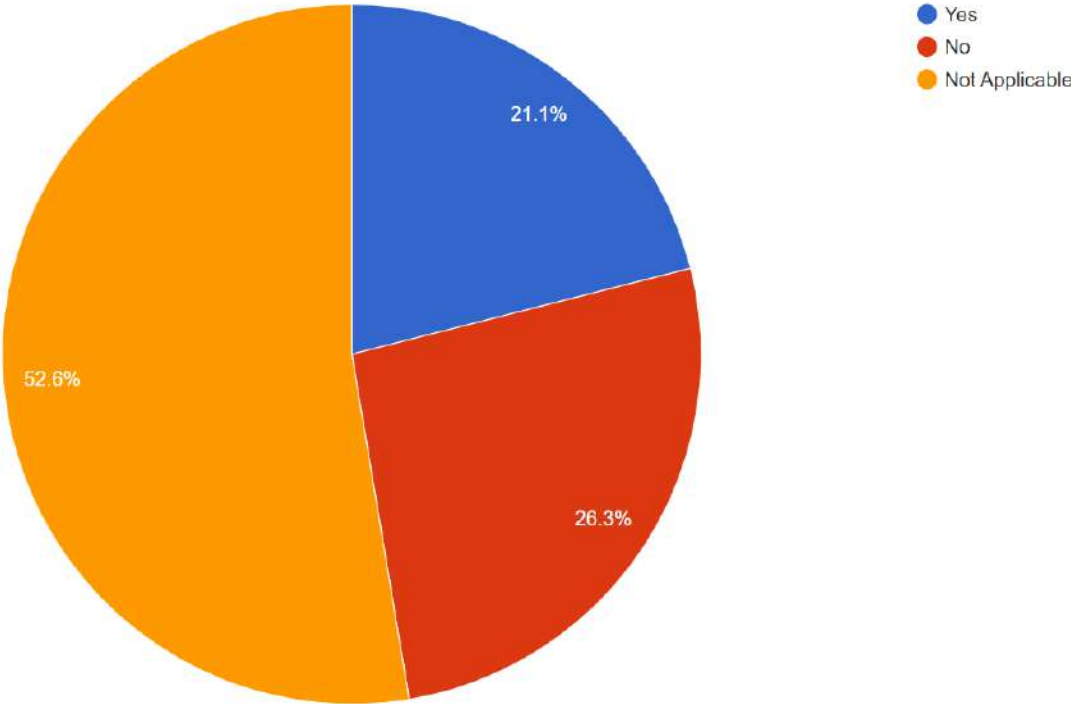
3. Which transport method do you currently use to travel to work?



4. Which transport method would you prefer to use to travel to work?

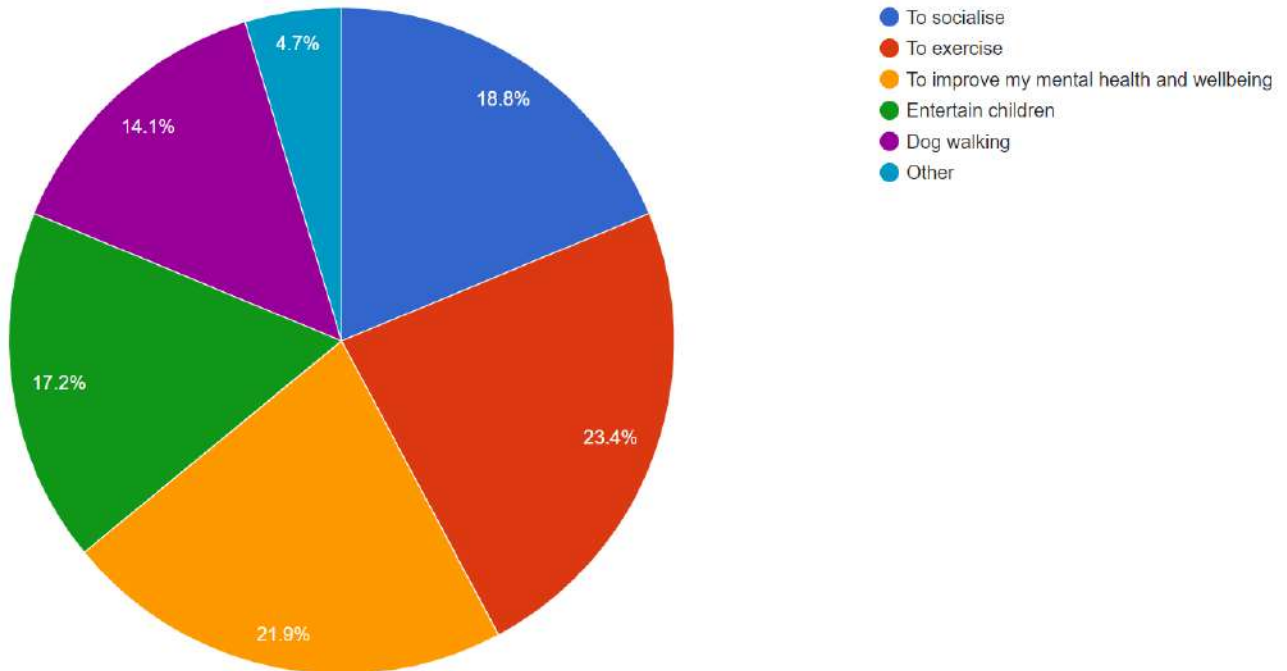


5. If you are a home/remote or hybrid worker, would you consider using facilities or working from a co working hub? i.e not the office or your home



Natural and Historic Environment

1. Why do you visit a public space, such as a park, playing field or beach?



2. How do you think the natural environment can be best enhanced?

Overall the emphasis is on protecting the natural environment.

- Restrictions on dogs
- Tackle antisocial behaviour by installing cameras
- Footpaths/cycle paths and bridleways to allow to access for all
- Plant wildflowers/trees in the correct places
- Protect/restore the natural environment
- Promote clean energy
- Introduce comprehensive recycling programs
- Water conservation
- Introduce green incentives for business and individuals to adopt environmentally friendly practices
- Create functional natural environments to be inclusive for all
- Abiding by planning laws

3. Rank these elements of the existing environment in order of their priority to be protected and enhanced

- Countryside
- National Landscapes – Dedham Vale
- Conservation Areas

- Coastline
- Rivers and Waterways
- Historic Buildings
- Archaeological Sites

The highest-ranking environment to be protected and enhanced was the countryside, followed closely by National Landscapes. The least favoured environment for protection and enhancement was Archaeological sites.

4. How do you think heritage assets can best be enhanced?

There were some concerns over maintenance and costs involved, some support for tourism to fund projects, others against tourism as locals are unlikely to use it. Education, history and preservation were consistent comments made.

Design

1. What do you think is good design? Include images and/or examples from Colchester, Essex or elsewhere.

Community led and consulted design was mentioned throughout this question, the design on the development should work well for who are using it. Some comments on design being noninvasive of existing development and aesthetically pleasing. Connecting new with old as well as well integrated landscapes. Mixed-use and varied styles of houses including high density was preferred by some.

2. What do you think is bad design?

The main concerns were where design doesn't meet the needs of its users, the design fails to address the primary needs or solve the problems it is intended to, e.g. lack of pavements, not enough parking and also car dominant developments. Some concern over the lack of accessibility where the design does not accommodate people with disabilities, limiting its usability. There was mention of ugly, unappealing standard house types with little variant and other comments where there was a lacking of coherence in style and colour schemes.

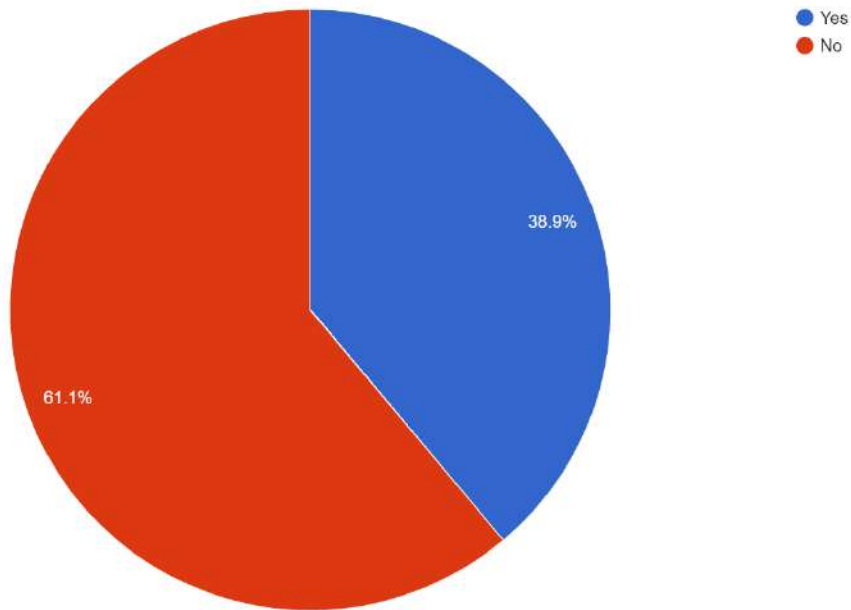
3. What does beauty mean to you?

The most common answer to this question was nature.

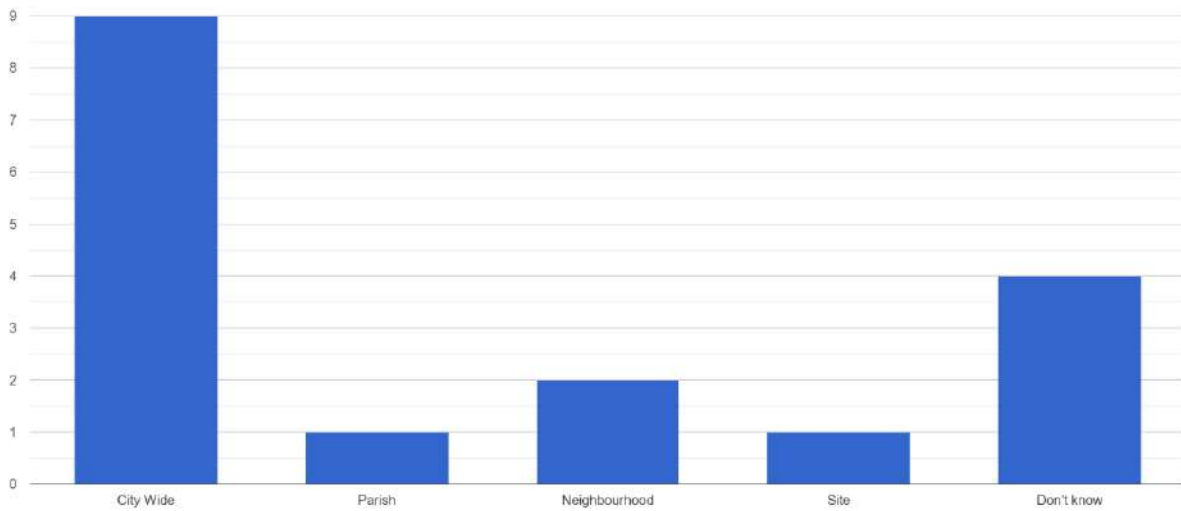
- Unspoilt countryside
- Green open spaces – mentioned, Mersea, Wivenhoe, Middlewick, Colchester Castle Park, Friday Woods,
- Gardens
- Historic villages

- Good architecture

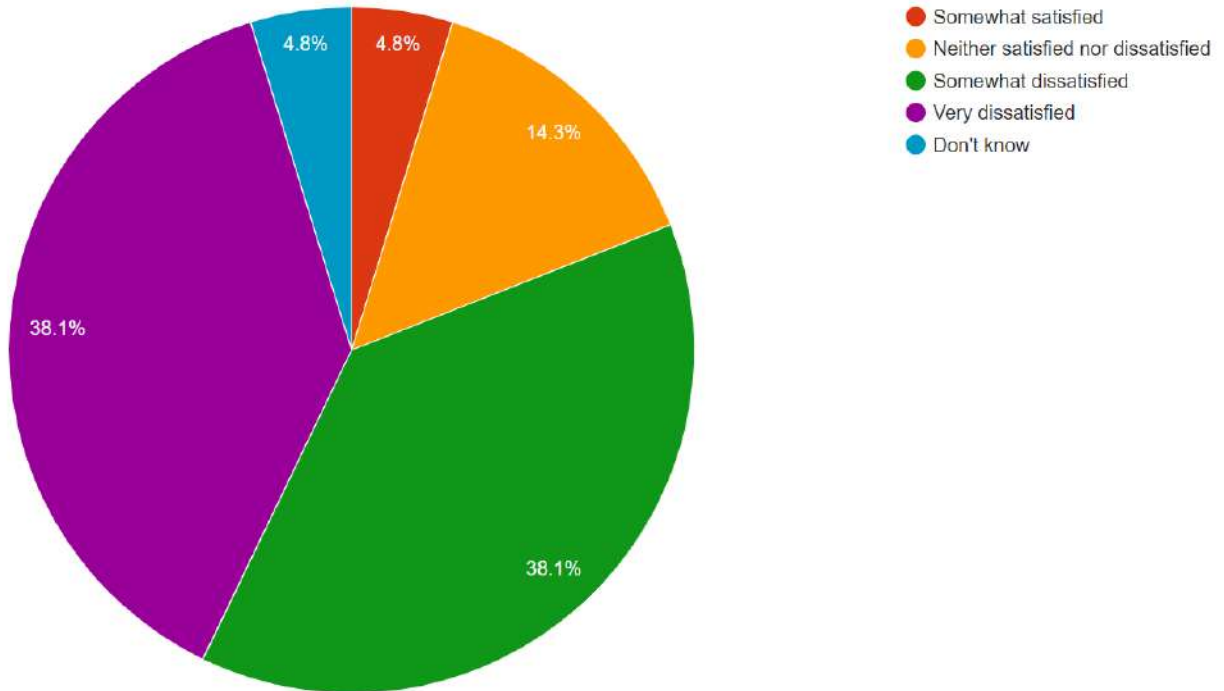
4. Are you aware of the national requirement for Authority wide design codes?



5. At what scale do you think design codes would be most effective?



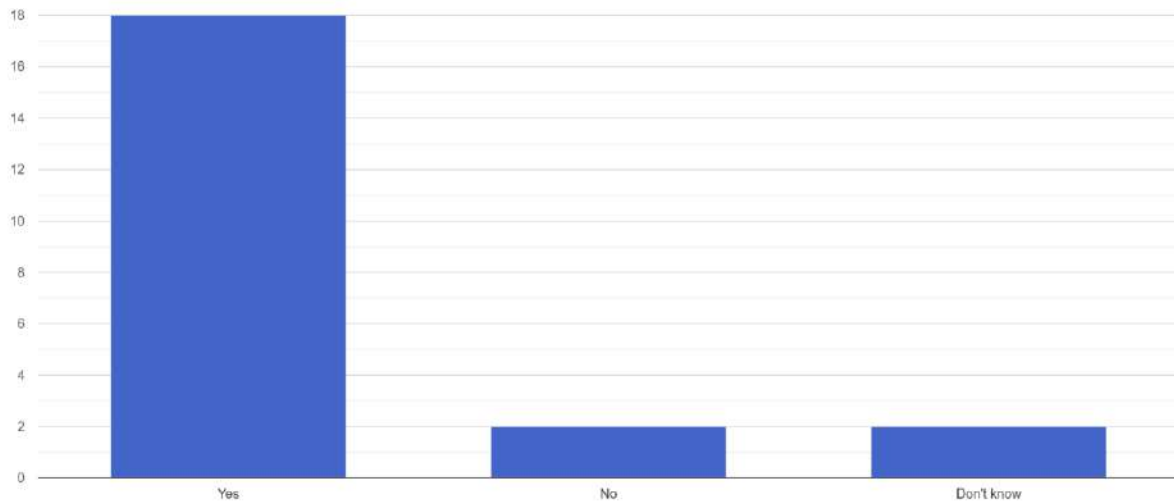
6. How satisfied are you with the appearance of new developments being built in Colchester? Why?



Why?

There were some comments that density is too high with small roads and not enough parking. Other comments said that recent developments are too car dependent. There were many concerns that there aren't enough green spaces on new developments and that EV charging, solar panels and heat pumps should be standard.

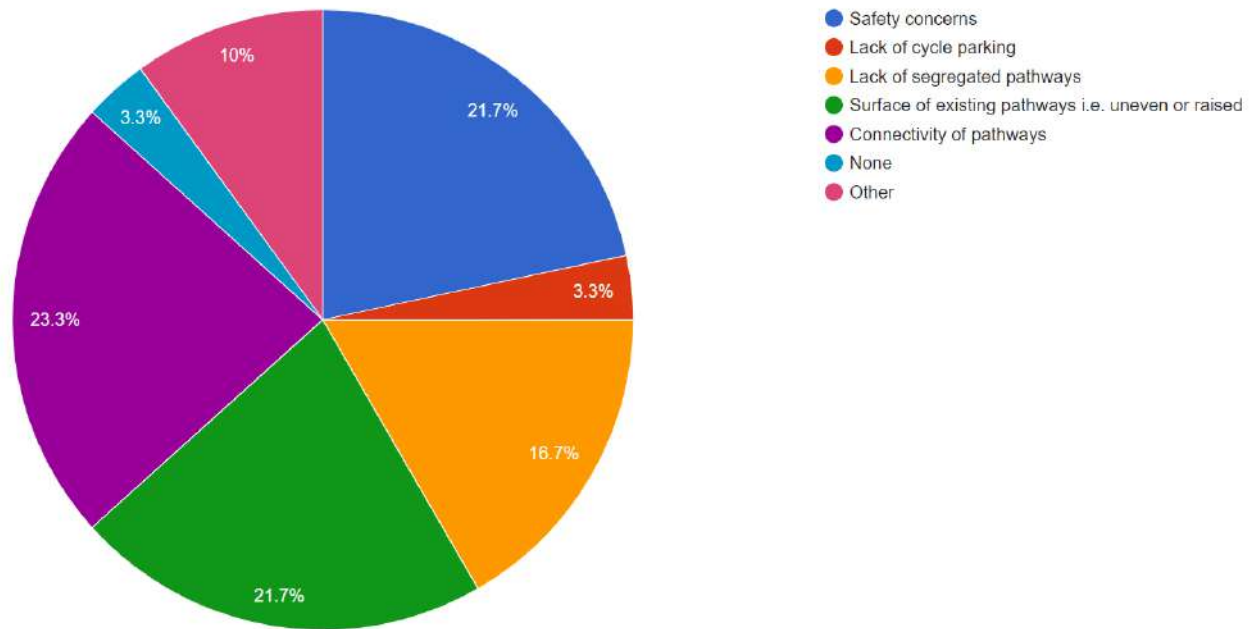
7. Should all new buildings have solar panels?



- Multi-functional or co-located spaces e.g. children’s play area and outdoor gym
- More variety of spaces
- Improved accessibility within the space
- Walking/cycling routes
- Improved safety e.g. lighting, pathways, multiple entrances and exits
- More regular maintenance
- Designated dog walking area
- Sports facilities
- Access to shops and services
- Other (please specify)

The highest-ranking answer was access to green space with 50% ranking this top. The lowest ranking answer was a designated dog walking area.

2. What barriers do you face which prevent or reduce your ability to travel in a more active way?



‘Other’ barriers included, age, disability and distance.

Planning and Development Industry Questionnaire

13 responses (some members of the public responded to this questionnaire)

Design Policy, Codes and Frameworks

1. What do you think is important to include in a design policy?

- Establishing a clear framework for policy that integrates community input and addresses the needs of the area.
- Development should mitigate carbon emissions, utilise green and blue infrastructure, and adopt sustainable construction methods to enhance resilience against climate change.
- Design policies should reflect local history while allowing for contemporary development, incorporating detailed design standards that honor local character. Including architectural details.
- Policies should promote active living by creating environments conducive to physical activity and well-being.
- Design policies must be adaptable to reflect broader county and national updates while maintaining a commitment to community safety and quality of life.

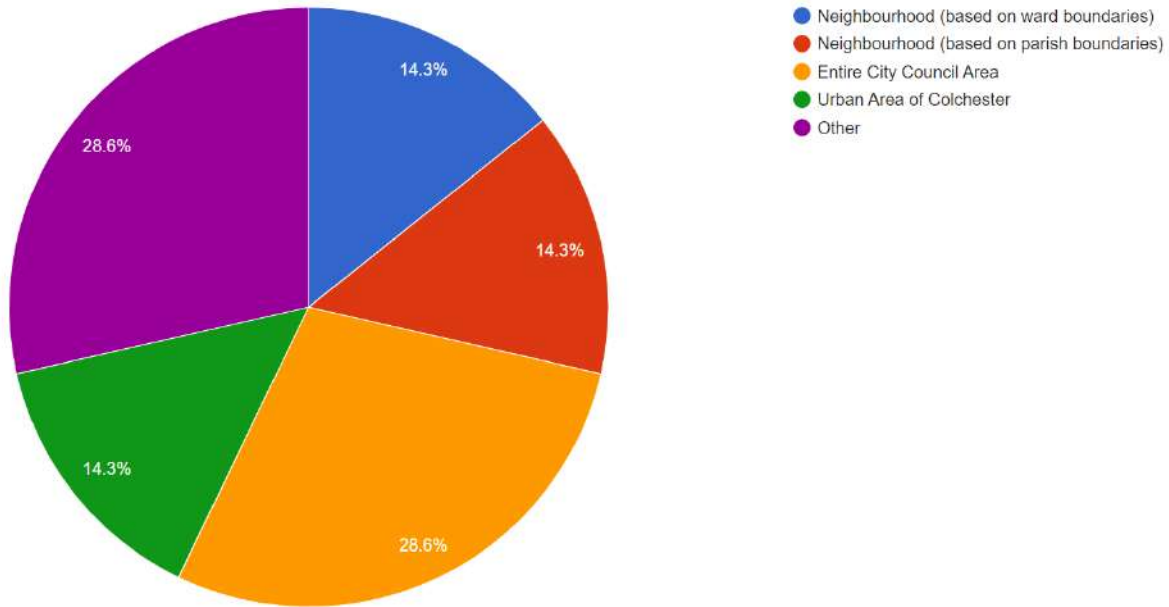
2. What do you think should not be included in a design policy?

- Design policies should avoid excessive detail and not explicitly include elements from the Essex Design Guide to allow for updates and changes over time.
- Concerns that detailed guidelines can dilute the main policy and should implement instead.
- Some calls for flexibility in design standards, such as average rather than minimum garden sizes and appropriate car parking sizes.

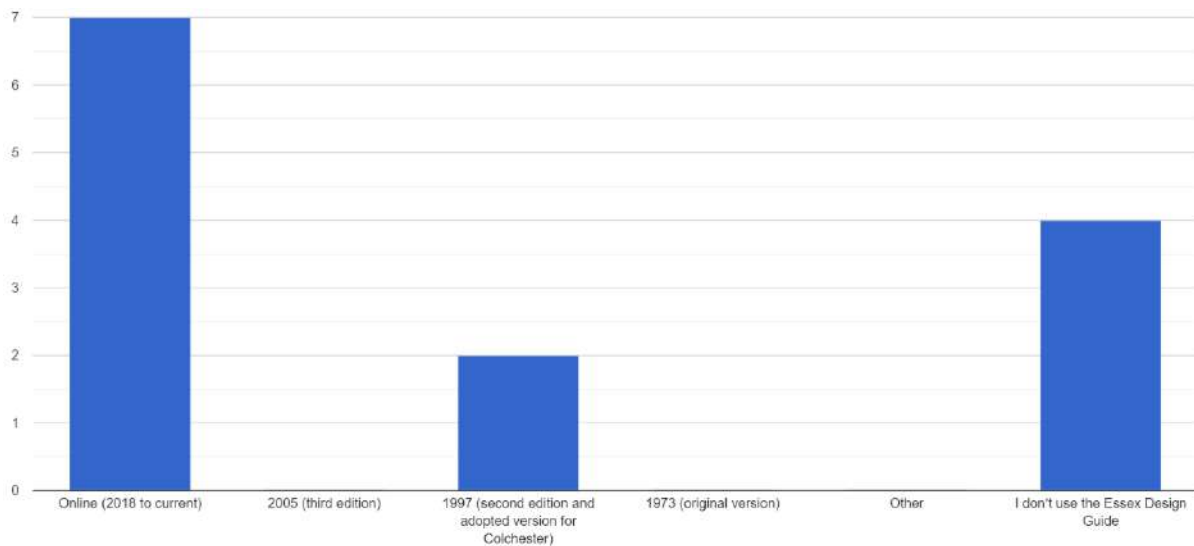
3. What design codes do you want to see in Colchester for 2041?

- Designing spaces that retain environmental benefits, reduce commute times
- Offer affordable housing aligned with local wages with increased social housing
- Robust infrastructure
- Preserving historical elements.
- Clear guidelines for sustainable water management, including innovations like rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling, to enhance resilience against climate challenges.
- Some concerns on current low-quality housing practices and stresses the importance of high design standards to create distinctive, functional homes.
- Some support for a unified design code across CCC that reflects local character while allowing flexibility in development.

4. At what scale should there be a design code(s) created for Colchester?



5. Which version of the Essex Design Guide do you use, if any, when creating a scheme in Colchester?



6. Which aspects of the currently adopted Essex Design Guide (1997 version) are most important for Colchester and you would like to see retained as adopted guidance for Colchester?

- Some comments on simplifying the guidance, focusing on diagrams over text. It should incorporate modern concepts like 20-minute neighborhoods and include detailed standards for vernacular architecture.
- Some sustainability concerns with the need for updated guidance that reflects contemporary sustainability challenges, particularly related to drought and flooding resilience, is highlighted. The aim is for designs that support economic growth while achieving net-zero targets by 2030.
- Some support for the domestic extensions section.

7. Which aspects of the Essex Design Guide (online version from 2018 to today) are most important to apply to Colchester?

- Landscapes and Greenspaces: This section stresses the multifunctionality of greenspaces managing surface water runoff, reducing flood risk, and enhancing biodiversity.
- Parking and Infrastructure
- The principles established for Garden Communities are crucial for Colchester's future, focusing on green infrastructure, self-sustainability, and accessible transport systems, especially in urban-edge developments.
- Themes around promoting health and active lifestyles are also highlighted, indicating a holistic approach to urban design.

8. Are there examples of policy frameworks that have worked well elsewhere and why have they been successful?

- Full district design code for part of Cumbria (no details included)
- Chelmsford Making Places Supplementary Planning Document
- Historic England made reference to their website

Design

1. What do you think is good design? Include examples and/or images from Colchester, Essex or elsewhere

- Consideration of Local impact
- Reflect the local architectural style and character, avoiding generic designs often seen in mass-produced developments.
- Good design enhances the surrounding area, responding to local context and history.
- Alignment with context
- Good design can address climate change impacts
- Successful design results in unique, locally distinctive places that people are drawn to

- Integration of Water Management and Housing

2. What do you think is bad design? Include examples and/or images from Colchester, Essex or elsewhere.

- Bad design is bland, go-anywhere and generic. Poorly designed developments can be incompatible with their surroundings.
- A lack of alignment with spatial strategies and unwillingness to achieve goals towards sustainability would contribute to a lack of identity and consequently to poor design.
- Designs that are not future proofed against a changing climate and environmental challenges such as flood risk and drought.

Workshop

Engagement under the Placemaking theme also included a Residents Panel Workshop for Placemaking, which was held on 23 July 2024. Residents Panel members were invited to attend an in-person workshop to inform the early work on Placemaking for the Local Plan Review. There were 9 Resident panel members in attendance. The members were placed in groups and asked to complete a series of questions in groups and as a whole room.

Exercise 1

What do you like about where you live?

The Residents Panel members were asked to discuss in their groups and write their collaborated answers down. The below table summarises their answers and have been grouped where they relate to similar themes and listed in the table below.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Closeness to centre	GP, Library, shops, Dentist	Housing estates, Greenstead, Shrub End (pre 1980)
The night time economy	Walks	Accessible green spaces
Transport links (Stansted and London)	Monkwick	Making the most of old architecture (Red Lion Walk)
Roman History	Mixed housing, missed family groups	Good bus service
Increased events in castle park	Bus route	Good housing layout
Farmers market at the Mercury	Abbey fields, Middlewick	
Castle Park	Gardens	
Green space	Appropriate transport	
	Parker Morris standards	

What would you improve about where you live?

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Improve public transport (reliability and frequency)	Space standards, lack of garden size, not enough space for parking	Wider roads in new build for buses and charge cars
Pedestrianise the high street	Suitable public transport	Community member taking responsibility for their area
Celebrate our Roman history more	Lack of availability for single occupancy	Path/road improvements in existing streets
Electric buses	Infrastructure	Follow Greenstead model for pedestrian movement
More things for the younger generation	Lack of accommodation for disabled people	Community facilities/hub
Reduce density of new builds, more green space	Leave space for different needs in the future to allow for repurposing	Turn redundant schools into community hubs
Wider roads, bigger gardens for new builds	Underutilization of housing stock	
More and cheaper parking	Look at history – original plans for areas like Monkwick and Prettygate to build communities	
More public services (doctors/dentists)		
More variety of shops		

Exercise 2

Where should growth be located?

In this exercise the groups were given areas where growth could be directed and they were asked to order in their preferred locations highest to lowest priority.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
1	Hamlets	City Centre	Colchester City Centre
2	Colchester City Centre	Urban area of Colchester	Hamlets
3	Urban area of Colchester	Large towns and villages	Small villages
4	Large towns and villages	Small villages	Urban area of Colchester
5	Small villages	Hamlets	Large towns and villages

Exercise 3

For the final exercise, the panel was asked to send in photos of design that they thought was good or bad to use during the workshop. We displayed these on a projector screen for the room to see and talked though what the room thought was good and bad. After the discussion each participant was able to vote whether they thought it was bad or good design.







Photo 1	Voted Good design
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40 house development• Green areas• mixed housing development – multiple occupancy, students, single, family• garages, ample parking• Social nature.• American design• Good transport links
Photo 2	Voted good design
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modern style flats• Low rise• Single entrance

Photo 3	Equally good and bad votes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrianised high street • Safer, no cars • Excludes access for disabilities
Photo 4	Voted Good design
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed housing • Houses look different • Large central green, area of focus, social and community feel • Close to A12
Photo 5	Voted good design
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of green open space • Integral shopping areas • Lower density housing
Photo 6	Voted bad design
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misused area • Parking on grass and ruining large open space • Car park required to mitigate this

The following photos were supplied by the planning team

Photo 7



Voted bad design

- Concrete jungle
- No green space
- Wouldn't want to live there

Photo 8



Voted bad design

- High density
- Green space
- High rise is not good for families
- Sterile

Health and wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing crosses many aspects of planning. Other themes include green network, climate change and placemaking, which are all intertwined with issues which relate to health and wellbeing. For the purpose of considering the issues and options at a high level to help inform the new Local Plan, engagement was focused on two key elements, recognising the distinction between the two for planning considerations:

1. health and wellbeing through design and placemaking;
2. planning for healthcare infrastructure.

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance recognises that planning and health need to be considered together. Paragraph 001 of that guidance summarises the two ways planning can contribute to healthier communities; • in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and • in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system (taking into account the changing needs of the population).

The Planning Practice Guidance defines a healthy place as one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages: • It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing; • It is a place which is inclusive and promotes social interaction; • It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance sets out the approach to engagement between relevant organisations in plan making. Working with the Director of Public Health it is necessary to involve the key groups in the local health and wellbeing system. The Integrated Care System approach brings together the Clinical Commissioning Groups responsible for planning and commissioning of healthcare services and facilities. These are now brought together for the Colchester City Council area under the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance.

The primary focus for engagement on this theme has been through the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance Health and Planning Subgroup. This has provided the opportunity for the health care professionals and other key stakeholders to be engaged at an early stage and throughout plan making to ensure the Local Plan adequately plans for healthcare infrastructure and shapes and influences placemaking for the benefit of health and wellbeing. The Board agreed to support engagement in this way as a vehicle to inform the Local Plan. Other key stakeholders such as Sport England were invited to engage directly to help inform the issues and options linked to this theme. Engaging with wider stakeholders and local communities on health and

wellbeing matters is also important and the Placemaking questionnaire included questions relating to health and wellbeing.

The importance of access to open space to people's health and wellbeing is evident from a number of the placemaking questionnaire responses, including it being ranked as the highest answer to the question specifically related to health and wellbeing.

The Health and Planning Subgroup initially informed the scope of the evidence which is relevant and available to inform the broad ranging issues embedded in health and wellbeing of our communities. Agreement of the indicators that the Local Plan may be able to influence emerged from this workshop. Building on this an evidence base document covering the relevant issues and indicators for health and wellbeing is being finalised which will inform the new Local Plan.

A second Subgroup workshop focused on the headlines emerging from draft evidence based on the Healthy Places Guidance listed below, to consider potential policy responses to some of the key issues. Input from the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) also contributed to this work. This has been valuable as the TCPA have launched a toolkit to support Local Planning Authorities in embedding health and wellbeing in Local Plans. ([Planning for healthy places - a guide on embedding health in Local Plans and planning policy in England - Town and Country Planning Association \(tcpa.org.uk\)](https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/planning-for-healthy-places-a-guide-on-embedding-health-in-local-plans-and-planning-policy-in-england)). The evidence base is being finalised in consultation with the SubGroup, and it will be published and used to inform plan drafting later in the year.

Healthy Places Guidance: (based on Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA))

1. Active and Sustainable Environments / Active & Sustainable Travel
2. Design of Homes and Neighbourhoods
3. Access to Open Green and Blue Spaces
4. Supporting Communities and Neighbourhoods for the life-course (mainly for public realm)
5. Access to Healthier Food Environments
6. Access to Education, Employment, Skills and Training
7. Access to Healthcare Infrastructure and Self-care
8. Environmental Sustainability / Addressing Health Impacts

The evidence will highlight the relevant indicators and issues under each of the above themes which can be considered further as the plan is prepared, recognising the opportunity to embed connections between health and wellbeing and various other planning objectives.

Early Thoughts for the Colchester Local Plan Review

Prior to commencement of the iterative Issues and Options engagement for the new Colchester Local Plan in November 2023, a number of thoughts have been provided to the Council from members of the public and local groups. These are summarised below.

Colchester Cycle Campaign

We would like:

- Improved cycle links at Crown Interchange
- A cycle route from Manningtree station to Dedham and perhaps Flatford
- A cycle route from Wivenhoe to Brightlingsea
- Improved and signposted cycle access to Harwich International Port, including on the port site itself
- An assurance that the government's Gear Change and LTN 1/20 is given full weight in all future work of the planning department
- Tendring's Local Plan to reflect the ambitions in the Colchester draft active travel Supplementary Planning Document
- The creation of rural cycle infrastructure along the A137 between Manningtree (north) and Garden City, Lawford
- The creation of rural cycle infrastructure along the A133 between Elmstead Market and Essex University
- The developer of any extension to the Memorial Way estate (former Betts factory site next to the Crown Interchange) to pay for high quality cycle links at Ipswich Road south into Colchester (even though the money would go from TDC to Colchester city council)
- A quiet road network south of Lawford using existing legislation, as used extensively by Suffolk county council
- A plan come forward for the future of Bromley Road/Crockleford Hill including better pedestrian and cycle safety — this is a key leisure route out of Colchester and the hill could be bypassed (to be left access only) as part of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community
- Colchester Cycling Campaign to be a consultee on cycling provision in the Borders garden community, and cycle routes between Greenstead and Elmstead Market
- A rural cycle route between Elmstead Market and Monkey Street, Little Bromley (traffic reduction and control needed)
- Improved cycle facilities to and from Manningtree railway station in all directions and improvements to the existing cycleway to Brantham
- Better cycle routes to Brightlingsea
- Consideration of the effect of climate change on cycle routes [based on this map](#).
- A way to enable the easy conversion of selected footpaths to bridleways (ECC responsibility but worth broaching)
- The [Sunshine Coast Cycleway](#) plans incorporated into the Local Plan.

- All cycle parking meeting the conditions laid out in LTN 1/20 and the Essex Parking Guide; cycle hangars should be considered in all new developments and be retrofitted where required by residents

Sir Bob Russell

- Concerned that Middlewick remains in the Local Plan for development when it is obvious that it is contrary to the Council's Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document.
- Concerned that there is a dumbing down of the Council's statutory duty to uphold the importance of Conservation Areas and in some instances Listed Buildings within those Areas.
- The failure to promote the Roman Circus – lack of signage to it from the City Centre, likewise to the Roman Christian Church.
- Proposals to develop the former ABRO Workshop site should include a proper "sense of arrival" at the Roman Circus Centre including provision for tourist coaches.

Welshwood Park Residents Association

Propose the creation of a nature belt around North East Colchester, linking Bullock Wood with Welsh Wood and on to Churn Wood, by default linking with The Broomhangings.

Benefits:

- Create wild belt corridor
- Restoring depleted natural habitats
- Improved physical and mental health
- Defined north eastern boundary for Colchester City
- Trees to capture carbon
- Paths allow cycle commuting

Existing footpaths could link to Essex University, Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community via Salary Brook to Highwoods and Severalls Lane. Paths could be used for cycling.

Would require cooperation with Tendring District Council and delivery in phases. Several public footpaths in local area of Welshwood Park are well used by families, dog walkers, cyclists and retired people. Use has increased following housing developments along Bromley Road. Important paths for people of Welshwood Park, Parsons Heath, Greenstead and people moving into new housing developments and those in wider Colchester area. Various health benefits of exercising in fresh area. Important for preserving areas for wildlife.

Various Members of the Public

Middlewick Ranges should be removed from the Local Plan and identified as a County Park/Nature Reserve.

British Horse Society

- Equestrians included in new or improved provisions unless evidence based reasons for their exclusion.
- Improvements for walking and cyclists should not be to the detriment of other users including horses.
- Reduction in suitable pathways for horse riders as increasing pressure for development and houses and industry.
- Riders excluded from grass verges by creation of foot-cycleways
- Consideration of safe access for equestrians both on roads and the links to the PROW network

Comments outside of specific consultations

In addition, the Council has received a number of comments concerning the Local Plan outside of any Issues and Options engagements from a few sources, where these may be relevant to local plan matters, consideration can be given to points raised where appropriate.