



Colchester Preferred Options Local Plan

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Colchester City Council

Final report

Prepared by LUC

February 2025

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Land Use Consultants Limited

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Colchester City Council commissioned LUC in March 2024 to provide critical friend support to support the Council in its preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the emerging Colchester Local Plan. As part of this commission, LUC was also tasked with the preparation of the full SA Report for the Local Plan once the scoping stage was completed.

1.2 This report relates to the Colchester Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan and it should be read in conjunction with that document.

The plan area

1.3 Colchester lies within the county of Essex in the East of England (see Figure 1.1). The District covers approximately 32,400 hectares and borders Suffolk in the north, along with three Essex districts – Tendring in the east, Braintree in the west and Maldon in the south west. At its centre is the City of Colchester, surrounded by villages and smaller towns of distinct and complementary character. Some are in Dedham Vale, a designated National Landscape.

1.4 Beyond the settlement of Colchester, the City's largest towns are Wivenhoe, Tiptree, Marks Tey and West Mersea. Mersea Island is at the south of the District, and it forms its principal coastal area. The centre of Colchester, broadly defined by the area within the Roman city walls, is a focal point for the whole City – containing one of the Eastern region's busiest shopping destinations, as well as many major cultural experiences and leisure attractions.

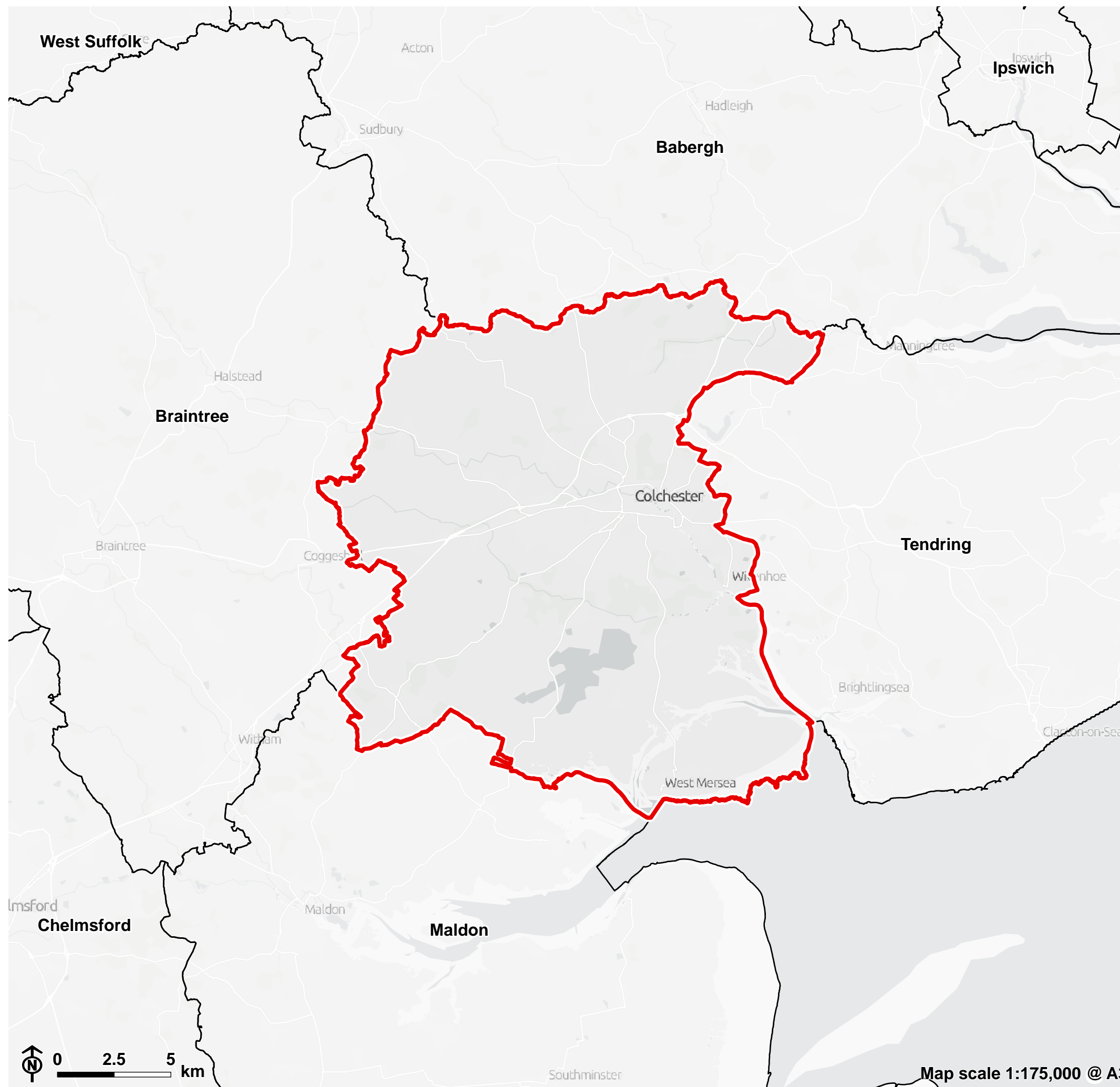


Figure 1.1: Location

- Colchester District
- Neighbouring local authority

Outline of the Plan and its objectives

1.5 The current development plan for Colchester comprises:

- Section 1 Local Plan (adopted February 2021)
- Section 2 Local Plan (adopted July 2022)
- Essex Mineral Local Plan (2014)
- Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)

1.6 Neighbourhood Plans are also ‘made’ in Colchester for:

- Copford with Easthorpe;
- Great Tey;
- Myland and Braiswick;
- Boxted;
- Wivenhoe;
- West Bergholt;
- Eight Ash Green;
- Marks Tey;
- West Mersea; and
- Tiptree.

1.7 Furthermore, a neighbourhood plan area was designated for Great Horkesley in June 2022. Work on a Neighbourhood Plan for Messing and Stanway was abandoned and no recent activity in this area has been undertaken.

1.8 The Section 1 Plan was prepared jointly by Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council, and Braintree District Council – the ‘local planning authorities’ (LPAs) collectively known as the ‘North Essex Authorities’ to form the first part of each of the authorities’ respective Local Plans. The Section 1 Plan is designed to articulate a spatial portrait of the North Essex area, including its main settlements and strategic infrastructure, as a framework for accommodating future planned growth. It also provides a strategic vision for how planned growth in North Essex will be realised. The Section 2 Plan provides the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for Colchester up to 2033.

1.9 The Section 1 Plan requires a Development Plan Document (DPD) to be produced to provide more detail in relation to the development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community land for which is allocated partly in Colchester and partly in Tendring. This is being produced jointly with Tendring District Council and is overseen by a Joint Committee. In September 2023 Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.

New Local Plan outline

1.10 Although the current Local Plan was adopted relatively recently, an early review is taking place to ensure that it remains up to date and can meet future development needs. There is a statutory requirement for Local Plans to be reviewed every 5 years, which in the case of the District means a new Local Plan will be required by February 2026. The new Local Plan will include policies and allocations for Colchester, covering the plan period 2025 to 2041.

1.11 The City’s green network and waterways and the ‘creating a better environment’ agenda formed the starting point and key purpose of the new Local Plan Review. The approach is to protect and enhance the green network and waterways through the new Local Plan. This approach responds directly to the growing demands linked to the green agenda enabling delivery on climate change, health and wellbeing and biodiversity requirements as well as

delivering growth requirements in a way which has planning for a better environment at its heart.

1.12 The plan will aim to deliver allocations to meet Colchester's growth needs. New housing allocations will facilitate new green spaces, biodiversity net gain and wider environmental enhancements and under this approach the Council can prioritise allocating sites that will create a better environment. Focussing on enhancing the green network and the best outcomes in terms of biodiversity net gain will help to justify the selection of housing sites. The provision of environmental benefits and green spaces has always been a recognised “trade-off” for development. The difference that the Council are suggesting through the new Local Plan, is that the approach starts from identifying the optimum opportunities for the environmental enhancements through green network and biodiversity net gain which provide benefits to local communities, health and wellbeing, wildlife and climate change and link that to the strategy for development to enable its delivery and provide the best outcomes for place making.

1.13 The Council has completed the first phase of engagement on the emerging new Local Plan, known as Issues and Options. Rather than the Issues and Options consultation consisting of one consultation document which is consulted upon for a 6-week period, the Council conducted the Issues and Options as an iterative process during November 2023 to July 2024. The engagement focussed on the following different themes:

- 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

1.14 The comments received during the themed engagement have been considered by the Council 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.

1.15 The Colchester City Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan comprises the following main components:

- Local Plan Vision and Objectives.
- Strategic policies addressing overarching key issues of relevance to the District, including promoting health and wellbeing, protecting the environment and green network, and setting the spatial strategy for the plan area as well as the overall level of housing and employment growth to be delivered for the plan period.
- More specific topic-based policies set out to guide development in the District, across a number of themes. The policies included are set out under the following headings:
 - Environment
 - Green network and waterways
 - Landscape and coast
 - Net zero homes and buildings, renewable energy and water
 - Homes
 - Economy
 - Community and social infrastructure
 - Place and connectivity
- A number of policies are also included to allocate and safeguard sites to meet the growth needs of the District. This includes a number of site allocations that have been carried forward from the adopted Local Plan and a number of new sites that are needed to deliver the spatial strategy. These policies are presented by the settlements at which the land in question is found.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.16 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for Development Plan Documents. For these documents it is also necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments **[See reference 1]**, they are necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes are being made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime operates. Therefore, the SEA regulations remain in force and it is a legal requirement for the Colchester Local Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

1.17 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) received royal assent in October 2023 and sets out the direction for planning, making provisions to support the levelling-up agenda. As part of this, it seeks to streamline the planning process, including through a reform of existing EU-generated systems of SA/SEA, Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will eventually be replaced by a simpler process known as 'Environmental Outcomes Reports'. However, secondary legislation is required to introduce the new regime and at present the requirement to undertake SEA remains in force.

1.18 SA and SEA are tools used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. SEA considers only the environmental effects of a plan, while SA considers the plan's wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts. SA should meet all of the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, so a separate SEA should not be required.

1.19 An approach that satisfies both the requirements for SA and SEA using a single appraisal process is advocated in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). This is the process that is being undertaken by Colchester City Council. From here on, the term 'SA' should therefore be taken to mean 'SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Regulations'.

Requirements of the SEA Regulations and where they are met in this report

1.20 The relevant sections of the SA Report that are considered to meet the SEA Regulations requirements are signposted below. This information will be included in the SA Report at each stage of the SA to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met through the SA process.

Preparation of an environmental report

1.21 Preparation of an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated (Reg. 12). The information to be given is (Schedule 2):

- a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.
 - Covered in Chapter 1, Chapter 3 and Appendix B of this SA Report.
- b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.
 - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this SA Report.
- c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.

- Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this SA Report.
- d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.
 - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix C of this SA Report.
- e) The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.
 - Covered in Chapter 3 and Appendix B of this SA Report.
- f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.)
 - Covered in Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this SA Report.
- g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.
 - Covered in Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this SA Report.
- h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.
 - Covered in Chapter 2 of this SA Report.
- i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Reg. 17.
 - Covered in Chapter 7 of this SA Report.

- j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.
 - A separate non-technical summary document will be prepared to accompany the SA Report for the Regulation 19 Local Plan.
- The report shall include the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process to avoid duplication of the assessment (Reg. 12(3)).
 - Addressed throughout this SA Report.

Consultation requirements

1.22 When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the environmental report, the responsible Authority shall consult the consultation bodies. (Reg. 12(5)).

- Focussed consultation on the scope and level of detail of the SA was carried out with the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England for a 5 week period from April to May 2024.

1.23 Every draft plan or programme for which an environmental report has been prepared in accordance with regulation 12 and its accompanying report (“the relevant documents”) shall be made available for the purposes of consultation in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.

1.24 As soon as reasonably practical after the preparation of the relevant documents, the responsible Authority shall:

- Send a copy of those documents to each consultation body;
- Take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the preparation of the relevant documents to the attention of the persons who, in the Authority’s

opinion, are affected or likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions involved in the assessment and adoption of the plan or programme concerned, required under the Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Directive (“the public consultees”); and

■ Inform the public consultees of:

- (i) The address of the website at which the relevant documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
- (ii) The fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by email from the responsible authority;
- (iii) The fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by post from the responsible authority, provided that it is reasonably practicable for the authority to provide a copy by post;
- (iv) The address, email address and telephone number for the purpose of requesting a copy of the relevant documents either by email or by post;
- (v) Whether a charge will be made for copies of the relevant documents provided by post and the amount of any charge; and
- (vi) The telephone number which can be used to contact the responsible authority for enquiries in relation to the relevant documents.

1.25 The period referred to in paragraph (2) (d) must be of such length as will ensure that the consultation bodies and the public consultees are given an effective opportunity to express their opinion on the relevant documents. (Reg. 13 (1), (2), and (3)).

- Consultation on the draft Local Plan document will commence in March 2025 and run for 6 weeks. The consultation documents are accompanied by this SA Report.

1.26 Where a responsible Authority, other than the Secretary of State, is of the opinion that a plan or programme for which it is the responsible Authority is likely to have significant effects on the environment of a Member State, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable after forming that opinion:

- Notify the Secretary of State of its opinion and of the reasons for it; and
- Supply the Secretary of State with a copy of the plan or programme concerned, and of the accompanying environmental report. (Reg. 14 (1)).
 - The Local Plan is not expected to have significant effects on other EU Member States.

Taking the environmental report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making (Reg. 16)

Provision of information on the decision

1.27 As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme for which an environmental assessment has been carried out under these Regulations, the responsible Authority shall:

- Publish the plan or programme, as adopted, its accompanying environmental report and a statement containing the particulars specified in paragraph (4) (“the relevant adoption documents”) on a public website at which the documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
- Provide a copy of the relevant adoption documents by email to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request;

- Provide one copy of the relevant adoption documents by post to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person's request, unless it is not reasonably practicable to provide a copy by post for reasons connected to the effects of coronavirus, including restrictions on movement; and
- Make available a telephone number for the public to make enquiries in relation to the relevant adoption documents. (Reg. 16 (1)).
- To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted.

1.28 As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme:

- The responsible Authority shall inform (i) the consultation bodies; (ii) the persons who, in relation to the plan or programme, were public consultees for the purposes of regulation 13; and (iii) where the responsible Authority is not the Secretary of state, the Secretary of State, that the plan or programme has been adopted, and a statement containing the following particulars:
 - How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
 - How the environmental report has been taken into account;
 - How opinions expressed in response to: (i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible Authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;
 - How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;
 - The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
 - The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.
- To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted.

Monitoring

1.29 The responsible Authority shall monitor the significant effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action. (Reg. 17(1)).

- To be addressed after the Local Plan is adopted. Chapter 7 proposes a number of monitoring indicators.

Quality assurance

1.30 Environmental reports should be of a sufficient standard to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

- This report has been produced in line with current guidance and good practice for SEA/SA and this section demonstrates where the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met.

Structure of the SA Report

1.31 This chapter describes the background to the production of the Colchester Local Plan, an overview of the contents of the plan and the requirement to undertake SA. The remainder of this SA Report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 describes the approach that is being taken to the SA of the Colchester Local Plan.
- Chapter 3 describes the relationship between the Colchester Local Plan and other relevant plans, policies and programmes; summarises the social, economic and environmental characteristics of Colchester and identifies the key sustainability issues.

- Chapter 4 presents the SA findings for reasonable alternatives the Council has considered as part of the plan making process in relation to the broad distribution of growth in Colchester and to the site allocations.
- Chapter 5 presents the SA findings for the various elements of the draft Local Plan, including the spatial strategy, various topic-based policies and site allocation policies.
- Chapter 6 presents the cumulative effects of the Local Plan draft policies and proposed site allocations.
- Chapter 7 presents proposed monitoring indicators for the potential effects of the Local Plan.
- Chapter 8 describes the next steps to be undertaken for the plan and the SA.
- Appendix A presents the consultation comments received in relation to the SA scoping work completed to date and explains how they have been addressed.
- Appendix B presents a review of relevant plans, policies and programmes.
- Appendix C presents baseline sustainability information for Colchester.
- Appendix D presents the site assessment criteria used to appraise the site options considered for the draft Local Plan.
- Appendix E presents the audit trail table of decision making for each of the reasonable alternative site options considered for allocation in the plan.

Chapter 2

Methodology

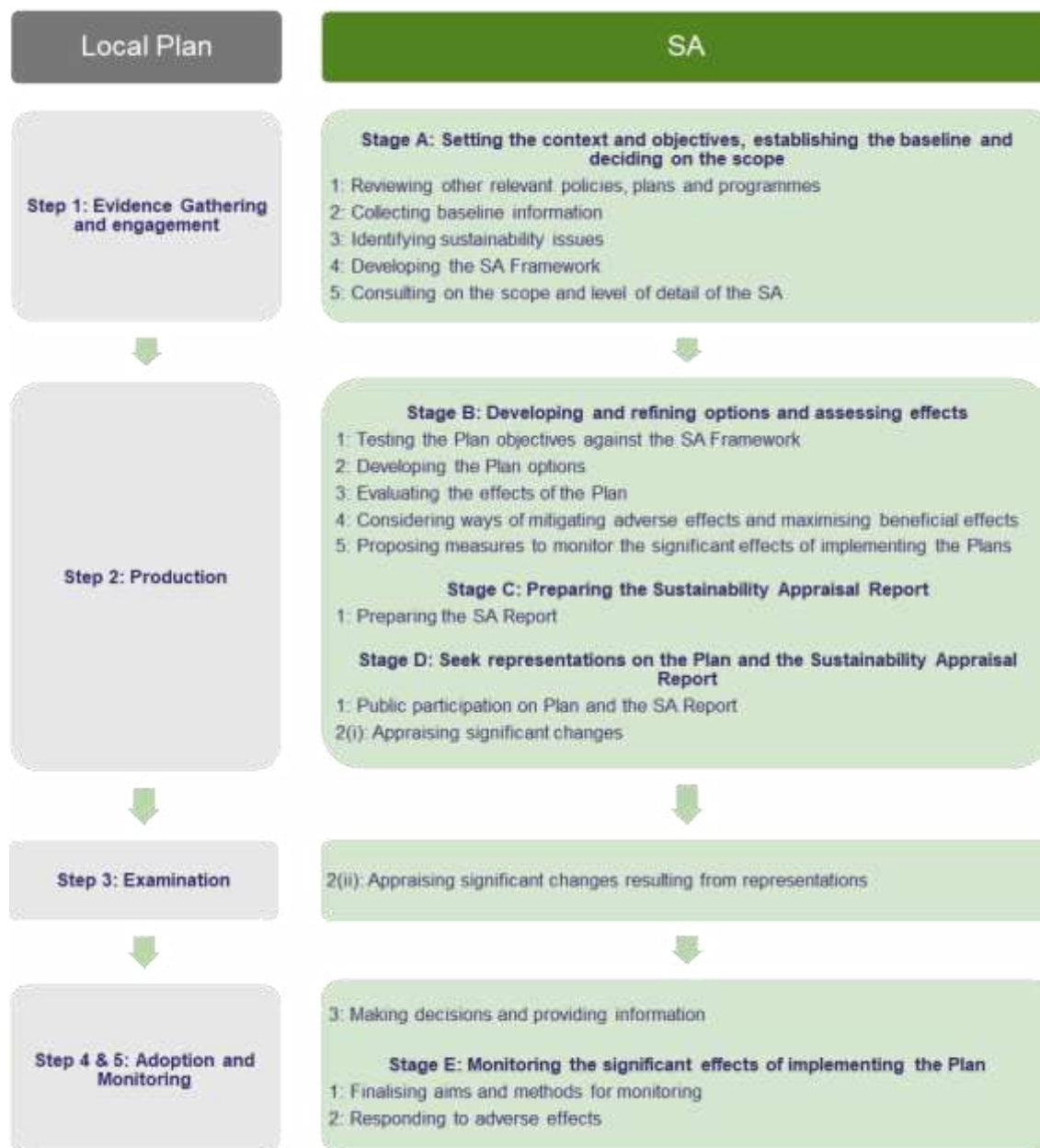
2.1 The SA process comprises a number of stages as, shown below:

- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
- Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects.
- Stage C: Preparing the SA Report.
- Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the SA Report.
- Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.

2.2 In addition to complying with legal requirements, the approach being taken to the SA of the Colchester Local Plan is based on current good practice and the guidance on SA/SEA set out in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance [\[See reference 2\]](#).

2.3 This calls for SA to be carried out as an integral part of the plan-making process and Figure 2.1 sets out the main stages of the plan-making process and shows how these correspond to the SA process.

Figure 2.1: Corresponding stages in plan-making and SA



2.4 The sections below describe the approach that has been taken to the SA of the Colchester Local Plan to date and provide information on the subsequent stages of the process.

SA Stage A: Scoping

2.5 The scoping stage of SA involves understanding the social, economic and environmental baseline for the plan area as well as the sustainability policy context and key sustainability issues and using these to inform the appraisal framework. The Scoping Report (2024) was prepared in-house by the Colchester City Council planning team. LUC provided critical friend support to the Council's team as the report was prepared to ensure that the requirements of the SEA Regulations were fully met and best practice was exercised.

2.6 Details of the main components of the scoping stage are set out below. Each component was initially presented in the Scoping Report prepared by the Council team in April 2024 and was subsequently updated as part of the preparation of this report by the LUC SA team.

Review other relevant policies, plans and programmes to establish policy context

2.7 The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation; rather it is prepared within the context of other policies, plans and programmes. The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to describe the relationship of the plan with other relevant plans and programmes. It should also be consistent with environmental protection legislation and support attainment of sustainability objectives that have been established at the international, national, and regional/sub-regional levels.

2.8 A review was therefore undertaken of other policies, plans, and programmes at the international, national, regional and sub-regional levels that were considered to be relevant to the scope of the Local Plan. The review is presented in Appendix B.

Collect baseline information to establish sustainability context

2.9 Information on existing environmental, social and economic conditions in the plan area provides the baseline against which the plan's effects can be assessed in the SA and monitored during the plan's implementation.

2.10 Baseline information can also be combined with an understanding of drivers of change that are likely to persist regardless of the local plan to understand the likely future sustainability conditions in the absence of the local plan.

2.11 The SEA Regulations require the Environmental Report to describe relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and how they are likely to evolve without the plan. An understanding of this likely future, together with the assessed effects of the plan itself, additionally allows the SA to report on cumulative effects, another requirement of the SEA Regulations.

2.12 The SEA Regulations require assessment of effects in relation to the following 'SEA topics': biodiversity, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage), landscape, and the inter-relationship between these. Baseline information was therefore collected in relation to the SEA topics and additional sustainability topics were also addressed, covering broader socio-economic issues such as housing, access to services, crime and safety, education and employment. This reflects the integrated approach that is being taken to the SA and SEA processes. Baseline information for the City has been updated as part of the preparation of this iteration of the SA Report and is presented in Appendix C.

Identify sustainability issues

2.13 The baseline information also allows the identification of existing sustainability issues, including problems, as required by the SEA Regulations.

2.14 Sustainability issues and their likely evolution without the new Local Plan are detailed in Appendix C and summarised in Chapter 3.

Develop the SA framework

2.15 The relevant sustainability objectives identified by the review of international, national and regional policies, plans, and programmes as well as those applicable to Colchester were considered alongside the key sustainability issues facing the City, identified by the collection and review of baseline information. This review work helped to inform the development of a set of sustainability objectives (the 'SA framework') against which the effects of the plan would be assessed. These objectives also take into account the types of issues that are capable of being affected by the land use planning system.

2.16 Development of the SA framework is not a requirement of the SEA Regulations but is a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be transparently and consistently described, analysed and compared. The SA framework comprises a series of sustainability objectives and supporting criteria that are used to guide the appraisal of the policies and proposals within a plan. The SA framework that has been used in this way throughout the plan-making process is presented in Chapter 3.

Development of the site assessment criteria

2.17 To ensure consistency and transparency when assessing the likely sustainability effects of development site options considered for allocation in the Local Plan, the SA framework is supported by a set of site assessment criteria.

These criteria set out clear, mostly spatial, parameters within which defined effects would be recorded, based on factors such as the distance of site options from sensitive environmental receptors (e.g. designated biodiversity sites or areas of higher landscape sensitivity) and distance to key services and facilities (e.g. service centres or public transport links). More detail on the criteria used in the SA is provided in Appendix D of this SA Report. The criteria were applied through the use of a Geographical Information System (GIS) and appropriate digital data.

Consult on the scope and level of detail of the SA

2.18 Public and stakeholder participation is an important element of the SA and wider plan-making processes. It helps to ensure that the SA Report is robust and has due regard for all appropriate information that will support the plan in making a contribution to sustainable development.

2.19 The SEA Regulations require the statutory consultation bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England) to be consulted “when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included” in the SA Report. The scope and level of detail of the SA is governed by the SA framework and the statutory consultees have therefore been consulted on this when it was developed as part of the scoping process for the SA Report [\[See reference 3\]](#). This consultation on the SA Scoping Report was undertaken for a five week period ending in May 2024.

2.20 Appendix A lists the comments that were received on the SA during this period of consultation and describes how each one has been addressed. In light of the comments received, a number of amendments were made to the review of policies, plans, and programmes, the baseline information, key sustainability issues and the SA framework.

SA Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

2.21 Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation responses and the SA can help to identify where there may be other 'reasonable alternatives' to the options being considered for a plan.

2.22 In relation to the SA Report, Part 3 of the SEA Regulations 12 (2) requires that:

"The report must identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of—

(a) implementing the plan or programme; and

(b) reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme."

2.23 Schedule 2 (h) of the SEA Regulations requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of:

"(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with."

2.24 The SEA Regulations require that the alternative policies and site allocations considered for inclusion in a plan that must be subject to SA are 'reasonable', therefore alternatives that are not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. Examples of unreasonable alternatives could include policy

options that do not meet the objectives of the plan or national policy (e.g. the NPPF) or site allocation options that are unavailable or undeliverable.

2.25 The SA findings are not the only factors taken into account when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Indeed, there will often be an equal number of positive or negative effects identified by the SA for each option, such that it is not possible to rank them based on sustainability performance in order to select a preferred option. Factors such as public opinion, deliverability and conformity with national policy will also be taken into account by plan-makers when selecting preferred options for their plan.

2.26 The following sections describe the process that was followed in identifying and appraising options for the Local Plan. The alternative options were identified by the Council based on the most up-to-date evidence. The stages of options development and accompanying SA to date are outlined below.

Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with

Options for the spatial distribution of growth in the District

2.27 The Council prepared the Spatial Strategy Approach and Options Paper (Spring 2024) as an internal evidence paper for officers and members to set out the options for the spatial distribution of growth (i.e. the spatial strategy) in Colchester. A Member briefing was held in May 2024 setting out these options and to provide an indication of the considerations which may inform preferred options through the evidence base. In June 2024, Local Plan Committee were presented with the spatial strategy options and Members noted the spatial options be tested by the relevant evidence to inform the consideration and drafting of the Preferred Options Local Plan

2.28 The Spatial Strategy Approach and Options Paper clarifies that the Local Plan will need to use the green network and waterways and the 'creating a better environment' agenda as the starting point and key purpose of the Local Plan as agreed by Local Plan Committee in October 2023. The challenges identified as part of the identifying of relevant options included preventing coalescence of settlements and the protection of rural character, whilst allowing villages to grow sustainably to meet local needs for housing, employment and infrastructure.

2.29 The Council considered several approaches to growth which could be used to develop options for the spatial strategy for growth in the plan area. These approaches were not subject to SA. For context, the spatial approaches that were used by the Council to inform the development of the options are:

- Substantial Growth – Garden Communities and Suburbs
- Hubs and Spokes Model
- Environment Led
- Transport Corridors
- Expand and Regeneration of Colchester urban area
- Proportionate Growth
- Community Gain

2.30 Officers subsequently used the spatial strategy approaches set out above to develop seven spatial strategy options for Colchester. These were developed taking into account the emerging evidence base and early engagement undertaken as part of the Issues and Options for the Colchester Local Plan.

2.31 Some of these options combine more than one of the approaches above. The spatial strategy options are:

- Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy
- Option 2: New Garden Community
- Option 3: Garden Suburbs

- Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre
- Option 5: Transport Corridors
- Option 6: Hubs and Spokes
- Option 7: Environment Led

2.32 Each of the options includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community which is addressing the longer term needs for both Colchester and Tendring.

2.33 The SA team completed the appraisal of the seven options and provided its findings to the Council in August 2024 to help inform its preparation of the preferred spatial strategy. Further detail about the each of the options considered and the related SA findings are presented in Chapter 4.

2.34 The preferred spatial strategy has been developed though the work on the Issues and Options engagement, and consideration of evidence and initial SA findings. It recognises the need to create a better environment, protecting character and assets whilst allowing sustainable growth to meet the needs and level of growth required as well as adequate supporting infrastructure.

2.35 The Council considered the site assessment undertaken by officers through the SLAA, the findings of the SA in relation to the reasonable alternative spatial strategy options and site options and the other elements of the evidence base for the Local Plan to work up its preferred spatial strategy. The spatial strategy progressed most resembles Option1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy but also incorporates elements of the other options considered.

2.36 The Council's identification of the strengthens and weakness of the seven options considered and the elements of each option that have been taken forward in the spatial strategy included in the Preferred Options Local Plan are set out below.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

Strengths:

- Existing spatial strategy was tested as part of adopted Local Plan examination;
- Focuses growth at the most accessible and sustainable locations;
- Provides residents with good access to a wide range of employment opportunities, travel choices, and services and facilities;
- Supports alternative modes of travel to the private car, which limits congestion and promotes health lifestyles;
- Spreads growth around the District;
- Helps to sustain services and facilities within settlements outside of Colchester City;
- Restricts development in the countryside;
- Focussing growth in urban area helps to address deprivation;
- Helps to address access to housing in areas of need;
- Less impact on landscape character when compared to development in more rural areas;
- Potential for large scale green infrastructure in Colchester City.

Weakness:

- Limited development of brownfield sites and large proportion of greenfield sites, including soils of at least Grade 3;
- Only supports limited housing growth within rural areas;
- Potential to overburden existing services and facilities in settlements outside of Colchester City;
- Potential for adverse effects on Conservation Areas in settlements outside of Colchester city;

- Potential for adverse impact on townscape character;
- Potential for adverse effects on Dedham Vale National Landscape;
- Development in areas of flood risk in Hythe regeneration area;
- Potential to exacerbate air pollution in AQMA.

Elements included in the preferred strategy:

2.37 This is the preferred strategy; all elements are included. The settlement hierarchy has been slightly amended from the existing settlement hierarchy.

2.38 The SA notes negative effects in terms of the distribution of heritage assets, biodiversity assets and value landscape features close to some of the sustainable settlements. The SA reports that there is likely to be potential to limit these effects by providing lower levels of development at particularly sensitive locations. For example, this includes Dedham which lies within the National Landscape and West Mersea which lies close to several internationally important biodiversity designations. Furthermore, it may be that when considering specific site options for development in more detail, less sensitive locations for development can be found at these settlements.

2.39 Whilst West Mersea and Wivenhoe are two of the larger settlements, the amount of growth directed to these settlements is lower than the other settlements including Marks Tey and Tiptree owing to the internationally important biodiversity designations. No growth has been allocated in Dedham, which lies within the National Landscape. Furthermore, for all site allocations the likely harm to biodiversity has been considered and all Place policies include criteria relating to biodiversity mitigation, BNG and heritage assets.

Option 2: New Garden Community

Strengths:

- Public gains through significant growth such as provision of new infrastructure;
- Growth within the urban area and other existing settlements would bring the benefits as outlined in the strengths for option 1;
- Expansion of existing employment area;
- Creation of a new centre;
- Marks Tey is relatively unconstrained in terms of the historic environment;
- Marks Tey is not close to the sensitive Essex coast, which has international nature conservation designations;
- Potential for large scale green infrastructure;
- Potential for district heating scheme;
- Benefits of Garden City principles.

Weakness:

- This is a long term strategy for growth, so a garden community could not meet all Colchester's needs in the plan period;
- It may be difficult to maintain a supply of homes in the short to medium term;
- A level of self containment would be achieved long term and so in the short to medium term new residents may have to travel to access employment and services and facilities;
- Unlikely to address issues of access to housing to a significant degree beyond the new Garden Community and the urban area of Colchester;
- Potential for significant loss of greenfield land;
- Marks Tey falls on land mostly classified as Grade 2 agricultural land;
- Limiting growth in Colchester's settlements could increase the need for residents to travel for employment and services and facilities;
- Adverse effects on Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI.

Elements included in the preferred strategy:

2.40 The preferred strategy includes large scale growth in Marks Tey, growth to the north of Colchester at Langham, and growth to the east around St Johns and Bullocks Wood, growth to the south around Berechurch, and regeneration areas including the Hythe.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

Strengths:

- Public gains through large scale growth such as provision of new infrastructure (although to a lesser extent than a Garden Community);
- Growth within the urban area and other existing settlements would bring the benefits as outlined in the strengths for option 1;
- The development of smaller scale Garden Suburbs is likely to have shorter lead in times than a larger scale Garden Community and deliver housing at a faster rate;
- It could help to address barriers to housing at a wider range of locations including areas of greatest need;
- Expansion of existing employment areas;
- Creation of new centres;
- Marks Tey and Tiptree are relatively unconstrained in terms of the historic environment;
- Marks Tey and Tiptree are not close to the sensitive Essex coast, which has international nature conservation designations;
- Potential for large scale green infrastructure;
- Potential for district heating scheme;
- Benefits of Garden City principles.

Weakness:

- It may be difficult to maintain a supply of homes in the short term;
- This scale of growth is unlikely to support a similar level of infrastructure provision as likely to be achieved at a new Garden Community;
- Significant loss of greenfield land;
- Adverse effects to landscape character at multiple locations;
- Limited potential for regeneration;
- Marks Tey falls on land mostly classified as Grade 2 agricultural land;
- Limiting growth in Colchester's existing settlements could increase the need for residents to travel for employment and services and facilities;
- Adverse effects on Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI, Tiptree SSSIs and local designations.

Elements included in the preferred strategy:

2.41 The preferred strategy includes large scale growth in Marks Tey.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

Strengths:

- Development in areas where there is an identified need;
- Re-use of previously developed land and less greenfield development (efficient use of land);
- Development in the most sustainable and accessible location;
- Reduce the need to travel;
- Strengthen the role of the city centre;
- Contribute towards delivery of the City Centre Masterplan;

- Address deprivation in and around the City Centre particularly within the wards of Castle and New Town and Christ Church;
- Less potential for impacts on landscape character in less developed and potentially more sensitive locations in Colchester.

Weakness:

- Fails to achieve a wide distribution of growth across the District;
- High density could limit the type and tenure of homes;
- Challenge with land availability has potential to limit the delivery of a high level of growth in the City Centre;
- An over reliance on one location for economic growth could result in an increase in commuting;
- Potential for stagnation of economic growth at other locations;
- An over reliance on one location could overburden infrastructure;
- Intensification in the City Centre could have adverse impacts on the settings of a number of heritage assets;
- Adverse effects on townscape and potential loss of open spaces;
- Adverse impacts in terms of traffic and congestion and exacerbation of air pollution within the AQMA.

Elements included in the preferred strategy:

2.42 The preferred strategy includes regeneration and intensification within the city centre; at the Hythe, a long standing regeneration area; and Magdalen Street, which is a gateway to the city centre. This is part of a wider strategy for growth that includes other areas of Colchester and not a sole reliance on city centre intensification.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

Strengths:

- Opportunity to connect to the Rapid Transit System (RTS);
- Good access to the strategic road network;
- Support regeneration in the urban area;
- Good access to employment areas and centres;
- Attractive to investors;
- Increase access to sustainable transport modes;
- Development along the A12 likely to have less impacts on biodiversity than other locations;
- Opportunities for improving the relationship between the settlement edge and surrounding countryside.

Weakness:

- Good access to the strategic road network over access to public transport could lead to a high number of journeys being made by private vehicle;
- Less distribution of growth within Colchester's villages;
- Loss of greenfield land;
- Adverse effects on historic environment;
- Impacts on local landscape character;
- Development in north Colchester could adversely affect Dedham Vale National Landscape.

Elements included in the preferred strategy:

2.43 The preferred strategy acknowledges the role of transport corridors. It includes a growth area at Marks Tey, which is located on the junction of the A12

and A120 and has a mainline railway station. The preferred strategy delivers large scale growth at Langham, which is adjacent to the A12. Additionally, it includes growth at Colchester Station as a brownfield, sustainable, high density regeneration opportunity.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

Strengths:

- Recognises the relationship between Colchester's settlements;
- Helps to sustain services and facilities within Colchester's settlements.

Weakness:

- Does not take account of Wivenhoe, as Wivenhoe's 'spokes' are in Tendring;
- Loss of greenfield land;
- Development on Grade 2 and 3 soils;
- Less likely than other options to lead to regeneration;
- Less supportive of growth in the City Centre;
- Range of services and facilities is more limited in the hubs than the urban area;
- Only a few hubs have both school and healthcare provision;
- Adverse effects on the historic environment;
- Likely to result in harm to biodiversity at a number of locations through the inclusion of hubs for development at West Mersea and Marks Tey;
- Development in villages in the north could adversely affect Dedham Vale National Landscape.

Elements included in the preferred strategy;

2.44 The hubs and spokes model has not been included in the preferred strategy.

Option 7: Environment Led

Strengths:

- Protects biodiversity designations;
- Protects the Dedham Vale National Landscape;
- Protects heritage assets;
- Addresses existing open space deficiencies;
- Could help avoid loss of best quality soils;
- Could result in creation of a new country park in South Colchester.

Weakness:

- Limits the distribution of growth across Colchester;
- Increased challenges in delivery;
- Focus of much of the growth in and around the urban area may result in localised congestion;
- Focus of much of the growth in and around the urban area may result in service provision to become overburdened.

Elements included in the preferred strategy:

2.45 The preferred strategy limits growth in Dedham, West Mersea and Wivenhoe due to environmental designations.

Levels of growth considered for the Local Plan

Employment scenarios considered

2.46 The approach to assessing future employment floorspace and land requirements for the emerging Local Plan was undertaken in line with the PPG on economic needs assessments [See reference 4]. The future demand assessment set out in the Employment Study [See reference 5] considered three different approaches/scenarios to determine the future land requirements in Colchester:

- Scenario 1: Labour Demand – based on the land needed to accommodate expected employment growth in the local authority area, as per the latest employment forecasts from Experian.

The net requirement for industrial and office land up to 2041 would be 15.0ha and 5.9ha, respectively.

- Scenario 2: Labour Supply – based on the latest housing and population growth projections, as derived from the Local Housing Needs Assessment.

The net requirement for industrial and office land up to 2041 would be 32.5ha and 9.2ha, respectively.

- Scenario 3: Past Trends – trend-based scenario based on the continuation of historical net absorption rates, sourced from CoStar. This analyses the net absorption of floorspace – i.e. the quantum of net floorspace occupied over a period of time (i.e. move-ins minus move-outs) based on lease deals, a proxy measure of demand – by use class over the past 10 years and extrapolates these trends over the assessment period.

The net requirement for industrial and office land up to 2041 would be 24.3ha and 6.0ha, respectively.

The likely sustainability merits of the employment scenarios

2.47 Given that the scenarios considered have not been assigned spatial distributions, it is difficult to consider the potential for impacts on natural resources and environmental designations in Colchester. Considered at this high level, all three scenarios are expected to perform similarly in relation to the environmental SA objectives. All three scenarios are expected to result in negative effects in relation to SA objectives 2: Efficient land use, 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity and 9: Landscape. This reflects the scale of land take required and level of development to be delivered which could result in adverse impacts on the settings of heritage assets, ecology and landscape setting. There is potential for Scenarios 2 (Labour Supply) and 3 (Past Trends) to result in more significant negative effects than Scenario 1 given the larger amount of development to be delivered through these scenarios.

2.48 Scenario 2 (Labour Supply) is expected to perform most favourably, with greatest potential for significant positive effects, in relation to SA objective 3: Economic growth given that it would achieve the highest amount of employment land. Furthermore, by matching employment growth to the housing and population projections it is best equipped to ensure that a large proportion of residents have access to job opportunities in the plan area. Scenarios 1 (Labour Demands) and 3 (Past Trends) are also likely to result in positive effects in relation to SA objective 3, however, the benefits achieved are likely to be less pronounced considering the lower levels of economic growth that would be supported. Furthermore, by matching expected housing and population projection for Colchester Scenario 2 (Labour Supply) could help to achieve increased self-containment in the District and reduce the need for out commuting, with associated benefits in relation to air quality and carbon emissions. Therefore, this option is also likely to outperform Scenarios 1 (Labour Demands) and 3 (Past Trends) in relation to SA objectives 4: Sustainable transport, 10: Climate change and 13: Air quality. Scenario 2 (Labour Supply) is also likely to perform most favourably in relation to SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing by providing residents with access to an increased number of employment opportunities in the plan area,

thereby supporting mental wellbeing and potentially increasing the potential for more journeys to be made by active travel.

Preferred scenario

2.49 The scenarios presented forecast varying changes in floorspace in Colchester across the Local Plan period; with a more modest growth outlook forecast under Scenario 1 (Labour Demand); whereas Scenario 2 (Labour Supply) and Scenario 3 (Past Trends) project stronger outlooks for growth.

2.50 Scenario 2 (Labour Supply) considers the potential population increase in Colchester associated with the additional homes forecast over the Local Plan period, and how much employment land would be necessary to broadly match forecast growth of the resident workforce. This results in a net provision of 80,146 sqm office floorspace (equivalent to a 9.2 ha land requirement) and 129,557 sqm industrial floorspace (equivalent to a 32.5 ha land requirement) being forecast.

2.51 With this scenario being based on population projections, linked to housing growth projections, it represents an approach which seeks to maximise the opportunities for the economically active population in the District, in line with the projected growth of the population (and the relative proportion of those who are economically active), underpinned by the most recent Census 2021 data. This is the most ambitious scenario and supports the growth agenda being driven by the Council and is also aligned with emerging economic strategies and the wider North Essex geography.

2.52 As such, the Council considers that Scenario 2 (Labour Supply) is the preferred scenario for future floorspace needs and employment land requirements for all employment land uses in the District over the plan period to 2041.

Housing

2.53 The initial Local Housing Needs Assessment commission predated the proposed change to the NPPF at which time the housing numbers were not mandatory and the potential for exceptional circumstances applied. The Local Housing Needs Assessment applied the Standard Method that applied at the time and also considered whether there were any exceptional circumstances which may apply in accordance with the PPG. The study concluded that there was no justification for any exceptional circumstances and the housing figure based on the Standard Method at the time was 1,043 per annum.

2.54 Subsequently, the proposed (now confirmed) change to the Standard Method not only makes the targets mandatory but also changes the Standard Method calculation and generates a need figure of 1,300 homes per annum in the District. Appendix A of the Housing Needs Assessment [\[See reference 6\]](#) sets out the revisions in respect of the implications of the changes to the Standard Method.

2.55 The economic growth aspirations set out in the plan are aligned with the housing and population projections, with the most optimistic scenario being selected for the economic growth. The Housing Needs Assessment and the Employment Study did not identify a need for the growth to go beyond the Standard Method requirement. The Housing Needs Assessment identified an acute need for affordable housing, however, it also sets out that this does not support a requirement for the Council to increase the overall housing requirement, but rather that it should seek to maximise the delivery of affordable housing. With this in mind, a lower housing requirement would not align with economic aspirations, or the need to maximise affordable housing delivery.

2.56 Initial discussions with neighbouring authorities progressing plans at a similar stage under Duty to Cooperate arrangements did not raise any issues in respect of the need for Colchester to contribute to their needs, or for any need for any cross boundary strategic sites for this plan period (other than continued joint work with Tendring regarding the cross border garden community). The joint working and sharing of housing numbers established for the Tendring

Colchester Borders Garden Community is proposed to continue for both Colchester and Tendring for the new Local Plans.

2.57 The availability of suitable sites is sufficient to meet the evidenced Standard Method housing requirement, which again points to there being no justification to lower the housing requirement. The work on the infrastructure audit, water resources and initial transport evidence to date do not indicate that appropriate solutions and mitigation cannot be achieved to support the level of growth identified.

2.58 In the absence of the wider evidence justifying a lower, or higher level of growth, variation of the Standard Method requirement is not justified and the SA has not considered any related options.

Options for potential site allocations

2.59 The Council undertook a Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) to inform preparation of the draft Local Plan. Its purpose was to identify what land is capable of being developed and to assess the constraints and opportunities of developing that land.

2.60 In line with the PPG, the SLAA considered sites capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25ha (or 500m² floor space) and above. The first stage of identifying the site options to be considered for the Local Plan was a desktop review by the Council of:

- Existing housing and economic development allocations and development briefs not yet with planning permission;
- Sites considered through previous SLAAs;
- Planning permissions for housing and economic development that are unimplemented and those that been refused or withdrawn (in relation to spatial strategy) where decision issued after October 2017;
- Land in the local authority's ownership;

- Surplus and likely to become surplus public sector land;
- Sites with permission in principle or identified brownfield land;
- Vacant and derelict land and buildings;
- Additional opportunities for unestablished uses (e.g., making productive use of under-utilised facilities such as garage blocks);
- Business requirements and aspirations;
- Sites in rural locations;
- Large scale redevelopment and redesign of existing residential or economic areas;
- Sites in or adjoining villages and rural exception sites;
- Potential urban extensions and new free standing settlements; and
- Existing green space.

2.61 In addition to the desk top review, the Council also issued a Call for Sites to enable people to promote sites for consideration and assessment. A Call for Sites was launched in Autumn 2023, closing on 5 January 2024.

2.62 Sites identified from these sources were then subject to an initial survey of constraints by officers. This determined whether a site should progress to the next stage of assessment of the SLAA, taking into account national policy and designations. The following were considered to be absolute constraints and the sites were not taken forward to the next stage of the SLAA and were not considered as reasonable alternatives for the SA:

- Physically isolated in the open countryside;
- Located wholly within Flood Zone 3;
- Located wholly within a National Landscape, SSSI, SAC, SPA, Scheduled Monument, ancient woodland or Ramsar site; or
- Not accessible by vehicle from the public highway.

2.63 Following the initial survey (Stage 1), the remaining sites proceeded to the full Stage 2 SLAA site assessment. These sites were considered against a range of constraints and their potential to be mitigated to assess whether they are potentially available, suitable, and deliverable. They were also considered to be reasonable alternatives and were subject SA.

2.64 These sites were initially appraised by the SA in September 2024 and the draft findings were provided to the Council. Following this initial stage of appraisal, as part of the selecting of sites preferred for allocation, the Council provided LUC with a set of changes to the initial list of reasonable alternative sites. This included new sites and changes to boundaries and/ or capacities of previously appraised sites. These changes were provided by the Council for a number of reasons, including to:

- Achieve a logical site boundary and relationship with the settlement boundary;
- Remove potentially sensitive environmental areas of the site;
- Merge sites where they could viably be delivered together; and
- Reflect additional areas of land promoted following the closing of the call for sites.

2.65 To ensure all reasonable alternatives were given equal consideration, the SA of site options was updated in December 2024 to consider all new and amended sites provided after September 2024.

2.66 An overview of how the sites proposed for allocation in the draft Local Plan have been considered by the Council is set out by the various parts of the District below. Further information about the reasons for the Council's decision making for the selection or rejection of the site options considered is set out in Appendix E of this report.

Colchester

2.67 Within Colchester urban area and city centre, there is a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services, open space and sustainable travel choices for existing and future communities. This is the most sustainable location, and growth is directed here in the first instance.

2.68 The Preferred Options Local Plan includes allocations to deliver substantial growth in the Colchester urban area with requirements for masterplanning on larger sites to ensure good placemaking.

City Centre

2.69 The Council adopted a Colchester City Centre Masterplan in January 2024. The Masterplan is about building on existing strengths and transforming the City Centre while conserving its proud heritage. The goal is greater prosperity, a better quality of life for all, and providing more choices for getting into and around the city. The Masterplan includes many things for people who already live, work and travel through the city centre today, it is very much about creating a city centre for the future. It looks to the needs of young people today, for our children, and our children's children.

North Colchester

2.70 North Colchester has seen significant change in recent years, this has included the opening of the A12 junction 28 and the Northern Approaches Road (Via Urbis Romanae) and the development of the Northern Gateway sports and leisure park, and Severalls and Chesterwell urban extensions. There is good open space provision and links between open spaces, which should be improved with development. Colchester Business Park and other employment uses are located in North Colchester. There is potential for development in the North-East to benefit from the development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community with links to the University of Essex. Whilst part of the

Northern Gateway development has occurred north of the A12, the A12 continues to act as a strong boundary. North-west Colchester includes large areas of protected open space and areas at high risk of flooding. Parts of the north of Colchester City (Plains Farm) are within Tendring district.

South Colchester

2.71 South Colchester is home to the Garrison. Colchester became a garrison 2000 years ago, and today its military tradition is part of Colchester's outlook and character. Colchester has been a modern Garrison Town for the past 165 years. For the past 21 years, it has been home to 16 Air Assault Brigade, the UK's rapid response force. There are higher levels of deprivation than other parts of the city district (46.3% of households in Old Heath and Hythe and 43.6% of households in Berechurch are not deprived in any dimension compared to 48.4% for the England average) and less variety of community and social infrastructure than others parts of the city. The 10 Year Plan for primary schools indicates that there is some capacity in schools over the next 5-year period There is additional capacity of 60 places per year within existing accommodation of the schools in City southeast (Berechurch). Within South Colchester is the largest remaining section of semi-natural habitat on the Colchester plateau, free from large-scale development or aggregate extraction because of its history of military ownership. It comprises a broad wedge of land reaching from the Roman River in the south most of the way to the city centre. The southern section slopes down towards the river, but most of this area is broadly level, bisected by the narrow valley of Birch Brook.

West Colchester

2.72 West Colchester has seen significant change in recent years. This has included urban extensions to Stanway delivering a significant amount of new housing, a new primary school (Lakelands) and Stane Park retail centre. Like North Colchester, the A12 continues to act as a strong boundary. The railway also provides a strong boundary to the north. The A12 and railway line continues to define the northern boundary of West Colchester. The 10 Year

Plan for primary schools indicates that there is additional capacity of 45 places per year within existing accommodation of the schools in City southwest (Stanway). There is generally good open space provision and links between open spaces, which should be improved with development but with gaps to the west of the area.

Growth and Opportunity Areas

2.73 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, Marks Tey and other large-scale developments will deliver substantial growth, enabling significant community benefits to be realised. Opportunities for growth along key transport corridors, particularly with access to the rail network are favoured subject to sufficient capacity on the network and/or appropriate mitigation to support any enhancement required.

Hythe Opportunity Areas

2.74 The Hythe area is a former commercial harbour which includes some rundown and underused industrial land. There has been change in this area over the last few years, through expansion of the University of Essex and student accommodation. The area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area.

2.75 There is good access to Hythe Station and the Hythe is located close to the University of Essex and City Centre but is constrained by flooding due to its proximity to the River Colne.

2.76 A number of sites are allocated for residential development in this area (see policies PP14, PP15 and PP16). However, there are additional opportunities at the Hythe, through wider regeneration.

2.77 Regeneration will involve partnership working with public sector agencies, the local community and other key stakeholders including Community Land Trusts and the Hythe Task and Finish Group (responding to flooding issues in the area).

Magdalen Street Opportunity Area

2.78 Magdalen Street is a key gateway to Colchester City Centre. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. The area has changed in recent years through the development of student accommodation and Aldi.

2.79 The area is located close to Colchester Town Station and future development is planned as a part of the Transforming the City Centre project, funded by the Town Deal and Levelling Up Funds. This includes improvements to the St Botolph junction to modernise the area creating a better balance between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and improve the public space.

Marks Tey Growth Area

2.80 Marks Tey is located at the junction of the A12 and A120. It is essentially a linear settlement that, while being sustainably located has been fragmented by the railway and A12/A120. It contains a good range of facilities which are located in different sections of the village; a railway station to the east providing an interchange between the mainline to London and branch services; a larger area of modern housing, village hall, commercial areas and the primary school to the west and retail facilities to the south of the A12.

2.81 Large areas of land have previously been promoted for development in and around Marks Tey and there is an opportunity for growth to help reconnect the village. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, add weight to the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support

development at the scale promoted. Accordingly, the Plan allocates sites for housing which could deliver up to 2500 new homes within the plan period, but on the proviso that it can be demonstrated that additional vehicular movements can be safely accommodated on the A12 and A120 without adding to congestion.

2.82 Additional employment land is also allocated, recognising the areas potential given its location on the strategic road network and its position in relation to Stansted to the west and the Haven ports to the west.

2.83 The policies reflect the fact that it is not anticipated that all the growth promoted can be accommodated without significant upgrades to the A12 and A120. The Growth Area designation is intended to demonstrate that some development would be acceptable within the overall sites, subject to further evidence

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Growth Area

2.84 Whilst the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is not being tested as part of the SA and Plan, it is a Growth Area within Colchester's settlement hierarchy.

2.85 The principles of the Garden Community are established through the Section 1 Local Plan and more detailed policies on the design and development of the Garden Community are included in the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document. Policy ST9 of the Preferred Options Plan provides a summary of what will be included in the Garden Community with reference to housing numbers, employment provision and the decision-making process.

Large Settlements

2.86 Colchester's large settlements have the most facilities, services, travel choices and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. However, in the case of West Mersea and Wivenhoe, these settlements have more environmental constraints. Accordingly, the level of growth proposed in West Mersea and Wivenhoe is balanced with the environmental constraints.

Tiptree

2.87 Tiptree is a large village located on the southwest boundary of Colchester. Development has grown up around key highway intersections in a roughly triangular built form. There is a small separate cluster of houses to the southwest of the main village known as Tiptree Heath. Tiptree has a district centre with a high number of key services and community facilities. It is the only large village with a secondary school. A neighbourhood plan with site allocations was adopted in 2023. The vision of the neighbourhood plan is to deliver a link road in the north of Tiptree, reducing congestion throughout the village. This plan seeks to build on the work undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and ensure the vision can be achieved.

West Mersea

2.88 West Mersea is a small coastal town located on the confluence of the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries approximately 15km from Colchester City Centre. There are frequent bus routes serving the town to and from Colchester and serving the local secondary schools. West Mersea has numerous town centre and community uses both within the district centre and throughout the town, making it a sustainable settlement. However, it has environmental constraints with the Colne and Blackwater estuaries, which are designated at international level for nature conservation (the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries are Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites and form part of the Essex

Estuaries Special Area of Conservation). A balance is needed to allow some development in this sustainable settlement but to limit this to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Colne and Blackwater estuaries.

Wivenhoe

2.89 Wivenhoe benefits from good infrastructure provision including a mainline train station, a GP surgery, two primary schools, numerous shops and restaurants and abundant open space provision. There are also frequent bus services between Wivenhoe and Colchester, a cycle path between Wivenhoe and the University of Essex and the popular Wivenhoe Trail along the river to Colchester. However, there are a number of constraints which has influenced the amount of growth considered appropriate for Wivenhoe beyond 2033. Wivenhoe is bordered by the River Colne to the west and south. In addition to the physical boundary that the river presents, land falls within flood risk zone 3. There are a number of environmental designations surrounding Wivenhoe. The Upper Colne Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the west and south of Wivenhoe. The Colne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site and SSSI and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lie to the south-east of Wivenhoe. The Colne Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site runs adjacent to the built-up western boundary. The Coastal Protection Belt surrounds the west and south of Wivenhoe. Wivenhoe Gravel Pit SSSI lies to the north-east of Wivenhoe.

Medium Settlements

2.90 Medium settlements include settlements with a range of community and social infrastructure but to a lesser extent than the infrastructure within the larger settlements. These medium settlements are capable of accommodating growth appropriate to the size, environmental constraints and scale and infrastructure of the settlement.

Abberton and Langenhoe

2.91 Abberton and Langenhoe were originally two separate settlements but have now effectively merged into one village which share services and facilities. The facilities in the village include a primary school, community hall, and public open space. The village benefits from good road connections to Colchester being situated along the B1025 which has bus stops situated along it which are served by the Mersea bus.

Boxted

2.92 Development in Boxted is currently concentrated within three distinct settlement areas: Boxted Cross, Workhouse Hill and an area to the south of the parish to the west of Straight Road. Development in Boxted Cross has grown in a linear manner around Straight Road/Carters Hill, Dedham Road/Cage Lane crossroads extending north eastwards as far as Cooks Lane. Boxted Cross is considered to be a sustainable location for growth as it is reasonably well served by a number of services and facilities.

Chappel and Wakes Colne

2.93 Chappel and Wakes Colne are separate settlements but are located adjacent to one another and share services and facilities. Chappel has one core settlement area with three remote/dispersed small clusters of housing at Rose Green, Swan Street and Wakes Street. The core focus of Chapel is centred around the primary school. The settlement is defined to the east by the railway line, which is the operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. Wakes Colne is the main settlement area with smaller dispersed clusters of housing around Inworth Lane and at Middle Green. The core focus of Wakes Colne is around the railway, defined to the east by the railway line, which is operational Sudbury to Marks Tey branch line. The railway station is also home to Chappel and Wakes Colne Railway Museum which hosts many events and houses a number of refurbished steam trains.

Copford

2.94 Development in Copford has grown in a linear manner along London Road, eastwards towards Stanway and westwards towards Marks Tey. Copford Green is located to the south of Copford and is one of Colchester's small settlements.

Dedham and Dedham Heath

2.95 Most of the Dedham parish area falls within the Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly AONB). The largest settlement within the parish is the main historic village of Dedham to the north. A smaller area of predominantly housing called Dedham Heath lies to the south and two smaller clusters of properties lie to the west and east of Dedham Heath known as Lamb Corner and Bargate Lane respectively. Dedham has a range of services and facilities, including its own primary school. Dedham Heath is located approx. 1km away and is on a bus route to Dedham.

Eight Ash Green

2.96 Eight Ash Green comprises three main areas of which two are considered sustainable and have a range of services and facilities: Eight Ash Green/Fordham Heath and Eight Ash Green /Choats Corner. Seven Star Green is not considered sustainable as it is located south of Halstead Road and is separated by this main road from the key facilities available in the village.

Fordham

2.97 Fordham is a linear settlement with a core concentration of development which has evolved over time, including a number of small estate type developments. A primary school is situated at the southern end of the village just beyond the settlement boundary. The village hall and a convenience shop /

post office are located within the core of the concentrated area of development. Also within the village is a playing field and a community orchard maintained by the local community. A small cluster of dwellings to the north along Plummers Road is separated by the Grade II listed Moat Hall which is situated on a significant mature landscaped garden which adjoins an established community woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

Great Horkesley

2.98 Great Horkesley is essentially linear in shape and has developed over time along the old Roman road that radiates away from north Colchester (now the A134). More recently development has spread westwards along a number of roads off the main road. Land to the east of the main road has remained relatively free of development and is more open in character. Great Horkesley is fragmented with the main core of the settlement to the south and two smaller fragments to the north along the A134. The southern edge of the main part of the village is approximately 0.6km from the Colchester urban edge and is located north of the A12. There are a range of services and facilities within the village.

Great Tey

2.99 Great Tey is situated north of the Roman River and is surrounded by largely flat arable land. The parish of Great Tey is a small rural community that contains a few local amenities including a village pub, a school, and a Norman church. The community originally developed at the southern end, as evidenced by the Conservation Area, with a newer small estate to the north and ribbon development along the main road through the village between Little Tey and Chappel.

Langham

2.100 Langham includes two areas of settlement, Langham Moor and St. Margaret's Cross, linked by School Road. Langham is located close to the A12, and the spatial strategy includes opportunities for growth along key transport corridors. A former WWII airfield lies between the two areas. The village contains a mixture of historic properties and farmhouses with more recent development. Langham contains a public house, a community café, a community shop, community centre, recreation ground, a playground, football pitches and tennis courts.

Layer de la Haye

2.101 Development in Layer de la Haye is concentrated within two settlement areas: Layer village and Malting Green. The two areas are physically separated by a large grass sward known as Malting Green, a large part of which is a designated Local Wildlife Site (Co 93). It is also an important open space that plays an important function in defining the rural character of the existing two settlement areas.

Rowhedge

2.102 Rowhedge lies within the parish of East Donyland, which covers the south-east of Colchester. The settlement was historically centred around the shipbuilding and fishing industries of the River Colne. The village lies on the opposite bank of the river to Wivenhoe but despite its close proximity to the town, access is only available by road through Colchester. Rowhedge has good public transport and road links to Colchester and contains its own primary school, post office and recreational facilities.

West Bergholt

2.103 West Bergholt is situated approximately 1km to the north-west of Colchester. The village is centered around a triangle of roads: the B1508 Colchester Road, Chapel Road and Lexden Road. West Bergholt is separated from Colchester by an area of open countryside and the valleys of St Botolph's Brook and the River Colne. The A12 bisects the open countryside between West Bergholt and Colchester. The majority of the more recent development has occurred on the northern side of Colchester Road.

Small Settlements

2.104 Small scale growth is proposed in some of Colchester's small settlements reflecting the size and level of community and social infrastructure and environmental constraints.

Aldham

2.105 Aldham is a nucleated settlement that has developed around the junction of Brook Road/New Road and Green Lane/Tey Road with more modern development to the north-east and south-east. Aldham is rural in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes but is close to the A12/A120 and A1124.

Birch and Layer Breton

2.106 Birch Green is the largest area of housing within the wider Birch parish area (with the smaller historic core of Birch to the north and a separate, isolated cluster of dwellings known as Hardy's Green to the north-west). Birch Green is broadly triangular in shape where development has filled the space between Birch Street, Mill Lane and Straight Way, with some development extending beyond Mill Lane and Birch Street to the north and Crayes Green to the south-east. Birch Green is rural in character, has limited connections to the strategic

road network but has a few key services including its own primary school and village hall.

Fingringhoe

2.107 Fingringhoe is essentially a linear settlement comprised of two main residential areas that have developed either side of the historic core of Fingringhoe, which contains a primary school, church and public house.

Messing

2.108 Messing is located north of Tiptree. Messing is very rural and historic in character and is accessed by narrow country lanes. It has limited services and facilities, but it has a primary school.

Peldon

2.109 Housing in Peldon is laid out in a triangular pattern around three roads. The settlement boundary in Peldon currently comprises two roughly equivalent areas of housing on either side of two of the three roads. The triangular residential area is surrounded by arable farms. The village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt.

Appraisal methodology

2.110 The draft policies and sites included in the draft Local Plan as well as all reasonable alternatives were appraised against the SA objectives in the SA framework (see Chapter 3). This included the appraisal of a number of options for the spatial distribution of development in the plan area as well as the preferred approach to development taken forward in the draft Local Plan. Symbols were attributed to each element of the plan to indicate its likely effects

on each SA objective, as shown in Table 2.1. The colours used to display the range of the effects were chosen to allow as many people as possible to read and understand the outputs of the assessment work. This includes people with visual impairments such as colour blindness.

2.111 The dividing line in making a decision about the significance of an effect is often quite small. Where either (++) or (--) has been used to distinguish significant effects from more minor effects (+ or -), this is because the effect of an option or policy on the SA objective in question is considered to be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect, taking into account other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.

2.112 For the appraisal work undertaken at the site options stage of the SA, most potential effects of site options were subject to a degree of uncertainty, e.g. due to the particular development design and site layout that could come forward. That uncertainty was generally only made explicit in the effects scores if factors such as the site design or layout could have such an effect as to substantially mitigate any adverse effects or substantially negate any beneficial effects that might otherwise occur. In such instances, this was shown by presenting the relevant effect according to the site assessment criteria as uncertain (e.g. “++?”). These “effects with uncertainty” were colour coded by reference to the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (green, blue, orange, etc.). In some instances, the level of uncertainty was so great that it was not possible to come to a judgement on the likely effect, in which case the effect was shown as “?”.

2.113 Where uncertainty was recorded in relation to any of the SA objectives for the options appraised, the reasons for this were explained in the findings.

Table 2.1: Key to effects symbols and colour coding used in the SA

Symbol and colour coding	Description of effects
++	Significant positive effect likely.
++/-	Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely.
+	Minor positive effect likely.
+/-	Mixed minor effects likely.
++/--	Mixed significant effects likely.
-	Minor negative effect likely.
--/+	Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely.
--	Significant negative effect likely.
0	Negligible effect likely.
?	Likely effect uncertain.

Site assessment criteria

2.114 SA inevitably relies on an element of subjective judgement. However, in order to ensure consistency and transparency in the appraisal of the site options, a detailed set of criteria was developed and applied. These criteria define clear, mostly spatial, parameters within which different effects would be recorded, based on factors such as the distance of site options from sensitive environmental receptors (e.g. designated biodiversity sites or areas of higher landscape sensitivity) or their distance to key services and facilities (e.g. service centres or public transport links). The criteria are presented in Appendix D of this SA Report. They were applied through the use of a Geographical Information System (GIS) and appropriate digital data.

SA Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal report

2.115 This SA Report describes the process that has been undertaken to date in carrying out the appraisal of the Colchester Local Plan.

2.116 The SA Report sets out the findings of the appraisal of the draft Local Plan vision, themes, objectives, policies, site allocations and proposed distribution of growth in the plan area, as well as the appraisal findings for the reasonable alternatives considered. Likely significant effects, both positive and negative, have been presented, taking into account the likely secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term and permanent and temporary effects.

2.117 These findings are set out in Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this SA Report.

SA Stage D: Consultation on the Local Plan and the SA Report

2.118 Information about consultation on the SA that has already taken place at earlier stages of plan-making has been provided above.

2.119 Colchester City Council is now inviting comments on the Regulation 18 Local Plan and this SA Report, both of which are being published on the Council's website. Consultation comments on this SA Report will be taken into account in the remaining stages of the SA.

SA Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Local Plan

2.120 Recommendations for monitoring the likely significant social, environmental and economic effects of implementing the Colchester Local Plan Review are presented in Chapter 7.

Difficulties and data limitations

2.121 The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(8) require the Environmental Report to include:

“...a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.”

2.122 A number of difficulties and limitations arose in the course of the site assessment work carried out to date and these are outlined below.

- There was a need to appraise a large number of site options, creating the potential for inconsistency. In order to provide consistency, detailed site assessment criteria relating to each of the SA objectives were developed and applied during the appraisal of site options (as described above).
- Heritage impact assessment work was only available to inform the appraisal of the site options taken forward as preferred allocations in the plan. This approach is considered proportionate to the level of detail required for the SA. All site options were initially considered in relation to their proximity heritage assets.
- The assumptions presented in Appendix C of this report include a number of distance-based criteria used to determine the likely effects of site

options. Walking distances within these criteria were based on 'desired', 'acceptable' and 'preferred maximum' walking distances described in the publication 'Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot' (Institution of Highways and Transport, 2000). Professional judgement was used to vary these standard distances in relation to certain services and facilities, for example, the distance used for railway stations was longer than the distance used for bus stops, reflecting the fact that individuals are likely to be prepared to walk greater distances to larger scale facilities; similarly secondary schools were assigned a longer walking distance than primary schools, reflecting the fact that older children should be capable of walking a longer distance and secondary schools are generally larger institutions with larger catchment areas than primary schools.

- Walking distances to services and facilities were measured from the site boundary. While this could be considered to understate the walking distance from development within larger sites to services and facilities beyond the site boundary, it should be noted that the distance thresholds defined in the site assessment criteria are a matter of judgement. Had distances been measured from site centres rather than site boundaries, it may have been appropriate to use longer distances. Such an approach would also have introduced potential inconsistencies in judging the centre point of irregularly-shaped sites.
- All walking distances were measured on a straight line basis. In light of the relatively short distances being considered relative to the size of the sites and the fact that digital data was not available to indicate the likely access points of services and facilities or the likely entry and exit points from the development site options, measurement of routes via the rights of way network was not carried out.
- Straight line distance-based criteria were used to define zones of influence within which varying levels of harm to environmental receptors were assumed to exist. In reality, the risk of harmful effects will sometimes depend on non-linear pathways (such as watercourses for water pollution effects) and will depend on the particular vulnerabilities of specific receptors. Nevertheless, the criteria used are considered to provide a consistent and robust approach to identifying the potential for significant

effects from a large number of site options that is proportionate to the level of detail of a Local Plan.

- Where site options were close to the Colchester District boundary, the spatial analysis was potentially affected by the fact that some spatial data required for proximity-based assessments were not available for all or part of neighbouring districts. At all locations in Colchester and its immediate surroundings, data that is available at a national level (for example, railway stations and biodiversity designations) was drawn upon to inform the appraisal work. However, data relating to town, district and local centres and primary and secondary schools was only available for the plan area.
- The level of detail of the site options appraisal work was commensurate with the level of detail of the Local Plan document. As such, more detailed aspects of the local environment were not investigated for each site option. For example, in relation to potential effects of the site options on biodiversity assets, the assessment was based on proximity to designated biodiversity sites, protected habitats and water courses. Other types of environmental receptor, such as non-designated sites, were not considered. This approach was considered to be robust, proportionate to the level of detail of a Local Plan, and the best way of ensuring a consistent level of detail in each site appraisal. Issues such as potential impacts on non-designated environmental receptors will be considered further as part of the planning application stage for sites allocated in the plan.
- The available GIS data for agricultural land classification did not distinguish between Grade 3a (considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land) and 3b (not considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land). Therefore, the potential for loss of any category of Grade 3 soils was considered on an equal footing. This provided a precautionary approach to the potential loss of higher value agricultural land.
- The emerging Local Plan proposes a number of changes to the boundaries of Local Centres and District Centres in the District as well as to Colchester City Centre. The changes include the expansion of the area covered by Colchester City Centre and designation of a new Tollgate District Centre, a new Turner Rise District Centre and a new Highwoods District Centre. The boundaries of Tiptree District Centre, Wivenhoe

District, Chesterwell Plaza Local Centre and Mersea Road Local Centre are also proposed for amendments. The site options appraisal work used the proposed new service centre boundaries, given that these proposed boundaries reflect current concentrations of retail provision and other services and facilities.

Chapter 3

Sustainability context

Introduction

3.1 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires information on the following (numbering relates to the items listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulations):

1. “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes” and
5. “the environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”.

3.2 An outline of the draft Local Plan was provided in Chapter 1 and further detail is provided in relation to individual policies in Chapter 5.

3.3 The requirement to describe environmental protection objectives and how these have been taken into account is addressed in this chapter and more detail is provided for international and national plans and programmes of most relevance in Appendix B.

Relationship with other relevant plans or programmes

3.4 The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation and must be in conformity with a range of international, national and sub-national plans and programmes. The document needs to be consistent with international and national guidance and strategic planning policies and should contribute to the goals of a wide range of other programmes and strategies, such as those relating to social policy, culture and heritage. It must also conform to environmental protection legislation and the sustainability objectives established at an international, national and regional level. It should be noted that the policy context is inherently uncertain as the current framework outlined here is likely to change in response to a number of key factors:

- **Brexit** – Following the United Kingdom's (UK) departure from the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020, it entered a transition period which ended on 31 December 2020. Directly applicable EU law now no longer applies to the UK and the UK is free to repeal EU law that has been transposed into UK law. Where EU law has been transposed into UK law and not repealed, the relevant UK legislation is still referred to in this report.
- **Slow economic growth in the UK economy** – The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) reported that the economy stagnated in 2023, with growth of just over 1% expected in 2024, rising to 2% in 2025 [\[See reference 7\]](#). The potential implications for planning and development potentially include Government spending cuts impacting on support available for services and facilities and new infrastructure.
- **COVID-19** – The COVID-19 pandemic has led to far-reaching changes to society in the UK and around the world. Which of these changes will continue in the long term is unknown and will depend on a variety of factors. Potential implications for planning and development include Government measures to re-start the economy via support for housebuilding and infrastructure development; changes to permitted development rights; increased remote working and reduced commuting

and related congestion and air pollution; increased prioritisation of walking and cycling over public transport; and increasing pressure to ensure satisfactory living standards are set and enforced.

- The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act – The Act received royal assent in October 2023 and sets out the direction for planning, making provisions to support the levelling-up agenda. As part of this, it seeks to streamline the planning process, including through a reform of existing EU-generated systems of SA/SEA, HRA and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will eventually be replaced by a simpler process known as 'Environmental Outcomes Reports'. However, secondary legislation is required to introduce the new regime and at present the requirement to undertake SEA remains in force.

3.5 It is also likely that UK and sub-national climate change policy will change as public awareness and prioritisation of the threat of climate change grows, as illustrated by the increasing number of local authorities, including Colchester City Council, that have declared a climate emergency.

International

3.6 At the international level, there is a wide range of plans and programmes which act to inform and shape national level legislation. Planning policy in England at a national and local level (i.e. the NPPF and Local Plan) should be aware of and in conformity with the relevant legislation. The main sustainability objectives of international plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SA are provided in Appendix B.

National

3.7 There is an extensive range of national policies, plans and programmes that are of relevance to the Local Plan and SA process. A pragmatic and proportionate approach has been taken with regards to the identification of key

national policies, plans and programmes, focusing on those that are of most relevance. A summary of the main objectives of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance of relevance to the Local Plan and SA is provided below. In addition, the main sustainability objectives of other national plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and SA are provided in Appendix B.

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

3.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [\[See reference 8\]](#) is the overarching planning framework which provides national planning policy and principles for the planning system in England. The NPPF was originally published in March 2012 and has since been updated and revised several times. The most recent update to the NPPF was in December 2024 [\[See reference 9\]](#) and that is the version under which the new Local Plan will be examined.

3.9 The three overarching objectives of the planning system are set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that net gains are achieved across each of the different objectives:

- “an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing; and

- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

3.10 The new Local Plan must be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, which states:

“Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”.

3.11 A local planning authority is also required to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State when preparing a Local Plan [\[See reference 10\]](#).

3.12 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states the need for strategic policies in plan making, which set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places (to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking), making sufficient provision for:

- “a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) 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);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) 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.”

3.13 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) [\[See reference 11\]](#) provides guidance for how the Government's planning policies for England are expected to be applied. Sitting alongside the NPPF, it provides an online resource that is updated on a regular basis for the benefit of planning practitioners.

3.14 The overarching nature of the NPPF means that its implications for the SA relate to multiple topics which this report seeks to address. Considering the importance of the NPPF to the English planning system, the relevance of the Framework and its implications for the plan making process and the SA is provided in more detail below. Sustainability topics are separated under environmental, social and economic below. Consideration of issues often cut across topics. This is reflected in the grouping of environmental and social issues together under one heading. The summary provided below is not absolutely comprehensive and the NPPF is intended to be read and applied as a whole during plan making.

Environmental and social considerations

Climate change

3.15 Climate change adaption and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation measures for new development including through the promotion of renewable energy schemes are supported through the NPPF. One of the core planning principles is to “support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”. Furthermore, local planning authorities should adopt a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change, water supply,

biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures.

3.16 Although Local Plans can no longer require levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes, they can promote the Home Quality Mark to support residents in understanding the quality and performance of new build homes and can also set targets for developers to provide for a given percentage of energy used by a new development to come from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies. Revisions were made to the Building Regulations 2022 [\[See reference 12\]](#), setting minimum energy efficiency standards which are increasing the performance values of properties. From 15th June 2022, all new build homes are required to produce at least 31% less carbon emissions. Local Plan policies can further support the development of renewable energy technologies where appropriate, in line with climate change mitigation strategies and targets. The UK Green Building Council has produced a resource pack which is designed to help local authorities improve the sustainability of new homes. The New Homes Policy Playbook [\[See reference 13\]](#) sets out minimum requirements for sustainability in new homes that local authorities should introduce, as well as proposed stretching requirements should local authorities wish to go further. For non-residential uses BREEAM assessments can be used by local authorities to ensure buildings meet sustainability objectives. Policies in the new Local Plan can also support design choices that achieve development that is better adapted to the effects of climate including through the incorporation of green infrastructure. The SA can consider the contribution the alternatives make in terms of climate change mitigation as well as climate change adaptation.

Population and health and wellbeing

3.17 In relation to health and wellbeing, healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lives are supported through the Framework. The Framework highlights that the Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit [\[See reference 14\]](#) can be used by local authorities to assist in the creation of places that are better for people and nature.

3.18 One of the core planning principles is to “take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community”. It is identified in the document that “a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and wellbeing of communities”. Furthermore, the retention and enhancement of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship is supported. Importantly, Local Plans should also “contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible”. Additionally, larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns are required by the NPPF to be guided by policies set within a vision that looks at least 30 years ahead [See reference 15]. The need for policies to be reflective of this longer time period is to take account of the likely timescale for delivery.

3.19 The delivery of new housing is considered to support local communities by meeting housing needs and addressing shortages. The new Colchester Local Plan can have a significant influence on addressing inequalities including those relating to health and will need to consider the appropriate siting of new development, particularly large development sites that are likely to include new service and facility provisions. The Local Plan can ensure that new development is located in areas which can improve accessibility for existing as well as new residents and ensure that future development does not exacerbate existing inequalities. The SA process can support the identification and refinement of options that can contribute to reducing inequalities and support the development of policy approaches that cumulatively improve the wellbeing of local communities.

Biodiversity

The NPPF sets out the approach Local Plans should have in relation to biodiversity and states that plans should “identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect

them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation”. Plans should also promote conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species, ecological networks and measurable net gains for biodiversity. A strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure is to be supported through planning policies.

3.20 The Colchester Local Plan should seek to maximise any opportunities arising for local economies, communities and health as well as biodiversity. This should be inclusive of approaches which are supportive of enhancing designated sites as well as the connectivity of green infrastructure and promoting the achievement of biodiversity net gain. The SA process should support the identification and maximisation of potential benefits through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of both negative and positive significant effects.

Landscape

3.21 In relation to landscape, the NPPF sets the planning principles of recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as well as protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Reference is included with regards to this purpose at National Parks, The Broads and National Landscapes **[See reference 16]**.

3.22 The Local Plan should be supportive of an approach to development which would protect the landscape character of Colchester and its surrounds, including that of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. Where appropriate it should also seek to protect the identity of the Colchester's settlements. The SA should identify those alternatives which contribute positively to landscape and townscape character.

Historic environment

3.23 The NPPF states that in relation to the historic environment plans should “set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats”. Where appropriate, plans should seek to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and local character and distinctiveness, while viable uses of assets should be considered. Plans should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. They should also consider the contribution the historic environment can make to the character of a place.

3.24 The new Local Plan can offer enhanced protection for designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, including any potential archaeological finds in line with heritage protection and enhancement plans. The SA has a role to play by identifying which alternatives could offer opportunities to secure the protection and enhancement of assets as well as those which might have significant impacts in terms of their appropriate use and setting.

Pollution and flooding

3.25 The NPPF states that new and existing development should be prevented from contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, pollutions including water pollution and air quality. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account implications for water supply. Furthermore, strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision of infrastructure for water supply and wastewater.

3.26 The new Colchester Local Plan presents an opportunity to consider incorporating targets for water efficiency and the level of water consumption and grey water recycling in any new development. Appropriate levels of

infrastructure should be supported to address water supply and the management of wastewater. The use of water in Colchester needs to be considered in light of the increased level of water stress the region is currently experiencing. The Local Plan also can ensure that development is sited away from areas of adverse air quality (including AQMAs), high flood probability and that appropriate water drainage is in place in line with flood risk strategies. The SA process should seek to identify and address potential negative effects on air quality, flooding and the water environment, including implications relating to wastewater.

Soils and minerals

3.27 The NPPF states that the planning system should protect and enhance soils in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or quality, while also encouraging the reuse of previously developed land. Furthermore, planning policies should provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance.

3.28 The new Local Plan can seek to ensure the appropriate protection of soil quality, including best and most versatile agricultural land. Further to this, the Local Plan should ensure that new development does not conflict with current mineral operations, as well as long-term mineral resource plans. The SA process should inform the development of the new Local Plan by helping to identify alternatives which would avoid areas of highest soil quality and best and most versatile agricultural land, as well as those that would promote the use of brownfield land.

Economic considerations

Economic growth

3.29 The Framework sets out that in terms of economic growth the role of the planning system is to contribute towards building a “strong, responsive and competitive economy” by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation. There is also a requirement for the planning system to identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure. Furthermore, planning policies should address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

3.30 Local planning authorities should incorporate planning policies which “support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation”. Local Plans are required to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration”.

3.31 The new Local Plan should seek to maximise the potential benefits of nearby strategic growth, whilst at the same time ensuring the vitality and viability of smaller localised economies. Ensuring that services and facilities within the Borough’s centres are maintained and enhanced is also important and will also provide support for local communities. The SA process can support the development of the new Local Plan to ensure that its policies are considerate of impacts on the economy in Colchester. The process can also be used to demonstrate that impacts on the viability of the Borough’s settlements have been considered.

Transport

3.32 The NPPF encourages local planning authorities to consider transport issues from the earliest stages of plan making so that: opportunities to promote sustainable transport are identified and pursued; the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified and assessed; and opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised. The framework also states that the planning system should actively manage growth patterns in support of these objectives.

3.33 Growth will inevitably increase traffic on the roads which also has implications for air quality and carbon emissions, and the new Local Plan and SA process can seek to minimise effects of this nature through appropriately siting new development, identifying where mitigation may be needed and requiring the necessary transport provisions and contributions from new development. The Local Plan, as supported by the SA, should seek to identify opportunities to maximise the potential for alternative modes of transport to the car and reduce the need to travel, therefore reducing emissions, through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of significant effects. This includes potential opportunities that may arise as a result of the delivery of new infrastructure.

Other national policies, plans and programmes

3.34 Numerous other policies, plans and programmes (PPPs) at a national level are of relevance to the preparation of the Colchester Local Plan and the SA. Unlike the NPPF, most of the documents are focussed on a specific topic area which the SA will consider. There will be some overlap between SA topics covered by these plans and programmes where those documents contain more overarching objectives. However, the plans and programmes considered of most relevance to the SA have been grouped by the topics they most directly

seek to address, and the sections below each topic heading summarise the implications of the national PPPs for the Local Plan and the SA.

Climate change adaption and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation

3.35 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (2023)
- Powering up Britain (2023)
- The Environmental Improvement Plan (2023)
- British Energy Security Strategy (2022)
- UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)
- The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021)
- The Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021)
- The UK Hydrogen Strategy (2021)
- Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021)
- Waste Management Plan for England (2021)
- National Infrastructure Strategy: Fairer, faster greener (2020)
- The Energy White Paper: Powering our net zero future (2020)
- Sixth Carbon Budget (Climate Change Committee, 2020)
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Policy Statement (2020)
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020)

- The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (2020)
- Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming (2019)
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and The Flood and Water Regulations (2019)
- Climate Change Act (2008) and Climate Change Act 2009 (2050 Target Amendment) Order (2019)
- The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (2018)
- Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018)
- The Clean Growth Strategy (2017)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014)
- Planning and Energy Act (2008)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.36 The Local Plan should consider setting out policies to achieve climate change and adaptation while also encouraging development that would help to minimise carbon emissions.

3.37 The Local Plan should help to ensure that new development is energy efficient and promotes the use of sustainable construction methods and materials, as well as reduce their carbon emissions. The Local Plan should also ensure that risk from all sources of flooding as a result of climate change is managed effectively and should ensure that development is resilient to future flooding. This should include the Local Plan setting out approaches to encourage the appropriate use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise flood risk. The Local Plan should also consider the handling of waste in line with the waste hierarchy.

3.38 In addition, the Local Plan should seek to allocate development in areas where sustainable transport patterns can be best achieved and encourage development to make use of more sustainable sources of energy, potentially through the allocation of sites that would support infrastructure for renewable energy generation

3.39 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to climate change, sustainable construction, waste management, flooding and sustainable transport.

Health and wellbeing

3.40 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)
- White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022)
- A fairer private rented sector White Paper (2022)
- National Design Guide (2021)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The State of the Environment: Health, People and the Environment (2021)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021)
- COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (2021)
- Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020)
Addendum (2021)
- The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020)
- Public Health England, PHE Strategy (2020-25)
- Homes England Strategic Plan (2023 to 2028)

- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2006)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.41 The Local Plan needs to consider the requirements for infrastructure as this has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment, and it should be prepared to ensure that the population has access to sustainable low carbon infrastructure and services and facilities and that there is sufficient capacity within them to serve the increased population. This should include healthcare, education and open space.

3.42 Local Plans offer the opportunity to maximise the wellbeing benefits of well designed local green spaces. The Local Plan should help to ensure that the provision of open space and green infrastructure is of sufficient quality as well as being sufficient in quantity to meet the needs of the plan area. Incorporated in the plan area in an appropriate manner these types of provisions will encourage healthy and active lifestyles, create fairer, safer and more inclusive communities, and improve the sustainable transport network including active travel networks.

3.43 The provision of an appropriate level of housing over the plan period will help address issues of disparity in terms of access to decent housing. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs with regards to housing size, tenure and type, including the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

3.44 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to health and wellbeing, social inclusion, housing and sustainable transport.

Environment (biodiversity/geodiversity, landscape and soils)

3.45 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- Working with Nature (2022)
- Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (UK BAT) (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)
- Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (2015)
- Defra right of way circular (01/09) (2011)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2010)
- Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.46 The Local Plan should be prepared to limit the potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity as well as important landscapes (including those that are designated) and higher value soils. The Local Plan should help to ensure that ecological features and biodiversity are managed in an appropriate manner, protected and enhanced and that opportunities for habitat restoration or creation are encouraged. The Local Plan should also help to ensure that environmental pollution is minimised in order to protect land and soils and ensure the efficient extraction of minerals. The Local Plan should also

help to ensure that designated and valued landscapes are protected and enhanced, and that development should be sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

3.47 The plan should also take into account non-designated landscapes identified as particularly sensitive to development and non-designated habitats which form part of wider ecological network. The Local Plan also presents opportunities to promote the achievement of net gain in biodiversity.

3.48 In terms of the location of development, the Local Plan can encourage the re-use of brownfield land and protect more valuable agricultural soils from development. The allocation of new sites for development and updated planning policy can also be used to achieve better habitat connectivity through the provision of new green infrastructure and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.

3.49 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, character of landscapes and townscapes, green infrastructure and contaminated land.

Historic environment

3.50 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Historic England Corporate Plan (2023-26)
- Heritage Statement (2017)
- Sustainability Appraisal and Strategy Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)
- Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (1953)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.51 The potential impact of new development on the historic environment, including local character as well as designated and non-designated heritage assets and their respective settings, should inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan should set out a positive strategy for conserving, enhancing and enjoying heritage assets and their settings, including wider historic townscapes and landscapes. The Local Plan can help to realise the wider benefits of historic environment enhancements which include contributions to wellbeing and the economy. Particular regard may be given to protecting heritage assets which have been identified as being 'at risk' (both at the national and local levels). Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to address these issues and site options should be considered with regard for related issues.

3.52 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the historic environment and the character of landscapes and townscapes.

Water and air

3.53 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The air quality strategy for England (2023)
- Environment Act (2021)
- National Chalk Streams Strategy Chalk Stream Strategy (2021)
- Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources (2020)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2018)
- Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2018

- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations (2017)
- Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016)
- Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations (2015)
- Air Quality Standards Regulations (2010)
- Flood and Water Management Act (2010)
- Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations (2009)
- Flood Risk Regulations (2009)
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (2003)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.54 Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to promote the efficient use of water and limit all types of pollution including water and air pollution. They should also seek to limit pressure on the wastewater treatment (WwT) infrastructure and water supply. The allocation of sites for development should take account of areas which are of highest sensitivity in relation to these issues, including Source Protection Zones (SPZs) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). To limit the potential for air quality issues to be intensified as development is delivered over the plan period, local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plan to factor in the contribution that specific site options can make to achieving modal shift and limiting the need for residents to travel.

3.55 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to air pollution, water quality and waste management.

Economic growth

3.56 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Draft Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy (2024)
- The Growth Plan (2022)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021)
- Agricultural Transition Plan (2021 to 2024)
- Agriculture Act (2020)
- UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018)
- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016-2021)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.57 The Local Plan should allocate land to support the projected level of economic growth required over the plan period. Furthermore, the Local Plan should set out policies to promote sustainable economic and employment growth to benefit all members of the community and reduce disparity in the plan area. This should include support for the infrastructure required for the economy to function successfully. Policies should also be included in the Local Plan to promote the viability of Town centres as well as local centres. Employment sites should be located to enable local people to be able to access the new employment opportunities.

3.58 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to economic growth and employment.

Transport

3.59 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022)
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)
- Transport Investment Strategy (2017)
- Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA

3.60 The potential for reducing the need to travel, limiting congestion and associated benefits for air quality and climate change as well as public health should inform the preparation of the policies for the Local Plan and its site allocations. The Local Plan should also encourage walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport by providing safe and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as recognise the multiple benefits they bring in terms of physical and mental health, reducing carbon emissions and reducing air pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site options for development should be informed by issues such as the potential for access to new and existing public transport nodes and active transport routes as well as specific highways capacity issues. The selection of individual site options should also be informed by their proximity to essential services and facilities and jobs which is likely to influence the need for residents to regularly travel long distances.

3.61 The SA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change, improving air quality, public health and wellbeing, and the provision of sustainable transport.

Sub-national policy context

3.62 Below the national level there are further plans and programmes which are of relevance for the Local Plan and SA process. These plans and programmes sit at the county level:

- Essex County Council (2024) Consultation Draft Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Essex County Council (2023) Housing strategy 2021 to 2025
- Essex County Council (2023) Essex Skills Plan
- Essex County Council (2022) Strategy for Levelling up Essex
- Essex County Council (2023) Essex Climate Action Plan (2021–2025)
- Essex County Council (2011) Essex Transport Strategy and emerging Essex Local Transport Plan

3.63 At the local level Colchester has adopted a Three-Year Plan 2023-26 to respond to the challenges of the City. The plan focusses on key topic areas of climate change, service provision, health and wellbeing, housing, economy and heritage and culture. The Council has also adopted a Climate Emergency Action Plan 2024-2027 (2024), Economic Strategy 2022-2025 (2022), Future Transport Strategy (2022) (in conjunction with Essex County Council and Essex Highways) and Housing Strategy 2022-27 (2022).

3.64 Development in the District will not be delivered in isolation from those areas around it. Given the interconnection between Colchester and the surrounding areas there is potential for cross-boundary and in-combination effects where development is proposed through development plans in neighbouring authorities. As such, a summary of the plans for local authority areas that surround the District is provided in Appendix B.

Baseline information

3.65 Baseline information provides the context for assessing the sustainability of the Local. It also provides the basis for identifying trends, predicting the likely effects of these documents and monitoring its outcomes. The requirements for baseline data vary widely, but it must be relevant to environmental, social and economic issues, be sensitive to change and should ideally relate to records which are sufficient to identify trends.

3.66 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires data to be gathered on biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors. As an integrated SA and SEA is being carried out, baseline information relating to other sustainability topics has also been included; for example, information about housing, education, transport, energy, waste and economic growth. As with the review of relevant plans, policies and programmes, a small number of amendments have been made to the baseline information since it was originally presented in the SA Scoping Report in 2024 in order to update it, drawing on the most recent evidence sources. The updated baseline information is presented in Appendix C.

Key sustainability issues and likely evolution without the plan

3.67 Key sustainability issues for Colchester were identified in the SA Scoping Report for the Local Plan, that was subject to consultation with the three statutory consultees in April - May 2024. The key issues identified through the analysis of the baseline, policy context and the consultation workshop with stakeholders are summarised in below.

3.68 It is also a requirement of the SEA Directive that consideration is given to the likely evolution of the environment in the plan area (in this case Colchester District) if the new Local Plan was not to be implemented. This analysis is also presented in relation to each of the key sustainability issues below.

3.69 The analysis below shows that, in general, the current trends in relation to the various social, economic and environmental issues affecting Colchester would be more likely to continue without the implementation of the new Local Plan, although the policies in the adopted Colchester Local Plan would still go some way towards addressing many of the issues. In most cases, the new Local Plan offers opportunities to directly and strongly affect existing trends in a

positive way, through an up-to-date plan which reflects the requirements of the NPPF.

Population, Health and Wellbeing

3.70 The provision of housing to meet local needs is an issue. This includes meeting the demand in terms of number of houses and types of housing needed. Meeting the demand for affordable housing, including allocation of sites for gypsies and travellers, will also need to be considered and met. Local Plans must set the objectively assessed need for housing using the standard methodology. Co-ordinated, planned development is more likely to lead to balanced economic and residential growth in a properly integrated fashion with new infrastructure including transport improvements but also environmental, community and cultural improvements. Local Plans provide a coherent plan and spatial strategy, without an up to date local plan, the provision of housing is less controlled.

3.71 As projections indicate an aging population the impact of smaller, older households on services and housing will need to be managed. It is important to recognise and manage the other potential impacts that an aging population may have on the Colchester community. These will include a greater stress on health services, on the local economy and on other key services such as retail, education, public transport, leisure, and tourism. It is likely that many of these impacts can be positive if planned for and managed correctly. Without a local plan, the necessary infrastructure to serve new development would not be forthcoming and the benefits of an aging population may not be realised. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update (2021) demonstrates the high cost of providing comprehensive infrastructure to support the allocations identified in the adopted Local Plan. Planning policies can include policy safeguards requiring necessary infrastructure as part of development.

3.72 As Colchester has a large rural area, rural isolation can be an issue, and this is linked to the issue of an aging population. Rural areas often have limited services and facilities, including limited broadband. This, coupled with poor

public transport links, can prevent those without access to a car accessing the facilities they need. With an increase in home working since the pandemic, good internet coverage is essential. Without a Local Plan, the necessary infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, to serve new development would not be forthcoming.

3.73 Ensuring that school places, including early years, are available in the right locations and at the right time is a key issue. It is also important to ensure that there is good accessibility to schools by sustainable modes of transport. Without a local plan, the provision of school places will not be considered in the context of a spatial strategy and the phasing of new homes.

3.74 Access to recreation, leisure and green infrastructure is as important as access to formal health facilities like hospitals, doctor's surgeries and NHS dentists in promoting healthy lifestyles. Health and wellbeing should be a golden thread running through the plan. The approach to the new Local Plan is to plan for a better environment and enhance the green infrastructure network. Without this forming the backbone of the local plan, green infrastructure will not be looked at strategically and opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network through new open spaces and connections where they are needed, will be missed.

3.75 There are pockets of deprivation and within these areas health and educational attainment are poorer than other areas in Colchester (Greenstead, St. Anne and St. John's, Shrub End, Berechurch are within the 10% most deprived under the Education, Skills and Training domain in the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation). There is opportunity for the local plan to help address this, including by supporting regeneration and infrastructure provision in areas of greatest need. Without a Local Plan, deprivation, and the consequences of this, such as poor educational attainment, could worsen.

Economy

3.76 It will be important to match the population growth with an appropriate level of economic growth.

3.77 Ensuring a range of job opportunities, including careers as opposed to jobs, is an important issue and can be addressed by understanding employment issues and needs and reflecting these through employment policies. This could include safeguarding employment sites, which could not be done without a Local Plan.

3.78 Town centre uses are directed to Colchester City Centre in the first instance. If Colchester's district centres continue to expand and are not planned in appropriate manner, this could have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the city centre. The continued economic and cultural vibrancy of the city centre lies in reconnecting it to the surrounding neighbourhoods and improving choice in transport modes including the walking and cycling experience of routes to the mainline rail station, the Roman Circus and the Hythe and University campus in particular. Whilst there is a City Centre Masterplan SPD, Local Plan town centre policies will have more weight and certainty of implementation.

3.79 Creative industries are a priority growth area for Colchester and should be considered as part of employment policies. Without a Local Plan, opportunities to consider the growth of creative industries through planning will be missed.

3.80 As a significant part of Colchester District is rural, there is a need to support the revitalisation and diversification of the rural economy. Without a Local Plan, the Council can only be reactive. A new Local Plan, allows the Council to positively consider the revitalisation and diversification of the rural economy in a more coherent manner.

Transport and Accessibility

3.81 One of the biggest challenges to Colchester's future development is traffic growth and the dominance of the car as the main mode of travel. Around 48% of people in Colchester drive to work. It is essential that improved transportation and active travel links are an integral part of the Local Plan to reduce congestion into and around Colchester. It is noted that numerous routes that serve the centre of the City currently experience high levels of traffic congestion. It will be particularly important to improve and maintain Colchester's transportation infrastructure so that the city can continue to attract businesses, retailers, tourists, and home buyers, therefore boosting the local economy. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Local Plans provide certainty to those involved in the development of land. Without a Local Plan, a policy vacuum would exist that would lead to planning by appeal. Through the adoption of a new Local Plan development that reduces the need to travel and provides opportunities for active travel and public transport through its location and the infrastructure it provides can be promoted.

Air, Land and Water Quality

3.82 Two historic AQMAs in Colchester have been revoked (AQMA 2, East Street and AQMA 4, Lucy Lane North) due to improved air quality. The remaining AQMA has been reduced to encompass only non-compliant areas: Brook Street, Osborne Street, St Johns Street and Mersea Road. Whilst air quality in Colchester has improved, air quality is an issue that should be considered as part of the plan. This could be through a spatial strategy that reduces the need to travel, supports improved walking and cycling networks and avoids development that places sensitive receptors close to existing air pollution hotspots/ emitters. Without a Local Plan, there will not be a spatial strategy and opportunities to improve air quality through planning are less likely to be achieved.

3.83 Pluvial flooding can occur as a result of severe storms, which create run-off volumes that temporarily exceed the natural or urbanised sewer and drainage capacities, creating flash flooding. This is likely to increase as a result of higher intensity rainfall, more frequent winter storms and increased urban development. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) manage the flow of surface water and are required for development. The new Local Plan can include policy requirements for SuDS, including ensuring these deliver multiple benefits. Furthermore, the location of development to avoid areas of highest flood risk (from the sea and rivers as well as from ground water and surface water) and areas which may result in increased flood risk in other parts of the District can be best achieved through a coordinated approach to the distribution of development in the new Local Plan.

3.84 Water resources (including supply and quality) is another important issue that is becoming under greater pressure and scrutiny and will need to be considered as part of a Water Cycle Study to support plan preparation. Without the benefits of an up-to-date Local Plan, supported by a Water Cycle Study, it will be more difficult to manage the effects of development on flood risk, water resources and water quality. A Water Cycle Study will help ensure that all site allocations will not have an impact on the water environment or water infrastructure. The study looks at water strategically in the context of the overall amount and location of development included in the Local Plan. The local plan can include policy safeguards to ensure that any requirements in relation to water are included in relevant policies.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

3.85 The UK has committed to being net zero carbon by 2050 and the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 with a commitment to achieve carbon neutrality for Council services by 2030. Working towards carbon neutrality is a key sustainability issue for the plan area, as is adapting to a changing climate. Climate change is one of the most pressing issues that we face internationally, and the Local Plan can play its part in helping to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. For example, through policies that direct development to accessible locations that reduce the need to travel, a requirement for net zero

buildings, and the provision of open space and tree planting (and other elements of green infrastructure) to help with adaptation to a warming climate. Without a Local Plan the Council can only encourage these measures, while the preparation of evidence-based policies can set out requirements developments will be required to meet.

3.86 Climate change is increasing the magnitude and frequency of intense rainfall events that cause flooding and the risk of flooding from the River Colne is also heightened by increased winter precipitation. Colchester has grown up around the River Colne and there is a risk of flooding from a number of sources: fluvial, tidal and pluvial. The River Colne is fluvial in the upper reaches and tidally influenced in the lower reaches, extending as far upstream as East Mill. There are four major tributaries and many creeks and brooks in the tidally influenced region of the river. Tidal flood risk is concentrated along the coastal frontage adjacent to Mersea Island, which is low lying. Tidal flood sources are the most dominant in Colchester and tidal flooding can result from a storm surge, high spring tides or both events combined over defended and undefended land. The Environment Agency are updating their flood risk mapping (expected spring 2025) and this will form important evidence for the local plan that will direct site allocations.

3.87 Climate change is leading to more frequent droughts, with consequent reduced water availability. The Environment Agency has identified that the catchment area of Anglian Water Services, which provides water (and wastewater treatment) to the City, is seriously water stressed. A Water Cycle Study will be needed as evidence to support the Local Plan.

3.88 As explained in the previous section, without the benefits of an up-to-date Local Plan, supported by a Water Cycle Study, it will be more difficult to manage the effects of development on flood risk, water resources and water quality. A Water Cycle Study will help ensure that all site allocations will not have an impact on the water environment or water infrastructure. Further evidence for Local Plan will include a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that will look at the risk of flooding over the long term, including the likely impact of climate change. The new Local Plan will also help to ensure that the distribution of growth over the plan period is directed to areas that are less at risk of

flooding and will not result in increased flood risk at other locations. This approach to new growth should consider the potential effects of climate change on flood risk in the plan area and its surroundings.

Biodiversity

3.89 Maintaining and enhancing the natural and built environment of the City is very important to its residents and communities. Nationally there is growing recognition of the importance of the natural environment, including green infrastructure, and the wider benefits this has on people and the economy. Responding to the increasing environmental agenda in plan making requires a more coherent and streamlined approach to developing policy objectives in relation to the environment. New development in Colchester has the potential to lead to adverse effects on the integrity of Colne Estuary, Blackwater Estuary and Abberton Reservoir SPAs and Ramsar sites as well as the Essex Estuaries SAC and likely significant effects will need to be avoided or mitigated through policy safeguards. A Local Plan allows for the appropriate selection of sites and carefully tailored site-specific measures to mitigate effects and protect and enhance the natural environment. It can also support a locally specifically approach to the achievement of biodiversity net gain. With the population increasing, pressure on wildlife areas such as through habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance including as a result of recreation, is likely to be exacerbated. Without an up-to-date Local Plan, there is also less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green infrastructure, i.e., open green spaces/green networks for recreation, walking and cycling networks, and wildlife.

Historic Environment

3.90 Colchester has a rich historical heritage, which is important to residents, visitors and employers. In 2023 there were nine entries on the Essex Heritage at Risk Register. The Local Plan should conserve existing assets and their settings and could look at opportunities to address existing problems through

policies and allocations that avoid harm to heritage assets. The Local Plan can also support the bringing of heritage assets back into viable and suitable use. Without a Local Plan including a positive strategy for the conservation of the historic environment, there is a risk that there would be increased harm to the historic environment through the lack of a clear and up-to-date local planning framework.

Landscape

3.91 It will be important to ensure that Colchester does not lose its identity as it continues to grow and new development and infrastructure is required to support this growth. New communities should be well integrated within the City and wider landscape. These aims should be balanced with Colchester's city status and making the most of this and meeting the needs of residents.

3.92 Protecting the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and considering valued and more sensitive landscapes will be of importance. A Local Plan allows for carefully tailored site-specific measures to protect, mitigate and enhance the natural environment, including landscape setting. It allows for the consideration of site allocations with a lesser impact on landscape character and allows the Council to consider and define valued landscapes. This will help prevent an ad hoc approach to growth which might otherwise result in piecemeal development and erosion of landscape setting and the character of settlements.

The SA Framework

3.93 As described in the methodology chapter, the relevant objectives established via the review of plans, policies, and programmes and the key sustainability issues identified by the baseline review informed development of a framework of sustainability objectives, the SA framework, against which the plan has been assessed. For each of the sustainability objectives a number of appraisal questions are included to act as prompts when considering the

potential effects of an option in relation to that objective. It should be noted that appraisal questions are not exhaustive and not all appraisal questions will be relevant to each element of the plan that is appraised. The SA framework is presented below.

3.94 A small number of changes have been made to some of the appraisal questions in the SA framework since it was presented in the Scoping Report, in response to comments received during the Scoping consultation – the detailed comments and associated changes are set out in Appendix A.

3.95 In summary, in response to the comment received from Natural England, SA objective 8: Biodiversity and its associated appraisal questions now refer to restoring biodiversity and geodiversity in addition to protecting and enhancing related assets. The update to the wording of the objective and appraisal questions has been made to better align with national planning policy.

SA Objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Deliver the number of houses needed to support the existing and growing population?
- Provide more affordable homes?
- Deliver a range of housing types and tenures including housing for students, gypsies and travellers, and the aging population?
- Deliver well designed and sustainable homes?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Material assets

SA Objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Lead to development on previously developed land?
- Minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land?
- Will densities make efficient use of land?
- Will a mix of uses be provided?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Material assets
- Landscape
- Soil

SA Objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Improve the range of employment opportunities?
- Support the vitality and viability of town centres?
- Support skills and training and changing economies?
- Support tourism, including an understanding of heritage, and the arts?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Material assets
- Population
- Human health
- Cultural heritage

SA Objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Provide good accessibility by a choice of modes of transport?
- Reduce the reliance on private vehicles?
- Enhance the active travel network?
- Will a mix of uses be provided?
- Increase development density in higher order service centres?
- Will the levels of sustainable and active travel increase?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Human health
- Climatic factors
- Air

SA Objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime?
- Reduce the proportion of people living in deprivation?
- Meet the needs of specific groups including those with protected characteristics?
- Increase access to open spaces, green infrastructure and recreational facilities, including access to nature?
- Encourage healthy lifestyles?
- Facilitate the integration of new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Human health

SA Objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Support easy access to a range of high-quality services and facilities?
- Contribute to improving educational levels of the population of working age, including by improving access to educational facilities?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Population
- Human health

SA Objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage and cultural assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage

SA Objective 8: Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Protect, enhance and restore designated nature conservation assets?
- Protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, including local wildlife sites?
- Protect, enhance and restore geodiversity?
- Protect, enhance and restore ecological networks, including opportunity areas identified through the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy?
- Deliver environmental net gain?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Biodiversity, flora and fauna
- Soil
- Water

SA Objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Maintain and enhance landscape character including the Dedham Vale National Landscape?
- Improve the condition of parks and open spaces?
- Maintain and enhance the character of settlements?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Landscape

SA Objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- Plan and implement adaptation measures for the likely effects of climate change?
- Include energy efficiency measures?
- Reduce energy consumption?

- Support the delivery of renewable energy schemes?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Water
- Air
- Climatic factors

SA Objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere?
- Promote the use of SuDS for flood resilience and improving water quality?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Water
- Climatic factors

SA Objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Reduce the amount of waste produced?
- Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?
- Reduce the amount of waste produced?
- Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Material assets

SA Objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Improve air quality?
- Help to achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Areas?
- Reduce emissions of key pollutants?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Air

SA Objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

Appraisal Questions – Will the Local Plan/policy...?

- Ensure there is sufficient water for the lifetime of the development in a changing climate without negatively impacting on the environment?
- Ensure there is sufficient wastewater treatment infrastructure and environmental capacity to accommodate the new development in a changing climate?

Relevant SEA Topics Covered

- Water
- Climatic factors

Chapter 4

Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

4.1 This chapter sets out the appraisal findings for the options considered for the distribution of growth in Colchester (i.e. the spatial strategy options), followed by the findings for the site options identified as reasonable alternatives identified by the Council for potential allocation in the Local Plan.

4.2 The appraisal findings for both the options for distribution of growth and the site options were provided to the Council in advance of preparation of the draft Local Plan. The findings for the findings for the distribution of growth options were provided in August 2024. The findings for the site options were initially provided in September 2024 and were subsequently updated to consider new and amended site options in December 2024. These findings have informed the preparation of the draft Local Plan and will be considered further as the plan making process continues.

Approach to appraisal of spatial strategy options

4.3 As described in more detail in Chapter 2, as starting point for the development of the spatial strategy options, Council officers considered seven reasonable alternative spatial strategy approaches. These approaches were not subject to appraisal but allowed officers to consider different elements that when taken forward in various combinations, might form viable spatial strategy options. The Council used this process to set out seven spatial strategy options for appraisal through the SA.

4.4 In line with the government's PPG, the reasonable alternative options for the spatial strategy that were appraised, were designed to be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each, so that meaningful comparisons could be made. In designing the preferred spatial strategy, officers considered the spatial strategy options in light of the SA findings for each and whether one or a combination of them should be taken forward as the preferred spatial strategy.

4.5 All spatial strategy options include the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, which is addressing the longer term needs for both Colchester and Tendring, since the principle for this has already been established in the adopted, joint Strategic Section 1 Local Plan. The exact amount of growth to be provided in Colchester to 2041 had not been established at the point the appraisal of spatial strategy options was undertaken. However, all the spatial strategy options have been included on the basis each are capable of accommodating Colchester's required level of housing growth.

4.6 A description of each of the spatial strategy options is provided below.

Option 1: Continuing existing spatial strategy

4.7 Continuing existing spatial strategy, focusing growth at the most accessible and sustainable locations. This includes growth within the urban area of Colchester and a variety of settlements, including development of a new settlement through the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

4.8 The settlement hierarchy underpinning the adopted Local Plan has been reviewed as part of the work for the emerging Local Plan. The update to the settlement hierarchy is detailed through the Council's Spatial Strategy Topic Paper (2025) [\[See reference 17\]](#) which forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. The settlement hierarchy focuses growth in the urban area of Colchester. Directly below the urban area, Growth and Opportunity areas are included where appropriate growth is planned for. This second tier also includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The

updated hierarchy broadly maintains the order of settlements below this with growth to be focused mostly at the sustainable large and medium settlements as well as some small settlements. The updated hierarchy includes an updated categorisation of the sustainable settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe as large settlements. The final tier is the Countryside of Colchester where development will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.9 Alongside the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, significant growth would be located at a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. There would likely be a number of public gains through significant growth, such as provision of new infrastructure. This would be a long term strategy for growth; therefore, growth would also need to be located in other locations across the City. This option would include growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

4.10 This would consider growth to the north of Colchester beyond the A12, to the east around St Johns and Bullocks Wood, to the south around Berechurch and towards Layer de la Haye and to the west towards Copford and Marks Tey. Regeneration areas could be identified within the urban area of Colchester, including the City Centre and Hythe.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.11 Alongside the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, smaller scale new communities would be developed as Garden Suburbs. These could be distributed across the City including within the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing.

4.12 This option would include growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.13 This option would look to regenerate and intensify development within the City Centre. Developments would be of a higher density and would change the skyline of the City Centre.

4.14 This option would include proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.15 This option would seek to focus growth in key transport corridors. These corridors may be directly from or to Colchester City Centre and will include a range of transport modes including rail (Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne, Colchester Town and Colchester) and road, including the A12 to the north (such towards Langham) and around the new junction 24. These may follow the Garden Town and Villages concept.

4.16 There is also potential for a transport corridor to include the route of the RTS. The planned route within the plan area travels from the A12 Park and Ride to the north of Colchester City to the University of Essex and new Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community site to the south east of Colchester City.

4.17 This option would include growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city.

4.18 This would consider growth to the north of Colchester beyond the A12, to the east around St Johns and Bullocks Wood, to the south around Berechurch and towards Layer de la Haye and to the west towards Copford and Marks Tey. Regeneration areas could be identified within the urban area of Colchester, including the City Centre and Hythe.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.19 A number of hubs and spokes will be identified across Colchester, with a higher level of growth attributed to the hub and smaller growth in the spokes. There are nine hubs across Colchester - Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. Nineteen spokes are associated with the hubs. This model would need to evolve further as the evidence base emerges.

4.20 This option would also include growth within the urban area of Colchester. It may also include proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the city that are not identified as hubs or spokes. Although Wivenhoe is one of the largest hubs within the Colchester District area, the spokes associated with this hub are located within Tendring and therefore it has not been included within this option.

Option 7: Environment led

4.21 An environment-led Spatial Strategy would seek to limit growth in those locations that are most significantly constrained by environmental designations such as Dedham and Mersea and other locations within or close to the highest level of environmental designation such as the European Habitats sites, SSSIs and National Landscapes.

4.22 Locations that are of environmental value for their landscape or biodiversity through lower tier designations could support growth, with the priority to deliver significant enhancements and environmental gains to the area such as through a Country Park. This could include south Colchester and other locations including Tiptree. The focus for selecting the full range of settlements to accommodate growth would be informed by evidence identifying the locations that would benefit most from enhanced green infrastructure for environmental, amenity and health and wellbeing benefits, delivering enhanced provision where the most significant gaps in such provision is currently.

4.23 Additional growth would also occur in west and south Colchester where there are most significant gaps in open space provision as identified through the Open Spaces Report [\[See reference 18\]](#). This option may include proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages away from the settlements most significantly environmentally constrained.

Appraisal findings for the spatial strategy options

4.24 The expected sustainability effects of the seven spatial strategy options for the distribution of growth are described below by SA objective. A summary of the effects is provided in Table 4.1 below. For each SA objective the appraisal is introduced setting out any relevant spatially specific considerations for the topic area (e.g. is any area part of the plan area particularly constrained or does it provide opportunities for achieving positive effects). Given that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is included as a constant in each option considered, the expected effects of its development are addressed in this introduction section to each SA objective. The detailed appraisal that follows focusses on the differences between the likely effects of the options considered.

Table 4.1: Summary of likely sustainability effects of each of the spatial strategy options

SA objective	Option 1: Existing Spatial Strategy	Option 2: New Garden Community	Option 3: Garden Suburbs	Option 4: City Centre Intensificatio n	Option 5: Transport Corridors	Option 6: Hubs And Spokes	Option 7: Environment Led
SA1: Housing	++/-	++/-?	++/-	+/-	++/-	++/-	+/-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	+/-?	--/+?	-?	+/-?	+/-?	--?	+/-?
SA3: Economic growth	++	++/-	+/-	++/-	++	+/-	+/-
SA4: Transport	++/-	+/-?	--/+	++/-?	++/-	+/-	++/-?
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++/-?	--/+	++/--?	++/-	--/+	++/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++/-	++/-?	+/-	++/-	++/-	--/+	+/-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	-?	--?	--?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--?	--?	--?	-?	--?	--?	+/-?
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?	-?	-?	--?	--?	+/-?
SA10: Climate change	+	++	+	+	+	0	+

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

SA objective	Option 1: Existing Spatial Strategy	Option 2: New Garden Community	Option 3: Garden Suburbs	Option 4: City Centre Intensificatio n	Option 5: Transport Corridors	Option 6: Hubs And Spokes	Option 7: Environment Led
SA11: Flood risk	-	-	-	-	-	-	+/-
SA12: Waste	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA13: Air quality	++/-	+/-?	--/+	++/--?	++/-	+/-	++/-?
SA14: Water	-?	-	-	-	-	-	-

SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

4.25 All spatial strategy options are assumed to meet the identified housing need for Colchester, including needs for different groups within the community. This includes affordable housing, as well as housing for families with children, older people, students, people with disability, service families, gypsy and travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

4.26 In terms of access to housing in Colchester, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 identifies that Colchester City contains some LSOAs that are within the 10% most deprived in terms of barriers to housing and services. There are also LSOAs within the rural wards of Rural North, Marks Tey and Layer and Mersea and Pyefleet that perform similarly in the IMD 2019.

4.27 While it does not fall within a more deprived LSOA in terms of barriers to housing and services, the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would make a substantial contribution to the housing need of the plan area.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.28 Option 1 proposes the most growth within the urban area of Colchester and a variety of second tier 'sustainable settlements'. Option 1 would broaden the type and tenure of houses in Colchester City, thereby helping to address access to housing in an area of need. While this option would allow for housing provision in the sustainable settlements in rural wards where there is similar need for housing, beyond these settlements, it would only support limited

housing growth within rural areas. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.29 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Land to the immediate north of Marks Tey is identified as within the 10% most deprived in terms of barriers to housing and services in the IMD2019. This option also offers the opportunity to develop regeneration areas within the urban area of Colchester which is likely to allow for the delivery of homes in areas of most need. Proportional growth would occur within the other settlements of the plan area. As such, this option is unlikely to address issues of access to housing to a significant degree beyond the new Garden Community and the urban area of Colchester. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected. The new Garden Community could potentially have a long lead-in time for development and therefore it may be difficult to maintain a supply of homes within the short to medium term. The overall mixed effect is therefore uncertain.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.30 Option 3 supports the growth of smaller scale new communities known as Garden Suburbs, including growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages. Option 3 would help to broaden the type and tenure of housing across the City. Smaller scale Garden Suburbs are likely to have shorter development lead-in times than large strategic sites and therefore deliver housing at a faster rate. They could also help to address barriers to housing at a wider range of locations including areas of greatest need. However, growth within the lower tier settlements is to be proportional to the size of the settlement, meaning that as through Option 2, the scale of development beyond the Garden Suburbs is expected to be relatively limited, hampering the ability of this option to address issues of access to housing across all of the plan area. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.31 Option 4 concentrates growth within the City Centre with proportional growth to be provided in other existing settlements and villages. The regeneration of the City Centre could support development within areas where there is an identified need. This option would not achieve a wide distribution of growth with the majority of development proposed within the City Centre. Therefore, areas of greatest need outside of this location are considered less likely to feel the benefits of new housing growth. In addition, proposing high density development within the city centre could limit the type and tenure of housing provided. Through this option, challenges relating to the delivery of a high level of housing within the City Centre and the availability of land for development may result. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.32 This option will provide much of the growth over the plan period within the urban area of Colchester and proportional development in other existing settlements and villages across Colchester. It is likely to support the regeneration of areas within the urban area of Colchester where there is identified need for housing delivery. However, limited growth is expected within the more rural areas and lower tier settlements, including where there is a further identified need for new housing. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.33 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. Housing at Marks Tey, Great Horkesley and Layer de a la Haye could help to address access to housing in areas of greatest need in the wards of Rural North and

Marks Tey and Layer. A more limited amount of development would be delivered at the small Spoke settlements in more rural locations. Growth would also be provided within the urban area of Colchester where there is an identified need for housing. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes, which is likely to limit growth beyond the Hub locations. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.34 This option would limit growth in locations that are most significantly constrained by environmental designations. There is a high concentration of European designations including SSSIs and SPAs to the south of Colchester District. Growth is likely to be more concentrated to the north (but away from the Dedham Vale and central/east of Colchester where there are few environmental designations. There is also potential for some development to occur towards west and south Colchester in locations that are not close to environmental designations, where significant gaps in open space provision have been identified. This option could limit the distribution of growth across Colchester, with settlements away from environmental designations to accommodate only proportional levels of growth meaning relatively limited growth is likely within the lower tier settlements. This option is expected to help address the housing need in some parts of the Urban Area but would be less likely to support housing delivery in rural locations. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected. While all options are expected to deliver the required level of housing for the plan area, limiting growth in areas with environmental sensitivity and where there is potential to enhance green infrastructure could result in increased challenges in delivery and therefore the mixed effect is partly uncertain.

SA objective 2: Efficient use of land

4.35 Providing development in the District to meet the housing needs over the plan period is likely to result in substantial greenfield land take. This could

include some higher value agricultural soils (within Colchester this includes soils of Grade 3 or Grade 2 value which range from 'moderate' to 'very good' quality). Colchester primarily comprises of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land to the north and west of the City. There are areas of urban land and Non-agricultural land to the east of the City. The 'Best and Most Versatile' agricultural land referred to in the NPPF is defined as Grades 1 to 3a but GIS data was not available for the District to sub-divide areas of Grade 3 land into Grades 3a and 3b. Therefore, the overall effect for all options is partly uncertain.

4.36 Through all options, development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would involve substantial greenfield land take, much of which is Grade 3 agricultural land and a small area of Grade 1 land within Colchester.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.37 Option 1 will likely involve the development of areas of greenfield land at the urban area of Colchester with development to the north of the City towards the A12 likely to result in the loss of land of at least Grade 3 agricultural value. Any development to the south of Colchester City is likely to fall within the large areas of land classified as urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land. Within the urban area there is also increased potential for regeneration and the reuse of brownfield land. Appropriate levels of growth would occur at sustainable settlements. Many of these settlements contain or are close to areas of Grade 3 or Grade 2 agricultural land, although it is notable that at Wivenhoe, West Mersea, Layer-de-la-Haye and Tiptree there are substantial areas of urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land meaning that the loss of higher value agricultural to new development might be limited. Only limited growth is supported in other villages which is likely to limit cumulative loss of more rural greenfield land. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.38 Through this option a significant level of growth would occur at Marks Tey through a new Garden Community. Marks Tey falls on land mostly classified as Grade 2 agricultural land with some areas of Grade 3 land to the south.

Furthermore, the development of a new garden community will result in significant loss of greenfield land. This option would also include growth within the urban area of Colchester allowing for regeneration and use of brownfield land to be achieved and proportional growth in other existing settlements.

Growth is expected to the south of the City at Layer de la Haye and Berechurch which include areas Grade 4 agricultural land and non-agricultural land.

Therefore, a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.39 Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This could include growth to the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages. Option 3 could result in the significant take up of greenfield land particularly around Marks Tey, Copford, Tiptree and Messing. With the exception of Tiptree, development at these settlements is likely to involve the loss of areas of Grade 3 or higher value agricultural land. Furthermore, there are significant areas of Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land to the east of the City. There is potential for development to the south of the City to make use of Grade 4 agricultural, non-agricultural or urban land. However, given the spread of development to a range of Garden Suburbs, the potential to achieve substantial regeneration and re-use of brownfield land through this option is considered to be relatively limited. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.40 Option 4 supports high density development and regeneration within the City Centre. This option would do the most to support more efficient use of land including the potential re-use of brownfield land in the most developed area of Colchester. Proportional growth is proposed within other existing settlements and villages across the City which could result in some further development of greenfield and higher grade agricultural land. Given that much of greenfield land within the plan area consists of Grade 2 or 3 Agricultural land then there is the potential for loss of high value agricultural land. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.41 Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the urban area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne and Langham. Development around these areas will likely result in the loss of greenfield land which mainly consists of Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. However, it is notable that there are areas of urban, non-agricultural and Grade 4 agricultural land towards Wivenhoe. Furthermore, development in the Urban Area is likely to support regeneration and the re-use of brownfield land. Development may also occur along the A12 to the north of Colchester and to the west at new junction 24 both of which fall on mostly greenfield, Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.42 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. The majority of these Hubs fall within Grade 2 or 3 agricultural land, the notable exceptions being Tiptree, West Mersea and Rowhedge which contain or are at the edge of

urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land. The Spokes are smaller settlements that all fall within Grade 2 or 3 agricultural land. Growth is also proposed within the urban area of Colchester which largely falls on land classified as urban or non-agricultural land. However, given the focus of growth towards the Hub and Spokes, this option is considered less likely to achieve regeneration of the City Centre and surroundings and is likely to result in significant loss of greenfield land. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.43 Option 7 aims to propose growth away from areas that are constrained by environmental designations and taking into account areas where green infrastructure might be enhanced. By directing much of the growth away from areas that are constrained by environmental designations, this option will potentially limit the loss of undeveloped greenfield land. Development will also be directed to areas that are likely to benefit from enhancements to green infrastructure. This could have a positive effect on the enhancements to soils in the plan area. Option 7 could help to avoid the use of the best quality soils within the plan area with much of the growth to be provided in the south and areas such as Tiptree, with both areas containing swathes of Grade 4, non-agricultural or urban land. However, the scale of growth required is likely to result in loss of substantial areas of greenfield land. Overall a mixed minor negative and minor positive effect is expected.

SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

4.44 Colchester City Centre sits at the top of the hierarchy of centres in Colchester, followed by a number of District and then Local Centres. The

Primary and Secondary Shopping Areas also lie within the centre of the town. This area is the principal comparison goods shopping destination in the District. The area to the north of the main Urban Area is designated as the North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area while a further Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area is designated to the east of the City. Stanway Strategic Economic Area is located to the west of the main Urban Area. These areas represent the best employment sites in the District. There are several Local Economic Areas across the Urban Area and also within a number of the sustainable settlements, including Marks Tey, Langham, Tiptree and West Mersea. Furthermore, the District's rich historic environment and range of landscapes provides the basis for an important tourism sector which creates jobs in the area.

4.45 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community lies adjacent to the Urban Area as well as the Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area. From this location residents will likely have good access to jobs and there is potential to achieve synergies between the Garden Community and University area depending on the uses incorporated.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.46 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Proposing the majority of growth within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements will provide residents with good access to a wide range of employment opportunities and will also help to support the main Town Centre as well as a number of District and Local Centres in these areas. This will also limit the need to travel further to access jobs for many residents, potentially helping to limit congestion which might otherwise affect economic growth. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.47 Option 2 proposes a significant amount of growth at a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Option 2 would also include growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across Colchester. The Garden Community at Marks Tey is located close to an existing Local Employment Area which might be expanded upon to provide residents with good access to employment opportunities. The provision of an additional Garden Community in the District is also likely to support the creation of a new centre which could be a further focus for economic growth in the area. The Garden Community location is also well related to the Stanway Strategic Economic Area. Development within the urban area of Colchester will also help support the viability of Colchester Town Centre. However, by limiting the level of growth at the sustainable settlements, this option is considered less likely to support economic growth and the viability of centres across a wider range of potentially suitable locations. This could result in increased need for some residents in more rural locations having to travel longer distances for work given the potential for economic stagnation. Overall, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.48 Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This could include growth to the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages. The spread of development to a wider range of smaller Garden Suburb locations at the edge of the City could see some residents have to travel longer distances for work resulting in some increase in congestion and is less likely to support the Town Centre. This is particularly likely to be the case where sites are to the south where they are less well related to a Strategic Employment Area, although development to the east could benefit from access to the University of Essex Strategic Economic Area. Most locations at the settlement edge would benefit

from access to a Local Employment Area. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.49 Option 4 proposes the majority of the growth within Colchester City Centre and aims to regenerate and intensify development at this location. The role of Colchester City as the main economic centre could be built upon through this option by providing new residents with good access to the Town Centre and a wide variety of employment opportunities by sustainable transport. Many new residents would also be well related to the District and Local Centres within the main Urban Area. This option also could help to reduce the need for new residents to travel to access jobs. However, an over reliance on one location as the centre for economic growth could result in a substantial increase in in commuting with impacts relating to commuting unless suitable mitigation schemes were delivered. The potential for over reliance on the City Centre as the location for growth could also result in stagnation of economic growth at other locations. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.50 Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the urban area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne and Langham. Focusing growth along the key transport corridors will likely provide easier access to the Urban Area which offers a range of employment opportunities and is also likely to support the viability of the Town Centre and range of District and Local Centres within this area. Furthermore, if the Garden Town and Villages concept is followed at new developments then this could lead to employment provision alongside residential development. The provision of development at locations that benefit from sustainable transport links could support its viability which may make the area more attractive to new residents and also investors. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.51 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller level of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements. While this option would deliver some growth at the Urban Area, the focus is at the Hubs which are located outside of this location and therefore this element of growth is less likely to support the viability of the Town Centre. Rowhedge, Great Horkesley, Eight Ash Green and Marks Tey are relatively well related to Strategic Employment Areas, while some other the other Hub locations benefit from Local Employment Areas. In general, the Spokes have more limited access to employment areas. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA3: Economic Growth.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.52 Option 7 aims to limit growth in locations which are significantly strained by environmental designations. It will also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement. The west and south of Colchester was identified as having significant gaps in green infrastructure provision. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome through the delivery of new Country Park land alongside new homes. The main Urban Area and areas to the north, west and east are less constrained by these types of designations. Growth within the urban area of Colchester would support the viability of the Town Centre and District and Local Centres within this area and would also ensure that residential growth is located close to employment opportunities. Development to the north, west and east of the main Urban Area could benefit from access to the Strategic Employment Areas at the settlement edge. At Tiptree residents would be less well related to the more substantial employment

areas, however, a Local Employment Area is found in this area. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

SA objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

4.53 Colchester is connected to a comprehensive network of major roads via the A12 and A120, which provide routes to London and the M25, as well as to Ipswich, Harwich and Stanstead Airport. Parts of the A12 carry over 90,000 vehicles a day. Transportation provision in the City also includes six railway stations, bus routes that serve the main sustainable settlements and several cycle trails including National Cycle Network routes 1, 13 and 51. The main Urban Area will also benefit from the planned RTS that will run from the A12 Park and Ride to the University of Essex and Tendring-Colchester Garden Community.

4.54 According to the 2021 census, sustainable travel options including trains, buses, cycling and walking account for only 16.4% of journeys to work in the District. The proportion of journeys to work made by car (47.4%) is higher than the national level (44.5%) [\[See reference 19\]](#).

4.55 Transport-related social exclusion (TRSE) relates to areas within which transport issues have a fundamental impact on everyday life, and limit the ability to fulfil everyday needs. In Colchester, 33,129 residents (17.0%) live in neighbourhoods with a high risk of TRSE, compared with 18.0% of residents across England. Neighbourhoods with the highest vulnerability within Colchester exist in the south of Colchester urban area, surrounding the area of Berechurch. There are also a number of vulnerable areas in the Greenstead area in the east of the Urban Area [\[See reference 20\]](#).

4.56 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community lies adjacent to the eastern edge of the Urban Area as well as the Knowledge Gateway and

University of Essex Strategic Economic Area. It is also relatively well related to a number of local centres within the Urban Area. This location is to be served by the RTS. The new Garden Community is expected to be of a sufficient scale to incorporate new service provision and achieve a degree of self-containment in the longer term. As such there may be reduced need to travel from this location and residents may be encouraged to make use of sustainable modes where there is a need to travel. The timing of these benefits will depend on the phasing of new infrastructure at the Garden Community.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.57 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Providing for a distribution of growth across a range of more sustainable locations is likely to support good access to a wide range of services and facilities, jobs and public transport options. This could help promote travel by alternative modes and support the viability of public transport. Development within the Urban Area could also help to ensure the viability of the RTS and address TRSE within the Berechurch and Greenstead. Growth at the sustainable settlements is likely to help build on service provision at these locations and allow for increased self-containment. Limited growth is to be provided at the smaller settlements. This level of growth is likely to help prevent the stagnation of service provision at these locations, however, some residents may need to travel longer to access jobs or more specialist services. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.58 Option 2 proposes a significant amount of growth at a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Option 2 would also include growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across Colchester. The level of development proposed at the new Garden Community is likely to allow for the provision of a sustainable and more

self-contained settlement where services and facilities are accessible by non-car modes. However, it may be that a high level of self-containment can only be fully achieved in the longer term, given that some infrastructure may not be in place for early occupants of the site. The potential need to travel by car to access some services and facilities is likely to be limited by the presence of the existing rail station at Marks Tey which lies along the Great Eastern Mainline. However, the good access this location provides to strong road links at the A12 towards make encourage travel by car. Development within the Urban Area is likely to provide residents with good access to a range of services and facilities, jobs and sustainable transport. This is likely to help encourage more trips to be made by sustainable transport and support the viability of public transport services. However, limiting the level of growth at the sustainable settlements, through this option is considered less likely to support the viability of service provision and the sustainable growth of these settlements and could result in a longer term need to travel from these locations. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that the potential to support self-containment at the new Garden Community is partly unknown.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.59 Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This includes growth within the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. It is notable that of these settlements Messing, sits below the sustainable settlements of the District, in the settlement hierarchy, illustrating its lack of service provision. While new Garden Suburbs will support the delivery of new infrastructure in Colchester, the scale of growth at a given location is unlikely to support a similar level of infrastructure provision as likely to be achieved at a new Garden Community. As such, this option would be less likely to promote self-containment at new development locations and many residents would be dependent upon the proximity of the new development to existing services and facilities. Given that Option 3 would result in a spread of growth in areas throughout Colchester, within and outside of the City, some residents would be more likely to make use of the private vehicle for the longer journeys to certain

provisions. Furthermore, the distribution of development across a number of locations is less likely to support the viability of public transport in the District. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.60 Option 4 concentrates much of the growth for the District within the City Centre and with proportional levels of growth directed to the other existing settlements and villages. Option 4 would therefore provide opportunities to strengthen the role of Colchester City as the main service centre in the plan area. It would also provide increased opportunities for residents to work locally or commute by train or bus. This could support the viability of public transport networks in the Urban Area, including the new RTS. This may help to address TRSE in the Urban Area. However, the higher number of new residents located within the City could put more pressure on existing services and facilities, which could result in overburdening and impact travel habits. There is also potential for increased congestion where appropriate mitigation is not delivered. By limiting growth at other locations in the District, this option presents increased risk in relation to the stagnation of existing services beyond the main Urban Area. This is particularly the case at the sustainable settlements which play an important role for service provision in the more rural locations away from the City. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that it be influenced by the achievement of appropriate transport mitigation.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.61 Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors, which could include within the urban area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne all of which benefit from nearby access to a railway station. Growth along key transport corridors will increase access to sustainable transport modes, particularly to public transport such as bus, rail and the RTS. Focusing development along these corridors may also create opportunities to improve public transport and accessibility in Colchester's most TRSE vulnerable

areas in the Urban Areas. However, it will also involve increased development at key elements of the road network, such as along the A12 in the north of the District and around junction 24. Development at the A12 to the north of the plan area would benefit from reasonable access to the edge of urban area although it would be some way from the town centre particularly where developed occurs towards Langham. Development towards junction 24 would be relatively close to Tiptree. The proximity of these locations to the strategic road network may encourage the use of private vehicles. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.62 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller level of growth will be directed to the Spokes, which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with a smaller amount of growth also occurring in the Urban Area. While some of the Hubs benefit from some services and facilities and strong public transport links (for example Marks Tey and Chappel both have a railway station and primary schools but no doctor's surgery) the range of services is more limited than within the Urban Area. This approach will support the longer term sustainability of the Hub settlements and could limit the potential for road congestion within the Urban Area. However, residents from some Hubs and those at the Spoke settlements may have to travel regularly to access certain more specialist facilities with many trips likely to be made by private vehicle. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.63 Option 7 would limit growth in locations that are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south

of Colchester. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west, around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. The environmental value of this southern part of the plan area may be protected through the incorporation of a new Country Park alongside new homes. Development in the Urban Area and locations relatively well related to the Urban Area, rather than in smaller settlements, is likely to promote travel by public and active transport, given the shorter journey times to services and facilities and jobs. This approach will also help to address TRSE within the Urban Area. However, the focus of the much of the growth in and around the Urban Area may result in localised road congestion. Furthermore, while proportional growth in the other settlements of the plan area will help to prevent stagnation of services and facilities, this more limited level of growth is less likely to support long term sustainable growth and could result in an over reliance on service provision in the Urban Area, increasing the number of journeys towards this location from other settlements. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected. The effect is uncertain given that appropriate mitigation may help to limit the potential for congestion within the Urban Area.

SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

4.64 Providing development that can incorporate areas of open space, which allows for informal interaction between residents, is likely to help support community cohesion in Colchester. The development of new, large scale sites may, however, disrupt existing community networks although at larger and/or longer-established settlements, these networks may be more resilient to change. Furthermore, the delivery of development that supports new service provision is likely to help address deprivation in the plan area and meet the needs of specific groups in the District including those with protected characteristics, such as age (older and younger residents), disability, race etc. The location of new development is less likely to affect crime and fear of crime

as this will be influenced more by policy requirements relating to design of new developments.

4.65 The City is relatively prosperous, ranking 181 out of England's 317 districts on the IMD 2019 (rank 1 being the most deprived). Out of the 105 LSOAs in the City, 27 are within the top 40% most deprived LSOAs in the country. With the exception of one LSOA within the Tiptree ward, these LSOAs are concentrated in the Urban Area within the wards of Berechurch, Greenstead, New Town & Christ Church, Old Heath & The Hythe and St Anne's & St John's. Colchester has one LSOA in the 10% most deprived in the country, that falls within the Greenstead ward.

4.66 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to be of a sufficient scale to support substantial infrastructure provision to benefit health and wellbeing of new residents. It may also benefit those in the surrounding areas, including in the ward of Greenstead given its location at Colchester's settlement edge. There is potential for the large scale of growth to result in some issues relating to place making as the new community is established. The phasing of new infrastructure will greatly influence the ability of the new community to be delivered successfully.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.67 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Many of the areas with the highest level of deprivation lie within the urban area of Colchester. By focusing much of the development within the Urban Area over the plan period this option is expected to help address identified issues of deprivation. The Urban Area also benefits from the best access to service provision (including GPs and hospitals) and established community networks at this location are potentially more resilient to change. Furthermore, existing open spaces are interspersed across the Urban Area. Providing a relatively high level of growth within the second tier sustainable settlements is likely to support their longer term viability as service providers and prevent an over reliance on the Urban Area for access to

services. These locations benefit from good access to certain services (although it is noted that some settlements lack healthcare provisions) or a key transport hub. Residents at these locations may need to travel to access healthcare provisions but will likely be able to use public transport to reach them. At these less developed locations, the open countryside may be more readily accessible for recreation. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.68 The new Garden Community at Marks Tey is expected to support the provision of new infrastructure to support health and wellbeing in the plan area. Marks Tey is moderately deprived, containing land that falls within the 50% most deprived in the country. It is acknowledged, however, that the delivery of a new Garden Community would have to overcome issues of place making. This option also supports growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the City. Growth within the Urban Area is likely to help address deprivation through regeneration within those areas most affected in Colchester; i.e. the south, east and central areas of the City. This approach will also make good use of the existing healthcare and recreation infrastructure in the plan area. Delivering only a limited amount of growth within the sustainable settlements in Colchester is less likely to support the long term viability of services at these locations and may result in an over reliance on the Urban Area for service provision at some settlements. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that the success of the Garden Community will depend on partly the phasing of new infrastructure alongside housing delivery.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.69 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. The Garden Suburbs elements of this option

will help to address deprivation within areas most affected in the Urban Area. However, by including a number of locations for growth, the scale of infrastructure that would be achieved is unlikely to be equivalent to what a new Garden Community could deliver. The relatively high level of growth at the Garden Suburbs could, however, contribute to place making issues across a number of locations. Furthermore, this option would limit development at the sustainable settlements beyond Marks Tey/Copford, and Tiptree, thereby potentially resulting in an over reliance on existing services and overburdening within the Urban Area. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.70 Option 4 proposes the majority of the growth within Colchester City Centre and aims to regenerate and intensify development at this location. This option would therefore perform well in terms of addressing the high levels of deprivation in and around the City Centre particularly within the wards of Castle and New Town and Christ Church. In addition, focusing development within Colchester City Centre will provide new residents with good access to a wide range of facilities including recreation, GPs and hospitals. However, delivering higher densities of development in the City Centre would need to ensure that access to open space in this part of the plan area is not adversely affected. This option proposes a low level of growth across Colchester outside of the City Centre, thereby potentially limiting the delivery of new viable healthcare infrastructure at other locations and increasing reliance and potentially overburdening on service provision in the Urban Area. Overall a mixed significant positive and significant negative effect is expected. The effect is uncertain given that there is potential for loss of existing open space in the City Centre through the delivery of higher densities of development.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.71 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24).

Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and the urban area of Colchester. Within the Colchester urban area a number of locations for regeneration are included which is likely to help address existing issues in areas of greatest deprivation. Focusing growth around key sustainable transport corridors could improve access to healthcare services for all members of the community, including those without access to a private vehicle. Through this option, elements of growth may follow the Garden Town and Villages Concept which is likely to support the delivery of new infrastructure alongside new homes to support health and wellbeing in the plan area. This option would only provide proportional growth within settlements beyond those along the key transport corridors in Colchester. This includes a number of sustainable settlements (notably this includes Dedham, West Bergholt, West Mersea and Tiptree all of which benefit from existing healthcare facilities as well as at least a primary school) where existing service provision might otherwise be built upon to benefit new and existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.72 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with some growth also occurring in the Urban Area. As such development is to be focussed at the Hubs and Spokes over the Urban Area. Only some of the Hubs benefit from healthcare facilities including West Bergholt, Layer de la Haye, Rowhedge, West Mersea and Tiptree. Furthermore, while residents at the Spokes will benefit from good access to the open countryside, the range of services at these locations is particularly limited. The small size and more limited service provision at these settlements could mean more substantial growth may disrupt existing local community networks. This option would also do little to address deprivation within the most affected areas within Colchester. It would also fail to

make good use of the range of services and facilities in the Colchester urban area. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.73 Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land, which would improve access to opportunities for recreation for residents in Colchester. Development in the Urban Area and locations relatively well related to the Urban Area is likely to help address deprivations towards Colchester City Centre and will also make good use of the existing services at this location. There is some potential for service provision at these locations to become overburdened given the focus of growth over the inclusion of a wider range of sustainable settlements. This approach also fails to distribute development to build upon existing healthcare provision within the larger settlements beyond the Urban Area (with the exception of Tiptree) which might otherwise benefit a substantial number of existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

4.74 The widest range of services and facilities in the plan area is found in the Colchester urban area. This area includes the main city centre as well as a number of District and Local Centres as the main focus for retail provision and other types of services. A small number of Local and District Centres are also found in the sustainable settlements of Dedham, Marks Tey, Copford, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. Furthermore, while many of the sustainable

settlements benefit from a primary school, beyond the Urban Area, only Tiptree provides access to a secondary school. The only university facilities in the plan area are found at the University of Essex Colchester Campus, to the east of the City. In addition to this, only some of the sustainable settlements provide access to healthcare facilities. These settlements are Wivenhoe, West Mersea, Layer-de-la-Haye, Tiptree and Dedham.

4.75 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to be of a scale to support new service provision. New service provision is also likely to benefit those in the surrounding areas, given its location at Colchester's settlement edge. The location of the new community at the settlement edge also provide residents will good access to services within the exiting urban area of Colchester, including via the new RTS.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.76 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. This approach is expected to provide most residents with good access to a range of services and facilities at multiple locations in the plan area. It will also help to support the viability of the centres in Colchester. Providing a relatively high level of growth within the second tier sustainable settlements is likely to support the viability of services at these locations. However, more specialist provisions will likely only be accessible within the Urban Area. Furthermore, as with all options considered, there is also potential for the scale of growth across the plan area to result in some overburdening of existing services and facilities, including schools and healthcare. Suitable additional capacity or new service provision may therefore be required alongside the new growth delivered. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.77 Option 2 would result in a high proportion of housing development occurring at the new Marks Tey Garden Community. The high level of development concentrated to one location is likely to support substantial new service, however, this might only be achieved in the longer term. New residents may need to travel to access some services, particularly in the short term. Residents at this location will benefit from access to some existing services and facilities in Marks Tey, which includes a local centre and a primary school, as well as a railway station providing sustainable access to more distant service provision. This option also supports growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the City. Within the Urban Area residents are likely to benefit from good access to the existing Town, District and Local Centres as well as a range of services and facilities. The relatively limited level of development to be provided at the sustainable settlements in Colchester could, however, reduce the potential for sustainable service growth in other locations in the plan area. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected. The mixed effect is uncertain given that the access to services from the new Garden Community will depend largely on the phasing of new infrastructure.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.78 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. New Garden Suburbs are likely to support new service provision, however, the small scale of growth achieved is likely to support a lower level of provision than what might be achieved through a new Garden Community. The location of the Garden Suburbs to the south and east of the Urban Area is likely to provide relatively good access to existing services including the University, however, there is potential for cumulative impacts relating to overburdening of these existing services. Furthermore, while new residents at Marks Tey/Copford and Messing would have relatively good access

to services and transport links, at Messing the existing provision is more modest. This option fails to make good use of the range of sustainable settlements where existing service provision might be built upon to benefit residents at a range of locations. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.79 A higher level of new housing at Colchester City Centre would increase the number of residents benefiting from easy access to the main town centre and wide range of existing services. It will also help to support future service provision in a location where a high number of residents can benefit from them. However, the high level of growth concentrated to this location could result in overburdening of services and facilities without appropriate provision of additional capacity. This option proposes a low level of growth across Colchester outside of the City Centre, thereby potentially limiting the delivery of new services at the sustainable settlements that might otherwise benefit a relatively large number of new residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.80 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth could include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and urban area of Colchester. All of the sustainable settlements included for growth contain a primary school, however, only Wivenhoe and Layer de la Haye also include healthcare facilities. There is potential for travel by sustainable modes from these locations to access other services, particularly at Chappel, Wivenhoe and Marks Tey which benefit from a railway station. This option would only provide proportional growth within settlements beyond those along the key transport corridors. This includes a number of sustainable settlements (notably this includes Dedham, West Bergholt, West Mersea and Tiptree all of which benefit from existing

healthcare facilities as well as at least a primary school) where existing service provision might otherwise be built upon to benefit new and existing residents. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.81 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes, with limited growth also occurring in the Urban Area. Only some of the Hubs benefit from both healthcare and school facilities, including West Bergholt, Layer de la Haye, Rowhedge, West Mersea and Tiptree. Furthermore, residents at these locations and particularly at the Spokes will need to travel to access a wider range of services. It is noted that from some of these locations, trips could be made by sustainable modes, including by rail from Chappel and Marks Tey. This option fails to make good use of the range of services and facilities in the Colchester urban area. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.82 Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. Development in the Urban Area and locations relatively well related to the Urban Area is likely to provide access to the Town, District and Local Centres and make good use of the existing services at this location.

There is some potential for service provision at these locations to become overburdened given the focus of growth over the inclusion of a wider range of sustainable settlements. This approach also fails to distribute development to build upon existing services within the larger settlements beyond the urban area (with the exception of Tiptree) which might otherwise benefit a substantial number of existing residents. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

4.83 The plan area boasts some 24 Conservation Areas, 1,560 listed buildings and 4 Scheduled Monuments. Much of the City Centre is covered by Conservation Areas containing numerous Listed Buildings. A number of the larger settlements beyond the Urban Area are also covered by Conservation Areas. The Urban Area also includes a Registered Park (Colchester Castle Park) and Wivenhoe Registered Park lies to the east and forms part of the university campus. The other Registered Park in the plan area lies to the north east of Tiptree.

4.84 It should be noted that the effects recorded for all options is partly uncertain given that appropriate design of new development may help to avoid and mitigate adverse effects and in some cases may support improvements in the settings of heritage assets.

4.85 The development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community has the potential to adversely affect the setting of the Wivenhoe Registered Park and a number of Listed Buildings within its boundaries. These heritage assets lie to the south of the A133.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.86 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Development within the Urban Area beyond the city centre has potential for limited adverse impacts on heritage areas given their relatively sparse distribution in these areas. Furthermore, these areas are likely to be less sensitive to change given their relatively developed nature, particularly when compared to less developed locations. Development directed towards the sustainable settlements, however, may have adverse impacts on a number of Conservation Areas that are designated at these settlements. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.87 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. Compared to other settlements in Colchester District, Marks Tey is relatively unconstrained in terms of the historic environment. It does not include a Conservation Area, although there are a number of Listed Buildings and two Scheduled Monuments at or close to the settlement. While there is potential for adverse impacts upon the setting of these assets, the design of the new Garden Community development also has potential to result in improvements to setting. Option 2 also supports growth within the urban area of Colchester, including the opportunity to develop regeneration areas within the Urban Area. Development within the Urban Area beyond the town centre has potential for limited adverse impacts on heritage areas given their relatively sparse distribution in these areas. Furthermore, these areas are likely to be less sensitive to change given their relatively developed nature, particularly when compared to less developed locations. The regeneration of urban locations may also support improvements in setting. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.88 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. Development within the Urban Area beyond the town centre has potential for limited adverse impacts on heritage areas given their relatively sparse distribution in these areas. Furthermore, these areas are likely to be less sensitive to change given their relatively developed nature, particularly when compared to less developed locations. Development at Marks Tey/Copford and Tiptree may also be delivered to avoid heritage assets, given that some areas at the settlement edges are less constrained. However, much of Messing is covered by a Conservation Area with many Listed Buildings also present. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.89 Through Option 4, the higher level of development and intensification of development in the City Centre is likely to result in substantial changes to the skyline at this location. The City Centre is covered by a number of Conservation Areas with a number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Colchester Castle Registered Park also present. Intensification of development at this location could therefore have adverse impacts on the settings of a number of heritage assets. This option would, however, limit the amount of development which otherwise would be distributed more widely to the smaller settlements in the District where development could have more substantial impacts given the less developed nature of some of these locations. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.90 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24).

Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and the urban area of Colchester. Development could therefore occur in both urban and more rural areas. Within the Urban Area this includes more central locations for regeneration which are potentially more sensitive in terms of the historic environment and within the wider Urban Area which are likely to be less sensitive in this regard. Of the settlements identified for growth beyond the Urban Area, parts of Wivenhoe and Chappel are covered by Conservation Areas with concentrations of Listed Buildings in these areas making them potentially sensitive to development. Furthermore, development within Hythe has the potential to impact upon the setting of Hythe and Distillery Pond Conservation Areas. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.91 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations, plus some development in the Urban Area. Of the Hub settlements, Rowhedge and Chappel are particularly constrained in terms of the historic environment with much of these areas covered by Conservation Areas. Furthermore, the western edge of West Mersea is also covered by a Conservation Area. Development at the Spoke settlements has potential for more substantial impacts on existing townscape given their presently less developed nature. Many of the Spokes, including Messing, Fingringhoe, Fordham, Great Tey, Copford and Copford Green, Boxted, Little Horkesley, Birch and Wormingford, contain either a Conservation Area or a relatively high number of Listed Buildings. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.92 Option 7 would limit growth in locations that are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would

benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. Given the spread of environmental assets in the plan area, this option could involve some level of growth in the more central areas where there is a higher concentration of heritage assets. However, the focussing of much of the new development within the Urban Area and to the northern settlement edge there is potential to achieve the growth needed while limiting adverse impacts on more sensitive heritage assets at the more rural settlements. Furthermore, the delivery of green infrastructure enhancements could benefit the setting of assets in the plan area. The potential for positive effects will, however, be influenced by the design of any enhancements which is not yet known. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, and enhance biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

4.93 Colchester has a rich biodiversity, with many sites designated for their nature conservation interest. The south and south east of the plan area contain a substantial proportion of the designated sites. Much of the coastline is internationally designated, including the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Colne Estuary SPA and Abberton Reservoir SPA. Furthermore, the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) covers the coastline and part of the River Colne towards the Urban Area. There is also one National Nature Reserve (Colne Estuary NNR) and eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) notified in Colchester. Beyond those located in the south of the District, SSSIs are located to the north east of the Urban Area (Bullock Wood), close to Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit) and Tiptree (Tiptree Heath), around 2.0km to the east of Dedham and around 1.5km to the west of

Chappel (Chalkney Wood). There are also around 170 Local Wildlife Sites that are distributed more evenly across the plan area.

4.94 It is expected that all options will have negative effects as a result of habitat loss and severance through land take as well as disturbance through construction and as new homes and businesses are occupied. The effects of all options are partly uncertain given that the design of new development may incorporate mitigations and enhancements that support benefits relating to habitat provision.

4.95 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community contains a number of locally designated biodiversity sites (Salary Brook, Thousand Acres and Home Wood). It is also close to a number of additional local designations to the south of the A133. There is potential for development to result in adverse effects on these locally important habitat sites.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.96 Option 1 supports the high proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within the District, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Through this option development at the sustainable settlements of Tiptree, Marks Tey, West Mersea and Rowhedge, Wivenhoe and Layer de la Haye has potential to adversely affect biodiversity sites of national significance or higher. Development to the north west edge of the Urban Area also has potential to adversely affect Bullock Wood SSSI. The Urban Area also contains and is close to a number of locally designated assets as well as areas of ancient woodland. The focus through this option on presently more developed locations may help to limit the disturbance of ecological assets at less developed locations. In addition, in these locations there may be greater potential to make use of brownfield sites which have already been developed, although these locations may contain habitats of importance for invertebrates. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.97 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. This element of growth has potential to adversely affect Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI given its close proximity to the settlement. The potential for adverse effects is considered to be substantial given the loss of a large area of greenfield land at a single location, although the incorporation of new green infrastructure at the site may help to mitigate adverse effects. This option also sets out growth for the Urban Area, with development being considered towards Bullock Wood where a SSSI is designated. Growth in the Urban Area may make use of brownfield sites, but it is noted that these may have value for particular species and also that there are several locally designated sites declared in this area. Furthermore, development towards Layer de la Haye has the potential to impact upon Abberton Reservoir SSSI and Ramsar site and Roman River SSSI as well as a number of locally designated sites. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.98 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. While development within the Urban Area may help to limit the need for growth in less developed and more sensitive areas of Colchester District, the south and east of the Urban Area is close to a number of SSSIs such as the River Colne, Roman River and Bullock Wood. This part of the District also contains numerous locally designated sites. Furthermore, the inclusion of development towards Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing has the potential to adversely affect the Marks Tey Brickwords and Tiptree SSSIs as well as several local designations. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.99 By delivering most development through the intensification of the City Centre, Option 4 would provide less development at the smaller settlements and villages in rural areas. It is likely that through a focus on intensification in the City Centre this option which could help to reduce the need for greenfield land and disturbance of more sensitive habitats take in the plan area. Furthermore, regeneration across multiple sites in the City Centre may provide opportunities for incorporation of substantial connected green infrastructure enhancements. However, this will be dependent upon the specific design of new development which is not yet known. By increasing the level of development at Colchester City Centre, this option could also increase the potential for impacts on the sites of ecological importance inside and adjacent to this location, including in relation to a range of locally designated sites. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.100 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and the urban area of Colchester. Development towards Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Chappel and Wakes Colne has potential to adversely affect designated sites of at least national importance given their relatively proximity. Furthermore, development provided within the Urban Area has potential for adverse impacts on a range of local assets. However, development to the north of the Urban Area and to a lesser extent at the new junction 24 of the A12 would be relatively free of biodiversity constraints. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.101 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. There is potential for biodiversity designations of national significance or higher to be adversely affected by development at the settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Marks Tey, Chappel and Layer de la Haye. Potentially of most note is the location of West Mersaea and Wivenhoe and to a lesser extent Layer de la Haye close to land designated as SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites. Through the inclusion of Spoke settlements, this option would also deliver across the more rural locations with potential to result in adverse impacts in areas which were previously relatively undisturbed for biodiversity. Disturbance of wider ecological networks in the plan area may occur as rural greenfield land is developed. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.102 Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. By definition, Option 7 would support the protection of Colchester's natural environment and biodiversity by avoiding the more sensitive locations in the plan area. However, adverse effects are still likely as greenfield land is required for development, construction occurs and new homes and businesses are occupied. The provision of green infrastructure enhancements as well as a new Country Park is likely to benefit habitat

provision and connectivity in the District. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

4.103 The plan area contains the Dedham Vale National Landscape to the north. Within Colchester District, the National Landscape extends to cover the villages of Dedham and Little Horkesley and part of Dedham Heath.

4.104 All options could have negative effects as a result of greenfield land take and new developments impacting upon the established character of the plan area. The effects of all options are partly uncertain given that the design of new development may incorporate mitigations and enhancements that support improvements in character and landscape setting.

4.105 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would result in a substantial greenfield land take at a single location in the plan area. This could disrupt existing character at this location. However, there is potential for appropriate design measures and the incorporation of green infrastructure to support an improved relationship between the settlement edge and the surrounding countryside.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.106 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Focusing much of the new development in the Urban Area which is already built up is likely to limit the potential for additional impacts on more sensitive elements of landscape character particularly when compared to the more rural and less built-up areas of Colchester District. There is potential for new development at

the Colchester urban area to impact upon the existing townscape, however, delivering development through a coordinated approach in this area may also help to improve the relationship between the settlement edge and the surrounding countryside through appropriate landscaping and green infrastructure proposals. While the sustainable settlements are smaller and potentially more susceptible to changes in landscape character, as second tier settlements they represent some of the more developed locations in the District. However, this option includes a relatively high level of growth at Dedham which falls within the National Landscape as well Langham and Boxted which are adjacent to this designation. As such, this option could have adverse impacts on this nationally important landscape. Therefore, a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.107 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. The focus of a large amount of development to a single location will result in substantial greenfield land take with potential for disruption of existing landscape character. However, there is potential for the incorporation of substantial green infrastructure and landscaping at the new settlement to help mitigate adverse effects relating to landscape character. Option 2 also supports growth within the urban area of Colchester at which the developed nature of this area makes it potentially less sensitive to change. While there is some potential for impacts relating to townscape in these locations, there is also potential for new growth to contribute to an improved relationship between the settlement edge and surrounding countryside. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.108 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. The focus of a large amount of development

to Garden Suburbs will require substantial greenfield land. The new Garden Suburbs could therefore result in substantial disruption to the existing landscape character at a number of locations. Where these developments are delivered at the existing settlement edge of the Colchester urban area there may be some potential for improving the relationship between this area and the surrounding countryside. The smaller size of the settlements of Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing may mean these locations are more sensitive to change if accommodating substantial housing growth through a new Garden Suburb. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.109 Option 4 concentrates growth within the City Centre thereby limiting the need for development within the more rural and smaller settlements in the plan area. Focusing much of the new development at Colchester City Centre which is already built up is likely to result in changes to the townscape at this location given the need for higher densities of development and taller buildings. Furthermore, the achievement of higher densities of development could result in loss of open spaces that contribute to local character. However, this option will limit the potential for impacts on landscape character in less developed and potentially more sensitive locations in the District. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.110 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and the urban area of Colchester. This option is likely to result in some development within or adjacent to the Urban Area where there are strong transport links. These locations are likely to be less sensitive to change given their more developed nature and there may be opportunities for improving the relationship between the settlement edge and surrounding countryside. The settlements likely to accommodate growth beyond

the Urban Area are relatively developed. However, where a higher level of growth occurs at these locations there is potential for more substantial impacts on local landscape character given that they are less developed than the Urban Area. Furthermore, development to the north of Colchester District at the A12 has the potential to impact upon the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape dependent upon its precise location and the land take involved all this route. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.111 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. It is expected that growth at many of these locations would involve greenfield land take and changes in landscape character at relatively undisturbed locations. While many of the Hub settlements are relatively developed, they are likely to be more sensitive to new development than the Urban Area given their less developed nature. Furthermore, the Hub settlement Great Horkesley and the Spokes of Little Horkesley, Boxted and Wormingford are located within or close to the Dedham Vale National Landscape with potential for development to result in harm to the area's special landscape character. Overall a significant negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.112 Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. This approach is likely to result in less

development in rural and potentially more sensitive locations. It will also help to conserve environmental features that contribute to landscape character in the District. A substantial proportion of development is expected occur in the Urban Area, which given its more developed nature is less likely to be sensitive to change with potential for improvements in the relationship between this area and the surrounding countryside where development incorporates appropriate landscaping. In addition, the green infrastructure enhancements and Country Park included through this option would likely enhance landscape character in Colchester District. However, this option is still expected to result in some change to local landscape setting as a result of the greenfield land take required for new development. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative is expected.

SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

4.113 To avoid duplication, the appraisal of the options in relation to SA objective 10 does not consider the potential to reduce the need to travel and associated carbon emissions as this is covered through SA objective 4: transport.

4.114 Addressing climate change adaptation as new development is delivered over the plan period is most likely to be influenced by design measures incorporated to address the hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters predicted for the UK. This might include enabling passive cooling, draught proofing and supporting natural shading, as well as promoting flood resilience. These measures will be supported through policy requirements in the Local Plan and not the location of new development, which is the focus of the options considered for growth in the District. Climate change adaptation may, however, also be influenced by the incorporation of green infrastructure as development is delivered. It is expected that all development will provide some opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure, however more substantial and coordinated

provision may be achievable at large-scale sites. Furthermore, large scale developments may also present increased potential for new low carbon energy infrastructure (such as district heating and combined heat and power (CHP)) to be provided and for a high number of homes to be connected.

4.115 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to be of a scale to support substantial infrastructure delivery. This may include measures to support climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.116 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. New development provided at the Urban Area could potentially support connections to district heating or CHP for a large number of existing residents where proposals include these types of provisions. There is more limited scope for these types of benefits at the sustainable settlements given the fewer numbers of residents at these locations. Benefits will depend largely on the infrastructure new schemes can deliver. Furthermore, by focussing much of the new development over the plan period at the Urban Area, Option 1 may provide opportunities for the incorporation of large-scale green infrastructure through a coordinated approach to support to climate change adaptation. Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.117 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. The scale of growth to be delivered at the new Garden Community could support the delivery of infrastructure for and connections to district heating and CHP. The large size of the site may also support the delivery of infrastructure for generating electricity from low carbon sources. The scale of development to be delivered at this location could support

the delivery of a large scale green infrastructure provision. The development provided towards the Urban Area could support benefits relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation for a large number of existing residents where developments achieve new infrastructure provision. Overall a significant positive effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.118 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. The scale of growth to be delivered at the Garden Suburbs would be more limited than what is achieved at a new Garden Community. As such while this option would support development that aligns with the Garden Town concepts, the scale of any new infrastructure delivered and benefits relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, is likely to be more limited. As the new Garden Suburbs would likely be delivered within the Urban Area or towards relatively large settlements beyond this location, there is potential for the existing development to benefit from new infrastructure provided in terms of both climate change mitigation (connections to new district heating schemes or CHP) and adaptation (new green infrastructure). Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.119 Option 4 proposes the majority of the growth within Colchester City Centre and aims to regenerate and intensify development at this location. Development focussed at the City Centre in a coordinated manner through Option 4 could support the provision of infrastructure for and connections to district heating and CHP. The relatively high level of development at Colchester City Centre could also result in a large number of homes benefiting from large scale green infrastructure provision. Furthermore, infrastructure provision at this location could benefit numerous existing residents in the surrounding Urban Area. Overall a minor positive effect is expected. The effect is partly uncertain

given that the need to achieve higher densities of development could reduce the potential to incorporate substantial infrastructure provision.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.120 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and the urban area of Colchester. This option does not include an obvious focus for large scale development that might otherwise support substantial new infrastructure provision in the District. However, where the delivery of new development provides the opportunity to incorporate new low carbon infrastructure (such as district heating and CHP) and coordinated large scale green infrastructure many of the locations included for growth are likely to allow for numerous new homes to experience benefits. Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.121 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. This option does not include an obvious focus for new large scale growth. As such the incorporation of new infrastructure to support climate change mitigation and adaptation is considered to be more difficult to achieve. Furthermore, where the delivery of new development provides the opportunity to incorporate new infrastructure (such as district heating and CHP) and green infrastructure the focus away from the Urban Area will likely mean fewer residents will benefit from the provision. Overall a negligible effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.122 Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. Option 7 does not include an obvious growth point to focus large scale development at. However, this is likely to result much of the new development being delivered in or adjacent to the Urban Area given its less constrained nature. Through this approach, new infrastructure supported is likely to benefit many existing residents in presently developed locations. Furthermore, this option is likely to benefit climate adaptation in the District by supporting the protection of sites of environmental importance as well as the delivery of land for a Country Parks and green infrastructure. Overall a minor positive effect is expected.

SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

4.123 Colchester District is crossed by a number of water courses around which areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 are present. This includes the River Colne which flows through a number of settlements including Chappel, Colchester City, Rowhedge, Wakes Colne and Wivenhoe where areas of higher flow risk are present. Other fluvial flood risk areas identified in the City are associated with the River Stour, Layer Brook and Roman River. The presence of these water courses results in areas of flood risk within Dedham, to the north and east of Great Horskesley, to the north of Marks Tey/Copford, to the north of Layer de la Haye and to the south and west of West Mersea. There are also areas at risk of surface water flooding distributed across the plan area.

4.124 New development is likely to include measures that will help to mitigate flood risk as it is delivered, for example through the incorporation of SuDS. However, this will depend on the design of any new development which is not known at this stage.

4.125 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is bordered by an area of Flood Zone 2 and 3 associated with Salary Brook. The large area incorporated within the area of search for the Garden Community is likely to mean that the areas of most risk can be avoided and that appropriate mitigation can be delivered.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.126 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. Development within the Urban Area may be able to benefit from an increased potential to re-use brownfield land given the more developed nature of this area. This approach may help to limit flood risk as development occurs as the proliferation of impermeable surfaces is limited. However, in the Urban Area development may fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3 associated with the River Colne. In addition, development at a number of the sustainable settlements could fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.127 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. There is a small area of Flood Zone 2 or 3 along the Roman River to the north of the settlement. The potential for new development to be adversely affected by flood risk from this source will depend on its precise location and design. Furthermore, development of this large scale would result in substantial growth in impermeable surfaces in a single location which could have implications for the infiltration of surface water.

While it is recognised that suitable mitigation might be achieved, the detailed design of any scheme for this location is not yet known. Option 2 also supports growth within the urban area of Colchester where there is greater potential for the reuse of previously developed sites but development could be vulnerable to flood risk from the River Colne dependent on its precise location. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.128 Option 3 focuses on the development of a number of smaller scale new communities as Garden Suburbs. The Garden Suburbs will be distributed across the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. Option 3 also supports growth within the urban area of Colchester and proportional growth in other existing settlements and villages across the plan area. This option has potential to result in some growth occurring in areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 within the Urban Area or at its edge as Garden Suburbs. Furthermore, development at Marks Tey/Copford could be affected by flood risk associated with Roman River. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.129 Option 4 would result in the highest proportion of housing growth being delivered at Colchester City Centre. The high level of existing development at this location could mean there is increased potential for re-use of brownfield land through this option, which may help to limit increases in impermeable surfaces and flood risk as development occurs. However, there are areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 along the length of the River Colne which passes to the north of the main town centre meaning developments at this location may be affected by flood risk. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.130 Option 5 focuses growth along the key transport corridors including rail, bus and road (notably the A12 to the north of the City and the new junction 24). Areas for growth would include Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel, Wakes Colne and the urban area of Colchester. This option includes a number of locations potential vulnerable to flood risk associated with water courses in the plan area. This includes land in or surrounding the settlements of Marks Tey, Copford, Layer de la Haye, Wivenhoe, Chappel and Wakes Colne as well as land within the Urban Area given the presence of the River Colne. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.131 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements which include Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller amount of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. The Hub settlements set out through this option include a number at which areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are located. These are West Mersea, Rowhedge, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de la Haye and West Bergholt. Including a smaller amount of growth at the Spoke settlements could result in new residents at settlements such as Easthorpe, Fingringhoe and Peldon being affected by areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 given their proximity to these settlements. Overall a minor negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.132 This option would limit growth in locations which are most significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some

of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. To the south, environmental sensitivities may be overcome by the delivery of new Country Park land. This option is likely to result in more development in the Urban Area with increased potential for re-use of brownfield land and limiting proliferation of impermeable surfaces and associated risk of surface water flooding. However, within the Urban Area development could be affected by flood risk associated with the River Colne. Furthermore, at the southern settlement edge there are areas of flood risk associated with Roman River and at the eastern settlement edge there is potential for development to be adversely affected by flood risk associated with Salary Brook. Given that Option 7 supports enhancement of green infrastructure, it could achieve flood risk mitigation in the plan area. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

4.133 New development as part of all the spatial strategy options will result in the generation of waste, both from construction and as sites become operational. This includes the Garden Community options considered. Although these elements are much more substantial in size, they are expected to result in a proportionate level of waste when compared to other elements of growth considered through the spatial strategy options. The generation of waste is unlikely to be substantially influenced by the overall spatial strategy. It is expected that all new development could be suitably served through the extension of existing kerbside collection services. Where there are opportunities to bring brownfield land back into use there is potential for existing materials and buildings to be brought back into use. However, this has already been considered through the appraisal of the options in relation to SA objective 2: efficient use of land. Therefore, minor negative effects are expected for all options.

SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

4.134 The effects expected for the spatial strategy options in relation to SA objective 13 are influenced by those identified in relation to SA objective 4: transport. These effects are not repeated in detail at this point. The effects expected in relation to SA objective 13 also consider the location of air quality management areas (AQMAs) in Colchester District.

4.135 An AQMA has been declared in the centre of Colchester City along Brook Street, Mersea Road, Osborne Street and St John's Street.

4.136 The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community presents an opportunity to deliver substantial new infrastructure supporting a degree of self-containment at the site and potentially in the surrounding areas. It is also to benefit from connections from the new RTS thereby limiting the need for new residents to travel by private vehicle. Furthermore, its location some distance from the AQMA in the City means that its development is unlikely to contribute greatly to increased air pollution in these areas.

Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy

4.137 Option 1 supports the highest proportion of growth at the most sustainable and accessible locations within Colchester District, including within the urban area of Colchester and the sustainable settlements. As per the effects reported for SA objective 4: transport, this option is likely to provide many residents with good access to a strong service and job offer, as well as transport links, and could help reduce the need to travel longer distances and contribute to improved air quality in the plan area. Development within the Urban Area, however, could worsen air pollution within the city centre AQMA. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected.

Option 2: New Garden Community

4.138 Option 2 proposes a significant level of growth through the development of a new Garden Community at Marks Tey. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport this may support the creation of a self-contained community from which there is reduced need to travel. However, it may be that the realisation of a more self-contained development can only be fully achieved in the longer term, given that some infrastructure may not be in place for early occupants of the site to benefit from. This option also includes development at the Urban Area at which residents will have good access to service provision and jobs, although there is increased potential for travel within the City's AQMA to contribute to their air quality issues. This option also omits substantial growth at the sustainable settlements, at which the existing service provision might be built upon to limit the need for residents in these locations to have to travel longer distances from on a regular basis. Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected. Given that effects are reliant on the potential to achieve self-containment at the new Garden Community in the short term, the effect is partly uncertain.

Option 3: Garden Suburbs

4.139 Option 3 proposes the development of smaller scale new communities across the City. This includes growth within the urban area of Colchester to the south and east and around Marks Tey/Copford, Tiptree and Messing. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, new Garden Suburbs could support more limited infrastructure provision than what might be achieved at new Garden Community developments and therefore a more limited level of self-containment is likely. The Garden Suburb locations are likely to be spread within and outside the Urban Area, with residents benefitting from variable access to services and facilities and jobs. Some of these locations may result in increased levels of vehicle traffic within the City's AQMA, adding to their air pollution. Overall a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected.

Option 4: Intensification in the City Centre

4.140 Option 4 concentrates much of the growth for the District within the City Centre and with proportional levels of growth directed to the other existing settlements and villages. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, it would likely provide opportunities to strengthen the role of Colchester City as the main service provider in the plan area and could provide increased opportunities for residents to work locally or commute by train or bus. However, this approach could increase the over reliance on the City Centre for certain provisions and result in longer term reduced sustainability of the other settlements in the plan area and overburdening of services in the Urban Area. Furthermore, as this option would result in highest level of development at the City Centre, it is likely to have adverse impacts in terms of traffic and congestion and exacerbation of air pollution within the City's AQMA. Overall a mixed significant positive and significant negative is expected. The effect is partly uncertain given that appropriate transport mitigation may help to avoid the potential increases in congestion and air pollution in the City Centre.

Option 5: Transport Corridors

4.141 Option 5 supports development along key transport corridors which could include within the urban area of Colchester, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe, Hythe, Chappel and Wakes Colne all of which benefit from nearby access to a railway station. Growth along key transport corridors will increase access to sustainable transport modes, particularly to public transport such as bus, rail and the RTS. However, as reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, this option would also include some locations which are notable in terms of the good access they provide to the strategic road network over access to public transport (the A12 and new junction 24). From these locations, high numbers of journeys may be made by private vehicle. Furthermore, the delivery of growth within the Urban Area where public transport provision is strong is likely to result in some exacerbation of air pollution in the City's AQMA. Therefore, a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 6: Hubs and Spokes

4.142 Option 6 proposes the majority of growth at the Hub settlements of Tiptree, West Mersea, Rowhedge, Eight Ash Green, Marks Tey, Chappel, Great Horkesley, Layer de a la Haye and West Bergholt. A smaller level of growth will be directed to the Spokes which are smaller settlements in more rural locations. A proportional level of growth will be supported within other settlements and villages that are not Hubs and Spokes with some growth also occurring in the Urban Area. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, while this option is likely to support the sustainability of larger settlements beyond the Urban Area, it is likely to result in some increase in the numbers of trips being made by private vehicle in Colchester District. This is likely because some Hubs and most Spokes will not provide residents with access to the required range of services and facilities and jobs. This increase in trips made by private vehicle will contribute to air pollution in the plan area. Given that this option would deliver only a limited level of growth in the Urban Area, it is unlikely to contribute substantially to air pollution in the City's AQMA. Overall a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected.

Option 7: Environment Led

4.143 Option 7 would limit growth in locations which are significantly constrained by environmental designations. It would also deliver growth in locations that would benefit from green infrastructure enhancement, including to the west and south of Colchester District. However, with the exception of some of the land to the south west around Tiptree, the south of the District is relatively constrained by biodiversity designations limiting the potential for growth in these areas. The environmental value of this southern part of the plan area may be protected through the incorporation of a new Country Park alongside new homes. This option is expected to limit the distribution of growth within Colchester City with a focus on the urban area and areas adjacent. As reported in relation to SA objective 4: transport, there is also the potential for limited growth within the lower tier settlements through this option, which result in many new residents having good access to a range of services and facilities and jobs.

However, it could also result in over reliance on the Urban Area for services and the stagnation of services beyond this area. This approach could contribute to increased road travel and congestion in this part of the plan area. Furthermore, development in the Urban Area could result in some exacerbation of air pollution within the City's AQMA. Overall a mixed significant positive and minor negative is expected. The effect is partly uncertain given that the potential for congestion in the Urban Area may be addressed through appropriate mitigation.

SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

4.144 The main rivers in Colchester District are the River Colne, River Stour, Layer Brook and Roman River. Water quality is an issue within the District with many of the watercourses in moderate and poor ecological status and all of the watercourses failing to achieve good chemical status. The main reasons for not achieving good status is due to impacts relating to agriculture and rural land management, the water industry, urban and transport, local and central government, and industry.

4.145 The majority of Colchester District (including the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community) is covered by SPZ 3. There are very small pockets of the Urban Area that are covered by SPZ 1 which are more sensitive in terms of the potential for impacts on groundwater resources. However, these areas are of a size that would only cover a small number of homes. There are further areas of SPZ 1 as well as areas of Zone 2 along the border between Colchester District and Babergh. This includes land close to the settlement of Dedham and the villages of Mount Bures, Wormingford, Little Horkesley and Boxted Cross. The only settlements that fall outside of a SPZ are West Mersea and part of Tiptree. Given the spread of development proposed through the options considered it is likely that all would have a minor negative effect in relation to the potential for contamination of groundwater resources. Option 1 could result in growth within the SPZ at Dedham as a sustainable settlement which could have further adverse effects. However, the distribution of growth to a wider number of settlements through this option is likely to limit the potential for a

significant effect. Uncertainty is recorded for this effect dependent upon the precise amount and location of new development at Dedham.

Summary

Identifying the most sustainable option

4.146 Of the options considered, Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy is expected to perform the most favourably in relation to the greatest number of sustainability objectives. This option is expected have the joint most significant positive effects (six, including mixed effects) alongside Option 5: Transport Corridors. However, Option 1 outperforms Option 5 given that it has more significant positive effects without any combined negative effects (two) than Option 5. However, this does not necessarily mean that Option 1 is the ‘best’ option since there are almost always trade-offs between different aspects of sustainability and the Council may wish to prioritise some over others.

Positive effects expected for the best performing option

4.147 Under Option 1, the continuation of the existing Spatial Strategy will continue to make good use of the urban area while also providing a suitable level of growth within the second tier settlements (i.e. the sustainable settlements). As such it will help to address issues of deprivation relating to barriers to housing and services (SA objective 1: Housing) where the IMD 2019 identifies that parts of the Urban Area fall within the 10% most deprived in the country. Development in the sustainable settlements will help to address similar issues within the Rural North, Marks Tey and Layer and Mersea and Pyefleet wards, all of which also include LSOAs that fall within the 10% most deprived in the countryside.

4.148 Furthermore, the continued focus of much of the development at the urban area will provide new residents with good access to the important

employment areas and sustainable transport links, which is likely to help attract inward investment (SA objective 3: Economic growth). There is also potential to support the viability of sustainable transport services including the RTS in the urban area (SA objective 4: Transport). Unlike some of the other options considered (notably Options 2: New Garden Community, 3: Garden Suburbs, 4: Intensification in the City Centre and 7: Environment-led), Option 1 would also support continued sustainable growth and the potential for suitable expansion of services provision and some job creation to support local populations within the sustainable settlements. It is expected that this approach will help to limit the potential for high levels of travel from these settlements as well as over reliance on the urban area that might otherwise result in overburdening of services and facilities (SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing and 6: Services and facilities) as well as congestion in this part of the plan area and intensification of air pollution (SA objective 13: Air quality) within the AQMA in the City Centre.

Negative effects expected for the best performing option

4.149 The potential for several significant negative effects was identified for Option 1. These largely reflect the relatively large amount of development that will be required to meet the needs of Colchester District and its potential impacts on:

- heritage assets across the plan area (SA objective 7: Historic environment);
- greenfield land take and loss and disturbance of habitats (SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity); and
- the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape from development in more rural parts of the plan area (SA objective 9: Landscape).

4.150 The potential significant negative effects for this spatial strategy option mostly reflects the distribution within the District of heritage assets, biodiversity assets and valued landscape features, close to some of the sustainable settlements. There are, however, likely to be opportunities to mitigate many of these potential negative effects by:

- providing lower levels of development at particularly sensitive locations, for example, within Dedham (which lies within the National Landscape) and West Mersea (which lies close to several internationally important biodiversity designations);
- the careful selection of sites within the main growth areas to identify relatively less sensitive locations for development; and
- the appropriate layout and design of individual development proposals.

Consideration of Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

4.151 As with all other options considered, the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is included in Option 1 to the east of the Urban Area. This element of growth is of a scale to support substantial infrastructure provision to benefit new residents and support a degree of self-containment. Its location at the settlement edge means the infrastructure delivered could benefit residents in the Urban Area, including within Greenstead which contains an LSOA within the 10% most deprived in the country. Depending on the final uses provided at the site, there is also potential for the new Garden Community to achieve synergies with the Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area which it is adjacent to, thereby supporting economic growth.

Identifying the least sustainable options

4.152 Of the spatial; strategy options considered, Option 6: Hubs and Spokes (six significant negative effects and one significant positive effect) followed by Option 3: Garden Suburbs (four significant negative effects and significant positive effect) perform less favourably in terms of attracting the most significant negative and/or fewest significant positive effects. As noted above, this does not necessarily mean that these options are the ‘worst’ since there are almost always trade-offs between different aspects of sustainability and the Council may wish to prioritise some over others.

4.153 For Option 6 this partly reflects the location of Hub and Spoke settlements assigned for growth in areas of sensitivity in terms of heritage assets (SA objective 7: Historic environment), environmental designations (SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity) and landscape importance including the National Landscape (SA objective 9: Landscape). This option would also fail to make best use of the urban area where the strong service provision exists (SA objective 6: Services and facilities) and increase reliance on the smaller Hub and Spoke settlements in the plan area. While a level of development would be provided at the urban area, it would be more limited than through some of the other options. Some new residents would be located at settlements at which development is likely to occur on higher value agricultural soils (SA objective 2: Efficient use of land) as well as at which their healthcare needs are less likely to be met with no healthcare facilities provided nearby (SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing).

4.154 While Option 3 would achieve the delivery of a number of growth points as Garden Suburbs, the scale of growth at each location would be much more limited than what is achieved at a new Garden Community. Therefore, the new infrastructure and level of self-containment achieved at each location is expected to be much less than what might be achieved at a Garden Community. In contrast to Option 6, Option 3 would also direct a limited amount of development to the sustainable settlements, increasing reliance on the urban area (with some growth at this location provided as Garden Suburbs to the south and east) as the main service provider with potential for increased travel to this location resulting in congestion and air pollution (SA objectives 4: Transport and 13: Air quality). This approach is also unlikely to support sustainable service growth to benefit the health and wellbeing of a substantial number of residents in the sustainable settlements (SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing).

Consideration of benefits of the other options

4.155 Significant positive effects alone are recorded for Options 2: New Garden Community and 5: Transport Corridors for SA objectives 10: Climate change and 3: Economic growth, respectively. There may be potential for some of the

benefits of these options to be taken forward in the final spatial strategy that the Council decides on. The delivery of a new Garden Community growth point through Option 2 could achieve critical mass to support the delivery of substantial new infrastructure, including that which could support climate change mitigation in the plan area (SA objective 10: Climate change). This could take the form of infrastructure to support the generation of energy from low carbon sources and that needed for CHP and district heating. Option 1 already includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community which has the potential to achieve similar benefits. The potential benefits of including an additional Garden Community in the plan area would need to be weighed against the potential difficulties of start up, delivery, appropriate phasing of new infrastructure and longer term issues of place making.

4.156 Option 5: Transport Corridors could achieve benefits relating to economic growth given its support for development in areas that have best access to transport corridors, which is likely to make the plan area more attractive to new residents as well as investors. This option includes development at strategically important roads through the District, including the A12 to the north of the Urban Area and at the new junction 24. While development at these locations could increase private car travel, unless substantial mitigation was achieved, there is potential to support economic growth (SA objective 3: Economic growth) along the strategic road network and close to existing areas of importance for the economy in Colchester District.

4.157 The SA of the spatial strategy options also found that Option 7: Environment Led has potential to achieve benefits over and above those expected for Option 1, that might be incorporated to some extent as part of the preferred approach. This option seeks to avoid areas most constrained by environmental designations and is likely to limit the potential for impacts on biodiversity sites of international importance and the Dedham National Landscape. This approach would need to be considered alongside the need to deliver appropriate levels of growth in the sustainable settlements to support service provision and long term viability at these locations. Most notably this includes at the settlements of Dedham and West Mersea which are relatively constrained in terms of important environmental features but perform important functions for their populations. Furthermore, this option is the only option where

a positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: Landscape and 11: Flood risk. This partly reflects the approach of avoiding areas of most environmental importance and also the potential to deliver development and green infrastructure enhancements where deficiencies in provision are presently identified. Option 7 could include the delivery of a new Country Park in the south of the District. This approach would help to address green infrastructure deficiencies as well as being likely to support habitat connectivity and improvements in local landscape setting.

Approach to appraisal of site options

4.158 The process for the identification of the reasonable alternative site options has been explained in Chapter 2 alongside explanation of the reasons for selecting the other alternatives for the plan appraised by the SA.

4.159 Each site option was appraised using the detailed assessment criteria and associated assumptions set out in Appendix D. The site assessment work to date has been undertaken at a level of detail that is proportionate to the level of detail of the Local Plan stage. If additional relevant evidence becomes available at later stages of plan-making, the SA will draw on this as appropriate.

4.160 All of the individual site options were appraised on a 'policy-off' basis. This is to say, the appraisal was undertaken based on the principle of development for the specified use within a defined site boundary and without taking into account opportunities to mitigate potential negative effects by, for example:

- providing new social infrastructure;
- development design that seeks to minimise effects; or
- site layouts that avoid sensitive environmental receptors within the site boundary.

4.161 This approach served to highlight potential effects on the environment and potential gaps in existing services, facilities and sustainable transport links. It also provided a more consistent basis for assessment than reliance on indicative site masterplans or offers of infrastructure provision that some site promoters may have made, given that this information was not available for all site options. Consideration by the SA of any proposed site layouts would also be inappropriately detailed; the level of detail of the appraisal work undertaken reflects the relatively high level of a Local Plan.

4.162 The site assessment scores for site options were revisited for sites included as proposed allocations in the draft Local Plan, to reflect the plan's site-specific policy requirements. This work is presented in Chapter 5. The assessment of the plan as a whole is also included in this report (see Chapter 6), to take account of the mitigation offered by development management policies and regulatory mechanisms external to the plan.

4.163 The appraisal of the site options in this chapter also includes recommendations about potential approaches to mitigation that the Council might take to avoid the adverse effects identified for the SA objectives where relevant.

Appraisal findings for site options

4.164 The sites that were considered by the Council to be reasonable alternatives are listed in:

- Table 4.2 for site options considered for residential use only;

- Table 4.3 for site options considered for a mix of residential and employment use; or
- Table 4.4 for site options considered for employment use only.

4.165 As noted in Chapter 2, site options were initially appraised by the SA in September 2024; a number of site options were then reappraised in December 2024 to reflect changes to site capacity, site boundary etc. In these cases, both sets of SA findings are presented, with the unique site identification number suffixed with 'a' to indicate the results for the revised version of the site option.

4.166 The tables included later in this chapter set out a summary of the likely effects of the site options in relation to each of the SA objectives. These tables are followed by an overview of the sustainability findings for each SA objective. Where differing approaches have been taken for the appraisal of residential, mixed use and employment sites options, this has been explained. Maps setting out the location of each site option are presented in Figures 4.1 to Figure 4.1.6 below Table 4.2, Table 4.3 and Table 4.4.

Table 4.2: Summary of sustainability effects of residential site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10082	North Station Car Park	+	++	+	++	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10082a	Land at Colchester Station	++	++	+	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10090	Land North Halstead Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10121	Land at Birch Green	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10122	The Old School	+	++	-	-	-	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10122a	The Old School	+	++	-	-	-	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10123	Site west of Chappel Hill	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10125	Cedar Brook Field	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10132	Brook Meadows	++	--	+	+	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10154	Colchester Willow Ground	+	-	0	++	+	++	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10165	Land North of Woolmer Green	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10171	Land Adjacent to 124 School Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10173	Livelihoods	+	++	-	+	0	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10177	Sawdon	+	--	-	-	-	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10178	Land South of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10179	Sawdon - Kemps Farm	+	--	-	-	-	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10181	Peldon Hall Farm	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10185	Land west of Langham Lane	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10196	Land South of Halstead Road Site 1	+	--	-	+	-	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10197	Land south of Halstead Road Site 2	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10208	Land North of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10211	Land east of Fingringhoe Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10225	Site adjoining Clay Barn	+	--	-	--	+	--	0?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10226	Land East of School Road	++	--	-	-	0	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10226a	Land East of School Road	+	--	-	-	0	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10228	Land adjacent Lower Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10229	Land north of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10231	Land north of Colchester Road	+	++	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10233	Land at Oxley House	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10239	Gosbecks Business Park	+	++	--	+	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10244	Land adjacent New Park Cottage	+	-	-	-	+	+	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10245	Land northwest of Harwich Road	++	--	-	-	0	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10248	Land north west Colne Bank Avenue	++	--	-	++	+	++	--?	--	--?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10253	Ship Inn Field	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10254	Apex Lodge	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10255	Green Farm House	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10256	Buildings Farm	++	--	0	+	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10256a	Buildings Farm	++	--	0	+	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10257	Woodlands Farm	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10258	Black Brook Farm	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10259	Land north of Woodlands	+	--	-	-	-	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10260	Land adjacent Elms Farm House	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10261	Land adjacent Bonnie Blue Oak,	+	-	-	-	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10262	Highlands	+	++	-	-	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10264	Land south of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10265	Land at Moat Road	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10266	Land South Malting Green Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10267	Tey Gardens	++	++	-	-	-	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10291	Land opposite Wick Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10479	Folkard Gardens	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10486	Land north of Maldon Road,	++	--	-	-	+	+	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10492	Land adjacent Rectory Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10508	Land East of Plummers Road	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10510	Land to the East of Nayland Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10511	Land west Hall Road	+	++	-	-	+	+	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10514	Land west and east of North Lane	++	--	-	+	0	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	-	N/A	-	--
10515	Land east of Layer Road	+	--	-	+	-	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10520	Land South West Tiptree	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10522	Land adjacent 57 Rowhedge Road	+	-	-	+	+	-	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10526	Land between White Hart Lane & Manor Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10531	Land north of Church Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10532	Land east of Factory Hill	+	--	-	-	+	+	-?	-	-?	N/A	-	N/A	-	0
10534	Land East of Factory Hill	++	--	-	+	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10535	Land off New Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10535a	Land off New Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10536	Land southwest of Halstead Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10538	Land south of Church Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10547	Land south Long Road West	+	--	-	-	-	--	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10548	Land east of Hall Road	+	--	-	-	0	--	-?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10567	Land west of The Causeway	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10569	Land East of Brook Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10571	Bumblebee Farm	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10587	Land north of Halstead Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10594	Wivenhoe Quarry	++	--	+	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10600	Picketts	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10611	Land East of School Road	+	--	-	-	0	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10616	Land north of Bromley Road	++	--	-	+	+	+	0?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10616a	Welshwood Park	++	--	-	+	+	-	0?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10616b	Land north of Bromley Road	++	--	-	+	+	+	0?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10617	Lakelands Crescent	++	--	0	+	-	+	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10617a	Lakelands Crescent	+	--	0	+	-	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10618	View Park	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10618a	View Park	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10622	Land East of Mersea Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10627	Land east Dawes Lane	++	--	-	-	+	--	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10627a	Land east Dawes Lane	++	--	-	-	+	--	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10629	Place Farm	++	-	--	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10629a	Place Farm	+	-	-	+	-	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10634	Land at Kelvedon Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10649	Land west of Station Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10652	Land north A1124	+	--	-	+	0	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10656	Land north of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10656a	Land north of Halstead Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10657	Land North Oak Road	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10664	Land north of Park Lane	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10665	Land east of Wick Road	++	--	-	+	0	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10666	Land south School Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10673	Land south Mersea Road	++	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10675	Land south East Road	++	--	-	-	+	--	-?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10676	Land North Boxted Straight Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10682	Land to the east of Cross Lane	++	--	-	-	+	--	-?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10686	Land at Earls Colne Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10687	Land south of Berechurch Hall Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10687a	Land south of Berechurch Hall Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10691	Land North of Coach Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10745	102 East Road West Mersea	+	-	-	-	+	--	--?	0	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10746	The Car Boot field	++	--	-	+	0	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10747a	Tey Green	++	--	-	+	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10747b	Land North of A120, Marks Tey	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10748	Land off Colchester Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10749	Land off Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10750	Land off Rowhedge Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10751	Land off Croquet Gardens	++	-	+	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10752	Land west Oxley Parker Drive	+	--	-	+	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10752a	Land west Oxley Parker Drive	+	--	-	+	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10755	Land North of the Fire Station	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10755a	Land North of the Fire Station	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10756	Land East of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10757	Land West of Colchester Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10758	Land west The Folley	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10759	The Furze	+	--	-	-	+	-	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

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Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10760	Land south of Halstead Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10761	Land off Bakers Lane	++	--	0	+	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10762	Land North Grove Road	++	--	-	-	+	+	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10764	Former Aldham Playing Field	+	--	-	-	0	--	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10765	Land North London Road	+	--	-	+	-	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10765a	Land North London Road	+	--	-	+	0	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10766	The Willows	++	--	-	+	-	--	-?	--	-?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10767	Land North East of Coach Road	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10768	Land South of Armoury Road	++	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10769	Land North Armoury Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10777	Land West Queen Street	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10778	The Roman Circus Quarter	++	-	+	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10928	Land adjacent Traveller Site	+	--	-	+	0	--	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10934	Geantree	++	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10935	Land north of Ivy Lodge Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10941	Land accessible via Chesterwell (Colchester Golf Club Site 2)	++	--	+	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10946	BT Site	+	++	-	+	+	-	0?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10947	BT Repeater Station	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10950a	Vineyard Street Development	++	++	-	++	+	++	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10951	St Runwald Car Park	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10952	Braiswick	++	--	0	+	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	--
10952a	Braiswick	+	--	0	+	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10953	Middlewick	++	-	-	+	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10953a	Middlewick	++	-	-	+	+	+	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10954	Barrington Road/Bourne Road	+	++	+	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10956	Rowhedge Business Park	++	++	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10956a	Rowhedge Business Park	++	++	-	-	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10957	Highlands Nursery	++	--	-	-	+	+	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10960	Land North Colchester Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10961	Land Adjacent Halstead Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10963	Chapmans Farm,	+	++	-	+	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10968	Land of Stanway Western Bypass	++	--	+	+	+	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10970	Gosbecks	+	--	-	+	-	+	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10972	Spring Lane Nursery	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10973	Whitehall Industrial Estate	+	-	--	+	-	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10976	Britannia Car Park	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10979a	Gas Works Site & Allotment	++	++	-	++	+	+	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10980a	Land West of Hawkins Road	+	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10981a	Land East of Hawkins Road	++	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10984	Europit & Magdalen Garage Site	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10985	83-102 Magdalen Street	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10986	146 Magdalen Street	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10987	Ford Car Showroom	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10987a	Ford Car Showroom	++	++	0	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10988	Robertson Van Hire	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10991	Former Telephone Exchange	+	++	0	-	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10994a	King Edward Quay Industrial Park	++	++	-	++	+	-	--?	--	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10995	West Bergholt Allocations	+	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10996	Former Lookers Garage	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
11008	Land West Severalls Lane	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11113	Swan Grove	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Table 4.3: Summary of sustainability effects of mixed use site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10251	Stanway Nurseries	+	++	-	+	-	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10621	Land at St Ives Road	+	--	-	-	+	--	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10635	Land north/south Accommodation Road	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10685	Land North Boxted Straight Road	+	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10690	Land South of Marks Tey Village	+	--	-	+	+	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10747	Tey Green	+	--	-	+	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10846	Land North of Marks Tey Railway Station	+	--	-	+	+	--	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
10927	Seven Saints Farm	+	--	-	+	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10929	Cuckoo Farm Arts Studios	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10950	Vineyard Gate Development	+	++	-	++	+	++	--?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10969	The Crescent	+	--	-	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10975	Former Fieldgate Site	+	++	-	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10977	Fomer Coldoc Site	+	++	-	++	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-
10978	Scrapyards	+	++	-	++	+	+	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10979	Gas Works Site,	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-
10980	Land West of Hawkins Road	+	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10981	Land East of Hawkins Road	+	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	-
10982	Derelict Coal Yard Site	+	++	-	++	+	-	--?	-	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10994	King Edward Quay Industrial Park	+	++	-	++	+	-	--?	--	0?	N/A	--	N/A	-	--
10997	Former Coldoc Site 2	+	++	-	+	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	-	N/A	-	-

Table 4.4: Summary of sustainability effects of employment site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10175	Haycocks Yard	N/A	++	-	-	+	-	--?	-	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10230	Land south of Doggetts Lane Service Station	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10239a	Land North of Maldon Road, Colchester	N/A	--	0	+	+	-	--	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10488	Bullbanks Farm	N/A	++	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10527	Land south of Factory Hill	N/A	--	+	-	+	+	-?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10566	Oakview Landscapes Ltd, Pattens Yard,	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10623	Land north and south of Dobbies Lane	N/A	++	0	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
10632	Land south of Tower Business Park	N/A	--	-	+	+	-	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
10647	Wakes Hall Business Centre	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10663	Land off Newpots Lane	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	--?	--	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10671	Land south A12	N/A	--	0	-	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10677	Land South of the A12	N/A	--	0	-	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
10969a	Colchester Business Park, The Crescent	N/A	--	-	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11006	Land south Cycle Racing Facility	N/A	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11007	Site East of P&R	N/A	--	-	+	-	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
11016	Colchester Water	N/A	++	+	+	+	-	0?	--	--?	N/A	-	N/A	-	++/--

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

Site ID	Site Name	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
	Recycling Centre														

Figure 4.1: Site options appraised

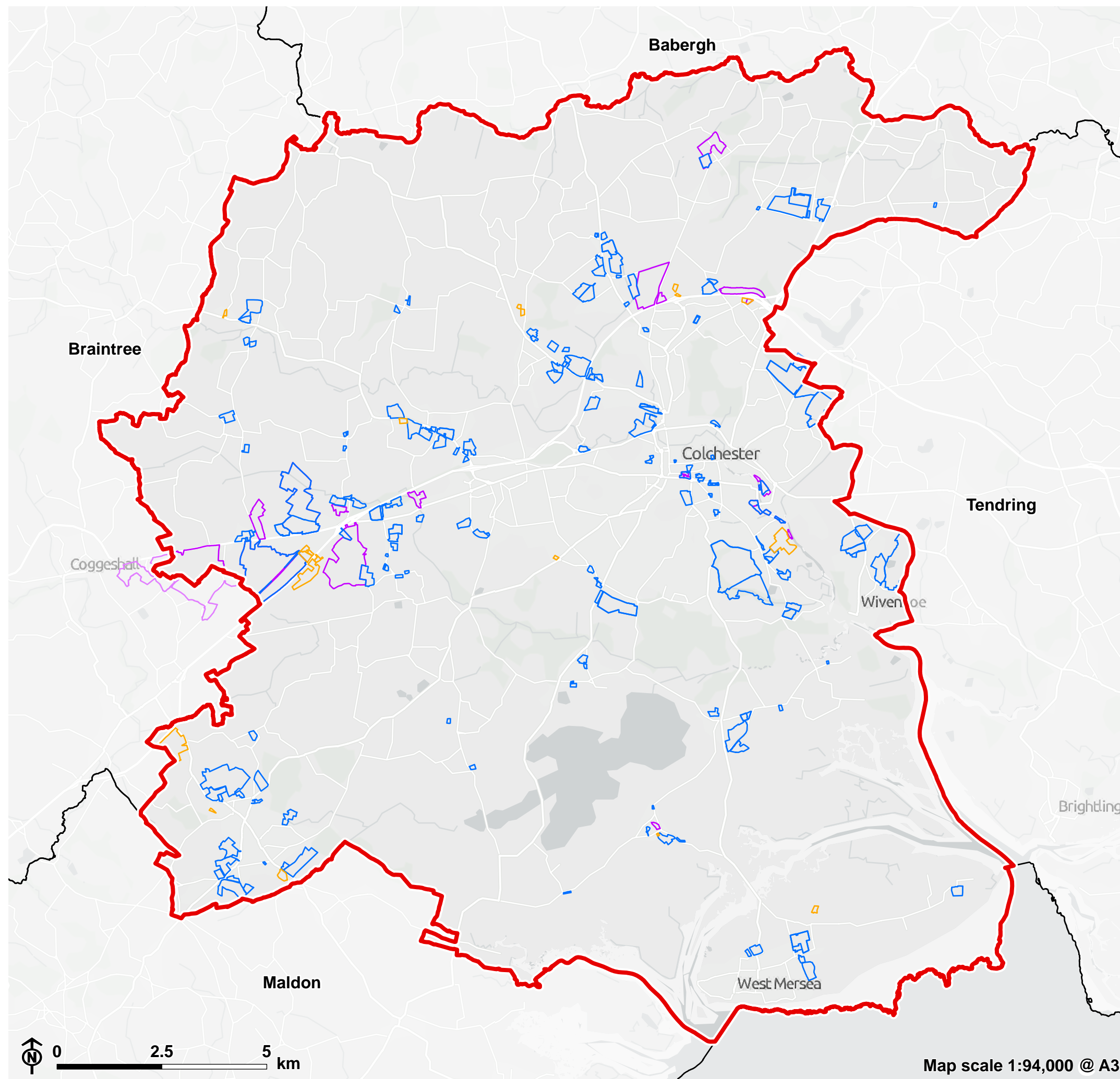
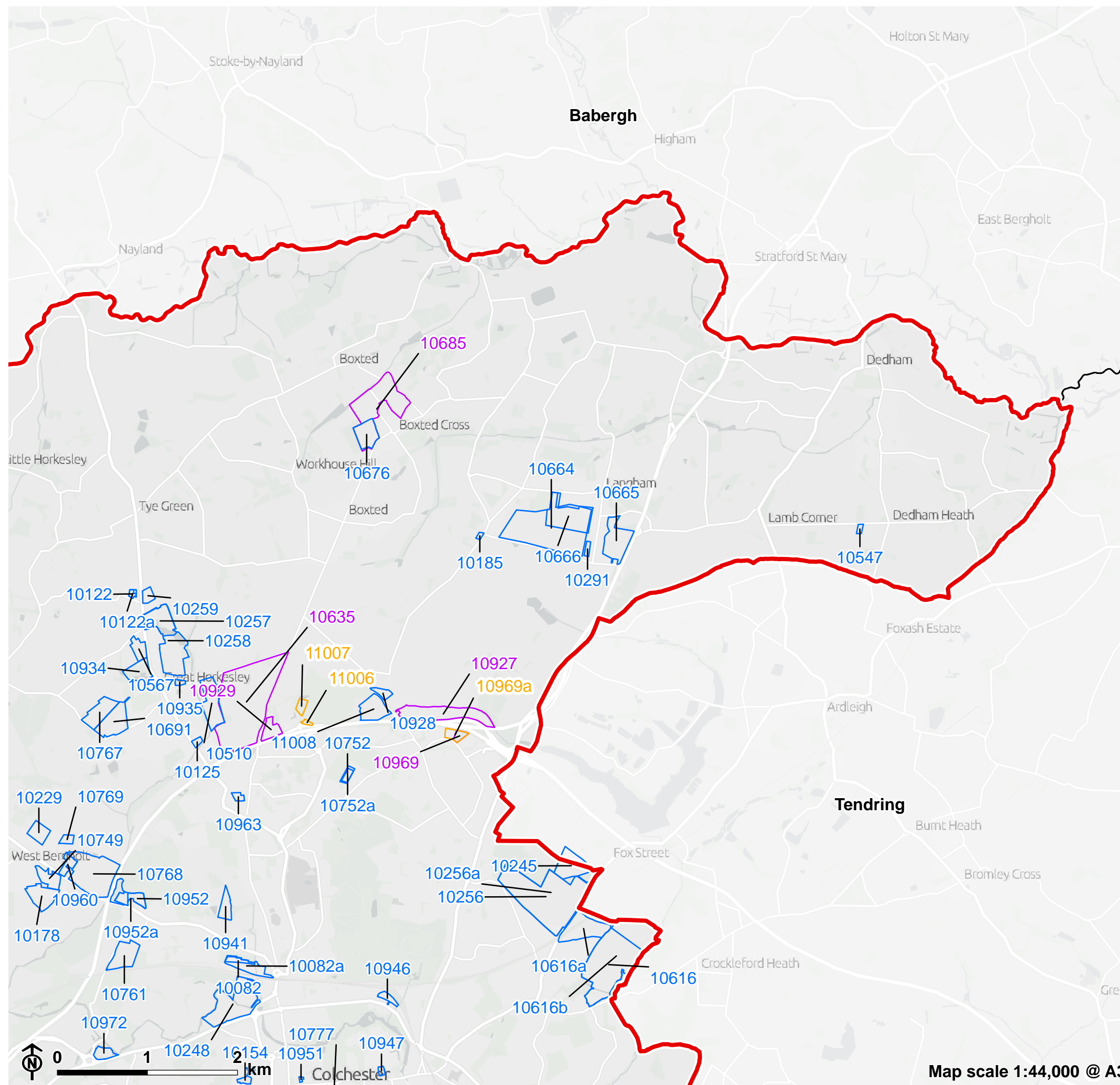




Figure 4.1.1: Site options appraised (north east)





- Colchester District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Proposed use**
- Employment
- Mixed use
- Residential


 Colchester District

 Neighbouring local authority

Proposed use

 Employment

 Mixed use

 Residential

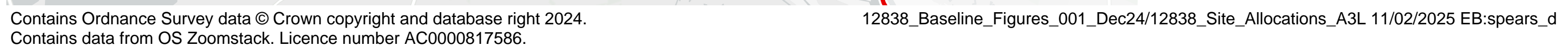


Figure 4.1.3: Site options appraised (south east)

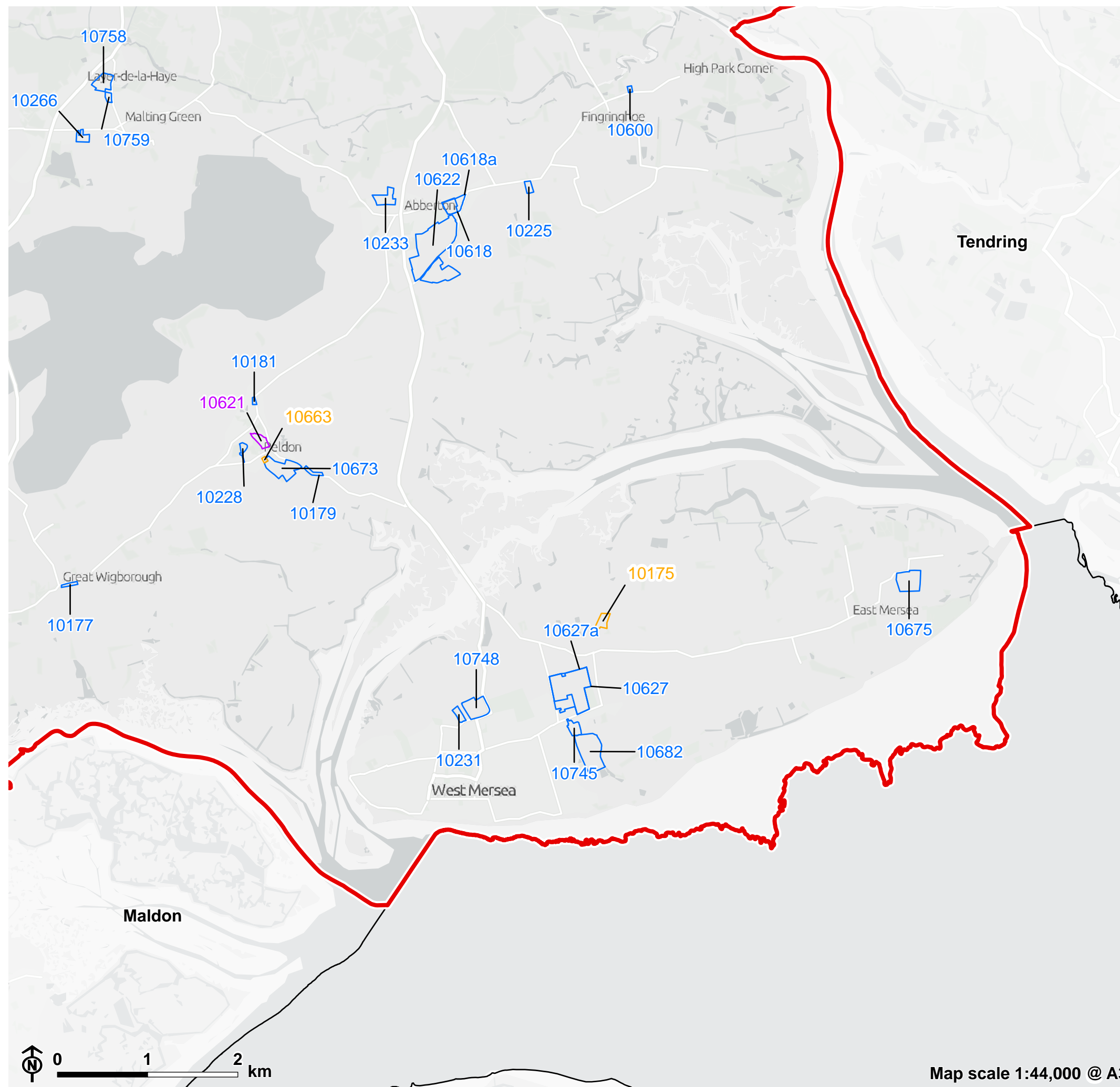


Figure 4.1.4: Site options appraised (south west)

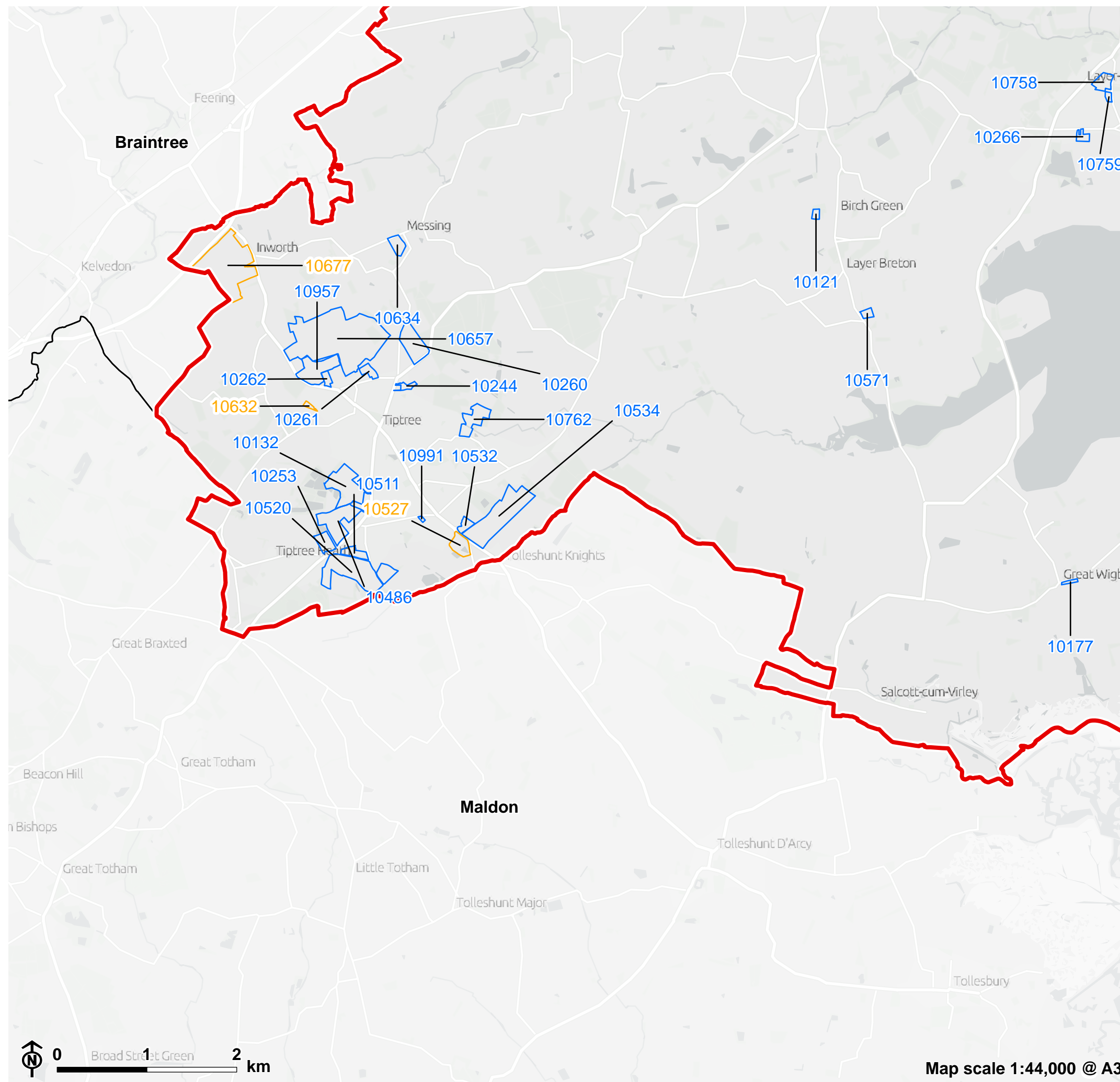


Figure 4.1.5: Site options appraised (west)

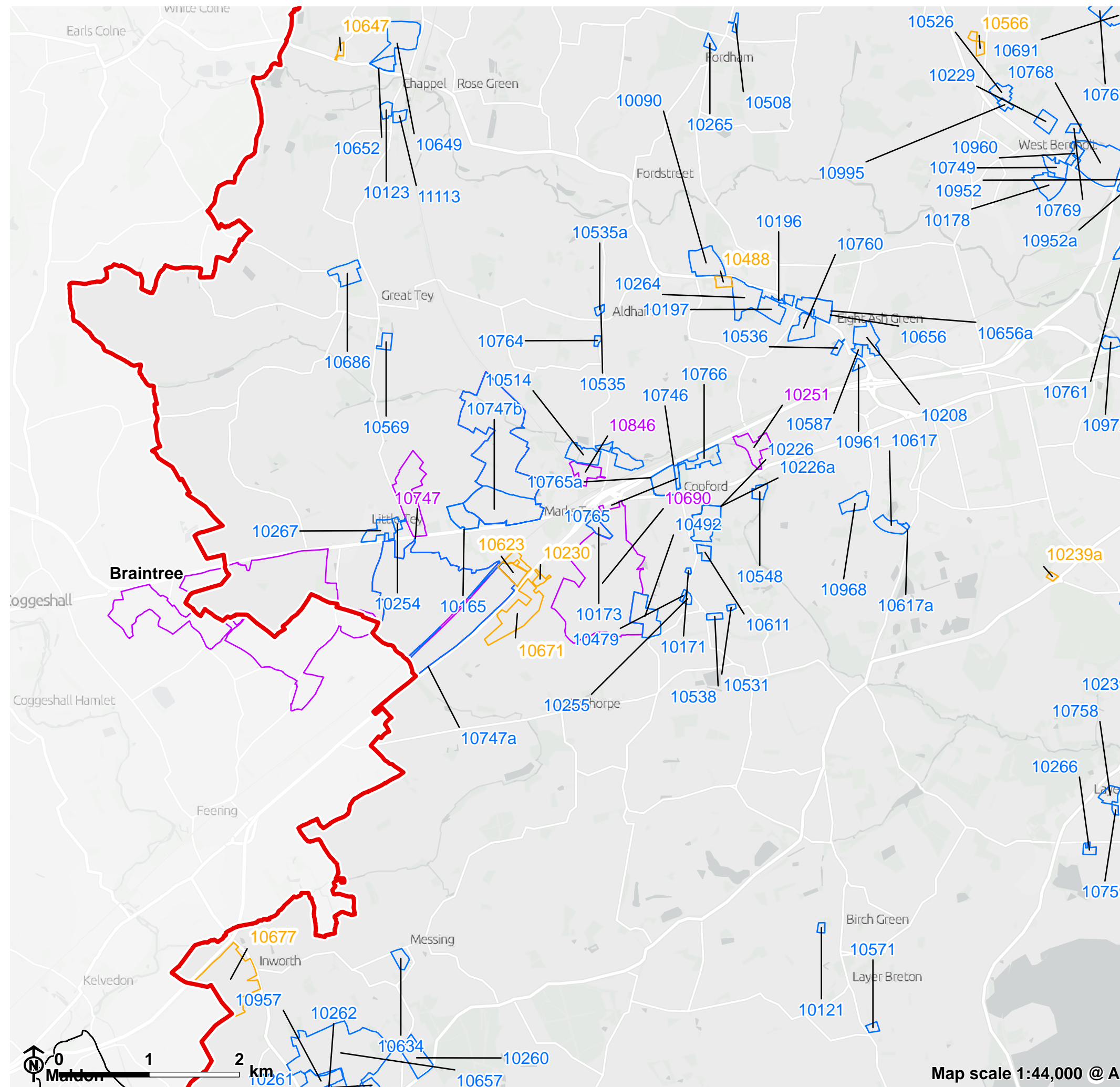
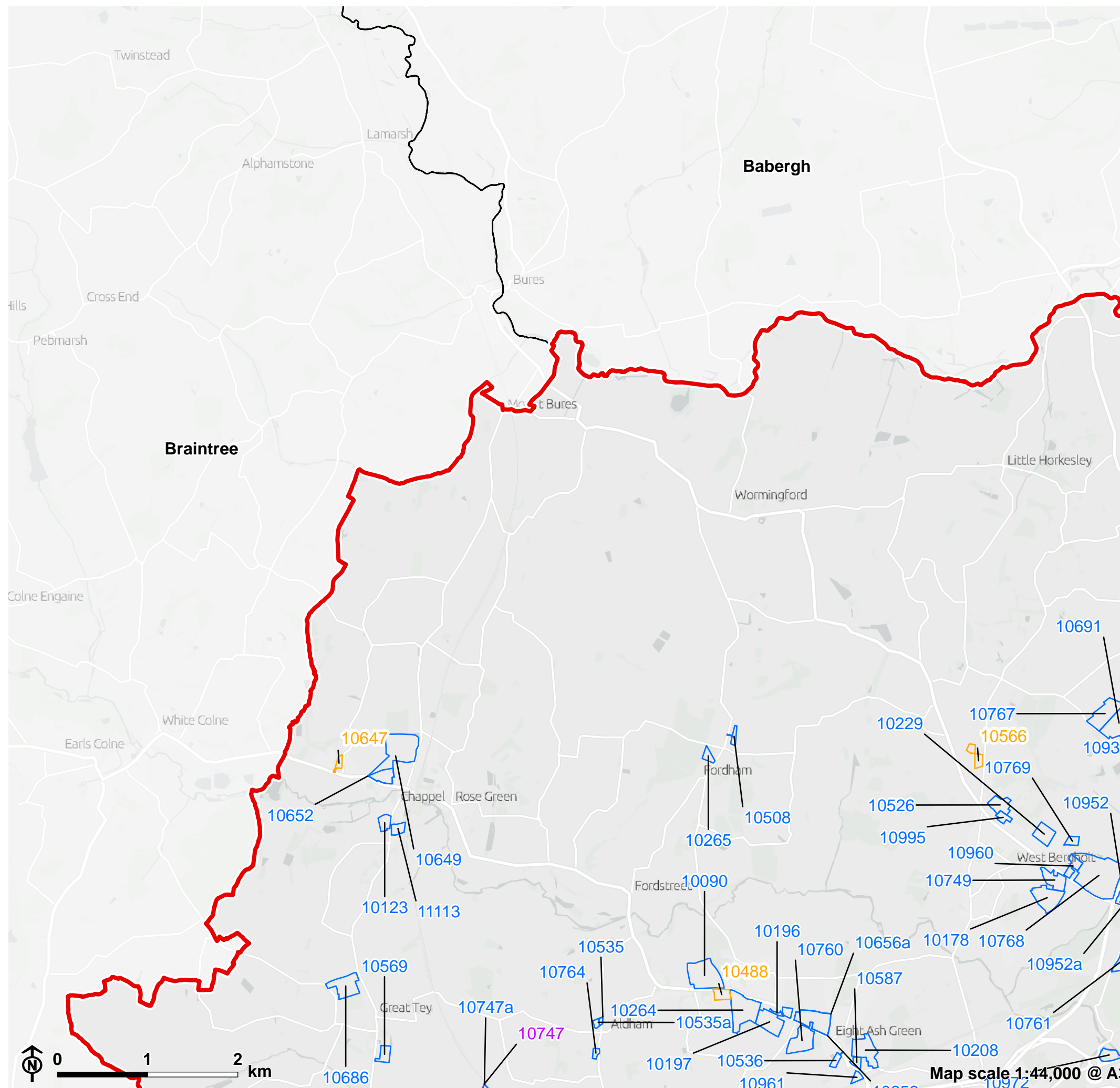


Figure 4.1.6: Site options appraised (north west)



SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

4.167 The ability of site options to support the delivery of new homes in the plan area has been considered in relation to their respective sizes, with larger sites likely to deliver a higher number of homes. At the early stage of plan making when the site appraisal was initially undertaken, the Council had not considered an appropriate level of housing for each site. Some site promoters suggested an amount of housing for their respective sites and in some cases, this was supported by a concept vision, which included other uses such as green space. However, the same level of detail was not provided by all site promoters. To ensure that all reasonable site alternatives were appraised consistently, the Council estimated the dwelling capacity of all site options using an assumed development density of 30 dwellings per hectare.

4.168 Around 50% of the residential sites are expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to SA objective 1 given that they have potential to deliver 100 homes or more. The remaining residential sites are expected to have a minor positive effect given that they have potential to deliver less than 100 homes.

4.169 For all mixed use site options, the positive effect recorded was minor. While some of the mixed use sites are relatively large, there is uncertainty about the proportion of these sites that would accommodate housing vs. other uses. On a precautionary basis, the positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 1 for mixed use site options was therefore assumed to be uncertain minor positive rather than significant positive.

4.170 This SA objective was scoped out the of the appraisal of employment site options considering the types of uses that would be provided at these sites.

SA objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

4.171 The NPPF supports the redevelopment of previously developed land, stating that strategic policies should make as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. The SA considered whether each site option is mostly greenfield or mostly brownfield.

4.172 National planning policy also places an emphasis on the conservation of best and most versatile agricultural land. The SA considered whether each site contains higher value agricultural soils (i.e. Grade 3 soils or higher).

4.173 Significant negative effects were identified for the majority of all site types - around 70% of residential site options, 70% of employment site options and 50% of mixed use site options. The majority of the land within these sites is greenfield. Around half of all of these sites comprise at least 25% Grade 3 or higher agricultural soils. This includes around 50% of residential sites, nine employment sites (10239a, 10230, 10527, 10566, 10647, 10671, 10969a, 11006 and 11007) and six mixed use sites (10635, 10685, 10690, 10747, 10846, and 10969). A minor negative effect is expected for only around 5% of all site options, all of which were considered for residential use. These sites are mostly greenfield but contain mostly urban, non-agricultural or Grade 4 agricultural land. Around 20% of residential site options, 50% of mixed use sites and 30% of employment sites are expected to have a significant positive effect given that they comprise mostly brownfield land. Many of the sites that are mostly brownfield land lie within the developed Colchester urban area and other established larger settlements such as Marks Tey and Tiptree.

Mitigation

4.174 It is unlikely that all adverse effects can be mitigated given the likely requirement for greenfield land to support residential and employment growth over the plan period. There is some brownfield land in the District and where it is safe, viable and sustainable (taking into account other SA objectives), the redevelopment of previously developed land should be prioritised. The development of higher value agricultural land (particularly Grades 1 and 2) should be avoided. It is notable that the District contains large swathes of Grade 2 soils to the north and west of Colchester City towards Marks Tey as well as surrounding Tiptree. It may prove difficult to entirely avoid these areas while promoting a sustainable pattern of development.

SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

4.175 Potential negative effects were identified where the allocation of a residential or mixed use site could lead to loss of an existing employment use at the site or part or all of an existing employment area. Residential and mixed use sites were also assessed in relation to the potential for residents to be able to access jobs. This element of the appraisal was based on the 'employment' domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and the concentration of jobs in that area. Employment and mixed use sites will support the provision of jobs in the plan area, with larger employment sites assessed as performing more positively in this regard. The appraisal also considered the potential for all site types to support the viability and growth of town centre locations through increased footfall, based on their proximity to these centres.

4.176 Around 15% of the residential sites were identified as being in employment use or containing a substantial amount of land (at least 25% of the

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site) that lies within an employment area. Only three of the residential sites (10239, 10629 and 10973, all of which are in employment use or contain part of an employment area) are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 3. These three sites are located towards the south western and south eastern edges of the Colchester urban area. Some of these sites are also within areas that are within the 20% most deprived nationally as per the 'employment' domain of the IMD or within areas that are in 80-100 percentile in the District for density of jobs. Around 90% of the residential sites are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to this SA objective. Many of these sites fall within the 20% most deprived nationally areas for the 'employment' domain of the IMD or within areas that do not benefit from high concentrations of jobs. There are relatively large swathes of land from the western edge of the Colchester urban area towards Marks Tey and from the north east of the Colchester urban area towards Langham where the concentration of jobs is low, compared to other parts of the District. Only six residential site options (10082, 10082a, 10132, 10594, 10751 and 10778) are likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 3. These sites lie within the areas with the highest concentration of job provision in Colchester District or in the case of 10778 lie within 400m of Colchester city centre. The sites in question lie within the Colchester Urban Area (three sites), Wivenhoe (two sites) and Tiptree.

4.177 All 20 of the mixed use site options are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 3. Twelve of these mixed use sites were identified as being in employment use or containing a substantial area of an employment area. While none of these sites lie in an area in the 20% most deprived nationally areas for the 'employment' domain of the IMD, several (10950, 10978 and 10979) fall within the 20-40% most deprived nationally. Furthermore, 13 of the sites fall within the 80-100 percentile in the District for jobs' density. The majority of the mixed use site options are also not well related to town centre locations in Colchester District, the notable exception being site 10950 which is located at the edge of Colchester city centre.

4.178 Ten of the employment sites (10175, 10230, 10488, 10566, 10632, 10647, 10663, 10969a, 11006 and 11007) are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to this SA objective. While all employment sites

considered are expected to support job creation in the District, most of these sites are smaller than 3ha and therefore have more limited potential for the provision of jobs. Furthermore, none of these ten sites are located within a more deprived areas as per of the 'employment' domain of the IMD and they are not well related to a town centre location. Only employment sites 10527 and 11016 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 3. Site 11016 is notable in that it is considered for infrastructure to support sewerage and water supply undertakings and has some potential to support job creation. It lies in the urban area of Colchester within an area in the 20% most deprived nationally areas for the 'employment' domain of the IMD and therefore could support job creation in an area of most need. The effect for the remaining four employment sites (10239a, 10623, 10671 and 10677) is negligible.

Mitigation

4.179 The potential negative effects identified by the SA of residential site options could be avoided by ensuring that any site selected for change of use from employment to residential is surplus to local requirements for the particular type of employment space that is currently supported. Furthermore, these types of sites can be provided in locations where residents have good access to town centre locations to support the viability of these locations without resulting in loss of viable town centre uses.

SA objective 4. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

4.180 The potential to limit travel by private vehicle as new development occurs in the plan area will partly depend on ensuring sites have good access to public transport. Access to employment and essential services and facilities will also influence the potential for modal shift, however, these issues have been considered separately through SA objectives 3: employment, 5: health and

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wellbeing and 6: services and facilities and are therefore not repeated under SA objective 4.

4.181 The appraisal of site options in relation to SA objective 4 has considered the potential for residents and site users to make use of more sustainable modes of transport, including public transport and cycle. The Colchester Urban Area benefits from three existing railway stations and there are further stations at Wivenhoe, Marks Tey and Chappel and Wakes Colne. There is a relatively strong network of bus stops across the plan area, most notably within the Colchester urban area and along the road network towards Marks Tey, and within West Mersea, Tiptree and Wivenhoe. There is a planned route for a new rapid transit system in Colchester which will travel from the A12 Park and Ride to the University of Essex and the new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community on the A133. The Colchester urban area also provides access to a network of cycle routes and the National Cycle Network passes into the District towards Langham, Mount Bures and Tiptree.

4.182 Given the widespread coverage of bus services throughout many parts of the District, almost all site options are located close (within at least 1km) to a bus stop. The exception are residential sites 10225 (located outside of Abberton) and 10762 (located at Tiptree) and employment site 10647 (located outside of Chappel). Furthermore, residential site option 10225 is the only site for which a significant negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 4.

4.183 A minor negative effect is expected in relation to this SA objective for around 40% of the residential site options as well as around 10% of the mixed use site options and around 70% of employment site options. The majority of these sites are well related to bus stops but are located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycle path.

4.184 Around 40% of the residential site options, 50% of the mixed use site options and almost 30% of employment site options are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 4. A significant positive effect is recorded for only around 10% of residential site options and 40% of mixed use site options. These site options are all located in the Colchester urban area,

reflecting the better access to rail services and existing dedicated cycle routes, as well as bus services in this part of the District.

Mitigation

4.185 Avoiding the allocation of site options in the areas that are less well served by public transport would help to reduce the adverse effects identified in relation to this SA objective. The main developed area of the Colchester Urban Area contains three railway stations as well as a high concentration of bus stops and the new RTS. However, the centre of the City is also subject to high levels of road congestion. Where there is a need to allocate sites in areas which are currently poorly served by public transport, there is potential to mitigate negative effects through the delivery of new public transport and active travel connections, in advance of or early in the delivery of development. Ensuring that new residents have good access to nearby essential services and facilities and jobs will also help to reduce the need for residents to travel longer distances on a regular basis. Both of these forms of mitigation are more likely to be viable where a larger scale of growth is provided.

SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and, reduce levels of deprivation

4.186 Site options were appraised against SA objective 5 in relation to the potential to improved public health in the District, including by providing residents with good access to facilities that would support this aim. For all site types this was undertaken through appraisal criteria relating to access to open space and public rights of way (PRoWs). The appraisal also considered the potential for regeneration to address deprivation in the plan area with positive effects recorded for all site options where they fall within more deprived areas, as indicated by the IMD. For residential and mixed use site options only, the objective also considered access to GP surgeries. The appraisal for all site

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types took into account the potential for loss of existing services and facilities where these types of features lie within site boundaries. Given the likely occupation of residential and mixed use sites at night and the sensitivity of these site types to disturbance, the appraisal of these site types considered their location in relation to sources of noise (i.e. roads and rail) and odour (i.e. facilities related to waste management).

4.187 The majority of the site options appraised are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5. Most of these sites are well related to areas of open space and PRowS but many are less well related to GP surgeries. This includes around 80% residential site options, 85% of mixed use site options and 90% of employment site options. There are areas of the District that fall within the 10% and 20% most deprived in the country as per the findings of the IMD. None of the site options appraised lie within the 10% most deprived areas. However, several sites within the Colchester urban area towards the parishes of Heath and the Hythe, Berechurch and New Town and Christ Church lie within the 20% most deprived areas. It is expected that development of these sites could contribute to regeneration of areas of most need and help to address deprivation in Colchester District.

4.188 A minor negative effect is expected in relation to this SA objective for 10% of the residential site options, around 15% of the mixed use site options and just under 10% of the employment site options. This includes several sites (10251, 10617, 10617a 10970 and 11007) that take in all or part of an open space. Furthermore, many of the residential and mixed use site options for which a minor negative effect is expected lie close to roads or railway lines at which high levels of noise are likely or close to a waste management facility, where odour may be an issue. It is notable that a railway line passes through Marks Tey, Copford and the Colchester Urban Area and is a source of noise pollution in the District. Furthermore, the A12 is another source of noise pollution and this route also passes close to Marks Tey and Copford and to the north of the Colchester Urban Area. The potential disturbance of residents contributes to the relatively poor performance of some of the sites within Marks Tey and Copford, in particular. Furthermore, several of the residential and mixed use site options that are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 5, are located close to potential odour sources. This

includes a number of sites at Marks Tey and Copford that are close to Colne Skips waste site and Copford WwTW and three sites at the edge of the Colchester urban area (10617, 10617a and 10927) that are close to either a landfill site and non-hazardous materials recycling / recovery facility. For the remaining residential site options a negligible effect is expected.

Mitigation

4.189 Some of the potential negative effects identified by the SA of residential site options could be avoided by selecting sites outside of areas affected by noise pollution and odour, such as the District's main road and rail corridors and waste management facilities. Noise pollution generally reduces very quickly with increasing distance from the source, therefore on large site allocations it may be possible to avoid effects through appropriate site layouts. Furthermore, the design of sites to incorporate trees and shrubs may allow for natural barriers to noise. Site options that include existing open space may be avoided or be designed to ensure that the existing open space is retained and enhanced unless there is an identified surplus in the area or a suitable and accessible replacement would be provided. Developing sites with additional green space and active travel routes alongside development, where this is currently lacking, would help to improve positive effects of site allocations on health and wellbeing more widely. New green space may also support community food growing, with benefits in terms of both active lifestyles and better access to healthy food.

4.190 As noted in relation to the potential for mitigation for the adverse effects recorded for SA objectives 4, incorporating new services and facilities and jobs alongside residential development is likely to result in a higher proportion of trips being made by active and public modes of transport. As such this approach is likely to benefit public health by building physical activity into the daily lives of the District's residents.

SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities and education

4.191 Site options were appraised in terms of their likelihood of providing good access to essential services and facilities and education. For all site types, proximity to the town, district and local centres of the District was used to assess access to services and facilities. For residential site and mixed use options, consideration was also given to the potential for residents of sites to easily access primary and secondary schools. The appraisal also took into account the potential for loss of existing services and facilities where these types of features lie within site boundaries.

4.192 A significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 6 for only four site options; two residential sites (10154 and 10248) and one mixed use site (10950 and 10950a). These sites are located close to Colchester town centre as well as primary schools and secondary schools within the Colchester urban area. A minor positive effect is expected for around 25% of residential site options and 10% of mixed use site options. The vast majority of these sites provide good access to a primary school. However, around half are less well related to a secondary school and over half do not benefit from good access to a town centre location. It should be noted that these sites include residential site option 10778 which takes in St John's Green Primary School and this facility could be lost if new residential development was to occur. The residential and mixed use site options that are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 6 are mostly located within the Colchester urban area and Tiptree. The Colchester urban area contains the main town centre of the District, a district centre and several local centres, while Tiptree benefits from a district centre as well as several primary schools and secondary school. Only one employment site option is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective; site 10527 in Tiptree would provide good access to a district centre in the plan area.

4.193 Around 20% of the residential site options and 15% of the mixed use site options are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA

objective 6. Many of these sites are located at more rural locations or smaller settlements where no schools or town centres are present, for example sites at Peldon, East Mersea, Great Wigborough and Aldham. There are other sites of this type that are located at more sizeable settlements but still outside of reasonable walking distance from the nearest school and town centre location. This includes several sites at West Mersea, Eight Ash Green, Fordham, Great Horkesley, Marks Tey and Copford, all of which include a primary school but no secondary school and several of which include a district or local centre. A minor negative effect is expected for around 55% of the residential site options and 70% of the mixed use site options. This is also the case for around 90% of the employment site options.

Mitigation

4.194 The potential negative effects identified by the SA for the residential site options could be avoided by adopting a similar mitigation strategy as that outlined in relation to SA objective 4. That is to say, sites that are poorly served by sustainable transport and less well related to existing services and facilities should be considered as being less appropriate for allocation. The planning and early delivery of new and enhancement of existing public transport and active travel routes would provide benefits in terms of residents' access to services and facilities and jobs. Similar benefits are likely where new services and facilities and employment can be delivered alongside housing growth in the plan area. This is more likely to be viable for larger scale developments.

SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

4.195 The potential for site options to impact upon the District's historic environment was assessed on the basis of their proximity to designated heritage assets. Given the potential for effects to be transmitted across a

greater distance in less developed areas where there are less likely to be intervening structures, the threshold distance applied for effects is greater outside of the existing settlements in the plan area. All effects were recorded as partly uncertain at the options stage, given the absence of a heritage impact assessment. A heritage impact assessment will inform the appraisal of the sites selected for allocation in the plan.

4.196 The majority of site options are expected to have negative effects in relation to SA objective 7. This reflects the distribution of designated heritage assets across much of the plan area. Many of the larger settlements in the District including the Colchester Urban Area, Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea contain Conservation Areas. For around 65% of the residential site options, 70% of the mixed use site options and 65% of the employment site options, the negative effect is expected to be significant. These sites lie within a settlement and are within 100m of a designated heritage asset or lie outside of a settlement and are within 500m of a designated heritage asset. Around 20% of the residential site options, 20% of mixed use site options and 20% of employment site options are expected to have a negligible effect in relation to SA objective 7. Several of these sites are located beyond the settlement boundary of Tiptree, while some are within the Colchester urban area but away from its centre, where designated heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, are concentrated. The remaining site options are expected to have a negligible effect in relation to SA objective 7 because they are remote from heritage assets.

Mitigation

4.197 Avoidance of allocating site options whose development could result in harm to the significance of heritage assets, including their setting, would provide the best mitigation in relation to this SA objective. Given the uncertainty inherent in the proximity based assessment of site options, it is recommended that a heritage impact assessment is carried out to better inform final decisions on site allocation. Where the wider sustainability merits of site options result in a decision to allocate development in locations where the risk of heritage impacts

is high, it may be possible to avoid significant negative effects via site-specific requirements in relation to site layout and development design.

SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, and enhance biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

4.198 Development sites that are close to an internationally, nationally or locally designated conservation site have the potential to affect the biodiversity or geodiversity of those sites/features, e.g. through habitat damage/loss, fragmentation, disturbance to species, air pollution, or increased recreation pressure. Conversely, there may be opportunities to promote habitat connectivity if new developments include green infrastructure. While proximity to designated sites provides an indication of the potential for an adverse effect, appropriate mitigation may avoid adverse effects and may even result in beneficial effects. It is not proportionate for the SA to consider the particular sensitivities to development of each individual designated wildlife site or undesignated habitats/species close to the potential development sites allocations. This should be determined once more specific proposals are developed and submitted as part of a planning application.

4.199 Around 40% of the residential site options are expected to result in a significant negative effect and around 50% are expected to result in a minor negative effect. Sites were mainly identified as having significant negative effects because they intersect with a locally designated wildlife site, ancient woodland, or priority habitat. It is notable that significant negative effects have been identified for some of the residential sites at Tiptree, Peldon, West Mersea, East Mersea, Abberton, Marks Tey, Wivenhoe and the south western and north western edges of the Colchester urban area. This reflects the proximity of these areas to international or national biodiversity sites including Colne Estuary, Blackwater Estuary, Essex Estuaries, Abberton Reservoir, Tiptree Heath, Bullock Wood and Marks Tey Brickpit. A negligible effect is expected for only ten of the residential site options (10535, 10535a, 10634,

10686, 10745, 10985, 10986, 10987, 10987a and 10996). These sites are located towards the centre of the Colchester urban area (three sites) as well as at Messing, Aldham and Great Tey.

4.200 Of the employment site options appraised, four sites are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 8. These sites are located towards Tiptree (10527), Chappel (10647), Peldon (10663) and at the north edge of the Colchester urban area (10969a). Around 50% of the employment site options are expected to have minor negative effects and the remaining three sites are expected to have negligible effects. The three sites for which a negligible effect is expected are located at the northern edge of the Colchester urban area (11006 and 11007) and towards Marks Tey (10671).

4.201 Negative effects are expected for all but one mixed use site (10929 at the north edge of the Colchester urban area for which a negligible effect is expected), with approximately 65% of these types of sites expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 8. This includes a number of mixed use sites at Marks Tey, the development of which have potential to result in adverse effects on Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI given the proximity of this designation. For the remaining 30% of mixed use site options, a minor negative effect is expected.

Mitigation

4.202 If any of the site options that are close to or overlap with an internationally, nationally or locally designated wildlife site are taken forward for allocation, the Council should carefully consider whether (in some cases minor) changes to development site boundaries are required to ensure compliance with statutory and NPPF requirements for biodiversity conservation. In terms of the other negative effects identified by the appraisal of site options, the Council should consider more detailed investigation of these potential effects and if the sites are taken forward as allocations, ensure that appropriate site-specific mitigation is specified within policies to avoid negative effects on sites/areas of high biodiversity value and safeguard ecological networks. Additionally, Local

Plan policy should be put in place to ensure biodiversity net gain is achieved on each development site or losses are offset elsewhere within the District where this is not feasible. The allocation of development sites may present opportunities to provide green infrastructure that promotes habitat connectivity in the plan area in line with the objectives of the Essex LNRS.

SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

4.203 The Council commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment [See reference 21], which included a high-level assessment of areas for inherent landscape value and sensitivities. The plan area was sub-divided into various Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and each LCA was rated high, medium or low for these measures. Given their developed nature, the settlements of the Colchester urban area, Wivenhoe, Tiptree and West Mersea were not covered in the Landscape Character Assessment. The landscape sensitivity of these areas was considered to be low. This work was used to assess the potential of each site option to negatively impact the landscape. Areas of high inherent value and increased sensitivity lie to the north of the plan area towards the Dedham Vale National Landscape, to the west of the Colchester urban area extending to cover the settlement of Chappel and areas to the south west and south west of the City extending around parts of Wivenhoe and West Mersea. The remaining areas of the District are assessed as having medium value. Given the largely unknown nature of any design that might be implemented at the site options being assessed, all effects for this SA objective were recorded as uncertain.

4.204 Around 20% of the residential sites lie in LCAs with high value and therefore uncertain significant negative effects were recorded in relation to SA objective 9. This is also the case for around 10% of mixed use sites and 30% of the employment sites. 60% of the residential sites, 35% of the mixed use sites and 65% of the employment sites lie within LCAs with medium value. Uncertain minor negative effects were identified for these site options. The remaining sites lie within the settlement boundaries of the Colchester urban area and Tiptree.

The potential for impacts on sensitive landscapes is considered more limited at these locations and therefore uncertain negligible effects were recorded. This is the case for around 20% of the residential sites, 55% of the mixed use sites and 10% of the employment sites. The majority of these sites are located within the Colchester urban area developed area, with only two (10527 for employment use and 10991 for residential use) lying within Tiptree.

Mitigation

4.205 Avoiding allocating sites within areas of highest landscape sensitivity to development would provide the best mitigation in relation to this SA objective. In areas of medium and higher landscape value and sensitivity areas, Local Plan policy requirements for development site layouts and development design that seek to reduce adverse effects on the landscape could be implemented to mitigate potential negative effects. These requirements may be more applicable in the north of the District given that it includes part of Dedham Vale National Landscape.

SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

4.206 SA objective 10 was scoped out of the appraisal of site options. While transport-related carbon emissions may be reduced by locating development close to public transport hubs and close to employment and key services and facilities, these aspects of the Plan's sustainability have been separately assessed (under SA objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6) and are not repeated here. The other effects of the Plan in relation to this SA objective are mostly likely to be influenced by the design of developments to mitigate the effects of climate change and creation and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure. These factors do not depend on the location of the site and were taken into account by

the SA through the appraisal of development management policies and site-specific requirements set out in allocation policies.

SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

4.207 Development on greenfield land would increase the area of impermeable surfaces and could therefore increase overall flood risk, particularly where the sites are within high risk flood zones. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance identifies residential properties as a 'more vulnerable use' that is suitable in Flood Zones 1 and 2 but would require an exception test in Flood Zone 3a and is unsuitable in Flood Zone 3b. Adopting a precautionary approach, the SA has recorded similarly adverse effects for all site types (i.e. residential, mixed use and employment) if 25% or more of the site is within Flood Zone 2 (minor negative) or Flood Zone 3 (significant negative).

4.208 Surface water flooding occurs when intense rainfall overwhelms drainage systems. The SA has considered the potential for sites to be affected by this source of flood risk, with adverse effects recorded where at least 25% of a site option lies on land within a 1 in 100 year risk (minor negative effect) of flooding or 1 in 30 year (significant negative effect) risk of flooding. Other aspects of the Local Plan affecting flood risk were assessed via the SA of development management policies, for example requirements to incorporate SuDS, or site-specific policies, for example requirements for flood-resilient design.

4.209 The majority of site options were appraised as having negligible effects in relation to SA objective 11 as they do not fall within Flood Zone 2 or 3 and less than 25% of the site has a 1 in 30 year or 1 in 100 year risk of surface water flooding. Significant negative effects are expected in relation to SA objective 11 for eight residential site options (10179, 10248, 10776, 10946, 10972, 10980a, 10981a and 10994a) and minor negative effects are expected for three residential site options (10514, 10532 and 10952). Many of these sites are located close to the River Colne in Colchester and Roman River in Marks Tey where areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are present. While residential site options

10532 and 10952, are relatively free of areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3, the minor negative effect identified for these sites in relation to SA objective 11 reflects their location on land with a 1 in 100 year risk of surface water flooding.

4.210 Four of the mixed use sites are expected have a significant negative effect (10251, 10980, 10981 and 10994) and a further four sites are expected to have a minor negative effect (10977, 10979, 10982 and 10997) in relation to this SA objective. The majority of these sites are located in the Colchester urban area close to the River Colne where there are areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3. The exception to this is site 10766 which includes land that is within Flood Zone 3 associated with the Roman River towards Marks Tey. Of employment site options appraised, only one site (11016) is expected to have a minor negative effect given that it lies within it lies close to the River Colne within Flood Zone 2 at the south eastern edge of the Colchester urban area. None of the employment sites are expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 11.

Mitigation

4.211 The potential negative effects identified by the SA of site options would be most effectively avoided by not allocating sites within the relevant areas of higher flood risk, where appropriate in accordance with the sequential and exception tests. Where site options only partially overlay such areas, the Council could consider whether boundaries of site options could be redrawn or sites masterplanned so as to avoid development of areas with higher flood risk. The incorporation of green spaces and SuDS into the design of new developments to reduce the risk of flooding could also help to mitigate downstream flood risk.

SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

4.212 SA objective 12 was scoped out of the appraisal of site options. This SA objective is mostly likely to be influenced by sustainable design practices and construction techniques which could help to promote more sustainable use of resources. The location of sites is also not likely to have an effect on the recovery, re-use or recycling of waste materials, or the demand for recycled material. The SA will look at the plan's support for this objective through the appraisal of its development management policies.

SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

4.213 Colchester District contains one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This area is located towards the city centre and includes Brook Street, Mersea Road, Osbourne Street and St John's Street. This area previously included several other streets in the city centre. Development within or on roads that are linked to these areas has the potential to subject new residents to higher levels of air pollution and also to intensify existing issues of air pollution in the District as residents travel to and from their properties. Concentrations of NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are mapped for the plan area [\[See reference 22\]](#) showing that the lowest concentration of pollutants are displayed to the south in the area surrounding West Mersea and East Mersea and the highest concentrations of pollutants are present mostly towards Marks Tey and Copford, the northern edge of the Colchester urban area and sections of the A12 between these two locations. The highest levels of pollution at these parts of the District include areas subject to NO₂ concentrations of 20 µg/m³, areas subject to PM₁₀ concentrations of 20 µg/m³ and areas subject to PM_{2.5} concentrations of 12 µg/m³. It is also notable that an area towards Colchester City Centre is subject to NO₂ concentrations of 19 µg/m³. However, no part of the District is subject to concentrations of any of these pollutants at levels above the 2021 WHO air quality guidelines and the higher pollution levels allowed under the UK's national air quality objectives.

4.214 All site options are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 13. All site options fall within an area within which the PM_{2.5} concentrations are between 5 and 20 µg/m³. The majority of site options (around 85% of residential site options, 95% of mixed use site options and 85% of employment site options) fall within an area within which the PM₁₀ concentrations are between 15 and 40 µg/m³. Furthermore, the majority of site options (around 55% of residential site options, 90% of mixed use site options and 60% of employment site options) fall within an area within which the NO₂ concentrations are between 10 and 40 µg/m³. These points considered, none of the sites lie within areas that exceed concentrations of these pollutants set out in the 2021 WHO air quality guidelines or the higher pollution levels allowed under the UK's national air quality objectives.

4.215 Eleven site options have been identified as being within or linked by the road network to the AQMA towards the centre of the Colchester urban area. These residential (10777, 10778, 10950a, 10976, 10984, 10985, 10986, 10987, 10987a and 10988) and mixed use site options (10950) have potential to expose residents and other site users to higher levels of pollution and/or to contribute to additional trips within the city centre AQMA, which may intensify existing air pollution.

Mitigation

4.216 The potential negative effects identified by the SA of site options could be reduced by adopting a similar mitigation strategy as that outlined in relation to SA objective 4. That is to say, sites that are poorly served by sustainable transport or key services should be considered as being less appropriate for allocation. Where such sites are allocated, negative effects could be mitigated by ensuring that public transport and active travel connections were created or enhanced as appropriate, in advance of or early in the delivery of housing development. There is further potential to reduce the need for residents to have to regularly travel longer distances by car where new service and facilities and employment are provided alongside housing. The potential to allocate sites for development should be considered in relation to areas which experience higher levels of air pollution. Residential development and other sensitive uses are

considered to be less suitable in areas that experience high levels of pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site allocations and design of developments should be considered in relation to the potential to limit the number of residents located within the AQMA and to limit the need for vehicular travel through this area.

SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

4.217 Eastern England is classified as severely water stressed, with the result that providing water for a growing number of residents and businesses in the District while avoiding negative effects on the water environment will prove challenging over the plan period. The Revised draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024 [\[See reference 23\]](#) sets out measures to ensure that water supply is maintained in the wider area. However, the effects of development on water resources were not appraised on a site by site basis. The effects of the level of housing and employment growth on water resources were considered as part of the SA of the strategic policies and the cumulative effects of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the support of the Local Plan for water efficient design of new development was considered in the SA of development management policies. Effects of development on water quality will partly depend on adoption of good practice site layout and construction techniques as well as the inclusion of appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) within the design. These factors will also be considered in the SA of development management policies. In addition, development could affect surface water quality due to additional discharges of wastewater, for example because there is insufficient treatment capacity at the local wastewater treatment works (WwTWs) or because of nutrient enrichment issues in the receiving waters. These issues are generally managed at the catchment scale and are considered by the SA of the spatial strategy and policies on the amount of development to be delivered rather than for individual site options.

4.218 Development could affect the quality of drinking water resources during construction or occupation. SPZs are areas designated to protect groundwater

sources used for public drinking water supply. They relate to the risk of contamination of the water source from various activities. The potential risk increases as the distance between the source of contamination and the groundwater abstraction point decreases. These zones cover the majority of Colchester District with the exception of its south edge including West Mersea, East Mersea and parts of Tiptree.

4.219 As the majority of the District falls within an SPZ (zone 3), only 14 site options are expected to have negligible effects in relation to SA objective 14. This includes several residential sites in West Mersea, East Mersea and Tiptree (10231, 10261, 10262, 10511, 10532, 10627, 10627a, 10675, 10745, 10748, 10957 and 10991) and two employment sites (10175 in West Mersea and 10632 in Tiptree). Significant negative effects have been identified for 38 site options where they contain a watercourse or waterbody. Development at these sites could contribute to water pollution within these receptors due to contaminated runoff as construction occurs. These sites are distributed across the District, with notable clusters found in Marks Tey and the north and south of the Colchester urban area.

4.220 Site 11016 is one of the options that is expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 14 given that it lies within SPZ 3 and contains a small waterbody. However, while it is noted that the development of the site could contribute to the contamination of local water resources including the waterbody within the site, particularly during construction, the site is being considered for infrastructure that would support the water supply and management of wastewater in the District. Therefore, an overall mixed significant positive and significant negative effect is expected for this site option in relation to SA objective 14.

Mitigation

4.221 Priority should be given to allocating sites that are outside of relevant water resource protection zones to help protect water quality in the District. Regardless, some development is likely to be required within these zones given their coverage of most of Colchester and pressure from development,

Chapter 4 Appraisal findings for options for distribution of growth in Colchester and site options

population growth and climate change is likely to exacerbate the deterioration of water sources as a result of pollution from nitrates, chemicals or micro-organisms. The Council should work with the Environment Agency and water companies to understand the particular water resource protection objectives for which these zones have been designated and to ensure that Local Plan policies for sites allocated within the zones place appropriate requirements on development to avoid contributing to drinking water protection objectives. Furthermore, where sites are allocated to include water courses or waterbodies construction activities at sites should be required to limit the potential for pollution from run off and other pathways.

Chapter 5

Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

5.1 This chapter presents the appraisal findings for various components in the Local Plan. The appraisal of the topic based policies (including the spatial strategy policy for the distribution of development in the District, other strategic policies and development management policies) is presented first, followed by the appraisal of the site allocation and safeguarding (place) land policies included in the draft Local Plan. The appraisal work is presented to follow the order of the policies as they are included in the Local Plan.

5.2 The appraisal of the topic based policies has been grouped by topic area. For each group of policies, a summary table of the likely sustainability effects is presented with a discussion of the effects below that table.

5.3 Given the large number of policies subject to appraisal, the description of effects is mostly limited to positive or negative effects identified. Where negligible effects have been identified, the reasoning for these effects have not been explained. The exception to this is where the SA objective for which a negligible effect is identified overlaps with the theme of the policy and therefore further explanation of the absence of positive effects is needed.

5.4 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies a number of alternatives to the preferred policies included in the document. In some instances, the alternative set out is not to include a policy and to rely instance on policy at the national level. In these instances, the 'no Local Plan policy' approach has not been discussed in the SA Report. It is not purpose of the SA Report to appraise adopted national policy. Where other types of alternatives are identified in the Local Plan their likely sustainability effects have been discussed below the appraisal of the preferred policy approaches. This discussion presents a

comparison of the alternatives to the preferred policy approach and difference in sustainability effects that might result.

5.5 As part of the appraisal of each policy consideration was given to how the positive effects identified might be strengthened and the negative effects mitigated. The recommendations are presented after the discussion of the expected effects for each group of policies. The SA team provided these recommendations to the Council in advance of their finalising of the Preferred Options Local Plan for committee. The text that follows the appraisal of each set of policies, also details Council's response to each of the recommendations proposed by the SA team.

5.6 Please note that the appraisal of policies in this report reflects the final versions of the policies included in the Preferred Options Local Plan, including any updates made by the Council following the provision of recommendations by the SA team.

Vision, themes and objectives

Vision

5.7 The vision sets out the Local Plan's focus and direction. The achievement of the vision for the plan is supported by several objectives that are grouped below the following themes:

- Healthy, vibrant and diverse places
- Sustainable
- Welcoming inclusive communities
- Well connected

5.8 The vision and supporting themes and objectives are positive and aspirational in nature and as such no likely negative effects are identified. It is

expected that most weight will be given to the more detailed policies included in the plan when deciding on planning applications and therefore no significant effects have identified.

5.9 The likely effects of the vision for Colchester are presented in Table 5.1 and are described below the table.

Table 5.1: Summary of SA findings for the vision

SA objective	Vision
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	0

5.10 The vision seeks to deliver a varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households and as such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.11 The vision sets out ambitions to deliver a range of jobs, including careers, that support a strong local economy and as such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.12 It also seeks to deliver better public transport corridors and routes and an increase in active travel as well as reduce reliance on the private car and the need for residents to commute outside of Colchester. This will support better connections between places, help to reduce congestion and emissions, provide more travel choices and encourage more active lifestyles. The vision also directly promotes improved health and wellbeing and quality of life, while seeking to foster sustainable and inclusive communities. Furthermore, it outlines that new development should minimise carbon emissions and infrastructure delivered over the plan period should be able to respond to climate change which is likely to include increased risk of flooding. As such, a minor positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community health and wellbeing, 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk and 13: Air quality**.

5.13 The increased connectivity supported by the vision is likely to increase access to services and facilities. In addition, the vision seeks to promote life-long learning which will help to support educational attainment and as such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.14 Ambitions to safeguard Colchester's unique heritage and landscapes are also provided for in the vision text. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment and 9: Landscape**.

5.15 The vision seeks to increase nature, wildlife and green spaces and protect and enhance Colchester's special and diverse natural environment. This will be achieved through provision of new open spaces, biodiversity net gain at new

developments and the creation of wildlife corridors to support better connections between habitats. A minor positive effect is therefore expected in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**.

Themes and objectives

5.16 The likely effects of the themes and objectives for Colchester are summarised in Table 5.2 and are described below the table.

Table 5.2: Summary of SA findings for the Local Plan themes and objectives

SA objective	Theme 1: Healthy Vibrant and diverse places	Theme 2: Sustainable	Theme 3: Welcoming inclusive communities	Theme 4: Well connected
SA1: Housing	0	0	++	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	0	0	0
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	++	0
SA4: Transport	0	0	0	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	+	0	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++	0	0	0

SA objective	Theme 1: Healthy Vibrant and diverse places	Theme 2: Sustainable	Theme 3: Welcoming inclusive communities	Theme 4: Well connected
SA9: Landscape	+	0	0	0
SA10: Climate change	0	++	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	0	0
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	+
SA13: Air quality	0	+	0	+
SA14: Water	0	+	0	0

Theme 1: Healthy Vibrant and diverse places

5.17 Theme 1 seeks to encourage the redevelopment of brownfield land in Colchester. Therefore, a significant positive effect is recorded in relation in **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This theme also aims to protect stretches of undeveloped countryside, enhance the quality of the natural environment creating net gains to biodiversity and as such, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**.

5.18 A minor positive effect is expected for theme 1 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** as it aims to support Colchester's tourism role through the provision of additional high-quality facilities.

5.19 In addition, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** and **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Theme 1 sets out ambitions to protect, maintain and enhance the distinct character, heritage identity and setting of Colchester City.

Theme 2: Sustainable

5.20 Theme 2 aims to deliver sustainable energy to achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It also seeks to ensure development helps Colchester to adapt and increase resilience to the effects of climate change. These aims will help Colchester to both minimise greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change** and a minor positive effect is expected and **SA objective 13: Air quality**. Given that improved levels of climate change resilience is likely to help reduce the risk of flooding in the District, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**.

5.21 A minor positive effect is expected for theme 2 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** as it aims to ensure access to high quality healthcare that is deliverable and where needed. This theme will also support integration in the plan area.

5.22 In addition, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** given that theme 2 sets out ambitions to improve existing facilities, roads and schools, which would increase access to services, facilities, and education.

5.23 Given that theme 2 seeks to ensure that waste is managed in line with the waste management hierarchy, a minor positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**. A minor positive effect is also expected for theme 2 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** as it aims to improve infrastructure for wastewater.

Theme 3: Welcoming inclusive communities

5.24 A significant positive effect is expected for theme 3 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** given that it aims to deliver a varied mix of housing to meet the needs of all, including social and lower income households.

5.25 Objective 3 also aims to deliver high value jobs for locals and deliver high quality public realm and enhance infrastructure to attract inward investment. This will help enhance Colchester's economy and therefore a significant positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.26 A minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This theme will help to ensure that residents can benefit from appropriate access to high quality housing as well as jobs. This is expected to support community integration in the area.

Theme 4: Well connected

5.27 Theme 4 aims to deliver better public transport corridors to reduce congestion and increase active travel making cycling and walking more attractive. This will help reduce congestion and vehicular emissions and support healthier lifestyle choices in Colchester. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected for theme 4 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. A minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community health and wellbeing, 10: Climate change and 13: Air quality**.

Recommendations

The SA team recommendation:

- The vision, themes and objectives could include text to support the efficient use of natural resources, including land resources in Colchester. Most notably this could include encouraging the redevelopment of

brownfield land. This could sit under the ‘healthy, vibrant and diverse places’ theme.

- The vision, themes and objectives could include text to support the reduction of waste in line with the waste management hierarchy. This could include through support for recycling of construction materials at new developments. This could sit under the ‘sustainable’ theme.

Council response:

- The recommended additions have been added to the vision.

Strategic policies

5.28 This section presents the appraisal of the strategic policies included in the plan. Given the importance of the strategic policies for the interpretation of the Local Plan and the level of detail included in each policy, most of the strategic policies have been appraised individually. Where this is not the case and the appraisal of individual strategic policies has been combined, this is explained in the report.

Policy ST1: Health and wellbeing

5.29 Policy ST1 is set out to support the achievement of healthy lifestyles and inclusive communities through new developments. This is to include through the requirement for major larger developments to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment.

Table 5.3: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST1

SA Objective	Policy ST1
SA1: Housing	+

SA Objective	Policy ST1
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

5.30 Given that Policy ST1 supports the provision of healthy and affordable homes to meet the needs of the community and good access to a range of employment opportunities, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. Policy ST1 is supportive of the creation of accessible places and the provision of healthcare facilities in accessible locations. This approach is likely to help reduce the need to travel longer distances in the plan area and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** as well as **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.31 Policy ST1 includes a range of requirements for developments to minimise the potential for adverse effects relating to public health (such as the avoidance of pollution) and promoting positive outcomes. In line with the policy, development should contribute to healthy lifestyles and help to reduce health

inequalities, including by supporting the provision of healthcare infrastructure. The policy also includes a specific requirement for larger developments to be supported by Health Impact Assessments. An overall significant positive effect is therefore expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.32 The policy also requires that development should provide access to natural environments including green and blue infrastructure. It is expected that the incorporation of green and blue infrastructure at new developments would have a range of benefits. This is likely to include habitat provision, protection and enhancement of landscape character, and mitigation of the effects of climate change, including increased flood risk. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: Landscape, 10: Climate change and 11: Flood risk**. The policy also requires that developments should support environmental improvements which is likely to help reduce air and water pollution in Colchester and therefore a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objectives 13: Air quality and 14: Water**.

Policy ST2: Environment and the green network and waterways

5.33 Policy ST2 addresses the conservation and enhancement of Colchester's natural and historic environment, including in relation to green infrastructure, open space, biodiversity and landscape.

Table 5.4: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST2

SA Objective	Policy ST2
SA1: Housing	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	-?

SA Objective	Policy ST2
SA4: Transport	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++
SA9: Landscape	++
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

5.34 The requirements of Policy ST2 for the protection of natural features and for developments to be supported by a green network and waterways plan may mean certain schemes are not considered viable in the District. This reflects the distribution across the plan area of biodiversity assets that will need to be protected. As such a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. The negative effect is uncertain for both SA objectives given that the policy is unlikely to make all proposals unviable and is unlikely to result in the housing and employment requirements for the District not being met.

5.35 The promotion of the green network in line with Policy ST2 is likely to result in a range of benefits relating to allowing space for recreation and supporting resilience to climate change, including by providing space for the safe infiltration of surface water. As such a minor positive effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing, 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**.

5.36 A significant positive effect has been recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape** given that it requires the protection of the natural environment (including designated sites and through improvements to the identified strategic biodiversity areas) and landscape character as well as stating that major residential proposals should be supported by a green network and waterways plan. The latter requirement will support the integrated provision of green infrastructure, with benefits likely in terms of habitat provision and visual amenity.

5.37 The promotion of the green network in the District is also likely to benefit local air quality by providing features that will act as barriers to and help to absorb pollution. Furthermore, the incorporating of waterways at new developments is likely to support the natural functioning of watercourses and water bodies to protect local water quality. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 13: Air quality** and **14: Water**. A positive effect is also expected for **SA objective 7: Historic environment** given that the policy also requires that proposals conserve and enhance the historic environment. The effect is minor given that the policy text does not set out detailed criteria to help achieve this aim.

Policy ST3: Spatial strategy

5.38 Policy ST3 sets out the spatial distribution of growth for the plan area. The majority of development is to be delivered within the urban area or close to existing centres and also includes substantial development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The policy also sets out the settlement hierarchy for plan area by which the allocations have been made.

5.39 The appraisal of the spatial strategy options considered by the Council are presented in Chapter 4 of this report. The preferred spatial strategy taken forward through Policy ST3 best aligns with Option 1: Continuing existing Spatial Strategy but also incorporates elements of the other options considered.

Table 5.5: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST3

SA Objective	Policy ST3
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--/+
SA3: Economic growth	++/-
SA4: Transport	++/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++/-
SA7: Historic environment	--/+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--/+
SA9: Landscape	--/+
SA10: Climate change	+/-
SA11: Flood risk	-
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	++/-
SA14: Water	-?

5.40 Policy ST3 sets out the broad spatial distribution of growth across Colchester up to 2041. The total amount, affordable proportion, type and tenure and design of that housing is primarily governed by other plan policies, limiting its effect in relation to SA objective 1. Although most growth is directed to the Colchester urban area and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, by also distributing housing growth proportionately in line with the settlement hierarchy, this policy will, however, help to ensure that the housing needs of all the District's communities are met close to where they arise. As such a minor positive effect is expected for Policy ST3 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.41 The delivery of development to meet the needs of the District will require substantial greenfield land take. Furthermore, the District contains large areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils and there is potential for the delivery of the required level of development to result in loss of access to these areas. This includes the development of the large scale development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. There will be opportunities for the re-use of brownfield land and intensification of the existing densities within the urban area and this approach is supported through Policy ST3. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land.**

5.42 The approach of the spatial strategy is to direct much of the development to the most sustainable and accessible locations in the urban area and close to existing centres. These locations benefit from the largest concentrations of existing employment opportunities and development here will also support the viability of the town, district and local centres in Colchester. The provision of employment development in these locations will support access to jobs for a large proportion of the population and will also support higher levels of self-containment of many locations in terms of the potential to access nearby employment opportunities. However, the spatial strategy also directs smaller amounts of growth to lower order settlements such as the small settlements of Aldham, Fingringhoe, Peldon and Messing. At these locations, residents will most likely have to travel longer distances to access employment. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth.**

5.43 The approach of providing much of the development over the plan period within the urban area and higher order settlements is likely to promote increased levels of self-containment and walking and cycling in Colchester as new residents are located close to employment and services and facilities. Furthermore, these areas benefit from the strongest existing sustainable transport provisions including Colchester Town and Hythe Railway Stations and the emerging RTS. The incorporation of large scale development, such as the Tendring Colchester Garden Community will support new infrastructure and service provision to further promote self-containment in the District. The strategy favours opportunities for development along key transport corridors,

particularly those with access to the rail network, which is likely to help limit road congestion in the plan area. However, it is notable that the centre of Colchester City suffers from existing congestion and the focus of growth within the urban area may increase the number of trips made to and from this location. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.44 The urban area and higher order settlements benefit from the best access to healthcare provision in the plan area. This includes Colchester Hospital within the urban area. Much of the growth over the plan period is set out for this part of the District and these residents will benefit from good access to a GP surgery. The exceptions to this are mostly smaller sites at Boxted, Copford, Langham, Great Horkesley, Fingringhoe, Abberton, Layer Breton, Messing, Aldham, Great Tey, Fordham, Chappel and Wakes Colne. Development at Marks Tey would also not be close to any existing healthcare centre but the scale of development could support the delivery of new facilities of this nature. It is also expected that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community would incorporate new healthcare services. Furthermore, by directing much of the new development over the plan period to the most sustainable settlements, the close proximity of a range of services and facilities to new residents, is likely to increase the potential for a large proportion of trips to be made by active modes which would have additional benefits for public health. However, there is potential for the distribution of growth to result in some residents being adversely affected by noise pollution. Most notably this includes development at Marks Tey, where this could occur close to the A12 and A120. There is also potential for some residential development to be adversely affected by facilities responsible for odours in the District. These include infrastructure for wastewater in the south east of the urban area as well as landfill and other waste management facilities to the south west of the urban area and towards Marks Tey. It may be possible that the design and layout of development could be achieved to avoid adverse effects relating to these issues. Furthermore, delivering some of the growth towards the centre of the Colchester urban area is likely to include some growth within the 20% most deprived areas in the country. This approach to development is likely to support a degree of regeneration in areas of most need and may help to alleviate the underlying issues of deprivation. As such an

overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.45 Similar to the effects reported in relation to SA objective 5, the higher order settlements in the plan area benefit from the access to the widest range of services and facilities in Colchester District. As such delivering much of the development of the plan period at these locations will help to ensure that residents can access a suitable range of services and facilities. Residential development delivered within the existing urban area will help ensure the viability of the town, district and local centres and the services at these locations, however, there is some potential for overburdening to result. While many locations for development would not be close to secondary schools given the reduced coverage of these types of facilities, the majority of the higher order settlements include a primary school, with the exception of Peldon. Furthermore, in addition to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, at which new school facilities would be provided, the scale of growth for the District over the plan period would support the delivery of additional new school facilities. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.46 Colchester District includes numerous heritage assets whose settings are likely to be sensitive to change. The spatial strategy states that development will be required to respect the built environment and preserve or enhance the historic environment, with specific safeguards relating to this topic set out in the relevant theme based policy and the policies allocating sites for development. While the spatial strategy states that the areas of highest sensitivity in heritage (and other environmental) terms will receive the lowest levels of growth, the centre of Colchester urban area is nevertheless covered by a number of Conservation Areas which include numerous Listed Buildings and most of Colchester Castle Park Registered Park and Garden. While new development may present opportunities for enhancement, particularly where sensitive regeneration occurs, the delivery of much of the growth over the plan period in this area may result in substantial adverse impacts. Furthermore, providing some development within the smaller settlements in the plan area may result in growth in areas more sensitive to change. At these locations it is anticipated

that effects relating to setting could be transmitted over longer distances given the lower density of existing development. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

5.47 The District contains a number of important biodiversity assets. The south of Colchester is particularly sensitive given the presence of the Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary and Essex Estuaries nationally and internationally designated biodiversity sites. There are further areas of SSSIs to the south of the Colchester urban area (including Abberton Reservoir (which is also an SPA and Ramsar site), Upper Colne Marshes and Roman River) and to the east of the urban area (Bullock Wood) as well as towards Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit). As such there is potential for development over the plan period to result in disturbance of and impacts on the connectivity of nationally and internationally important biodiversity sites. However, the spatial strategy states that development over the plan period should preserve and enhance biodiversity in the plan area. Furthermore, providing much of the growth over the plan period within or adjacent to the existing urban area and the larger existing settlements is likely to help limit the potential for development at locations that are presently less disturbed in terms of biodiversity. While development within the potentially sensitive south of the District is limited by the spatial strategy, it identifies the southern settlements of West Mersea, Abberton and Langenhoe and Layer de la Haye, which are relatively close to the most important biodiversity designations, as large or medium settlements where new growth will be achieved. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**.

5.48 Colchester benefits from areas of high value landscape including parts of the Dedham Vale National Landscape to the north. The drafting of the Local Plan has been supported by the preparation of landscape assessment work that considers the sensitivity and inherent value of the District's landscape. The majority of development over the plan period is set out within the urban area where there may be potential for regeneration to support enhancement of the townscape as well as within areas of medium landscape sensitivity. The spatial strategy is clear that the areas of highest sensitivity will accommodate the

lowest level of growth to help ensure the distinctive character of settlements and avoid their coalescence. However, the overall scale of development required over the plan period is likely to result in substantial change to the District, which could have impacts for local character. Furthermore, the spatial strategy sets out Chappel and Wakes Colne, Abberton and Langenhoe and West Mersea as medium settlements which could accommodate new growth. These settlements that are adjacent to land of high landscape sensitivity which potential for encroachment on landscapes of higher value. As such an overall mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**.

5.49 As discussed in relation to SA objective 4, the spatial strategy could result in variable impacts on transport. This is expected given the approach of focussing much of the growth required towards the urban area and more sustainable settlements that would help support increased self-containment in the District but could also contribute to further congestion in the urban area. Impacts relating to climate change will also be influenced by design choices at new developments, such as the delivery of more energy efficient buildings and the incorporation of renewable energy infrastructure and green infrastructure. These impacts are less likely to be influenced by the spatial strategy for the plan area. As such the effects reported relate mostly to transport in the plan area and associated carbon emissions and the need to power an increasing number of homes and businesses in Colchester as they are occupied. As such an overall mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**.

5.50 Increases in impermeable surfaces in the District through substantial greenfield development is likely to contribute to flood risk as natural drainage patterns are disrupted. Furthermore, there are areas of higher flood risk present in the District, including those associated with its main water courses such as the Roman River and River Colne and its tributaries as well as the coast. The spatial strategy includes most development at the urban area where the presence of the River Colne has resulted in large areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 being designated. The large settlement of West Mersea is also substantially constrained by flood risk, although areas of most risk lie beyond presently developed area of this settlement. The design of developments to include green

infrastructure and SuDS is likely to help to mitigate flood risk as new development occurs. As such an overall minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**.

5.51 The scale of development over the plan period will result in increases in waste produced in the District. However, it is not expected that the spatial distribution of development will contribute to the level of waste produced or the achievement of higher rates of recycling. Furthermore, it is expected that new development will benefit from kerbside pick-up of waste and recycling. As such an overall negligible effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

5.52 Impacts relating to air quality in Colchester will be greatly affected by the potential to reduce trips made by private vehicle. As such, they are expected to be broadly in line with those reported for SA objective 4. However, development within the centre of the urban area should be considered in relation to its potential to contribute further to air pollution within the AQMA declared along Brook Street, Mersea Road, Osbourne Street and St Johns Street, in addition to the potential for increases in existing levels of road congestion within the city centre. As noted in relation to SA objective 4, this part of the District also benefits from the best service provision and sustainable transport links which is likely to increase the potential for trips by active and sustainable modes and could help to mitigate the potential for increases in air pollution. As such an overall mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**

5.53 The District is reported to currently be seriously water stressed. Development in the plan area will contribute to increased pressures on resources, however, there is potential for this to be addressed through water efficiency measures at new developments and the delivery of infrastructure to support water supply. The Revised draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024 [See reference 24] sets out measures to ensure that water supply is maintained in the wider area. It is not expected that the spatial distribution of growth in the plan area will greatly impact the use of water resources in Colchester. However, the distribution of development set out through Policy ST3 would result in a substantial amount of development within the area of SPZ 3 that covers all but the most southerly parts of the District. Therefore, there is

potential for activities associated with the construction and occupation of new developments to contribute to contamination of water resources. As such an overall minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Policy ST4: Development in the countryside

5.54 Policy ST4 is set out to support a limited amount of development in the countryside where it is required to meet the needs of rural communities. However, the approach supported will not allow for development that adversely affects the roles of existing settlements in the plan area.

Table 5.6: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST4

SA Objective	Policy ST4
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	++
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0

SA Objective	Policy ST4
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	0

5.55 Policy ST4 is supportive of residential and employment development that could help meet the needs of those in more rural communities. A minor positive effect is therefore expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. The policy is clear that residents will be required to have access to sustainable modes of travel and a minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The support provided in the policy for the continued functioning of rural communities means a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.56 It is stated in the policy that where developments are proposed outside of settlement boundaries there should first be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the existing settlement. This is likely to help ensure the first consideration of sites that are more accessible to service and facilities and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. Ensuring new developments are accessible to public transport services and services and facilities is likely to help limit any increased contribution to carbon emissions or air pollution. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality**.

5.57 It is likely that the approach of supporting the existing roles of settlements in the plan area and their character and separate identities, as well as the valued landscapes in Colchester will greatly benefit the existing landscape character of the District. Therefore, a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. This approach is also likely to help protect setting of heritage assets in Colchester that is provided by the existing countryside and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

Policies ST5: Colchester's housing need and ST6: Colchester's employment need

5.58 Policies ST5 and ST6 provide for a level of housing and employment land that will meet local needs up to 2041. In addition to setting the overall level of housing and employment development for Colchester, the policies list the site allocations included for development in the plan. The appraisal of Policies ST5 and ST6 focuses on the overall level of development provided.

5.59 The appraisal of the spatial distribution of development has been considered through the appraisal of Policy ST3: Spatial strategy and each of the site allocations set out in the plan is subject to separate appraisal later in this report.

Table 5.7: Likely sustainability effects for Policies ST5 and ST6

SA Objective	Policy ST5	Policy ST6
SA1: Housing	++	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	+	++
SA4: Transport	+/-?	+/-?
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+/-?	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+/-?	0
SA7: Historic environment	-?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-?	-?
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	+/-?	+/-?

SA Objective	Policy ST5	Policy ST6
SA11: Flood risk	-?	-?
SA12: Waste	-	-
SA13: Air quality	+/-?	+/-?
SA14: Water	-	-

5.60 Policy ST5 is set out to meet the District’s annual housing requirement identified by the standard method of 1,300 homes per annum or 20,800 homes in total between 2025 and 2041. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected for Policy ST5 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. It is likely that the scale of housing delivered will support job creation in the construction sector and related industries and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy ST5 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. For Policy ST6, the positive effect recorded is significant. This reflects provision by the policy of 41.7ha of employment land over the plan period, meeting the demand projected by the Colchester Employment Land Needs Assessment [\[See reference 25\]](#).

5.61 Considering the level of development set out through Policies ST5 and ST6, a substantial amount of greenfield land take is likely to be required over the plan period. Given the composition of soils in Colchester District, which comprise mostly Grade 2 and Grade 3 quality, development is likely to result in loss or sterilisation of higher value agricultural lands in the District. Therefore, a significant negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** for both policies.

5.62 The scale of residential growth set out through Policy ST5 will help ensure that many residents have access to housing thereby preventing the potential for homelessness and contributing to physical and mental wellbeing. Policy ST6 is likely to benefit resident’s mental wellbeing by ensuring that they can access employment opportunities. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for both policies in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. This is combined with an uncertain minor negative effect for Policy ST5, given that the scale of residential growth could result in some overburdening of

existing healthcare facilities. It is noted that the scale of development achieved at some of the larger site allocations (such as Northeast Colchester and the larger sites at Marks Tey) is likely to support the delivery of new services that would help mitigate capacity issues. However, the policy also sets out numerous smaller allocations and it may be that smaller scale of development at these locations would be less likely to support new services. The scale of development provided for by Policy ST5 is also likely to place demands on the capacity of existing services and facilities beyond those that relate to healthcare; it also has the potential to support the delivery of additional capacity. If additional services and facilities can be provided close to the new housing provided for by this policy then the need to travel could be reduced; conversely if new capacity is provided further away from the new housing then the need to travel would increase. Similarly, the provision of employment land will likely contribute to increased numbers of journeys being made in some parts of Colchester, but will, in some locations, contribute to self-containment. Therefore, an uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is recorded for **SA objectives 4: Transport** and **6: Services and facilities** for Policies ST5 and ST6. Effects relating to carbon emissions and air pollution align with those identified for transport, given the large proportion of emissions that this activity accounts for. As such an uncertain mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is also expected for Policies ST5 and ST6 in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality**.

5.63 It is considered likely that the scale of growth provided for by policies ST5 and ST6 will result in adverse impacts in terms of the settings of heritage assets, ecological connectivity and landscape character. Therefore, a minor negative effect is expected for **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape** for both policies. The effects are uncertain given that they will depend on the location and design of development, both of which are appraised elsewhere in the SA.

5.64 Potential effects relating to flood risk will depend in part on the specific location in relation to fluvial and coastal flood risk and design of development to incorporate sustainable drainage. However, where the large amount of development set out through Policies ST5 and ST6 would result in a substantial increase in impermeable surfaces, it is likely to contribute to an increase in flood

risk. Therefore, an uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for both policies in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. The scale of development will require substantial amounts of natural resources (including water) and produce large amounts of waste. There is potential for the delivery of development to align with the waste hierarchy thereby limiting the amount of waste that is not re-used or recycled, however, it is unreasonable to expect that waste generation will be entirely avoided. As such a minor negative effect is expected for the Policies ST5 and ST6 in relation to **SA objectives 12: Waste** and **14: Water**.

Policy ST7: Infrastructure

5.65 Policy ST7 requires that new developments in Colchester are supported by the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities. Sufficient and appropriate infrastructure capacity is required for new growth to be supported by the Council.

Table 5.8: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST7

SA Objective	Policy ST7
SA1: Housing	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+

SA Objective	Policy ST7
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	+
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	++

5.66 Ensuring that congestion is mitigated as much as possible will be essential to ensuring economic growth and job creation in the District. While the provision of new road infrastructure in line with the requirements of Policy ST7 may result in some level induced demand, it is expected that making these provisions alongside active travel infrastructure will help to alleviate congestion in Colchester. As such a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.67 Policy ST7 will help to ensure that residents have good access to a range of services and facilities and essential infrastructure in the District. This is likely to include healthcare services and open spaces that would benefit the health and wellbeing of residents. These provisions are also likely to support self containment in Colchester and will reduce the need for many residents to have to travel longer distances on a regular basis. The close proximity of residents to services and facilities may also encourage trips to be made by active modes which could further benefit public health in Colchester. Therefore, significant positive effects are expected in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**. The potential to reduce reliance on travel by private vehicles could have benefits for local air quality and therefore a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

5.68 The whole of the East of England is designated as being in serious water stress. The provision of infrastructure to support the treatment and efficient transportation of water resources will be essential to ensure residents have access to the required level of water for drinking and other uses. Given that

Policy ST7 will support the provision of this infrastructure, a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

5.69 New infrastructure provided in the plan area is likely to include green infrastructure. These types of provision are likely to support habitat creation and could benefit local landscape character. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape**. Green infrastructure provision is also likely to support climate change resilience, including in relation to any increase in flood risk and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**. In line with Policy ST7, new developments are also likely to be required to contribute to flood defences and other flood related infrastructure where the needed is identified.

5.70 The provision of new infrastructure and securing related contributions in Colchester will also support waste management functions by funding new infrastructure where it is needed. As such a minor positive effect is also expected for Policy ST7 in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

Policy ST8: Place shaping principles

5.71 Policy ST8 sets out a several high level and wide ranging design related principles that development proposals in the District will be required to meet.

Table 5.9: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST8

SA Objective	Policy ST8
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	+
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+

SA Objective	Policy ST8
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

5.72 Policy ST8 sets out requirements that address the majority of the SA objectives against which it has been appraised. The policy sets out that amenity of existing and future residents should be protected in relation to a range of issues as new development occurs. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.73 The policy also requires that neighbourhoods are designed to provide a mix of land uses, services and densities. This requirement will support efficient land use in Colchester. It is also likely to ensure good access to services in the plan area thereby contributing to self-containment and reduced need to travel. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 2: Efficient use of land, 4: Transport and 6: Services and facilities**. The incorporation of services and facilities (including healthcare) and open spaces, in line with the policy approach is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.74 The requirement in the policy for development to protect and enhance historic assets, the natural environment and local character means that a minor

positive effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape**.

Furthermore, as part of its support of the natural environment, Policy ST8 requires development to support connection of a green network of biodiverse public open spaces and waterways. This approach is likely to support climate resilience, reduce flood risk and improve the functioning of natural watercourses. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk** and **14: Water**. Through the incorporation of green infrastructure and reducing the need to travel in Colchester, Policy ST8 is likely to act to provide barriers to air pollution and reduce any contribution made by vehicular traffic. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

Policy ST9: Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

5.75 The Tendring Colchester Border Garden Community was initially allocated as a defined broad location in the adopted Section 1 Colchester Local Plan. Policy ST9 notes that saved Policies SP8: Development and Delivery of a New Garden Community in North Essex and SP9: Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community of the Section One Shared Strategic Plan that will continue to apply where appropriate.

5.76 Further detail about how the Garden Community should be developed is set out in the Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD) which sets out the vision, key policies, and a preferred masterplan layout option for the area. The DPD was submitted for examination in September 2023 and consultation on proposed modifications closed in November 2024.

5.77 Policy ST9 does not introduce any requirements over and above those included in the saved policies. Its primary purpose is to acknowledge the contribution to the supply of housing and economic growth that will come from the Tendring Colchester Border Garden Community committed to via the Section 1 Adopted Local Plan and the DPD. Saving the policies is a robust

approach and avoids both Colchester and Tendring's Local Plans needing to "replace" these policies which provide the strategic policy base upon which the DPD is based.

5.78 The location for development, at the border with Tendring to the north east of the University of Essex Colchester Campus, has been tested extensively through the adopted Local Plan and DPD plan making processes. It is not the purpose of this report to revisit that work in detail. Instead, the appraisal presented here focusses on the environmental sensitivities of the area considered for development through Policy ST9 and the specific requirements set out in that policy, including the uses to be delivered within the Garden Community area.

Table 5.10: Likely sustainability effects for Policy ST9

SA Objective	Policy ST9
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	++/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+/-?
SA9: Landscape	++/-?
SA10: Climate change	+/-
SA11: Flood risk	+/-
SA12: Waste	0

SA Objective	Policy ST9
SA13: Air quality	+/-
SA14: Water	-

5.79 The policy requires the delivery of around 7,500 new homes and an 18-pitch Gypsy and Traveller Site. Furthermore, if the housing delivery target for the Garden Community for Colchester or Tendring is not met, the policy is clear that this shortfall should be met elsewhere in the respective plan areas. These requirements will help ensure that the Garden Community makes a substantial contribution to housing need within both Colchester and Tendring and therefore a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.80 The land set out for development is predominantly greenfield. Much of the site comprises grade 1 agricultural land (excellent quality) with areas of grade 2 (very good) and 3 (good to moderate) interspersed. The development of the site is therefore expected to result in the loss of access to a substantial area of higher value agricultural land. A significant negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 2: efficient use of land**.

5.81 In addition to any contribution the development of the site will make to the local economy in terms of construction related job creation, the policy also requires that the site incorporates a new Business Park and a 'Knowledge-Based Employment' site. In total 25ha of employment land is to be delivered. A significant positive effect is therefore recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.82 The delivery of a development of such a substantial size will result in an increase in journeys being made in the area. The policy requires the provision of a range of services and facilities, including substantial sustainable transport improvements (such as the Rapid Transit System and park and choose facility) that will help instil self-containment at the site and reduce the need to travel by car. A mixed significant positive and a minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.83 The range of services and facilities to be provided at the site include a new sports and leisure park and green spaces. These are likely to benefit health and wellbeing at the site. However, the policy does not require that the development provides any new healthcare facilities or contributions towards existing facilities in the area. Furthermore, the proximity of the northern and southern boundaries of the site to the A120 and A133 means that new residents may be adversely affected by noise pollution. A mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.84 The policy states that the range of services and provisions to be delivered include shops, community facilities and education. The delivery of the site is therefore expected to benefit residents at the site and in the surrounding areas in terms of access to local services. A significant positive effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.85 Development of land at the site has potential to adversely affect the setting of several listed buildings towards Crockleford Heath; Grade II Listed Allen's Farmhouse to the north east and Wivenhoe Registered Park to the south west. The policy requires the incorporation of greenspace which could help to mitigate adverse effects, however, there is no specific requirement for development to address the sensitivities of the site in relation to the historic environment. As such, an uncertain minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

5.86 The site was assessed as having potential for adverse impacts on European sites without considering any mitigation requirements in the plan as part of the HRA work for the DPD. However, the Appropriate Assessment was able to conclude that no adverse effects are expected on the integrity of any European sites, for the DPD alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The site also contains several areas of ancient woodland, Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve and a number of Local Wildlife Sites to the west. There is potential for development to result in habitat loss, fragmentation and disturbance. The policy requirement for the incorporation of the Local Nature Reserve and surrounding woodland as part of a new Salary Brook Country Park, will help to mitigate the adverse effects relating to this designated site and

promote habitat connectivity in the area. Overall, a mixed uncertain minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**.

5.87 The loss of an extensive area of existing open countryside to the east of the settlement of Colchester could have substantial implications for its setting and the wider landscape character. The site was assessed as having high to moderate landscape value and much of the area displays a degree of landscape sensitivity [See reference 26]. The policy requires that in addition to the delivery of the new country park, development achieves two new strategic gap areas. This requirement is likely to help mitigate the loss of open land within the countryside. It could also benefit the transition from the urban area to the countryside. As such a mixed uncertain significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**.

5.88 The incorporation of green spaces at the site will help promote climate change resilience, including adaptation to flood risk. The site contains some small areas of surface water flood risk and ground water flood risk. There are also areas of higher flood risk along Salary Brook, although development would not occur within this part of the site. Regardless, the development of such a substantial area of greenfield land will increase the area of impermeable surfaces and could disrupt some established natural drainage patterns. A mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is therefore recorded for **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**.

5.89 The scale of development at the site will undoubtedly contribute to increased traffic and air pollution in the area. However, the new services provided at the site, including sustainable transport measures will help to address these issues and may support improvements in air quality in the surroundings as existing residents may be able to make use of new public transport services provided. Overall, a mixed a minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

5.90 The Garden Community lies within a SPZ. As such there is potential for construction activities to result in contamination of groundwater resources at

this location. The policy does not address water resources and overall, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Recommendations

5.91 It is recognised that many of the adverse effects identified as part of the appraisal of Policy ST9 would be addressed by Saved Policies ST8 and SP9 of the adopted Local Plan, the detailed masterplanning of the Garden Community site and the requirements of the related DPD currently at examination. For example, while Policy ST9 does not address the need for development at the site to consider the potential for impacts on the landscape character and heritage sensitivities of the area or for higher levels of water efficiency to be achieved as the site is built out, these issues are addressed through Saved Policy SP9 with further requirements set out in the emerging DPD. Therefore, no recommendations are proposed.

Environment

Policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4, EN5, EN6, EN7, EN8 and EN9

5.92 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy EN1 - Nature conservation designated sites
- Policy EN2 - Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain
- Policy EN3 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy EN4 - Irreplaceable habitats
- Policy EN5 - New and existing trees
- Policy EN6 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- Policy EN7 - Archaeology
- Policy EN8 - Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
- Policy EN9 - Pollution and contaminated land

5.93 These policies seek to promote sustainable development by prioritising biodiversity, heritage conservation, and environmental protection. They include requirements for a 10% biodiversity net gain, to safeguard habitats and trees, address flood risks with nature-based drainage systems, and manage pollution and land contamination. Development is also required by this group of policies to protect heritage and archaeological assets.

Table 5.11: Likely sustainability effects for the environment policies

SA Objectives	EN1	EN2	EN3	EN4	EN5	EN6	EN7	EN8	EN9
SA1: Housing	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA3: Economic growth	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?
SA4: Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++	++	++	++	++	0	0	+	++
SA9: Landscape	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	+

SA Objectives	EN1	EN2	EN3	EN4	EN5	EN6	EN7	EN8	EN9
SA10: Climate change	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	++	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	++
SA14: Water	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	++	+

5.94 A minor negative effect is expected for all policies considered in this section in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** and **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. All policies may impact the potential for residential and/or economic development, by restricting locations that are considered acceptable in planning terms and by setting out requirements to meet BNG. However, it is considered unlikely that the housing and/or employment needs of the District would not be met as a result of these requirements and therefore the minor effect recorded for all policies is uncertain.

5.95 While none of the policies appraised directly seek to promote the re-use of previously developed land in Colchester, Policy EN9: Pollution and contaminated land states that developments on contaminated land may be required to be supported by remedial works. As such the policy is likely to support the remediation of contaminated sites in the District and a more efficient use of land resources. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.96 Allowing for appropriate interactions between residents and nature is likely to support improved wellbeing among the population. Policies EN1: Nature conservation designated sites, EN2 Biodiversity net gain and environmental net gain, EN3: Biodiversity and geodiversity, EN4: Irreplaceable habitats and EN5: New and existing trees support the conservation and/or enhancement of natural assets and biodiversity and a minor positive effect is recorded for these policies in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy EN9 will support the mitigation of pollution in Colchester, including air, light and

noise pollution, which will protect resident's health and wellbeing and therefore a minor positive effect is also recorded for this policy in relation to SA objective 5.

5.97 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy EN6: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment and Policy EN7: Archaeology in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The identified effects reflect the role of the policies appraised in directly addressing the protection of the heritage assets and archaeology that comprise important parts of the historic environment, as well as their respective settings.

5.98 Policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4, EN5 and EN9 all make extensive provision for the protection, conservation, and enhancement of Colchester's biodiversity, geodiversity, green spaces and natural environment. This includes through the protection of its designated biodiversity sites, the promotion of BNG, mitigation of pollution and the conservation of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland as well as enhancing the tree canopy in Colchester. As such, these policies are expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective as it requires that all development proposals should consider measures which will aid in protecting and/or enhancing biodiversity including natural flood management at a catchment scale and existing drainage features such as ditches and ponds.

5.99 It is likely that the preservation and enhancement of natural features in the District will also contribute positively to its character and landscape setting. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Through Policy EN5 this includes encouraging tree planting that form positive focal points or a landmark. Policy EN9 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. This reflects the policy's requirements for developments to contribute to improved environmental quality in relation to the selection of species and planting design and to reduce light pollution and impact on dark skies.

5.100 A minor positive effect is also expected for policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5 in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change** given the potential for the conservation and restoration of natural assets to help mitigate climate change and its impacts. Various elements of green infrastructure and planting may support carbon sequestration and help create more climate resilient environments. Policies EN6 and EN9 are also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 10. Policy EN6 outlines that all development proposals should promote the adaptive reuse of buildings and the role of heritage in sustainable development such as retrofitting for energy efficiency or considering climate change in heritage management. Policy EN9 protects air quality by requiring developments to minimise emissions and to incorporate green spaces with planting which could support the carbon sequestration as well as the potential for improved climate change resilience.

5.101 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy EN8 in relation to **SA objectives 11: Flood risk** and **14: Water**. This policy will support the positive management of flood risk and water resources including through the requirement for SuDS in new developments. The policy also includes requirements for developments to avoid flood-prone areas and not to increase flood risk on or off-site, as well as promoting proposals that include measures to enhance the flood resilience of new or renovated buildings. Given the potential for natural features (such as trees and naturally functioning water bodies) to contribute to reductions in flood risk and the natural filtration of water resources, a minor positive effect is recorded for policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5 in relation to SA objectives 11 and 14. In addition, Policy EN9 will aid in mitigating water pollution including in relation to the contamination of flood waters. A minor positive effect is therefore also expected for Policy EN9 in relation to SA objectives 11 and 14.

5.102 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy EN9 in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**. This policy seeks to protect air quality by requiring developments to minimise emissions, include mitigation in Air Quality Management Areas, and incorporate green spaces with planting to reduce pollution. The preservation of existing and incorporation of new natural features and elements of green infrastructure is likely to support the creation of natural barriers to air pollution and promote the absorption of these types of pollutants.

Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 13 for Policies EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4 and EN5.

Alternatives set out in the Preferred Options Local Plan

Policy EN8

5.103 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) of retaining the previous Local Plan Policies DM23: Flood risk and water management and DM24: Sustainable urban drainage systems.

5.104 The alternative considered would likely perform similarly in terms of SA objectives 1: Housing and 3: Economic growth by making certain areas in the District less appropriate for development in planning terms. While the preferred policy approach provides increased clarity in relation to the approach to flood risk avoidance and mitigation, the alternative would likely perform similarly in relation to SA objective 11: Flood risk given the multiple requirements included in saved Policies DM23 and DM24 to address flood risk. However, the alternative is likely to perform slightly less favourably in relation to SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and 14: Water given the increased focus on green infrastructure included in Policy EN8. It is expected that the preferred policy approach could provide further support for ecology and the natural infiltration of surface waters.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy EN2 could be strengthened by being clear that alternative measures to delivering biodiversity net gain through compensation should only be considered appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the required level of biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved within a site.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy EN2: Alternative measures to delivering BNG should only be considered appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the required level of BNG cannot be achieved within the site.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy EN5 could be strengthened by requiring that where the loss of trees is essential to allow for appropriate development an appropriate species and number of replacement trees is provided for. Any replacement trees should be provided as close as possible to the new development and should be supported by a suitable management and maintenance scheme.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy EN5: Where the loss of trees is essential to allow for appropriate development an appropriate species and number of replacement trees must be provided. Any replacement trees should be provided as close as possible to the new development and should be supported by a suitable management and maintenance scheme.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy EN8 could be strengthened by requiring that development conserves and enhances the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments. The policy could also promote development that opens up culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable. This approach could be used to support ecological improvements and create assets that are of benefit to local community, such as recreation.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy EN8: Development must conserve and enhance the natural flood storage value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors and catchments. Proposals that open up

culverted watercourses, where it is safe and practicable, will be supported. And addition to purpose of policy.

Green network and waterways

Policies GN1, GN2, GN3, GN4, GN5, and GN6

5.105 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy GN1 - Green network and waterways principles
- Policy GN2 - Strategic green spaces and nature recovery
- Policy GN3 - Local green spaces
- Policy GN4 - Tree canopy cover
- Policy GN5 - Suitable alternative natural greenspace
- Policy GN6 - Retention of open space

5.106 As part of the drafting of this section of the Local Plan, the Council also considered the following reasonable alternative policy option, which is appraised alongside the policies listed above:

- Reasonable alternative (RA): The incorporation of a coalescence break to maintain the individual character of settlements and ensure that settlements maintain their separate identity. Planning permission would only be granted within such areas where it can be demonstrates that the identity of and separation between settlements would be maintained.

5.107 This group of policies sets the approach to the protection and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure in Colchester. Key measures include creating new and protecting existing multifunctional open spaces as part of the approach to supporting nature recovery, increasing tree cover in the

District and providing suitable alternative natural greenspaces (SANGs) in relation to nearby international biodiversity designations.

Table 5.12: Likely sustainability effects for the green network and waterways policies

SA objectives	GN1	GN2	GN3	GN4	GN5	GN6	RA
SA1: Housing	0	0	-?	0	0	-?	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	-?	0	0	-?	-?
SA4: Transport	+	0	0	0	0	0	+/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	+	++	0	+	++	0
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/-
SA7: Historic environment	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	++	++	++	++	++	++	+
SA9: Landscape	+	+	+	+	0	+	++
SA10: Climate change	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA11: Flood risk	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-

SA objectives	GN1	GN2	GN3	GN4	GN5	GN6	RA
SA14: Water	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

5.108 Although they will support the long term wellbeing of the District, it is likely that Policies GN3: Local green spaces and GN6: Retention of open space will result in certain areas being considered unsuitable for development in planning terms. Given the requirement set out in these policies for the retention of local green spaces and other types of open spaces a minor negative effect is therefore recorded for these policies in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing and 3: Economic growth**. The reasonable alternative approach of incorporating a coalescence break around settlements in Colchester would also act to limit the delivery of housing and economic development in certain locations. Therefore, a minor negative effect is recorded for this reasonable alternative option in relation to SA objectives 1 and 3. The negative effect recorded in relation to SA objectives 1 and 3 for these policies and options is partly uncertain given that it is likely that the developments needs of Colchester could be met at other locations in the plan area. However, the approach of designating a coalescence break in Colchester is likely to help promote a more compact form of development that may encourage the recycling of brownfield land within settlements and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.109 The approach of declaring a coalescence break could result in reduced need to travel for some residents as more compact forms of development result. However, there is likely to be instances where development is required to ‘jump’ the coalescence break to the next settlement which would result in some residents having to travel longer distances to certain services and facilities. Therefore, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for this reasonable alternative in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The same effect is reported for this option in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. A minor positive effect is recorded for Policy GN1: Green network and waterways principles in relation to SA objective 4 given that this policy requires major developments to incorporate safe and inclusive walking and cycling routes.

5.110 A significant positive effect is expected for Policies GN1: Green network and waterways principles, GN3: Local green spaces and GN6: Retention of open space in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the requirements in these policies for developments to protect and/or provide new open spaces, green infrastructure and natural assets. Through Policy GN3 this includes the protection of green spaces identified to be of importance to local people. These types of provisions will support resident's access to nature and promote increased levels of recreational activity and more active and healthy lifestyles. Policies GN2: Strategic green spaces and nature recovery and GN5: Suitable alternative natural greenspace also will contribute to increasing access to green spaces and nature. Given that the focus of these policies relates mostly to the protection of biodiversity in the plan area, the benefits to local health are considered to be less direct than those supported through Policies GN1, GN3 and GN6. Therefore, the positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5 is minor.

5.111 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy GN1: Green Network and Waterways Principles, Policy GN2: Strategic Green Spaces and Nature Recovery, Policy GN3: Local Green Spaces, Policy GN4: Tree Canopy Cover, Policy GN5: Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and Policy GN6: Retention of Open Space in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. These policies make substantial contributions to the protection, conservation, and/or enhancement of Colchester's green and open spaces and natural environment. Importantly, this includes in relation to support for the green network in Colchester (Policy GN1), support for the delivery of the Essex LNRS (Policy GN2) and the delivery of suitable SANGs to mitigate effects relating to the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries SPAs and Essex Estuaries SAC (Policy GN5). It is likely that the reasonable alternative of incorporating a coalescence break would also have benefits for biodiversity in the plan area by limiting growth outside the main settlements thereby helping to preserve many of the more undisturbed, rural areas. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded for SA objective 8 for this option.

5.112 The provision of green space in the plan area will not always correlate with benefits for the historic environment. However, Policy GN1 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic**

environment. This policy specifically requires that development responds to an area's character so that it contributes to the conservation, enhancement and/or restoration of the historic environment and landscapes and that development creates new high-quality landscapes. Given the support set out in the policy for landscape character, a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape.**

5.113 Providing a coalescence break in Colchester could have a significant positive effect in relation to SA objective 9: landscape given that it would help to protect the separate identity of the District's settlements. It is expected that the provision of large scale strategic open spaces will contribute to the distinct character of Colchester and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy GN2 in relation to SA objective 9. Furthermore, Local Green Spaces in Colchester contribute to the character of the plan area and its settlements and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy GN3 in relation to SA objective 9. Policy GN4 is also expected to have a minor positive regarding this SA objective given that it promotes tree management which is sensitive to Colchester's landscape character, including through requiring that maintenance of new trees is included within any landscape management plan and landscape maintenance schedule for development sites. A minor positive effect is recorded for Policy GN6 in relation to SA objective 9 as it does not permit development that would result in the loss of any small incidental areas of open space that contribute to amenity value and the character of existing residential neighbourhoods.

5.114 A minor positive effect is expected for all policies appraised in this section in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change.** The policies in this section will help to conserve, manage and restore elements of green infrastructure and natural assets in Colchester. This is likely to help promote climate change mitigation and adaptation. The option of providing a coalescence break would also likely contribute to climate change adaptation by maintaining areas of undeveloped land that would support climate change resilience. Part of the resilience promoted by all policies and options considered relate to the preservation of green spaces at which surface waters can safely infiltrate. Therefore, all policies and options considered are also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk.** For Policy GN4

this includes the beneficial role trees can play in terms of slowing down the flow of rainwater and absorption.

5.115 A similar minor positive effect is recorded for all policies and options in relation to **SA objectives 13: Air quality** and **14: Water**. This reflects the potential for green infrastructure and nature features within undeveloped green spaces to absorb or act as barriers to air pollutants. It also reflects the potential for these types of areas to allow for the safe infiltration of surface water and to support natural drainage processes in the District. The minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 for Policies GN1 and GN2 considers the policy support included for green network and waterway plans which is likely to promote connections between green assets as well as the support for proposals for a Roman River corridor nature recovery area. For the option of incorporating a coalescence break in Colchester a minor negative effect is recorded in combination with the minor positive effect for SA objective 13. An overall mixed effect is recorded for this SA objective given that where development is required to 'jump' the coalescence break, some residents may have to drive further to access certain provision and this would contribute to air pollution in the plan area.

Alternatives set out in the Preferred Options Local Plan

Policy GN2

5.116 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy GN2: Strategic green spaces and nature recovery of not including reference in the policy to the Essex LNRS. The alternative would perform similarly to the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing, 9: Landscape, 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk, 13: Air quality and 14: Water given that the relatively minor changes that would result through the alternative. However, the alternative is likely to perform less favourably than the preferred approach in relation to SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity

given that it would be less supportive of the aims of the LNRS which will be of importance for nature recovery and ecological connectivity at the County level.

Policy GN3

5.117 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy GN3: Local green spaces of not designating Local Green Spaces and not referring to those local green spaces that are designated through made neighbourhood plans. The alternative would perform less favourably than the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing, 6: Services and facilities, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: Landscape, 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk, 13: Air quality and 14: Water. It would provide less protection to green spaces that are of importance to residents in Colchester that might otherwise provide space for community events, food growing and wildlife as well potentially support climate change resilience and space for the absorption of air pollutants and infiltration of surface water. However, this alternative would be less restrictive in terms of identifying areas where development would be considered less appropriate. Therefore, it is likely that the alternative would perform more favourably in relation to SA objectives 1: Housing and 3: Economic growth.

Policy GN4

5.118 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy GN4: Tree canopy cover of requiring a higher level of tree canopy cover of 20%. The alternative could perform more favourably than the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk, 13: Air quality and 14: Water. It is likely that supporting the achievement of an increased tree canopy will achieve improvements relating to wildlife and climate change resilience given the potential for supporting habitat provision and incorporating features that will support carbon sequestration and provide increased shading and other adaptive measures. Increased canopy cover in the District is also likely to help slow rainfall, to achieve increased absorption of air pollutants and to promote the functioning of the water cycle.

The alternative may achieve more positive effects in relation to SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing. The study, *The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being*, carried out in 2017, concluded that an average tree canopy cover of 20% should be set as the minimum standard for most UK towns and cities.

5.119 However, the more onerous requirements included in the alternative could have some implications for the viability of certain schemes in the District where suitable levels of provision might not be achieved. Therefore, the alternative may perform less favourably than the preferred approach in relation to SA objective 1: Housing and 3: Economic growth.

Policy GN5

5.120 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy GN5: Suitable alternative natural greenspace of including detailed criteria for the provision of SANGs rather than refer to the latest Natural England guidance. The inclusion of reference to the latest guidance is set out in the preferred approach to help ensure that the policy remains up to date throughout the plan period. The alternative would be less responsive to changes in guidance. As such the alternative would introduce uncertainty to the positive effects identified for the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: Landscape, 10: Climate change, 11: Flood risk, 13: Air quality and 14: Water.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy GN4 could be strengthened by supporting the provision of tree lined streets within developments. It could also require that new trees provided at developments are native species. Where tree loss or damage is essential at development sites, the policy could require that replacement

trees are delivered as close as possible to the site and that those provided achieve a suitable level of compensation in terms of number and species.

Council response:

- Policy GN4 does refer to tree lined streets. There is also a policy in the Environment chapter requiring new trees, both policies refer to native species.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy GN6 could be strengthened by requiring that any alternative provision to mitigate the loss of any open space should be delivered within an acceptable timeframe.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy GN6: and will be delivered within an acceptable timeframe to be agreed with the Council.

Landscape and coast

Policies LC1, LC2 and LC3

5.121 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy LC1 - Landscape
- Policy LC2 - Dedham Vale National Landscape
- Policy LC3 - Coastal areas

5.122 These policies are set out to help ensure that new development respects and enhances the District's landscapes and distinct character, with stricter protections applied to valued areas such as the Dedham Vale National Landscape and coastal area.

Table 5.13: Likely sustainability effects for the landscape and coast policies

SA objective	LC1	LC2	LC3
SA1: Housing	-?	-?	-?
SA2: Efficient use of land	+	0	0
SA3: Economic growth	-?	+/-?	-?
SA4: Transport	0	0	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	0	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	+	+	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+	+	+
SA9: Landscape	++	++	++
SA10: Climate change	+	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	0	0	0
SA14: Water	0	0	+

5.123 An uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policies LC1: Landscape, LC2: Dedham Vale National Landscape and LC3: Coastal areas in relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **3: Economic growth**. Each of these policies set out requirements that could limit residential and economic development in certain parts of Colchester. Most notably this includes in areas identified as having higher landscape sensitivity, within the National Landscape and within the Coastal Protection Belt. In addition, Policy LC3 specifically states that new moorings for permanent residential houseboats will not be supported.

The negative effect recorded for these three SA objectives is partly uncertain given that it is likely that suitable sites to achieve the required levels of growth for the District are likely to be identified at other locations in Colchester. For Policies LC2 and LC3 the negative effect is recorded in combination with a minor positive effect for SA objective 3. This reflects the requirement of these policies for development to support the wider environmental, social and economic objectives of the National Landscape Management Plan and to deliver economic sustainability benefits for the wellbeing of the coastal communities.

5.124 A minor positive effect is expected for Policy LC1 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This policy requires that, with the exception of renewable energy projects, all development on agricultural grade 1 soils will not be permitted unless a landscape strategy is secured or where there are overriding public benefits arising from the development. This approach would aid in minimising the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

5.125 A minor positive effect is expected for Policy LC3 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. The policy includes safeguards in relation to access to the King Charles III England Coast Path. This is likely to support recreational and health benefits for local people.

5.126 All three policies are expected to result in a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. These policies will help to conserve and enhance landscape character that contributes to the setting of heritage assets. This includes within the National Landscape and the coastal areas of the District. Policy LC1 specifically requires that developments protect natural landscape features where they make a contribution to the historic environment.

5.127 A minor positive effect is also expected for Policies LC1, LC2 and LC3 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. This reflects the potential for each of the policies to protect existing undeveloped green space and natural features that contribute to Colchester's biodiversity and important habitats. In particular, Policy LC1 requires that proposals must consider

ecological and geological features and identify areas suitable for habitat creation. It is also notable that Policy LC3 restricts harmful development in sensitive coastal areas and seeks to protect designated habitats in relation to proposals for moorings for permanent residential houseboats.

5.128 A significant positive effect is expected for Policies LC1, LC2 and LC3 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. All three policies include extensive provisions for conserving and enhancing the distinctive landscapes of Colchester. This includes in relation to ensuring that developments are compatible in terms of use, location, scale and design, and will not have a significant adverse impact on the established landscape and seascape character and the safeguarding or strengthening of tranquillity. Furthermore, Policy LC1 is clear that within areas identified as having 'high' inherent value and sensitivity developments should contribute positively to the established characteristics of the area. The protection of the purpose, natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape including its dark skies, is set out through Policy LC2. Development within the Coastal Protection Belt area of the District is restricted by Policy LC2.

5.129 Policies LC1 and LC3 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**. Policy LC1 requires that development should avoid reduction of and encourage traditional farming practices, including traditional orchards, whilst recognising the need to adapt to and mitigate against the effects of climate change. Policy LC3 minimises greenhouse gas emissions and supports climate change adaptation by protecting carbon-sequestering habitats like saltmarshes and promoting sustainable, climate-resilient coastal development. It also seeks to ensure that proposals are appropriate for their location and level of flood risk present.

5.130 Given the benefits of Policy LC3 in relation to promoting resilience to flooding risk and achieving sustainable coastal management, a minor positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objectives 11: Flood risk** and **14: Water**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy LC1 could be strengthened by placing a greater emphasis on protecting landscape character in relation to its existing rural openness and sense of place. Furthermore, emphasis could be placed on protecting natural landscape features where they make a contribution to the historic environment.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy LC1 (a): and protect rural openness and sense of place and protect natural landscape features where they make a contribution to the historic environment.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy LC2 could be strengthened to be clear that potential impacts on the National Landscape will be considered in relation to their individual or cumulative, adverse impact on the landscape.

Council response:

- The following text was added to the purpose of policy text for policy LC2: Potential impacts on the National Landscape will be considered in relation to their individual or cumulative, adverse impact on the landscape.

Net zero homes and buildings, renewable energy, water and waste

Policies NZ1, NZ2, NZ3 and NZ4

5.131 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy NZ1 - Net zero carbon development (in operation)
- Policy NZ2 - Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon
- Policy NZ3 - Wastewater and water supply
- Policy NZ4 - Renewable energy

5.132 These policies drive net zero carbon development by requiring energy-efficient, fossil-fuel-free buildings with on-site renewable energy, minimising embodied carbon through sustainable design and materials, ensuring water efficiency and infrastructure improvements, and supporting renewable energy projects that enhance biodiversity and minimise environmental impacts.

5.133 Policy NZ3 includes the allocation of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre. The equivalent site option is appraised alongside the other site options considered for the plan in Chapter 4 as site 11016. The detailed sustainability findings for this site option are not repeated here. Policy NZ3 does not include any requirements relating to mitigation or enhancement that development of the site should meet and as such the effects reported for the site option 11016 remain unchanged. Changes in effects relate only to where Policy NZ3 sets out requirements relating to water supply and wastewater for development across the District. As such the text below the table focusses on these effects for Policy NZ3.

Table 5.14: Likely sustainability effects for the net zero homes and buildings, renewable energy, water and waste policies

SA objective	NZ1	NZ2	NZ3	NZ4
SA1: Housing	+	0	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	++	++	-
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	+	0
SA4: Transport	0	0	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	0	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0?	+/-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	--	+/-?
SA9: Landscape	0	0	--?	+/-?
SA10: Climate change	++	++	++	++
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	+/-	0
SA12: Waste	0	+	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	-	+
SA14: Water	0	0	++/--	0

5.134 Supporting higher standards of energy efficiency in new homes in Colchester is likely to contribute to an improved standard of housing stock in the plan area and will also help limit the potential for fuel poverty given that energy bills of residents are likely to be reduced. Therefore, Policy NZ1: Net zero carbon development (in operation) is expected to have a minor positive effect in

relation to **SA objectives 1: Housing** and **5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy NZ4: Renewable energy requires that developments for renewable energy limit increases in ambient noise which is expected to benefit public health. This policy is therefore also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5.

5.135 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy NZ2: Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This policy supports development which re-uses, renovates or retrofits existing buildings and/or structures. However, a minor negative effect is expected for Policy NZ4 in relation to this SA objective. The policy text sets out support for renewable energy developments in suitable locations, even if this would involve using Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land. Given the likely potential to reduce waste through the approach of Policy NZ2, a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

5.136 The requirement for renewable energy schemes to be supported by a transport assessment is likely to help limit the potential for congestion and safety issues as these types of schemes are constructed, operated and decommissioned. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for Policy NZ4 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.137 A mixed minor positive and uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policy NZ4 in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape**. The development of renewable energy schemes is given strong support through this policy and development of this nature may result in harm to Colchester's historic environment, natural assets and landscape or the setting within which they lie. It is noted that the potential for impacts will depend on development location. However, the policy encourages all solar farm proposals to deliver biodiversity net gain of at least 50% and an increase in tree canopy cover of at least 50%, which will enhance Colchester's biodiversity. Furthermore, visual impacts should be met through good design, careful siting and layout and landscaping measures. The policy also requires that schemes are considered in relation to impacts upon the historic environment.

5.138 All four policies are likely to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**. This reflects the potential for the policies to reduce energy demands and carbon emissions associated with the operation of developments (Policy NZ1) as well as in relation to their construction and preparation and transport of the resources required (Policy NZ2). Policy NZ3: Wastewater and water supply will help to ensure that energy inputs required for the processing of wastewater and drinking water are limited as much as possible and will also ensure that infrastructure required to meet these demands is in place. The District is in serious water stress and water efficiency measures will be required to ensure long term climate resilience. Policy NZ4 will support the delivery of renewable energy developments in suitable locations, to meet the District's energy demands from more sustainable sources. These four policies could also contribute to improved air quality by reducing energy demands and limit dust from some proposals where it is possible to limit demolition and make use of existing structures. Therefore, a minor positive effect is identified for Policies NZ1, NZ2, NZ3 and NZ4 in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality**.

5.139 Given that Policy NZ3 requires that off-site drainage is secured before the occupation of dwellings, a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. This positive effect is recorded with a minor negative effect as part of an overall mixed effect, given that the land proposed for allocation for the extension of the water recycling centre contains areas of higher flood risk.

5.140 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy NZ3 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. The requirements of the policy relating to the management of water resources including innovative solutions such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling for new developments will aid in ensuring there is sufficient water for the lifetime of a development. The positive effect is combined with a significant effect given that the site for the extension of the water recycling centre takes in land within an SPZ and part of a water body. As such there is potential for construction activities to result in contamination of water resources in the District.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy NZ2 could be clear that embodied carbon relates to all emissions in producing and handling materials for developments and as such development should seek to minimise impacts arising from their sourcing, manufacture, construction, and end of life demolition and disposal. The policy could also be strengthened by promoting development that minimises and designs-out construction and end-of-life waste. Furthermore, where demolition is required as part of a scheme the policy could be clear that demolition activities should seek to maximise the materials recovered for reuse and recycling.

Council response:

- The Council have included the template policies prepared by Essex County Council (ECC) with support of Great Essex local planning authorities, but these recommendations will be shared with ECC.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy NZ4 could be strengthened by specifically requiring that renewable energy schemes should be considered in relation to impacts upon the historic environment.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy NZ4: Schemes should be considered in relation to impacts upon the historic environment.

Homes

Policies H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8

5.141 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy H1 – Housing Mix
- Policy H2 - Affordable housing
- Policy H3 - Student accommodation
- Policy H4 - Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- Policy H5 - Housing for an ageing population
- Policy H6 - Self and custom build
- Policy H7 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- Policy H8 - Rural workers dwellings

5.142 These policies aim to meet the diverse housing needs of the community. They include the approach for and required level of affordable housing, support for specialist and accessible homes, and for self-build and rural workers' dwellings tied to local businesses. The policy text set out also addresses student accommodation, HMOs and Gypsy and Traveller sites, with criteria included to ensure appropriate location of development, community cohesion, and access necessary facilities.

Table 5.15: Likely sustainability effects for the homes policies

SA objective	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
SA1: Housing	++	++ ?	++	++	++	++	++	++

SA objective	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SA4: Transport	0	+/-	+	+	+	0	+	+/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++	+	+	++	0	++	0
SA6: Services and facilities	0	+/-	0	0	+	0	+	-
SA7: Historic environment	0	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-
SA9: Landscape	+	+/-	0	+	0	0	0	+/-
SA10: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	0	+/-	+	+	+	0	+	+/-
SA14: Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

5.143 A significant positive effect is identified for Policies H1: Housing Mix, H2: Affordable housing, H3: Student Accommodation, H4: Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), H5: Housing for an Ageing Population, H6: Self and Custom Build, H7: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and H8: Rural workers dwellings in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. It is expected that these policies will help ensure the delivery of a range of high quality, sustainable and appropriate residential properties in Colchester. This includes the provision of a mix of homes (Policy H1) that meet the identified needs of Colchester, in terms of type, size, tenure and affordability. The needs of the ageing population are specifically addressed through Policy H5, while Policy H7 seeks to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. For Policies H3 and H4 the positive effect partly reflects the policy approach of

preventing an overconcentration of student dwellings or HMOs and avoiding harm to the amenity of other residential dwellings. The significant positive effect recorded for Policy H2 is partly uncertain given that the requirement to provide 30% of new dwellings on large sites as affordable housing may make some potential schemes unviable.

5.144 Policy H8 requires that developments for new rural workers' dwellings should consider the potential for the reuse, extension or conversion of an existing building on site in the first place. This is likely to help promote the reuse of existing buildings in Colchester and therefore a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.145 A minor positive effect is expected for Policy H8 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** given that it supports the development of dwellings for rural workers. It is expected that this type of provision will support the operation of certain rural businesses and could protect some job opportunities in Colchester.

5.146 A significant positive effect is expected for Policies H1, H2, H5 and H7 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy H1 supports the creation of mixed and balanced communities through the provision of an appropriate mix of housing. Policy H2 requires that 95% of affordable housing should meet Building Regulations relating to accessible and adaptable standards and that 5% should meet wheelchair user standards, which is likely to help meet the needs of people with disabilities. Furthermore, the requirement in this policy for affordable homes to be designed to have the same characteristics as market homes is likely to support community cohesion in the District. The requirements of Policy H5 support the development of housing to meet the needs of Colchester's ageing population including those with disabilities. Policy H7 supports the development of housing for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Colchester, including support for development that provides access to a range of services such as health and community facilities. In addition, both Policy H5 and H7 will help to meet the needs of specific groups in Colchester and support their integration into the community, including those with protected characteristics. Policies H3 and H4 will meet the specific needs of younger people in Colchester, while also preventing an overconcentration of

student dwellings or HMOs that might otherwise result, or appear to result in amenity issues, thereby hampering community integration. A minor positive effect is recorded for these two policies in relation to SA objective 5.

5.147 Policies H3 and H5 require that developments for student accommodation and specialist housing should provide access to public transport modes which is likely to promote travel by more sustainable modes. This is also the case for Policy H4 which requires HMO developments to provide an appropriate level of cycle parking. These requirements will aid in reducing reliance on private vehicles in Colchester and could support improved air quality. Policy H7 and H8 will have similar benefits given that they support Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and rural workers dwellings where they have good access to services and facilities and existing businesses that residents will need to regularly travel to. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for Policies H3, H4, H5, H7 and H8 in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport** and **13: Air quality**. For Policy H8 the positive effect is recorded in combination with minor negative effect given that rural workers are likely to have to travel regularly from new accommodation in more isolated locations to access services and facilities. Policy H2 supports the delivery of affordable homes on rural exception sites at the settlement edge or where it would maintain the vitality of rural communities. There is some potential that developments might be provided in less accessible locations, however developments provided directly adjacent to the settlement edge may support increased travel by sustainable modes. An overall mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is therefore expected for this policy in relation to SA objectives 4 and 13.

5.148 This approach to Policy H2 is likely to result in variable access to services and facilities and therefore a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is also recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. The approach of Policies H5 and H7 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. Policy H5 includes requirements for developments for specialist accommodation to be located close to local facilities. Furthermore, Policy H7 includes requirements for development for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to be located close to existing settlements and to provide access to a range of services such as shops and education facilities. Given that

Policy H8 allows for dwellings to accommodate rural workers, it is likely that residents at these sites will be housed in more isolated locations which are not well related to a suitable range of services and facilities. Therefore, a minor negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 6.

5.149 The delivery of development in more rural locations could result in impacts on presently less developed and undisturbed parts of Colchester. These areas may be more sensitive in terms of the setting they provide for heritage assets as well as their value for ecology and landscape character. As such a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected for Policy H2 and a minor negative effect is expected for Policy H8 in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity and 9: Landscape**. Given that Policy H8 requires that proposed permanent rural workers dwellings are sensitively designed and landscaped, the minor negative effect recorded for SA objective 9 is combined with a minor positive effect. A minor positive effect is also expected for Policy H1 and H4 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy H1 requires consideration of the existing housing stock and character of the local area when considering new proposals to avoid over concentration of a single size of homes. Policy H4 requires that developments for HMOs ensure there is no adverse impact on local character.

5.150 Policies H7 and H8 are both expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. Both policies require development to be located outside areas at high risk of flooding, thereby mitigating the potential for flood risk to development for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and rural workers.

5.151 There is potential for Policy H4 to encourage the appropriate processing of waste, including recycling given that it requires HMOs to incorporate adequate refuse storage and services. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

5.152 A minor positive effect is expected for Policy H7 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** as it requires development to have appropriate and sufficient drainage, water supply and other necessary utility services. It is

expected that these requirements will help to ensure that there is sufficient water for the lifetime of the development as well as sufficient provision of wastewater treatment infrastructure.

Alternatives set out in the Preferred Options Local Plan

Policy H2

5.153 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy H2: Affordable housing of retaining Policy DM8: Affordable housing from the Adopted Local Plan. The text of the preferred approach responds to the evidence set out in the Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment which identifies a clear and acute need for social and affordable rented housing. This is followed through to the text of Policy H2. As such it is expected that the alternative would not perform as favourably in relation to SA objectives 1: Housing and 5: Community and health and wellbeing.

5.154 The alternative would maintain support in the policy text for affordable housing on rural exception sites. This element of the policy approach could have implications in terms of residents' access to essential services and facilities and their need to travel by car as well as the potential for increased levels of development in presently less disturbed parts of Colchester. Therefore, the alternative is expected to perform similarly to the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 4: Transport, 6: Services and facilities, 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity, 9: Landscape, 10: Climate change, and 13: Air quality.

Policy H6

5.155 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy H6: Self and custom build of including specific allocations for every type of specialist

housing. The alternative could provide developers with increased certainty on the types of proposals that would be considered appropriate at these types of allocations. However, would not allow for flexibility for categories such as housing for an aging population or self and custom build that could be provided in a range of and locations. Overall it is expected the alternative would perform slightly less favourable than the preferred approach in relation to SA objective 1: Housing.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy H3 could be strengthened by incorporating requirements for student accommodation to support the net zero and climate resilient ambitions of the Council.

Council response:

- The net zero policy applies to all development so there is no need for repetition.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy H4 could be strengthened by requiring that HMOs do not contribute to excessive noise and disturbance to residents, impacts on existing levels of street parking or issues relating to refuse or recycling. HMO development should also not reduce the choice of housing in a given area. It may be appropriate to incorporate thresholds to limit the proportion of HMOs present in a given area. HMOs play an important role in offering accommodation choices for a range of users. However, it can contribute to or be perceived to contribute to a range of amenity issues and reduce housing choice in a given area where overconcentration results. The policy could be drafted to address these issues in a manner direct manner.

Council response:

- The policy addresses most of the recommendations, some of the recommended changes have been made to the policy (including in relation to refuse storage) and consideration will be given to setting thresholds as work on the plan progresses.

Economy

Policies E1, E2, E3, E4 and E5

5.156 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy E1 - Protection of employment
- Policy E2 - Economic development in rural areas and the countryside
- Policy E3 - Agricultural development and diversification
- Policy E4 - Retail and centres
- Policy E5 - Colchester Zoo

5.157 These policies address the protection of existing employment areas in the District, the safeguarding of economic uses in rural areas, the diversification of the rural economy and the hierarchy of centres in Colchester. Policy is also included to safeguard Colchester Zoo as a contributor to the local economy.

Table 5.16: Likely sustainability effects for the economy policies

SA Objective	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+	+	+	+	--

SA Objective	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
SA3: Economic growth	++	+	+	++	+
SA4: Transport	+	+/-	+/-	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	+	0	+	0
SA6: Services and facilities	0	0	0	++	+
SA7: Historic environment	0	+/-	+/-	+/-?	-
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	+/-	+/-	0	-
SA9: Landscape	0	+/-	+/-	0	-
SA10: Climate change	0	0	0	0	0
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	0	+	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+
SA14: Water	0	0	0	0	-

5.158 Policies E1: Protection of employment, E2: Economic development in rural areas and the countryside and E3: Agricultural development and diversification are expected to help promote the efficient use of existing employment land and extension of these sites for suitable uses. While there could be some use of greenfield land, the areas in question are mostly developed and the development of presently undeveloped areas is likely to be minor. These policies also include support for types of development that should bring sites into use where they are presently disused or underused. This includes through appropriate conversion or extension. Furthermore, Policy E3 specifically requires that developments for agricultural diversification should not

impact the availability of Grade 1 or Grade 2 agricultural soils. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for these three policies in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. Policy E4: Retail and centres is also expected to have a minor positive given that it supports larger scale development within the city centre where there are likely to be opportunities to support the redevelopment of brownfield sites. However, a mixed significant negative and minor positive effect is recorded for Policy E5: Colchester Zoo in relation to SA objective 2. This reflects the location of the Colchester Zoo site on Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils that could be lost to development through an extension of the site. It also reflects the requirement in the policy for proposals to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment which is likely to help ensure access to viable mineral resources and promote more efficient use of land and natural resources.

5.159 All policies in this section support the growth of the local economy and access to jobs. For Policies E2 and E4 the positive effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** is likely to be significant given the importance of safeguarding demonstrably viable employment locations and the town centres for sustainable economic growth and employment provision over the plan period. The positive effects recorded for Policies E2, E3 and E5 are likely to be minor. Allowing for rural economic growth and agricultural diversification will support access to jobs for residents in less developed areas, while support for the longer development of the zoo will provide jobs that benefit a certain section of the local community. Protecting the town, district and local centres in Colchester will also benefit residents in terms of the range of services and facilities they can make use of at more accessible locations. Therefore, a significant positive effect is also expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** for Policy E4. A minor positive effect is expected for Policy E5 in relation to SA objective 6 given that the land safeguarded at the zoo site could provide some future retail uses but that this is to be considered in relation to the potential impacts on existing centres in Colchester.

5.160 Safeguarding an appropriate level of employment land in areas where residents can access them will help to reduce the need for long distance commuting, including to locations outside of Colchester. As such, a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** for Policies

E1, E2 and E3. While it will be important for employment development to be provided in the less developed areas of the District, allowing for development in rural locations could see some increase in commuting to areas that are not well served by sustainable transport and therefore a combined minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 4 for Policies E2 and E3. Policy E4 is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 4. This reflects the highly accessible nature of town centre locations and the requirement for proposals to avoid impacts relating to traffic. A minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to SA objective 4 for Policy E5 given the relatively accessible location of Colchester Zoo close to multiple bus stops and a cycle route and the requirement of the policy to consider highways impacts and the potential for improvements to sustainable transport including a new off road cycle route.

5.161 The effects recorded for the policies in relation to **SA objective 13: Air quality** broadly reflect those recorded for transport. Where there is potential for traffic to increase, air pollution may result from vehicular emission. The exception to this is for Policy E4. While promoting the function of the town centre locations as a focus for retail, services and commercial activities is likely to result in some trips being made by active and sustainable modes, these areas also include or are close the city centre to AQMA and travel within this area could intensify existing air quality issues and result in some residents being exposed to pollutants. Therefore, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is recorded for Policy E4 in relation to SA objective 13.

5.162 The maintenance of local employment opportunities will be important to help maintain more rural communities in Colchester. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for Policy E2 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. Policy E4 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective given that it will help to ensure essential provisions are focussed mostly to areas that are highly accessible to a large number of residents.

5.163 More rural locations in Colchester are likely to be more sensitive to changes of use and extension or expansions of existing employment provisions, considering their less developed and less disturbed nature. As such there is

potential for adverse impacts on the settings of heritage assets, ecology and landscape character through Policies E2 and E3. The overall effect for these policies in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and **9: Landscape** are mixed minor positive and minor negative. This reflects the requirement in Policy E2 for developments to minimise negative environmental impacts and harmonise with the local character and in Policy E3 for development to avoid impacts on habitats sites and the National Landscape. Development within the town centre locations is considered less likely to adversely affect biodiversity assets and landscape character. However, there is potential for impacts on the relatively high concentration of heritage assets within the developed areas of the District. This includes the numerous Conservation Areas towards the centre of the City as well as Colchester Castle Registered Park and Garden. Policy E4 requires that developments at centre locations should not detrimentally affect character which is likely to provide some mitigation in relation to setting of heritage assets. Overall the effect recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for this policy is mixed minor positive and minor negative. The Colchester Zoo site is potentially sensitive in relation to heritage, biodiversity and landscape given its location adjacent to a Scheduled Monument and Local Wildlife Sites on multiple boundaries and its presence within areas of high and medium landscape sensitivity. While Policy E5 requires mitigation in relation to these issues, a residual minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to SA objectives 7, 8 and 9 given its sensitivity adjacent to heritage and biodiversity assets and the inclusion of land that is of high landscape sensitivity within its boundaries.

5.164 The Colchester Zoo site is mostly free from flood risk however there are areas of flood zone 2 and 3 at its eastern boundary. Policy E5 requires development of the site to be supported by the incorporation of SUDs and therefore a negligible effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 10: Flood risk**.

5.165 By and large it is not expected that the policies assessed would promote recycling of waste at new economic growth locations in the District. The exception to this is Policy E2 which requires that planning applications close to a habitats site should provide mechanisms to prevent flying tipping. As such a

minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

5.166 Given that Policy E5 could lead to future development within the Colchester Zoo site which lies within a SPZ there is potential for this policy to contribute to the contamination of water resources in the District. Therefore, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy E4 could be strengthened by requiring that proposals within the City Centre are considerate of the settings of the many heritage assets at this location. There is also potential for housing provided above retail in the centre to contribute to housing delivery in the plan area while ensuring that there are no detrimental impacts on shopping areas and retail provision. Furthermore, the evening and night economy and hospitality can make a contribution to the economic function of town centre locations. Policy E4 could also promote centre locations as providing the focus for such uses while ensuring that they are neighbourly and respect the character and existing amenity of the areas within which they are to be provided.

Council response:

- The policy and policy CC1 cover most of the recommendations. Reference to the night time economy will be considered as part of future plan making.

Community and social infrastructure

Policies CS1, CS2, CS3, CS4, CS5 and CS6

5.167 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy CS1 - Retention of community facilities
- Policy CS2 - Enhancement of and provision for community facilities
- Policy CS3 - Education provision
- Policy CS4 - Sports provision
- Policy CS5 - Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage
- Policy CS6 - Caravan parks

5.168 These policies address the retention and provision of new social facilities and infrastructure in Colchester. This includes facilities and infrastructure relating to education, sport, tourism and leisure.

Table 5.17: Likely sustainability effects for the community and social infrastructure policies

SA Objectives	CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+	+	+	0	+	0
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	0	0	+	0
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++	+	++	+	+

SA Objectives	CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4	CS5	CS6
SA6: Services and facilities	++	++	++	+	0	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA9: Landscape	0	0	0	0	+	+
SA10: Climate change	0	0	0	+	0	+
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	+	0	+
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA13: Air quality	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA14: Water	0	0	0	+	0	+

5.169 It is likely that Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities, CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities, CS3: Education provision and CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage will benefit **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. Policies CS1 and CS3 allow for the combining, rationalising and re-development of existing facilities (including school facilities) where a suitable alternative provision is made. Similarly, Policy CS2 allows for the enhancement of existing community facilities to be considered instead of delivering a new facility. Proposals for tourism development should be small scale and/or involve change of use or small scale extension of existing facilities in line with Policy CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage. It is considered that these types of approaches could help limit the need for development on greenfield land in Colchester.

5.170 By supporting the development of visitor attractions and visitor accommodation, Policy CS5 will support economic growth in tourism in the District. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for this policy in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.171 Providing residents with nearby access to services they will need to use on a regular basis is likely to help reduce the need to travel. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities, CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities, CS3: Education provision and CS4: Sports provision in relation to **SA Objective 4: Transport**. A minor positive effect is also expected for Policies CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage and CS6: Caravan parks given that they require that development for tourism and caravan parks should promote active travel.

5.172 Policies CS1, CS2, CS3 and CS4 are expected to have a positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities** given that they support the provision of new or retention of existing essential social infrastructure. Policies CS1 and CS2 will help to ensure that residents benefit from necessary community services and facilities that will benefit community integration in Colchester and therefore the positive effect recorded for SA objectives 5 and 6 is significant. Education provision is considered an essential service to ensure the successful functioning of the District and therefore the positive effect recorded for Policy CS3 in relation to SA objective 6 is also significant. The positive effect recorded for Policy CS4 in relation to SA objective 5 is also significant given the value of access to sports facilities for health and wellbeing. Policies CS5 and CS6 are likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5 given that they require that these types of development minimise impact on the amenity of nearby residents which is likely to help protect public health.

5.173 Policies CS5 and CS6 require that tourism facilities and caravan parks are of an appropriate scale to the surrounding area and compatible with the landscape character. In addition to benefitting landscape character, these elements of the policies are expected to help protect the setting of heritage assets in the District. Furthermore, Policy CS5 specifically requires that development for visitor attractions respects the settings of heritage assets. As such a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment** and **9: Landscape**. Furthermore, Policy CS5 seeks to directly protect the Dedham National Landscape and Policy CS6 includes a specific requirement for development to avoid light pollution which would likely have further benefits for landscape character in Colchester.

5.174 Development for tourism must also not result in undue harm to local wildlife sites as set under Policy CS5. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy CS6 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective given that it requires development for caravan parks to protect the integrity of habitats sites.

5.175 The incorporation of outdoor sports facilities (specifically playing pitches) provides space for safe infiltration of surface water thereby supporting some degree of resilience to the effects of climate change. Therefore, Policy CS4 is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **11: Flood risk**. Policy CS6 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to these SA objectives given that it requires developments for caravan parks to be supported by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management and Flood Evacuation Plan.

5.176 Allowing for infiltration of surface water supports the natural water cycle. Therefore, Policy CS4 is also expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Proposals at caravan parks are required by Policy CS6 to be supported by information from Anglian Water to confirm that there is adequate wastewater treatment and sewage infrastructure which is likely to help prevent the deterioration of water quality in the area as new development is occupied. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 14.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy CS3 could be clear that the serving of the community by an alternative provision of school facilities should be considered in relation to the scale and quality of any replacement facility and its location and accessibility within the area.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy CS3: Proposals should be considered in relation to the scale and quality of any replacement facility and its location and accessibility within the area.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy CS5 could specifically require developments to respect the settings of heritage assets. Furthermore, this policy currently requires that facilities are accessible by a choice of means of transport but it could also be strengthened by providing support for facilities that encourage travel by public and active modes.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy CS5: respect the settings of heritage assets. Reference is made in the policy to active travel.

Place and connectivity

Policies PC1, PC2, PC3, PC4, PC5, PC6, PC7 and PC8

5.177 The group of policies appraised in this section is as follows:

- Policy PC1 - Healthier food environments
- Policy PC2 - Active and sustainable travel
- Policy PC3 - Parking standards
- Policy PC4 - Development density
- Policy PC5 - Domestic development
- Policy PC6 - Design and amenity
- Policy PC7 - Residential schemes on greenfield sites

■ Policy PC8 - Private amenity space

5.178 These policies focus on creating sustainable, healthy communities by promoting active travel, access to fresh food and high-quality design. They also seek to ensure improved connectivity in the District, as well as more efficient land use, and the integration of public and private spaces. These approaches are framed by the design aims of supporting wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and local character.

Table 5.18: Likely sustainability effects for the place and connectivity policies

SA objective	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8
SA1: Housing	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	0	0	+	++	0	+	0	0
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
SA4: Transport	+	++	++/-	+	+	+	+	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++	++	0	+	0	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0
SA7: Historic environment	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0
SA9: Landscape	0	0	0	+	++	++	+	+
SA10: Climate change	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0
SA11: Flood risk	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0

SA objective	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8
SA12: Waste	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SA13: Air quality	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	0
SA14: Water	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0

5.179 Policy PC4: Development density requires residential developments to have regard to appropriate density and massing standards, in the context of providing an appropriate mix and type of housing and protecting residential amenity. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. Furthermore, Policies PC5: Domestic development and PC6: Design and amenity set out criteria to help ensure that developments (including domestic development such as alterations and extensions) are of a suitable quality and should prevent the potential for impacts on the residential amenity of properties in the surroundings. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also recorded for these two policies in relation to SA objective 1.

5.180 Policy PC4 is expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that it supports development densities that would promote more efficient use of land resources in the District. Policies PC3: Parking standards and PC6: Design and amenity are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. Policy PC3 requires that where possible large car parks should result in more compact forms of development which uses less land and that redevelopment of existing car parking should be considered to make efficient use of land. Policy PC6 requires that development proposals promote and sustain an appropriate mix and density of uses that optimise the efficient use of land. While Policy PC7: Residential schemes on greenfield sites sets out requirements for the development that would occur on greenfield sites, it does not promote this type of development that might otherwise result in loss of higher value soils and therefore a negligible effect is expected in relation to SA objective 2.

5.181 A minor positive effect is expected for Policies PC3 and PC6 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. Policy PC3 outlines that redevelopment of existing car parking will be considered where there could be improvements to

townscape and to support regeneration, thereby supporting revitalisation of town centre locations. High-quality, context-sensitive design that enhances local distinctiveness and supports vibrant, mixed-use developments is encouraged through Policy PC6 which could also support economic growth in the District. Furthermore, development is required by the policy to demonstrate economic as well as social and environmental sustainability.

5.182 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** given that it promotes the use and development of active and sustainable travel modes in Colchester. This includes by requiring that development should support the provision of new and the protection of existing infrastructure that is accessible to all to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel. Policy PC3 is expected to have a mixed significant positive and minor negative effect in relation to this SA objective. This policy supports a reduced need to travel by private vehicle by encouraging the delivery of secure cycle parking, park-and-ride schemes, and integrating parking management into Travel Plans to foster sustainable transport use. However, its allowance for new and expanded car parking risks perpetuating car dependency. Policies PC1: Healthier food environments, PC4: Development density, PC5: Domestic development, PC6: Design and amenity and PC7: Residential schemes on greenfield sites are all expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. These policies are expected to support reduced travel demand (including relating to food miles) and promote sustainable, active transport by encouraging high-density, well-designed developments where walking, cycling, and public transport are prioritised. They include requirements which emphasise accessible layouts, active travel routes, and integrated green infrastructure.

5.183 Policies PC1 and PC2 are both expected to have a significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. The positive effect recorded reflects the promotion of stronger, more resilient, and inclusive communities in the policy text. This includes through enhancing access to healthy food (and reducing access to less healthy foods) and encouraging use of active travel that can contribute to positive health outcomes. Policies PC4: Development density, PC6: Density and amenity, PC7: Residential schemes on greenfield land, and PC8: Private amenity space are all

expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. It is expected that these policies will help encourage the creation of well-designed, higher-density developments that prioritise sustainability, active travel, and access to local amenities. They will also help to provide good access to high quality green spaces and private and communal amenity areas, while also supporting community cohesion and protecting the residential amenity of those living in the District.

5.184 A minor positive effect is expected for policies PC2, PC3, PC4, PC5, PC6 and PC7 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. While these policies do not support the provision of new services or the protection of existing services in Colchester, they are likely to support access to these types of provisions. Policy PC2 ensures that developments are well-linked to public transport and active travel networks, facilitating easy access to education and other services. Policy PC3 ensures that appropriate car parking is delivered in line with the adopted standards and cycling parking is suitably incorporated. Policy PC4 encourages higher-density developments that are strategically located to enhance access to local services. Policy PC5 ensures that residential developments, particularly alterations and extensions, maintain compatibility with the local context, including proximity to services and schools, promoting accessibility for residents. Policy PC6 requires that developments achieve well connected streets within which sustainable modes are prioritised. Policy PC7 sets out that residential developments should contribute to permeability for vehicles and prioritise sustainable transport.

5.185 A minor positive effect is expected for Policies PC4, PC5 and PC6 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Development is required by Policy PC4 to have regard to the character of the surrounding area, including heritage assets. Furthermore, Policy PC5 is set out to ensure that residential alterations consider the original building's scale and design, thereby helping to protect the existing townscape and the setting of heritage assets in the surroundings. The requirement for developments to achieve a high-quality of design is also set out through Policy PC6, in relation to the provision of context-sensitive design that integrates well with the existing built environment.

5.186 Policies PC1, PC4, PC6 and PC7 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Support for the provision of community gardens and allotments is set out through Policy PC1, which is likely to help enhance local ecosystems. Policy PC4 prioritises green spaces and connectivity in high-density developments, thereby contributing to habitat provision and connectivity in more developed areas of Colchester. Developments designed to incorporate trees and landscaping are supported by Policy PC6, while Policy PC7 ensures greenfield developments integrate green and blue infrastructure.

5.187 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy PC5 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape** given that it will help ensure that residential alterations, extensions, and outbuildings respect the character of the original dwelling and its surroundings. This policy also seeks to prevent over-development in the countryside. A significant positive effect is also recorded for Policy PC6 in relation to SA objective 9. This policy requires that developments achieve a high quality of design and reflect the local distinctiveness of Colchester, while contributing to placemaking. Policies PC4, PC7, and PC8 are expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 9. Policy PC4 ensures that development densities respect the local landscape character and maintain the balance between built form and green space. Policy PC7 supports the creation of distinct spaces and character areas within developments. Furthermore, Policy PC8 is set out to ensure that the appearance of private amenity spaces is appropriate to the surrounding context.

5.188 The requirements included in Policies PC1, PC2, PC3 and PC4 are expected to result in a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality**. These benefits relate to the reduced potential for vehicular travel and associated carbon emissions and pollution, achieved by directly supporting more sustainable modes of transport and higher densities of development from which services and facilities will be more accessible. It is notable that the positive effect recorded for Policy PC1 relates to the potential to reduce food miles by supporting opportunities for local food growing. A minor positive effect is also recorded in relation to SA objectives 10 and 13 for Policy PC6 given that it prioritises energy-efficient design and climate resilience through sustainable solutions such as natural ventilation and tree

planting. The promotion of green infrastructure at car parking for residential developments on greenfield sites through Policy PC6 is likely to promote the incorporation of climate change resilience and natural barriers to air pollution. Therefore, a minor positive effect is also expected for this policy in relation to SA objectives 10 and 13.

5.189 The potential to reduce flood risk through the incorporation of elements of green infrastructure and adhering to the sequential approach to flood risk is set out through Policies PC1, PC5, PC6 and PC7. As such a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** for all four policies. The safeguarding of allotments and other areas for food growing through Policy PC1, is likely to prevent the loss of green infrastructure assets to allow for the permeation of surface water to reduce flood risk in Colchester. Policy PC5 requires replacement dwellings in the countryside to be supported by the flood risk sequential approach, while Policy PC6 emphasises the importance of integrating green infrastructure to support the creation of climate-resilient places which will include increased adaptation to flood risk. The requirement for the incorporation of green infrastructure set out through Policy PC7 is limited to car parking areas at residential developments, but could still have some benefits in terms of reducing local flood risk. Given the benefits that green infrastructure can achieve in relation to water quality through support for natural infiltration processes, a minor positive effect is also recorded for Policies PC1, PC6 and PC7 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

5.190 Support for the incorporation of accessible refuse and recycling storage areas in new development is provided for through Policy PC6. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

Alternatives set out in the Preferred Options Local Plan

Policy PC2

5.191 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel of retaining Policy DM21: Sustainable access to development from the Adopted Local Plan. Policy PC2 seeks to clarify and strengthen the policy approach relating to active travel in the plan. For example, it includes the additional requirements that development should ensure that cycling infrastructure is designed to have regard for the latest best practice and to the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The alternative is therefore considered less likely to encourage travel by active modes in the plan area. It is also less likely to achieve the associated benefits that might otherwise result in relation to promoting access for all to essential services, promoting more active lifestyles, and limiting the carbon emissions and air pollutants. As such it is likely to perform less favourably than the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community and health and wellbeing, 6: Services and facilities, 10: Climate change, and 13: Air quality.

Policy PC3

5.192 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies an alternative to Policy PC3: Parking standards of not having regard to the revised Essex Parking Guidance and to set out detailed parking guidance within the policy. The plan also identifies another option of adopting the Essex Parking Standards and relying entirely on them.

5.193 The supporting text of the policy explains that the Guidance aims to support the assessment of planning applications by ensuring proposals include an appropriate level of cycle parking, car parking and electric vehicle parking provision, and that parking designs and arrangements operate effectively and safely. The updated parking standards reflect changes in national policy.

5.194 The Guidance recognises that the level of parking required for a development is dependant not only on the land use type, but also the level of connectivity to the site and it incorporates a zonal approach to parking standards recommending that a lower provision of vehicle parking may be appropriate in highly connected locations where there is good access to facilities via public transport, walking and cycling.

5.195 Removing reference to the Essex Parking Guidance from the policy and setting out detailed guidance in the policy or incorporating the details of standards within the policy itself will help ensure that developments have appropriate regard to supporting access by a variety of modes of transport including sustainable and active modes. Furthermore, setting out detailed parking guidance in the policy itself could result in the adoption of more locally specific guidance to encourage positive travel outcomes that are more appropriate to the local area and the level of connectivity experienced within the plan area. However, this approach could mean the policy is less responsive to changes in evidence and guidance identified at the County level. As such without considering the details of any replacement policy that might result this approach would introduce uncertainty in relation to SA objectives 4: Transport, 6: Services and facilities, 10: Climate change, and 13: Air quality. The uncertainty reflects the unknown potential for any new detailed guidance within the policy to promote travel by sustainable modes, which might have implications for access to essential services as well as carbon emissions and air pollutants.

5.196 Adopting the Essex Parking Standards and relying entirely on them would remove reference to locally set parking guidance when determining planning applications. As such given that it is less reflective of local circumstances and related evidence and would also be less responsive to any changes to the Essex Parking Standards, this alternative would likely perform less favourably in relation to SA objectives 4: Transport, 6: Services and facilities, 10: Climate change, and 13: Air quality.

5.197 However, both alternatives considered are likely to perform similarly to the preferred approach in relation to SA objectives 2: Efficient use of land and 3: Economic growth. It is likely that the alternatives taken forward would not

remove support for more compact forms of development when considering car parks. Furthermore, the approaches of setting out detailed parking guidance in the policy or adopting the Essex Parking Standards would also support the local economy by providing car parking that would allow for access to areas of economic importance in the plan area.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PC1 could be strengthened by specifically requiring that developments do not result in loss of or loss of access to existing allotments orchards and community gardens.

Council response:

- The policy refers to safeguarding of these types of provisions. This covers potential impacts relating to access.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PC2 could be strengthened by setting out an approach that not only supports the provision of infrastructure for active and sustainable modes of transport but also encourages provisions that will support the use of these features by a range of users, including those with disabilities and older people. Sustainable and active transport modes and routes could be supported by the incorporation of features such as weatherproof shelters, benches, digital displays and appropriate signage.

Council response:

- Text has been added to Policy PC2.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PC4 could be strengthened by being providing clarity that the appropriateness of a development's density will be considered in the context of potential impacts on the residential amenity in the surrounding areas.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PC4: The appropriateness of a developments density will be considered in the context of potential impacts on the residential amenity in the surrounding areas.

Place Policies

5.198 This section presents the appraisal of the policies that allocate sites or safeguard land in Colchester under the Place Policies heading in the draft Local Plan. The SA presents the appraisal of all sites included in the plan. This takes in all sites allocated and land safeguarded by the emerging Local Plan. All policies included in this section of the plan (including those relating to sites that benefit from planning permission and those that do not) are appraised. Maps showing the location of each of the site allocations are presented in Figures 5.1 to 5.1.4, later in this section.

5.199 The appraisals of the Place Policies are grouped by the area which they relate to - in the Colchester City these are the relevant wards, Gateway or Opportunity Areas and beyond the City, the other settlements in the District. In some instances the appraisal is included separately where the detail of the policy warrants a standalone appraisal or where the land to which the policy applied is not close to any other land addressed by a policy in the Place section of the plan. By and large the appraisal of the policies is presented to align with the order of the policies in the Local Plan document.

5.200 The appraisals of all sites that are proposed for allocation build on the 'policy-off' appraisal of the corresponding site option, as set out in Chapter 4. The first column in the appraisal matrix for each site presents these pre-

mitigation effects. The policy appraisal then considers any mitigation or enhancement that is required by the specific policy that allocates the site or by Where area-specific allocation policies in the Local Plan include requirements for mitigation and/or enhancement, this has been reflected in the 'policy-on appraisal' column of the appraisal matrix for each site. The effects of other policies in the Local Plan are not included in the appraisals of individual site allocations; instead, the effects of the plan as a whole are considered in the 'Cumulative effects' chapter.

5.201 The methodology used to assess the policy-off effects has already been described in Chapters 2 and 4, based on the assessment criteria set out in Appendix D. The same approach to the scoping out of SA objectives is followed through from the 'policy-off' appraisal of site options. That is to say, effects are not presented for SA objectives 10: climate change and 12: waste for the reasons described in Chapter 4. Rather than repeating the reasons for the policy-off effects, the text below each effects table focuses on describing how the requirements of the site allocation policies are expected to mitigate negative effects and strengthen positive effects of development at the site.

5.202 It should be noted that the appraisal in the 'policy-on appraisal' column for SA objective 8: Biodiversity reflects the Emerging Allocations Biodiversity Assessment [\[See reference 27\]](#) commissioned by the Council; this was not considered as part of the GIS based analysis of site options, the findings of which are presented in Chapter 4. While all site options were considered 'policy-off' in relation to their potential impacts on biodiversity assets, in line with the site assessment criteria, the additional biodiversity assessment work was only reflected in the appraisal of the sites taken forward for allocation. The Biodiversity Assessment provides information about the potential for harm to result from development within a site categorising it as 'little/no harm', 'harm' or 'significant harm'. Where this detail is provided, a precautionary approach has been taken to any adjustment of effects. Where the Biodiversity Assessment identifies any additional sensitivities at a site (e.g. the potential for significant harm to result to biodiversity assets) the magnitude of the negative effect for SA objective has been increased. The decision has been made not to downgrade any negative effects where the Biodiversity Assessment findings identify the likelihood of little/no harm but biodiversity assets lie within the distance

thresholds considered for the appraisal of sites through the SA, in line with the precautionary approach. This reflects the potential for the development of a given site to contribute to ecological impacts as a result of construction and occupation that would be transmitted beyond the site boundaries and its immediate vicinity. The policy-on appraisal for SA objective 8 also reflects any mitigation provided by requirements in the relevant site policy.

5.203 The Council has also commissioned a Heritage Impact Assessment [See [reference 28](#)] to support the preparation of the Local Plan. To date this work comprises a high-level sift of the site options considered for allocation to determine the need for, and level of, any further heritage impact assessment. Where it has been determined that further heritage impact assessment work is required for site options, once undertaken, this further work will be reflected in the appraisal of SA objective 7: Historic Environment, in future iterations of the SA.

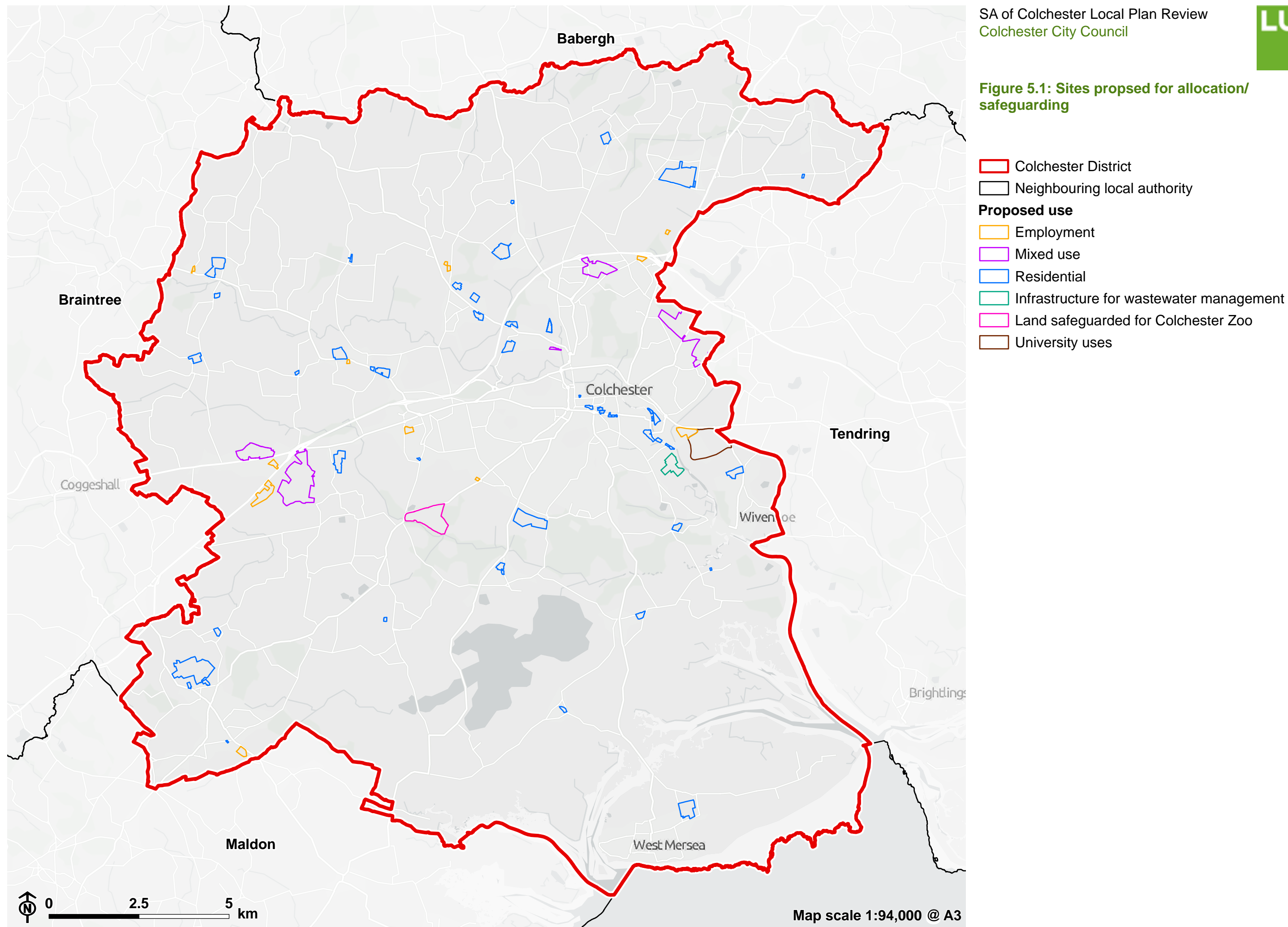
5.204 For many of the sites, the majority of effects recorded in relation to the SA objectives through the 'policy-off' appraisal remained relevant after considering the site specific policy text. For example, significant negative effects identified by the policy-off site appraisals continued to be identified if no mitigation directly addressing the reason for that significant effect is included in the site allocation policy.

5.205 However, in some cases the mitigation and enhancement requirements set out through the site specific policies result in some reduction in negative effects and strengthening of positive effects. When appraising the site allocation policies, significant positive effects were identified only where the policy would give rise to substantial improvements relating to the relevant SA objective, for example provision of substantial new services or a public/active transport improvement (e.g. a new park and ride scheme). Where the policy-off appraisal of sites considered proximity to sensitive receptors (notably SA objectives 7: historic environment, 8: biodiversity, 9: landscape and 11: flood risk), a precautionary approach was taken to the assignment of any positive effects resulting from requirements included in the policy. In general, 'policy-on' positive effects were not recorded in relation to heritage, given the sensitivities of the historic environment and the requirement for a qualitative assessment of this

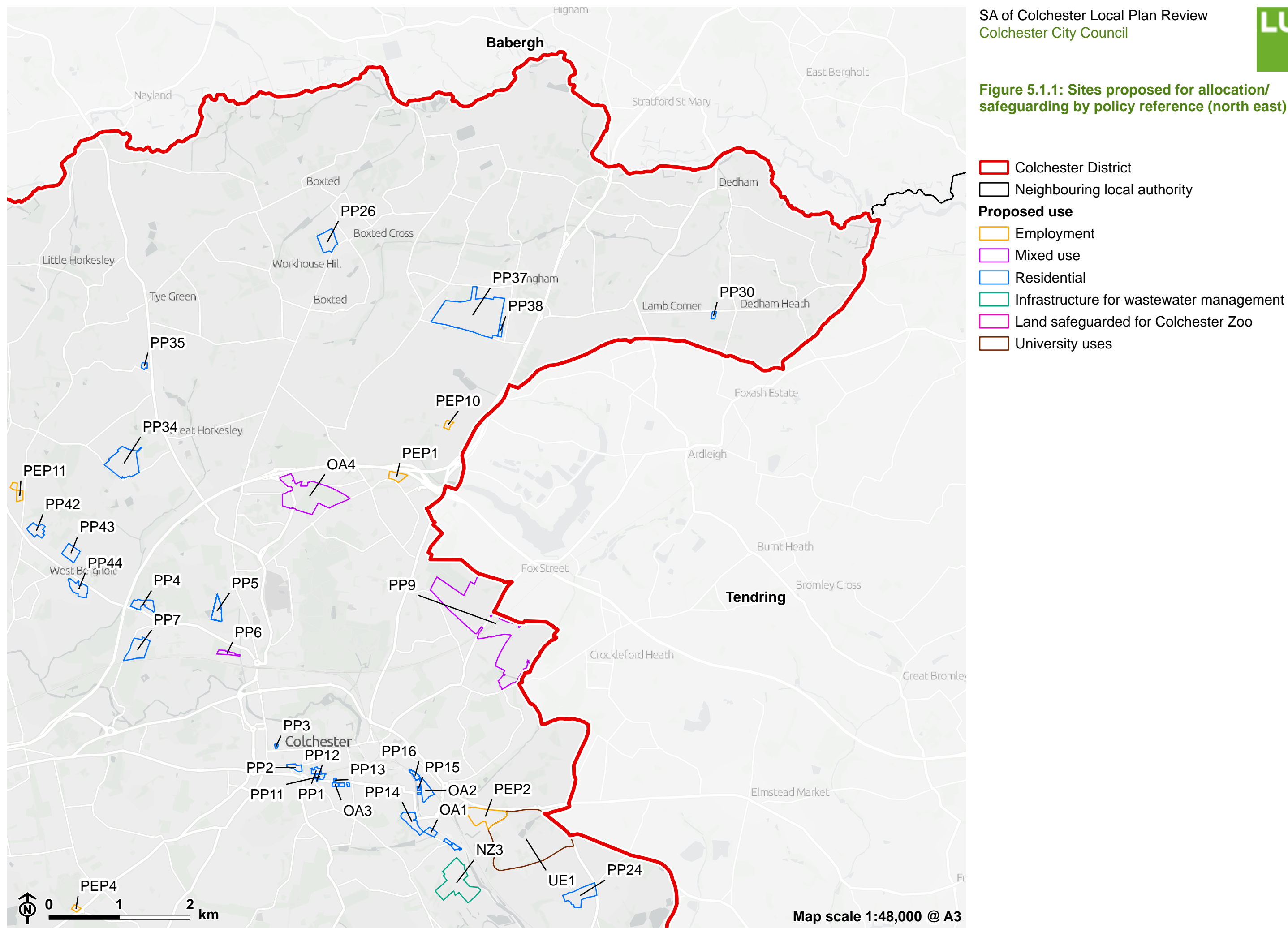
topic by a suitably qualified professional. Where there could be improvements to landscape as a result of improvements to settlement edge or transitions to the countryside, positive effects were recorded.

5.206 Since policies that safeguard land do not provide for development, a proportionate approach was taken to their appraisal. The SA of these policies did not include a detailed, policy-off appraisal. Instead, the SA considered the principle of safeguarding and general sensitivities of the locations in question.

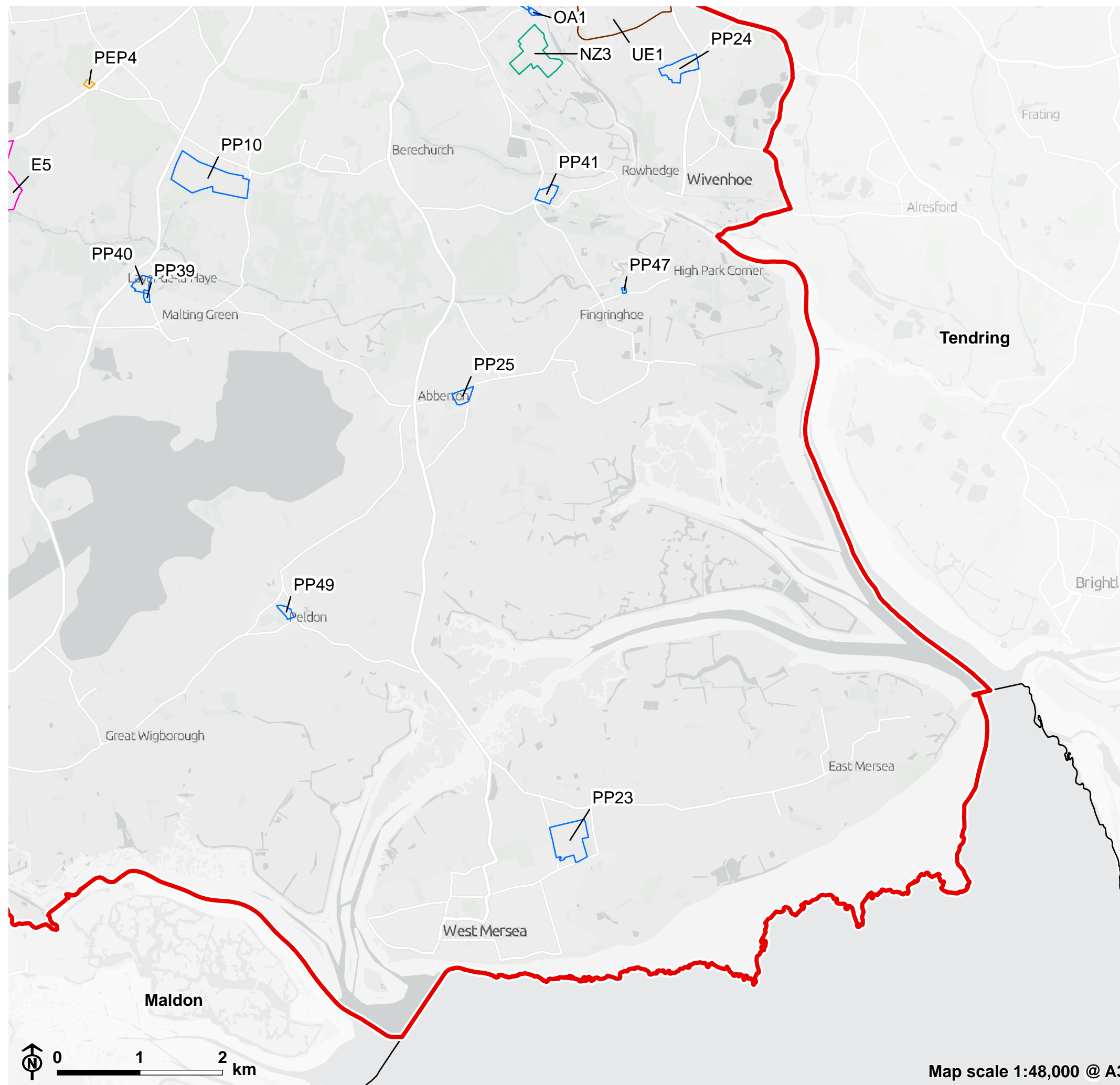
**Figure 5.1: Sites proposed for allocation/
safeguarding**



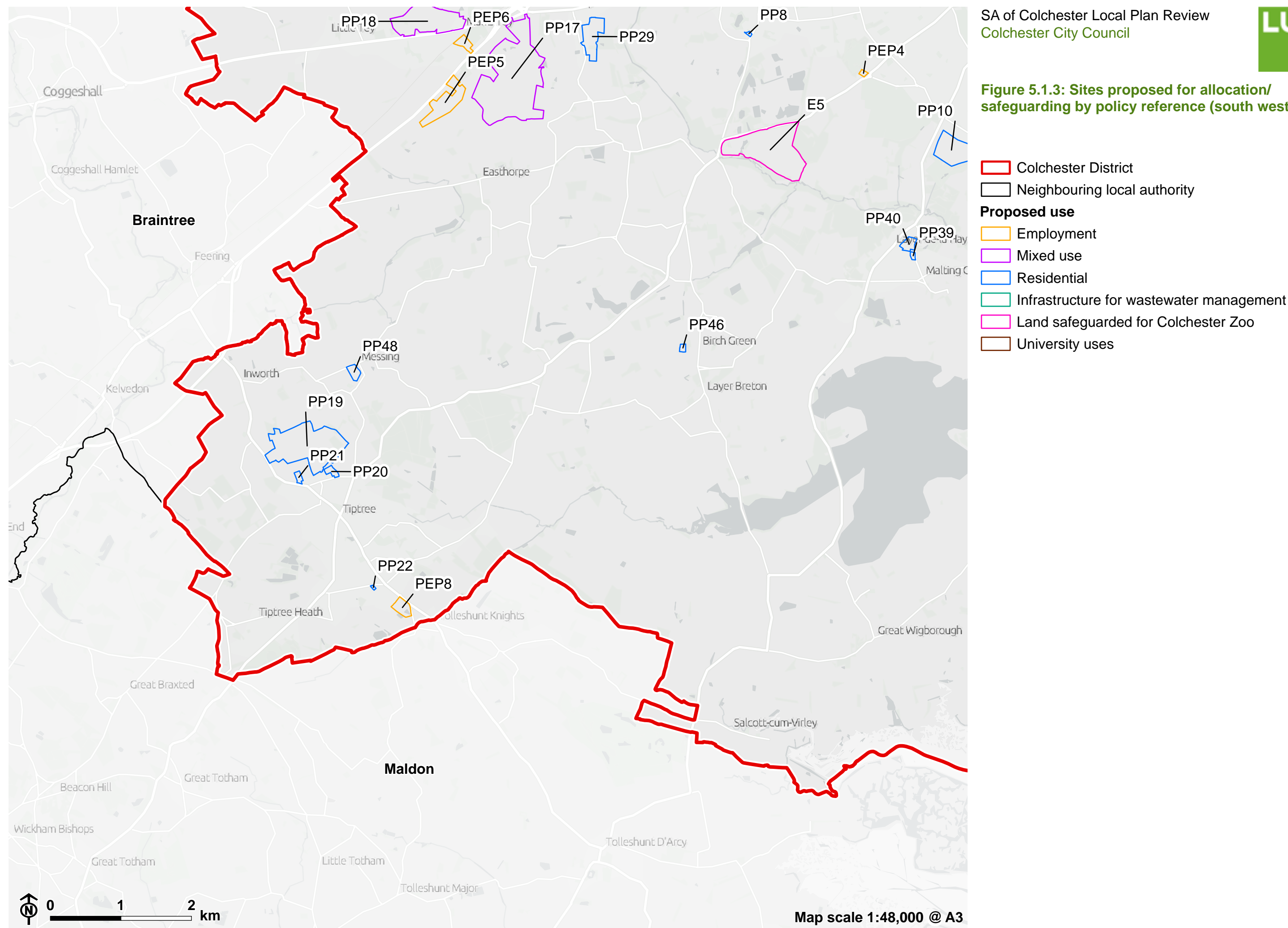
**Figure 5.1.1: Sites proposed for allocation/
safeguarding by policy reference (north east)**



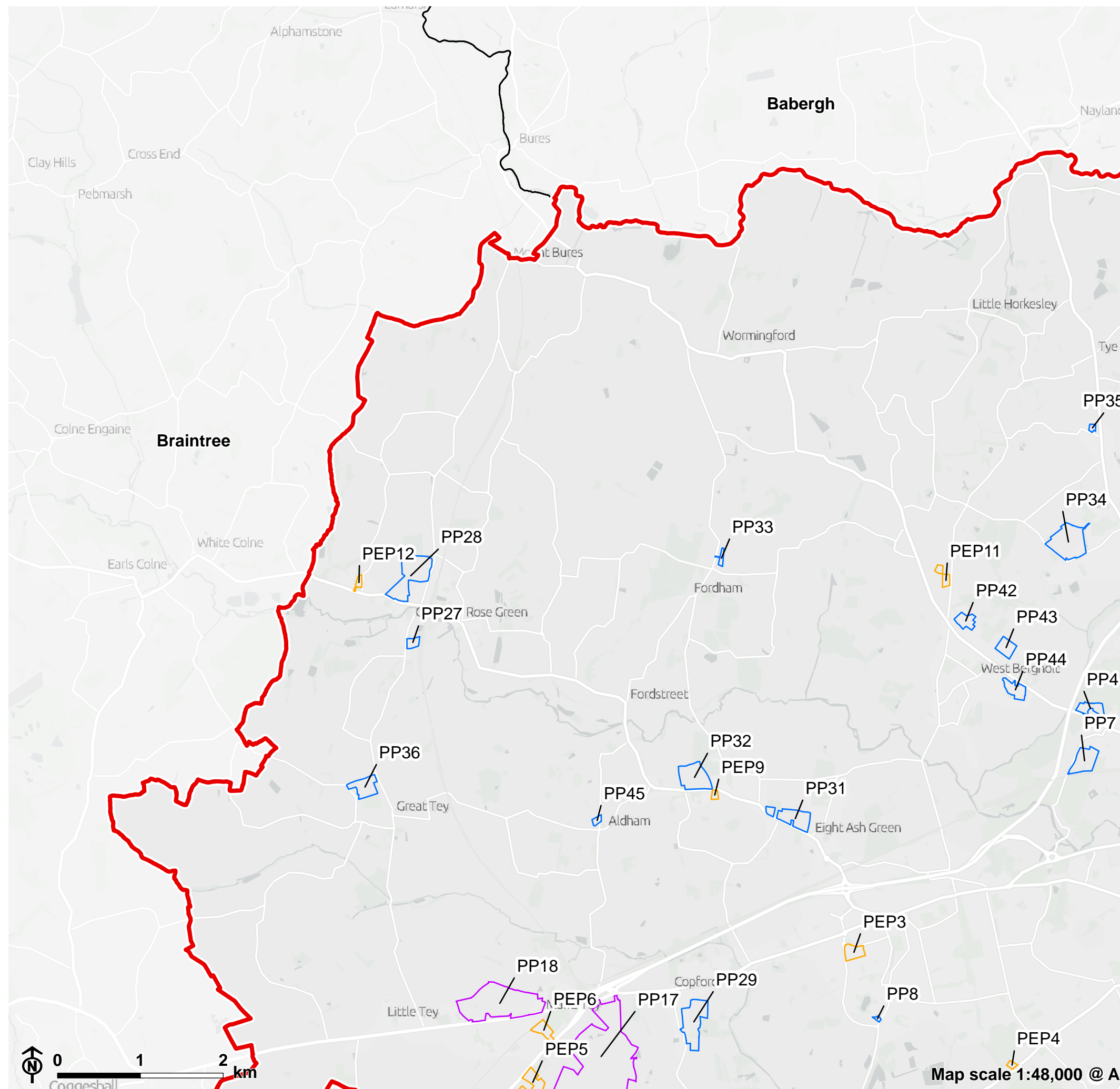
**Figure 5.1.2: Sites proposed for allocation/
safeguarding by policy reference (south east)**



**Figure 5.1.3: Sites proposed for allocation/
safeguarding by policy reference (south west)**



**Figure 5.1.4: Sites proposed for allocation/
safeguarding by policy reference (north west)**



- Colchester District
- Neighbouring local authority
- Proposed use**
- Employment
- Mixed use
- Residential
- Infrastructure for wastewater management
- Land safeguarded for Colchester Zoo
- University uses

Colchester City Centre

■ Policy CC1: City Centre

Sets out Colchester City Centre as the primary focus for retail, food and drink, cultural, leisure, community and other business uses.

Table 5.19: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Policy CC1
SA1: Housing	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	+
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	+
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+
SA9: Landscape	+
SA10: Climate change	+
SA11: Flood risk	+
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	+
SA14: Water	+

5.207 Policy CC1 does not set out land proposed to be allocated or safeguarded in the plan area. Instead, it sets out that developments will be supported where they make a positive contribution to levels of footfall, activity and vibrancy and support the City Centre's role and function. Given that the policy recognises the role of upper floors in terms of residential provision it is expected to complement the larger proposed housing allocations included in the plan area in terms of contribution to local housing needs and therefore a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.208 The policy supports higher densities of development within the City Centre which is likely to help contribute to a more efficient land use in Colchester. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.209 The City Centre is set out by Policy CC1 as the focus for business uses and requires that the mix of uses provided in this area supports the vitality and viability of the centre. It also seeks to ensure functioning of the Primary Shopping Area. As such it is likely that the policy will support the City Centre as a location where economic growth and job centre occurs at a location that is accessible to a large number of residents. Therefore, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.210 Within the City Centre proposals that complement the role and function of the centre are also supported by the policy. This includes a range of services and facilities that would support the integration of residents in the District. Parts of the City Centre include LSOAs that are within the 20% most deprived in the country and new development towards these locations (including new service provision and economic growth) could help to address issues associated with existing deprivation. Given that the City Centre is amongst the most accessible in the District, this approach is likely to support access to a range of services for many residents. It is likely that many of the residents will be able to make use of sustainable and active modes to access the jobs and services provided at these allocations. Therefore, a significant positive effect is also recorded for the policy in relation to **SA objectives 4: Transport, 5: Community and health and wellbeing and 6: Services and facilities**.

5.211 The City Centre includes numerous heritage assets including parts of several Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. As such there is potential for adverse effects as development occurs. However, the policy does not set out a specific level of development for the area. Furthermore, it requires that development should protect the character of heritage assets and their setting, the City Centre's cultural significance, along with the distinct positive elements of its skyline. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded for **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. A minor positive effect is also expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape** given that it also requires development to secure improved streetscapes retaining important spaces and key views and to enhance street frontages.

5.212 The town centre first approach set out through the policy which will help focus some economic growth and service provision in more accessible locations of the District, is expected to help limit the need for some residents to travel regularly by private vehicle. Therefore, there is potential for carbon emissions and air pollutants associated with travel to be reduced. While it is noted that there is an AQMA located within and towards the City Centre, the policy does not set out a specific level of development for this location that might otherwise result in increased traffic and air pollution within these areas. Overall, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 10: Climate change** and **13: Air quality** for Policy CC1.

5.213 Given that the policy supports developments that enhance existing or deliver new elements of green infrastructure there is potential for further benefits to result in terms of biodiversity improvements, climate resilience (including flood risk) and absorption and filtration of air and water pollutants. Therefore, considering the positive effect already reported in relation to SA objectives 10 and 13, additional minor positive effects are recorded in relation to **SA objectives 8: Biodiversity, 11: Flood risk** and **14: Water**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- The policy could be strengthened by including support for proposals in the City Centre that retain and enhance existing or deliver new elements of green infrastructure that provide benefits in terms of climate change resilience and/or habitat connectivity.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy CC1: Proposals that retain and enhance existing or deliver new elements of green infrastructure that provide benefits in terms of climate change resilience and/or habitat connectivity will be supported.

While the development sites do not contain high value habitats Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 could promote the incorporation of new elements of green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area.

Castle

■ Policy PP1: Britannia Car Park, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy PP2: Vineyard Gate, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy PP3: Runwald Street Car Park, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 40 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.20: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10976	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP1	Site 10950a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP2	Site 10951	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP3
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	++	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++	++	++

SA objectives	Site 10976	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP1	Site 10950a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP2	Site 10951	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP3
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	++	++	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	-	0
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	0	+	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.214 Site 10950a has been appraised as having a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing** through the policy-off appraisal given that it was considered to have capacity for less than 100 homes when considered at that stage. The relevant site allocation policy (PP2) confirms the site capacity as 100 homes and therefore an improved significant positive effect is recorded for this policy in relation to SA objective 1. No change is reported in relation to this SA objective for Policies PP1 and PP3 given that the housing capacity for both sites remained unchanged.

5.215 Policy PP2 requires that development at the site provides pedestrian connections directly to / from Lion Walk. A significant positive effect is identified for site 10950a in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that it is close to Colchester Town Railway Station and is also within 300m of a bus stop and 200m of a cycle route. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes, and there is potential for the significant positive effect recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4 to be strengthened. No requirements relating to sustainable or active travel are included in Policies PP1 and PP3 and therefore the significant positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 4 for the related proposed allocation sites wholly reflects the good level of access they provide existing sustainable transport links.

5.216 An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10976, 10950a and 10951 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** as these three sites are close to or overlap designated historic assets including Colchester Area 1 Conservation Area and numerous Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments. Policies PP1 and PP2 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the city centre conservation area and the significance of heritage assets and nearby Scheduled Monuments. Furthermore, Policy PP3 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of other nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect for the policies is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations.

5.217 Sites 10976, 10950a, and 10951, are all relatively close to areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of sites 10976, 10950a and 10951 would result in little/no harm given that they have limited natural habitat. This is reflected in the minor negative effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 promote development that provide green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity. As such an improve negligible effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8.

5.218 All three of the sites fall outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3 and mostly lie outside of higher risk surface water flood areas. An improved minor positive effect is expected for Policy PP1 and Policy PP2 in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** given both policies require development to provide contributions towards flood risk solutions, which will help to reduce flood risk at the site and surroundings. The policy-off negligible effect recorded in relation to SA objective 11 remains applicable for Policy PP3 given that the policy text does not include similar levels of requirements relating to mitigating flood risk.

5.219 The sites lie within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- While the development sites do not contain high value habitats Policies PP1, PP2 and PP3 could promote the incorporation of new elements of green infrastructure to support habitat connectivity in the urban area.

Council response:

- Text was added to the policies.

Mile End and Castle (including area extending beyond wards within the Colchester urban area)

■ Policy PP4: Braiswick, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 30 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy PP5: Land at Chesterwell, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes.

■ Policy PP6: Land at Colchester Station, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 250 homes as part of a mixed-use scheme including commercial floorspace.

■ Policy PP7: Land off Bakers Lane, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes.

Table 5.21: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10952a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP4	Site 10941	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP5	Site 10082a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP6	Site 10761	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP7
SA1: Housing	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	++	++	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SA4: Transport	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?	-?	0?	-?	0?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-	-	0	-	-	--	-

Chapter 5 Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10952a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP4	Site 10941	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP5	Site 10082a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP6	Site 10761	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP7
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	0	--	--	-	-

5.220 Site 10941 has been appraised as having a significant positive effect through the policy-off appraisal work undertaken in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. This reflects the capacity of over 100 homes that the site was considered for at that stage of appraisal. Given that Policy PP5 confirms the site's capacity as 50 homes an updated minor positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 1. The effect recorded for Policies PP4, PP6 and PP7 reflects the originally tested site capacities and no change is recorded in relation to the effect reported for SA objective 1.

5.221 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10082a in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** as the site is located in a LSOA that is in the top 20% of LSOAs in district for jobs density and is less than 200m from Turner Rise District Centre and therefore has good access to both jobs and a town centre location which is likely to support the viability of this centre. Policy PP6 requires the development of the site to incorporate commercial floorspace to serve commuters and surrounding community, which is likely to strengthen the benefits of the site in relation to economic growth. However, the scale of commercial growth at the site is not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of a significant effect and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable for Policy PP6 in relation to SA objective 3. Policies PP4, PP5 and PP7 do not include requirements that would support access to employment or economic growth in Colchester and therefore no changes are reported in relation to the effects reported in relation to SA objective 3.

5.222 Sites 10082a and 10941 are located close to Colchester Railway Station as well existing bus stops and cycleways. Sites 10761 and 10952a are less well related to the railway station but are close to bus stops and cycleways. Furthermore, Policies PP4, PP5, PP6 and PP7 all include requirements which promote active travel, including provision of safe pedestrian connections, connectivity to PRoWs and links for active travel. Policy PP6 includes the most substantial requirements including the provision of a mobility hub to support active travel modes and enhancements to the existing station facilities. A minor positive effect is identified for sites 10761 and 10952a in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the

policy. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded for Policies PP4 and PP7 in relation to SA objective 4. The requirements of Policies PP7 and particularly PP6 are expected to help strengthen the significant positive effect already recorded for the equivalent site options in relation to SA objective 4. The requirements set out in Policy PP6 could support increased travel by sustainable at the site and also in the supporting area through its support for improved station facilities.

5.223 An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10761 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Sites 10082a, 10952a and 10941 are expected to have an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to SA objective 7. The effects recorded reflect the relatively close proximity of these sites to designated heritage assets, with site 10761 noted to be particularly close to the Scheduled Monument Moat Farm Dyke at its eastern boundary. Policies PP4, PP5, PP6 and PP7 include requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to their site. Policy PP7 includes specific requirements for development to protect and enhance the setting of the Scheduled Monument. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PP7 in relation to SA objective 7 and an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP4, PP5 and PP6. The residual negative effect for Policy PP7 is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of this location.

5.224 Sites 10761 and 10952a were both appraised policy-off as containing areas of priority habitat, while site 10761 also contains part of Lexden Dyke Local Wildlife Site. Furthermore, sites 10082a and 10941 are within 250m of several areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment sets out that development within sites 10761 and 10952a has potential to adversely affect biodiversity assets while development within sites 10082 and 10941 is likely to result in little/no harm to biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** in the policy-off appraisal of sites 10761 and 10952a. A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10082a and

10941 given their proximity to areas of priority habitat. However, Policies PP4, PP5 and PP7 require development at the site to incorporate ecological mitigation measures. Policies PP4 and PP7 require the retention and enhancement of the condition of the existing grassland and scrub. Policy PP7 also requires that development adequately safeguards the Local Wildlife Site which intersects site 10761. Furthermore, Policy PP5 requires the retention of mature trees and hedgerows, creation of higher distinctiveness grassland and watercourse gain requirements. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the sites and therefore an improved minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP4 and PP7 in relation to SA objective 8 and an improved negligible effect is expected for Policy PP5. The residual negative effect for Policy PP4 and PP7 is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations. No requirements relating to biodiversity are set out in Policy PP6 and therefore no change is reported in relation to SA objective 8 with the minor negative effect remaining applicable.

5.225 The majority of the sites considered lie within the western extent of the developed urban area. As such their development is unlikely to have substantial impacts on landscape setting and a negligible effect has been recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. The exception to this is site 10761 which lies on land identified as having high inherent landscape value. As such the development of this site was appraised policy-off as likely to have an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 9. Policy PP7 requires development at the site to retain mature trees and hedgerows and to incorporate appropriate screening for the protection of landscape character which is likely to help support the integration of development into the wider landscape setting. Therefore, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policy PP7 in relation to SA objective 9.

5.226 The sites lie within SPZ 3. Furthermore, site 10082a includes a watercourse. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for sites 10761, 10941 and 10952a in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** and a significant negative effect has been recorded for site 10082a. Policies PP4, PP5, PP6 and PP7 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources

during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 for sites 10761, 10941 and 10952a and the significant negative effect recorded for site 10082a remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP7 proposes the allocation of land located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. While the policy requires the retention of mature trees and hedgerows it could be strengthened to include further requirements relating to the incorporation of appropriate screening and the protection of landscape character.

Council response:

- Text was added to the policy to require appropriate screening for the protection of landscape character.

Northern Gateway

- Policy OA4: Northern Gateway

Land north of Axial Way safeguarded for employment and land to the south of the Axial Way safeguarded for approximately 650 homes, a new local centre, commercial and health care provision and energy infrastructure.

This site benefits from existing planning permission.

Table 5.22: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Policy OA4
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++
SA6: Services and facilities	+
SA7: Historic environment	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	0?
SA10: Climate change	+?
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0
SA13: Air quality	0
SA14: Water	-

5.227 The policy states that the land within the Northern Gateway is to be safeguarded to provide approximately 650 homes and housing for care. As such the policy could make a substantial contribution to housing need in Colchester and contribute to housing for those with specific needs and a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.228 While the policy only requires that the land in question is safeguarded, it takes in Grade 2 agricultural soils which would be lost if development eventually occurs at the site. As such a significant negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.229 The safeguarding of land at the site also allows for employment provision on the land north of Axial Way. Given the contribution the site could make to local economic growth, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: economic growth**.

5.230 The land safeguarded is well related to existing bus stops and cycle routes but not a railway station. The provision of residential land alongside employment land and other new services could help to promote self-containment at this location in the District. Furthermore, the policy requires that development at the site should maximise opportunities relating to the Rapid Transit System, the Park and Ride facility and other local links. Overall, a significant positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.231 The land safeguarded is relatively close to a number of open spaces. The service provision to be delivered at the site includes new healthcare and new open space. Overall, given the improved access that the site could provide to open space and healthcare facilities for new and existing residents, a significant positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.232 The land safeguarded is well related to an existing primary school (Camulos Academy). It is located within approximately 1km of The Trinity and The Gilbert Secondary Schools. The safeguarding of the site supports the provision of a new local centre and new community facilities. Policy OA4 is therefore likely to support long term improvements to service provision in this area and a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.233 The policy does not include any substantial requirements relating to heritage assets, ecology or landscape character. Given that the site is not close to any heritage assets or biodiversity designations and falls on land within the developed area of Colchester that is surrounded by existing employment development, a negligible effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 7: Historic environment, 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity and 9: Landscape**. Given that effects relating to the historic environment and landscape will depend

large on the design of any development at the site, the effects are partly uncertain.

5.234 The policy states that the land safeguarded could incorporate new energy infrastructure. This type of provision is likely to support the energy security of the District and where infrastructure for renewable energy is delivered it is likely to support a transition to cleaner forms of energy. As such an uncertain minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 10: Climate change**.

5.235 The land in question is mostly unaffected by flood risk and does not lie close to an AQMA. As such a negligible effect is expected in relation to **SA objectives 11: Flood risk** and **13: Air quality**. The safeguarding of the site is also not expected to affect waste management in the District and a negligible effect is therefore also recorded in relation to **SA objective 12: Waste**.

5.236 The land safeguarded lies within SPZ 3. Should development occur at this location, there is potential for contamination of local water resources and therefore a minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Highwoods

- Policy PEP1: Colchester Business Park

Proposed for allocation for employment uses. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.23: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10969a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP1
SA1: Housing	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	+	+
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.237 The policy requires that the site is developed for employment to incorporate active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity with the surroundings and for sustainable transport. This requirement is likely to support increased use of more sustainable and alternative modes of transport in the area. The site is close to existing bus stops and a cycle route accessible at The Crescent. However, the requirements of policy are not considered to be substantial enough to warrant a significant positive effect being identified in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** and

therefore no change is recorded in relation to minor positive effect previously identified.

5.238 The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PEP1 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation

- While a significant negative effect is recorded for this policy it reflects the location of the site close to priority habitat and relatively close to international biodiversity designations. The identification of this effect is made to adopt a precautionary approach. No recommendations are included.

Stanway

- Policy PP8: Land at Lakelands Crescent, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 5 new dwellings.

- Policy PEP3: Tollgate West

Land safeguarded for employment uses. *This land benefits from planning permission.*

- Policy PEP4: Maldon Road

Proposed for allocation for employment uses. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.24: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10617a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP8	Policy PEP3	Site 10239a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP4
SA1: Housing	+	+	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	0	0	+	0	0
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	-	-	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	+	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?	--?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	--	-	-
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-

SA objectives	Site 10617a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP8	Policy PEP3	Site 10239a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP4
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-

5.239 Policy PEP3 requires that land at Tollgate West is safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with Policy E1. Given the requirement of the policy and the likelihood that the site would contribute to economic growth and access to jobs in Colchester a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. The other policies appraised in this section do not include policy requirements that will support further economic growth in Colchester and as such the effects recorded in relation to SA objective 3 reflect their location in relation to access to jobs (for Policy PP8 only), the amount of employment land that would be provided (for Policy PEP4 only) and access to town centre locations.

5.240 Sites 10617a and 10239a are required by Policies PP8 and PEP4 to provide safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards and demonstrate that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity. Policy PEP4 includes the additional requirement for the provision of active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport. Site 10239a is relatively close to existing bus stops along Straight Road and adjacent to part of the National Cycle Network. The requirements of the policy are not considered to be of a scale to result in an improvement to the minor positive effect already recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. Whilst the range of transport benefits that are promoted by the relevant site allocation policy (PP8) are of a lesser scale than those required by Policy PEP4, the minor positive effect identified for site 10617a also remains applicable. No policy requirements relating to sustainable transport are set out in Policy PEP3. The land safeguarded for employment uses is close to a bus stop and a cycleway but not a railways station and as such a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 4.

5.241 None of the policies appraised in this section address health and wellbeing or access to services and facilities. The land safeguarded by Policy PEP3 for employment uses is close to existing areas of open space and PProWs. It also lies within Tollgate District Centre and could potentially contribute to the successful functioning of this location when it is built out. Therefore, Policy PEP3 is likely to have a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**. The appraisal of Policies PP8 and PEP4 reflect the findings of the policy-off appraisal work for the sites proposed for allocation.

5.242 The development of site 10617a is required by Policy PP8 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site is not within close proximity to any designated heritage assets (the closest being within 400m at Grade II Listed Building White House) and therefore the uncertain negligible effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** remains applicable. No policy requirements relating to the historic environment are set out through Policies PEP3 or PEP4. The areas of land proposed for safeguarding and allocation lie close to Grade II Listed Building Foakes and Brickwall Farmhouse as well as a Scheduled Monument (Gosbecks Iron Age and Romano-British site), respectively. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect is identified for both policies in relation to SA objective 7.

5.243 Site 10617a is adjacent to the Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site has the potential to result in harm in relation to nearby biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The requirements of Policy PP8 includes the adequate safeguarding of Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site. An improved negligible effect is therefore recorded in relation to SA objective 8. The other policies considered do not address the potential for effects relating to biodiversity assets. The land proposed for allocation by Policy PEP4 is close to areas of priority habitat and Gosbeck's Park Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that development at the site would have little/no harm on biodiversity assets and assesses habitats in the surrounding area as having little value. Overall a minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PEP4 in

relation to SA objective 8. The land safeguarded by Policy PEP3 contains another section of Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site and as such a significant negative effect is recorded for this policy in relation to SA objective 8.

5.244 The sites and land set out in the policies appraised lie within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to SA objective 14: Water. Policy PP8 requires the development of the site at Lakelands Crescent to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PEP3 could acknowledge the proximity of historic assets and require development to both protect and enhance the historic environment.

Council response:

- Policy PEP3 safeguards a site with planning permission and these issues will have been considered through the determination of the application.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PEP3 could be drafted to acknowledge the presence of part of Stanway Pit Local Wildlife Site within the site and require that its development safeguard its biodiversity value. It is acknowledged that the land set out through Policy PEP3 benefits from planning permission and that the sensitivities of the location will have been addressed as part of the development planning process.

Council response:

- Policy PEP3 safeguards a site with planning permission and these issues will have been considered through the determination of the application.

St Anne's and St John's and Greenstead

■ Policy PP9: North East Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 2,000 homes and commercial uses

The land proposed for allocation was appraised policy-off as sites 10616a, 10616b and 10256a.

Table 5.25: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10616a	Site 10616b	Site 10256a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP9
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	+
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+

SA objectives	Site 10616a	Site 10616b	Site 10256a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP9
SA6: Services and facilities	-	+	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	--?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	--	-	-

5.245 Policy PP9 requires the development of the site to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils that lie within the site. As such the significant negative effect recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable.

5.246 The site is relatively isolated from existing centres. It is to be developed to deliver 2,000 homes as well as some commercial uses. The mix of uses provided at the site could support some degree of self-containment in the area as well as access to jobs for those at the site and in the surroundings. Given the potential to provide access to employment opportunities at the site and to

contribute to Colchester's economy, an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.247 The site is within close proximity to multiple bus stops as well as cycling routes, indicating good sustainable transport connectivity, although the site is located some distance from a railway station. Policy PP9 requires the development of the site to provide safe and suitable site access and active and sustainable travel and passenger transport which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires the site to ensure connectivity with existing PRoWs, including the Colchester Orbital. The policy also stipulates that an active travel plan will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, which will ensure site-wide active travel connectivity including links beyond the site. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes but are not of scale to warrant the identification of a significant positive effect, and as such, the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**, remains applicable.

5.248 The site is located within accessible walking distance of a primary and secondary school, although is located some distance from Colchester City Centre. Policy PP9 requires provision for appropriate service use and facilities, and commercial uses to create Local Centres to serve the communities across the site. Furthermore, the development should meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The specific details of these provisions at the site will be guided by a comprehensive Masterplan, which will ensure that services and facilities are well-integrated into the overall development, and are accessible to all residents. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision but the development would continue to be some distance from the City Centre, the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**, remains applicable.

5.249 Although the site is not within close proximity to Listed Buildings, Policy PP9 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their settings. While this mitigation is acknowledged, development is not expected to enhance the setting of any heritage assets and the uncertain negligible effect

received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**, remains applicable.

5.250 The site is adjacent to areas of priority habitat and Bullock Wood SSSI, as well as Welsh Wood Local Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve and is close to Salary Brook Local Wildlife Site and this is reflected in the significant negative effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. The Biodiversity Assessment undertaken in support of the Local Plan, identifies the potential for high harm in relation to these Local Wildlife Sites and low harm in relation to the SSSI. Policy PP9 provides mitigation for potential impacts by recognising that as a strategic site, there is potential for a range of habitat creation measures which should be maximised. Onsite biodiversity net gain measures will focus on woodland creation to expand and buffer the SSSI, enhanced connectivity through creation of a green corridor between designated sites, buffers to Welsh Wood and Wall's Wood Local Wildlife Sites. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP9 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.251 The site is located within an area identified as having high and medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal is therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP9 requires that screening measures will be required at the edge of the site to provide mitigation and integration within the landscape. Additionally, the protection of ancient woodland adjacent to the site and retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site will help to ensure that development is sensitively integrated to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

5.252 The site lies within an area of SPZ 3 and Salary Brook is adjacent to the east. As such there is potential for development to result in the contamination of water resources. The policy seeks to address the potential for impacts on water quality by requiring that development ensures the protection of water quality within the Salary Brook water course.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- The site is located within SPZ 3. Salary Brook is also adjacent to the east of the site. Policy PP9 could be drafted to ensure the protection of water quality within this water course and that its biodiversity value is conserved and enhanced.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PP9: Protection of water quality within Salary Brook water course and the conservation and enhancement of its biodiversity value.

Berechurch

- Policy PP10: Land South of Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 875 homes.

Table 5.26: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10687	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP10
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+

SA objectives	Site 10687	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP10
SA6: Services and facilities	-	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	--	--

5.253 Policy PP10 requires the development of site 10687 to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils within the site. As such the significant negative effect recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable.

5.254 Site 10687 is within close proximity to multiple bus stops, and a cycling route, although is located some distance from the closest railway station. Policy PP10 requires the development of site 10687 to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes, but they are not of a scale to warrant the identification of significant positive effect and as such, the minor positive

effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**, remains applicable.

5.255 The site is close to existing open space as well as a PRow which could support higher levels of physical activity among new residents. However, the site is not close to an existing healthcare facility and an overall minor positive effect was recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and Health and wellbeing** for the policy-off appraisal. The policy requires that the development provides for the enhancement of the quality and value of Camulodunum Way open space which is located to the north of the site. This requirement could enhance the open space accessible to residents in the area but would not address the lack of immediate access to a healthcare facility and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable.

5.256 Site 10687 is within close proximity to an existing primary school, although is located some distance from the closest secondary school and the nearest Town, District or Local Centre. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. Policy PP10 however, seeks to address this through the provision of appropriate service uses / facilities to create a new Local Centre(s), which will serve the communities across the site. Furthermore, the development of the site should meet the infrastructure requirements of the IDP, which are expected to include education provision. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6 for the site.

5.257 The site is required by Policy PP10 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site is within 100m of a Scheduled Monument and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Given the requirements of the policy, which include requirements relating to the nearby Scheduled Monument, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.258 The requirement of Policy PP10 to provide green infrastructure is set out in the text to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation and to benefit landscape. Site 10687 lies relatively close to the Roman River SSSI which is to the south east, meaning development on the site could potentially impact this sensitive area. The site is also within close proximity to a number of Local Wildlife Sites. However, the Biodiversity Assessment concluded that the site itself has limited natural value with development likely to have little/no harm on biodiversity. Given the proximity of biodiversity sites a significant negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The policy directly addresses the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets, requiring the development of the site to provide measures to mitigate the impacts of recreational disturbance to the Roman River Valley SSSI and stating that onsite biodiversity net gain measures should focus on improving east to west connectivity between Gosbecks to the west and Friday Woods to the east. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP10 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.259 The site lies with an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value. The policy requires that development at the site ensures the protection of existing tree belts and hedgerows to sensitively integrated development into the landscape. As such an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP10 could acknowledge the location of site 10687 within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy text could include screening measures, such as the protection of existing tree belts, and hedgerow to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape. This could include those at the southern boundary of the site as well as the boundaries towards the west by Layer Road and towards the east at Bounstead Road.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PP10: Protection of existing tree belts and hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape.

New Town and Christchurch

■ Policy PP11: Europit Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 40 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy PP12: Robertsons Van Hire Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 6 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy PP13: 146 Magdalen Street Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.27: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10984	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP11	Site 10988	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP12	Site 10986	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP13
SA1: Housing	+	+	+	+	+	+

SA objectives	Site 10984	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP11	Site 10988	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP12	Site 10986	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP13
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	-	-	0	0
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	0	+	0	+
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.260 A significant positive effect is expected for all three policies in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the locations set out for allocation are predominantly brownfield land. Furthermore, Policy PP11 sets out the requirement for development to achieve densities appropriate to an urban area, which is likely to support more efficient use of land in this part of the urban

area. As such there is potential for this policy to strengthen the significant positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 2.

5.261 Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 require development to provide active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport. A significant positive effect is identified for sites 10984, 10988 and 10986 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policies given their close proximity to Colchester Town Railway Station, numerous bus stops and cycleways. The policy requirements could help to strengthen the significant positive effect identified.

5.262 An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10984, 10988 and 10986 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The negative effect reflects the close proximity of these sites to numerous designated heritage assets including the Colchester Area 1 and New Town Conservation Areas and several Listed Buildings. Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 include requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect for the policies is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations proposed for allocation.

5.263 None of the policies appraised in this section include requirements that are likely to help mitigate impacts relating to biodiversity and as such their appraisal is based entirely upon their policy-off appraisal. Sites 10984 and 10988 which are proposed for allocation through Policies PP11 and PP12 are located within 250m of Colchester Roman Wall Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of sites 10984 and 10988 would result in little/no harm given that these sites have limited natural habitat. Site 10986 is not assessed in the Biodiversity Assessment, however the Site 10986 does not lie close to any biodiversity assets. The closest biodiversity feature is Colchester Roman Wall Local Wildlife Site which is within 350m to the north west. There is substantial existing development between the site 10986

and this feature. As such a minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP11 and PP12 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** and a negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP13 in relation to this SA objective.

5.264 All three of the sites fall outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3 and mostly lie outside of higher risk surface water flood areas. An improved minor positive effect is expected for Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** given they require development to provide contributions towards flood risk solutions, which will help to reduce flood risk at the site and surroundings.

5.265 The sites lie within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP11, PP12 and PP13 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Old Heath and the Heath

- Policy PP14: Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 200 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

- Policy PP15: Hawkins Road, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy PP16: Coal Yard Site, Colchester

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.28: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10979	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP14	Site 10980 a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP15	Site 10982	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP16
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	+	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-	--?	-	--?	-
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-	-	-	-	0
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+	--	+	-	+

SA objectives	Site 10979	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP14	Site 10980a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP15	Site 10982	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP16
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.266 A significant positive effect is expected for Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the land proposed for allocation comprises brownfield land. Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 set out requirements for development to be at densities appropriate to an urban area. Given that the policies could help support increased densities in the urban area, there is potential for the significant positive effect expected in relation to SA objective 2 to be strengthened.

5.267 Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 require development to provide active travel links that maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area including the city centre and railway stations and opportunities to maximise the use of sustainable transport. In addition, Policy PP14 requires development to be connected to PRoW Colchester 144 and Policy PP15 requires development to contribute to the restoration of the riverside footpath to provide convenient public access for pedestrians and cyclists. A significant positive effect is identified for sites 10979, 10980a and 10982 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that they are all close to Hythe Railway Station, numerous bus stops and cycleway. There is potential for the policy requirements set out to strengthen the significant positive effect already identified in relation to SA objective 4.

5.268 Policy PP14 is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires contributions towards enhancement of the quality and

value of Old Heath Recreation Ground. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10979 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and PRowS as well as a GP surgery. The development of this site could support regeneration within an area of relatively high deprivation, however it could also result in residents being affected by odours given its location within 250m of a Safeguarding Area of a waste management facility. The requirements of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and recreation. However, it will not address the potential for odour to affect residents at the site and therefore the minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable. No requirements are set out in Policy PP15 and PP16 and therefore the policy-off minor positive effect recorded for SA objective 5 given the location of these sites close to areas of open space and PRow, but less well related to the nearest healthcare facility, remains applicable. It is also notable that the proposed allocation set out through Policy PP16 includes land that could be affected by noise pollution associated with the railway line to the east.

5.269 An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10979, site 10980a and site 10982 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** given that they are close to several designated heritage assets, including Hythe Conservation Area which is adjacent to the west. Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 include requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect for the policies is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the locations proposed for allocation.

5.270 Site 10979 intersects with a deciduous woodland priority habitat and lies within 1km of Upper Colne Marches SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment sets out that the site has no significant habitat value, and development is unlikely to result in harm to biodiversity assets. Adopting a precautionary approach a significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10979 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** given that includes

areas of priority habitat. A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10980a and 10982 as they are close to several priority habitats including a mudflats habitat adjacent to the west. Site 10982 is also close to The Moors Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that development at these sites is likely to have little/no harm to biodiversity assets given although both sites are adjacent to the River Colne, there is limited natural habitat within their boundaries. Policies PP14 and PP15 require development to incorporate ecological mitigation measures. Policy PP14 requires development to retain wooded areas and Policy PP15 requires development to improve the environment while contributing to the restoration of the riverside footpath. Given the policy requirements set out, a minor negative effect is considered applicable for Policies PP14 and PP15 in relation to SA objective 8. Policy PP16 does not set out requirements relating to the natural environment and therefore no change is expected in relation to the minor negative effect recorded policy-off in relation to SA objective 8.

5.271 A minor positive effect is expected for Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk** as these policies require development to provide contributions towards flood risk solutions, which will help to reduce flood risk at the site in the surrounding areas. A significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10980a as it partially lies within Flood Zone 3 and wholly within Flood Zone 2. In addition, a minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10982 as it includes a small area of Flood Zone 3 and lies wholly within Flood Zone 2. Site 10979 includes only a small area of Flood Zones 2 and 3 at its northern boundary. Policies PP14 and PP16 both also require that residential development must not be located in the areas of the site that fall within Flood Zones 2 or 3. The requirements of these policies are expected to mitigate flood risk within the site and no negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 11. Furthermore, while there is a relatively large area of Flood Zone 3 within the site allocated by Policy PP15, the policy requirement for no residential development to occur at ground level within this area is expected to mitigate the potential for adverse effects.

5.272 The sites lie within SPZ 3 and are also close to the River Colne. As such, given the potential for contamination of water resources, including within the

nearby river, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP14, PP15 and PP16 require the development of these sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. Furthermore, Policy PP15 requires the development of the site to ensure the protection of water quality given its riverside location. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction considering the extent of the SPZ within Colchester. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP15 allocates land adjacent to the River Colne. The policy could be strengthened by requiring development to support biodiversity improvements and the protection of water quality in relation to the river corridor.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PP15: through biodiversity improvements and the protection of water quality.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP15 allocates land that is partly within Flood Zone 3. The policy could require development to be situated within areas of lower flood risk or include more substantial requirements relating to mitigating flood risk.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PP15: No development within Flood Zone 3.

Hythe Opportunity Areas

■ Policy OA1: King Edward Quay Opportunity Area

Proposed for allocation for approximately 200 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

■ Policy OA2: Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area

Proposed for allocation for approximately 150 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.29: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10994a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA1	Site 10981a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA2
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	++	++	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--	-	-

SA objectives	Site 10994a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA1	Site 10981a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA2
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	--	+/-	--	+/-
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	-	-	-

5.273 A significant positive effect is expected for Policies OA1 and OA2 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the land proposed for allocation comprises brownfield land. The policies set out requirements for development to be at densities appropriate to an urban area. Given that the policies could help support increased densities in the urban area, there is potential for the significant positive effect expected in relation to SA objective 2 to be strengthened.

5.274 Policies OA1 and OA2 require that development of sites 10994a and 10981a provides for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity. Furthermore, proposals for residential development should be located away from land which is contaminated. These requirements are likely to help protect the health and wellbeing of new residents. Policy OA1 includes the additional requirement for green infrastructure to be provided at site 10994a which should include the provision of an urban park. The policy-off appraisal of site 10994a considers its location close to the safeguarding area for a non-hazardous waste transfer site and the potential for adverse effects relating to odour. While Policy OA1 would promote a range of benefits relating to health and wellbeing, it does not directly address this issue and therefore a significant positive effect for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** is not considered appropriate and the minor positive effect remains applicable.

While site 10981a has not been appraised as likely to be affected by odour, the range of benefits that are promoted by the relevant site allocation policy (OA2) are of a lesser scale than those required by Policy OA1. Therefore, the minor positive effect identified policy-off for the site, also remains applicable.

5.275 Sites 10994a and 10981a are required by Policies OA1 and OA2 to be developed to consider the significance of nearby Conservation Areas. Site 10994a is close to the Distillery Pond Conservation Area and site 10981a is adjacent to the Hythe Conservation Area, both of which contain a number of Listed Buildings and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for these sites policy-off. Given the requirements of the relevant policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the sites proposed for allocation.

5.276 The requirement of Policy OA1 to provide green infrastructure is set out in the text to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation and to benefit landscape. Site 10994a lies within 1km of Upper Colne Marshes SSSI and is also close to areas of priority habitat. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. While the policy does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets, the provision of a new urban park could help to promote habitat connectivity and limit the potential for recreational pressures on existing habitats in the surroundings. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy OA1 in relation to SA objective 8. The site lies within the developed area of Colchester and therefore was not identified as having medium or high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of site 10994a was therefore recorded as uncertain negligible. The delivery of a new urban park could have some benefits for the character of the area. However, this provision is likely to be limited to benefits for the immediate surroundings and is not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of a positive effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Therefore, the uncertain negligible effect remains applicable. Policy OA2 does not include requirements that would address ecology or

landscape character and therefore no change is reported in relation to the effects recorded for SA objectives 8 and 9.

5.277 Much of sites 10994a and 10981a lie within flood zone 3. As such a significant negative effect has been recorded in the policy-off for both sites in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. The development of the sites is required by Policies OA1 and OA2 to respond to flood risk constraints of the area and to contribute towards flood risk solutions. As such an improved mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 11. The mixed effect acknowledges the mitigation required but also the potential vulnerability of the sites in relation to flooding.

5.278 The sites lie within SPZ 3. Furthermore, site 10994a lies adjacent to the River Colne. As such, given the potential for contamination of water resources a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** for site 10981a and a significant negative effect has been recorded for site 10994a. Policies OA1 and OA2 require development to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. Policy OA1 also requires that development should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment and explore opportunities for river restoration which is likely to help protect water quality within the River Colne. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources in relation to the extent of the SPZ within Colchester. As such a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14 for both policies. For Policy OA1 the effect is improved from the significant negative effect previously recorded as part of the policy-off appraisal.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy OA1 could be drafted to specifically require development to ensure that the development of site 10994a protects water quality within the nearby River Colne as construction occurs and the site is occupied.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy OA1: Proposals should consider the opportunity to improve and enhance the river environment and explore opportunities for river restoration, enhancement and provision of flood storage areas.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy OA1 could acknowledge the proximity of site 10994a to Distillery Pond Conservation Area which is within 90m to the south west. The policy text could require development to respond positively to the setting of the Conservation Area.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy OA1: Respond positively to the setting of the nearby Distillery Pond Conservation Area.

Magdalen Street - Opportunity Area

- Policy OA3: Magdalen Street Opportunity Area

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.30: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10987a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA3
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	++	++

SA objectives	Site 10987a	Site considering mitigation in Policy OA3
SA3: Economic growth	0	+
SA4: Transport	++	++
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
SA9: Landscape	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	+
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.279 A significant positive effect is expected for Policy OA3 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** given that the land proposed for allocation comprises brownfield land. Policy OA3 set out requirements for development to be at densities appropriate to an urban area. Given that the policy could help support increased densities in the urban area, there is potential for the significant positive effect expected in relation to SA objective 2 to be strengthened.

5.280 Site 10987a is identified as containing an employment generating use. However, Policy OA3 requires that development retains existing businesses where possible or considers relocation where necessary which is likely to mitigate any adverse impacts relating to access to jobs in the area. The site is

also close Colchester City Centre. Overall given the potential to mitigate existing employment generating uses at the site, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.281 Policy OA3 requires development to provide pedestrian and cycle routes and connections to link to the City Centre and wider networks. A significant positive effect is identified for sites 10987a in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that it is close to Colchester Town Railway Station, numerous bus stops and a cycleway. There is potential for the policy requirements set out to strengthen the significant positive effect already identified in relation to SA objective 4.

5.282 Policy OA3 requires that development of site 10987a provides for a compatible mix of uses having regard to neighbouring amenity. These requirements are likely to help protect the health and wellbeing of new residents. Site 10987a is located in close proximity to an area of open space, a PRoW and a healthcare facility at Wimpole Road, however, it is within an area affected by noise pollution associated with the A134. Policy OA3 could help to protect the amenity and health and wellbeing of nearby residents, but it does not directly address the issue of noise pollution. It is not considered that the requirements would result in further benefits relating to the health and wellbeing of new residents and therefore the minor positive effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** remain applicable.

5.283 The site is located within accessible walking distance of a primary school and Colchester City Centre. It is less well related to the nearest secondary school. Policy OA3 requires the development to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The requirements of the policy could support improved service provision in the area. However, given that the specific requirement is not set out in the policy text and that any provision could be limited to contributions towards new school facilities, it is not considered appropriate to record a significant positive effect in relation to access to services. Therefore, the minor positive effect recorded in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**, remains applicable.

5.284 Site 10987a is required by Policy OA3 to be developed to respond to the distinctive historic character of the area and reinforce the significance of the New Town Conservation Area. The site is adjacent to the New Town Conservation Area, which contains a number of Listed Buildings and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.285 Site 10987a is not close to any internationally, nationally, or locally designated sites. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself lacks natural habitat. This is reflected in the negligible effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. The policy does not include requirements that would support improvements in the ecological value of the area and as such the negligible effect remains applicable.

5.286 Much of site 10987a is not within Flood Zone 2 or 3 or an area at risk of surface water flooding. As such a negligible effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 11: Flood risk**. The development of the site is required by Policies OA3 to contribute towards flood risk solutions. As such, given that the policy could support reduced flood risks in the wider area, an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 11.

5.287 The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, given the potential for contamination of water resources a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy OA3 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Knowledge Gateway

- Policy PEP2: Knowledge Gateway

Land safeguarded for employment purposes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.31: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Policy PEP2
SA1: Housing	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	+/-
SA7: Historic environment	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	0?
SA10: Climate change	0
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0

SA objectives	Policy PEP2
SA13: Air quality	0
SA14: Water	-

5.288 The land safeguarded for employment purposes at the Knowledge Gateway is mostly developed. Should any further development occur within the safeguarded area it is likely to involve the replacement or extension of existing buildings. As such the policy supports more efficient land use in Colchester and a minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.289 The safeguarding of the site is set out in Policy OA4 to support additional jobs and expansion of the existing research and technology use. The retention of the land in employment use is likely to support employment opportunities in Colchester, including those in higher value sectors. As such a significant positive effect is likely in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. Growth in higher paying jobs is likely to be further supported by development of research associated with the university which is also set out in the policy. This approach is likely to have additional benefits in relation to the university and could support its longer sustainability as a facility that benefits local people. A minor positive effect is therefore recorded in relation to **SA objectives 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and **6: Services and facilities**. The effect recorded also reflects the proximity of the site to a small number of areas of open space and the University Health Centre that employees at the site could make use of. For SA objective 6 the minor positive effect is combined with a minor negative effect given that the site is located some distance from the nearest existing local centre where additional services and facilities might be accessible.

5.290 The safeguarded land is located adjacent to several bus stops and is served by a number of local cycle routes. It is also located relatively close to Hythe Railway Station. The policy requires that proposals for employment should provide active travel links with improved links to the surrounding area including the nearby garden community, university, city centre and Hythe

Railway Station. A minor positive effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.291 The land safeguarded is adjacent to the Wivenhoe Park Register Park and close to a Schedule Monument (Group of barrows at Annan Road). Should any extension or expansion of buildings at the site occur, there is potential for impacts on the settings of these heritage assets and a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The land contains part of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site and University Marshes Local Wildlife Site is nearby. It is within the settlement boundary of Colchester and any changes to the employment uses at the site are likely to have more limited impacts on biodiversity assets and landscape setting given the existing levels of development present. The policy requires that development at this location should consider how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced. A negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity** given the mitigation set out in the policy relating to the biodiversity value of the land and a negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9: Landscape given the developed nature of the area. The effect recorded for SA objectives 7 and 9 are uncertain given that impacts on setting will depend in part on the specific design of any proposals for the land.

5.292 Given that the land safeguarded falls within SPZ 3 there is potential for any new proposals to result in detrimental impacts on local water resources. There, a minor negative effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PEP2 could be strengthened by requiring that proposals at Knowledge Gateway have regard to the Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site and how its value might be enhanced. This could include through requirements for new green infrastructure to be delivered within the area.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PEP2: Consideration of how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, which could be through the provision of green infrastructure.

University of Essex

- Policy UE1: University of Essex

Land designated for university uses.

Table 5.32: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Policy UE1
SA1: Housing	0
SA2: Efficient use of land	+/-
SA3: Economic growth	+
SA4: Transport	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+
SA6: Services and facilities	++
SA7: Historic environment	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0
SA9: Landscape	-?
SA10: Climate change	0
SA11: Flood risk	0
SA12: Waste	0

SA objectives	Policy UE1
SA13: Air quality	0
SA14: Water	-

5.293 Policy UE1 designates land adjoining the Knowledge Gateway Employment Area and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community for university uses. The policy covers the existing area of the university site and it does not allocate or safeguard land at this location for a specific use. Instead it sets out criteria that development at the location should meet if it is to be supported at this location.

5.294 Development at the area could involve extensions of existing buildings and reuse of brownfield land. However, given that the area also contains sub-areas of Grade 3 agricultural land, an overall mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**.

5.295 It is expected that the provision of additional university uses within the area will support opportunities for research and development in Colchester and there is potential for synergy with the nearby Knowledge Gateway location. Therefore, a minor positive effect is expected for the policy in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.296 The area is close to existing bus stops and cycle routes and is relatively close to Hythe Railway Station. Furthermore, the policy requires that any development at the site should seek to incorporate active travel links and improve connections to the surrounding area. As such a minor positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The requirement in the policy for development to contribute to infrastructure in line with evidence in the IDP is likely to help mitigate impacts relating to transport as the university grows. These requirements will also support the provision of new social infrastructure to support new growth in the area and therefore a minor positive effect is also recorded for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**.

5.297 Given that the policy supports the provision of new uses for university purposes, a significant positive effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. This reflects the benefits expected for access to education in the area.

5.298 The university site contains the Grade II listed Wivenhoe House and Registered Park and Garden. It also lies within an area of medium landscape sensitivity. The policy requires that development has regard to the preservation and enhancement of the Registered Park and Garden but does not directly address landscape setting. As such a negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** and a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Both effects are uncertain given that they will depend largely on the design of any schemes that come forward at this location. The university area also contains part of the Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site. While the policy does not set out a specific level of development at the site, there is potential for expansion or extension of existing uses to result in adverse effects on this designation. Considering the requirement set out in the policy for new development consider to how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, it is considered that the potential for adverse effects would be mitigated. As such a negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**.

5.299 The area also contains part of SPZ 3. There is potential for construction activities associated with new university uses at the site to result in contamination of local water resources and therefore a minor negative effect is expected in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- The policy could be strengthened by requiring that proposals at the university area to have regard to the Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site and how its value might be enhanced. This could include through requirements for new green infrastructure to be delivered within the area.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy UE1: Consideration should be given of how the value of Wivenhoe Park Local Wildlife Site might be enhanced, which could be through the provision of green infrastructure.

Marks Tey Growth Area

- Policy PP17: Land South of A12, Marks Tey

Proposed for allocation for approximately 1,500 homes and commercial uses.

- Policy PP18: Land North of A120, Marks Tey

Proposed for allocation for approximately 1,000 homes and commercial uses.

- Policy PEP5: Marks Tey

Allocated for employment uses.

- Policy PEP6: Anderson's Site, Marks Tey

Safeguarded for employment uses. *This site benefits from existing planning permission.*

Table 5.33: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10690	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP17	Site 10747b	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP18	Site 10671	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP5	Policy PEP6
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	0	+	+
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	+	-	0	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	+	-	+	-	0	0	0

Chapter 5 Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10690	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP17	Site 10747b	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP18	Site 10671	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP5	Policy PEP6
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?	-?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	--	-	-	-	-	0

5.300 The policy-off appraisal of site 10690 considered the delivery of a mix of uses including new homes, at this site. At that stage of appraisal, the expected number of homes to be delivered at the site was unknown. As such an uncertain minor positive effect was recorded in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**. This effect is updated to significant positive when considered the text set out in Policy PP17 which requires that around 1,500 dwellings are delivered at the site.

5.301 Policies PP17 and PP18 require the development of sites 10690 and 10747b, to be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils within the sites in question. Furthermore, Policies PEP5 and PEP6 do not include requirements that would help to address the protection of land resources in Colchester. As such the significant negative effect recorded policy off for sites 10690, 10747b, and 10671 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable. Policy PEP6 is also expected to result in significant negative effect given that the safeguarding of this land for future employment uses could result in loss of Grade 2 agricultural soils at this location.

5.302 Policy PEP5 allocates new land in Marks Tey for employment uses that would benefit the local community in terms of access to jobs. Furthermore, land is safeguarded for employment uses at Anderson's Site also in Marks Tey through Policy PEP6. As such, a minor positive effect is expected in relation to both policies for **SA objective 3: Economic growth**.

5.303 Sites 10690, and 10747b are close to multiple bus stops as well as a railway station, although the sites are located some distance from cycling routes. Site 10671 is within close proximity of a railway station, although it is located some distance from a bus stop and cycling route. Policies PP17, PP18 and PEP5 require the development of the sites to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. All three

policies also support the incorporation of sustainable travel links to enhance connectivity with the surrounding area. The residential site allocation policies (PP17 and PP18) require development to ensure connections within the sites and to existing PRoWs, including links to the railway station. Furthermore, Policy PP17 specifically promotes active travel connections to Copford Green. These requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes. However, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of significant positive effect in relation to **SA objective 4:**

Transport. As such the minor positive effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to SA objective 4, remains applicable for Policies PP17 and PP18. An improved negligible effect is expected for Policy PEP5. While Policy PEP6 does not include any requirements relating to sustainable or active travel, the safeguarding of land for future employment uses at Anderson's Site could help to encourage travel by sustainable modes given the relatively good access from the site to bus stops and Marks Tey Train Station. A minor positive effect is therefore expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 4.

5.304 Sites 10671, 10690 and 10747b are within close proximity to areas of public open space as well as a PRoW. However, Marks Tey does not contain a healthcare facility meaning residents at this location would have to travel to access this type of facility. The residential site allocation policies (PP17 and PP18) support opportunities to access facilities for recreation by requiring that residential development includes safe pedestrian access connecting to the site to existing footways and PRoWs. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents in relation to recreation, but do not seek to address the lack of healthcare provision in the area. Policies PP17 and PP18 could also support improved service provision and community integration given that development is required to contain a mix of uses which support the creation of a sustainable community and should meet any infrastructure requirements identified by the IDP. The development of the land allocated by these two policies is also required to incorporate new local centres. Given that Policies PP17 and PP18 do not directly address access to healthcare, the minor positive effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 5:**

Community and health and wellbeing, remains applicable. This is also the case for Policy PEP5 given that this policy also does not directly address health related issues. Policy PEP6 is expected to have a similar minor positive effect

given that the safeguarding policy does not include any requirements relating to healthcare or recreation and could support employment development in an area where residents could access to open space and PRowS during break times for recreational activities.

5.305 While the residential sites allocated through Policies PP17 and PP18 are not well related to the larger town centre locations in Colchester (but are relatively close to Marks Tey Local Centre) and provide good access to existing primary schools but not a secondary school, the policy requirements are likely to help improve service provision accessible from these locations. Therefore, the minor negative effect recorded through the policy-off appraisal is improved to a minor positive effect in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. Given that the employment related Policies PEP5 and PEP6 would allocate or safeguard land for employment uses where it is located more than 400m from the relatively limited service offer at Marks Tey Local Centre, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6. The effect recorded also reflect the policy wording included which does not address service provision in the plan area.

5.306 Although it does not contain a Conservation Area, Marks Tey contains several Listed Buildings. All of the areas identified for allocation or safeguarding are close to assets of this nature. Policies PP17, PP18 and PEP5 require the development of the sites in question to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements included, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for Policies PP17, PP18 and PEP5. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location. An uncertain significant negative effect is recorded for Policy PEP6 in relation to SA objective 7 given that the area safeguarded could result in employment development in locations close to heritage assets and no mitigation is required by the relevant policy text.

5.307 Site 10690 contains an area of priority habitat. Site 10747b is adjacent to areas of priority habitat and is close to a Local Wildlife Site and is within 250m of Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of both sites has the potential to result in harm in relation to

nearby biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the significant negative effect received in the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policies PP17 and PP18 requires the achievement of biodiversity net gain including through the potential for habitat creation, identifying important habitats and species that should be protected and enhanced at both locations. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8 for Policies PP17 and PP18. The potential for delivering additional employment uses in Marks Tey could have some implications for biodiversity assets in the area. However, the land proposed for allocation and safeguarding through Policies PEP5 and PEP6 is some distance from the nearest identified ecological features. While neither policy seeks to mitigate effects relating to biodiversity, a negligible effect is expected for both policies in relation to SA objective 8.

5.308 Land at Marks Tey is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect for all sites within the settlement in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP17 and PP18 require that locally appropriate screening is incorporated along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9. Given the relatively sensitivity of the landscape at the locations allocated and safeguarded for employment uses through Policies PEP5 and PEP6 and the lack of mitigation required by these policies in relation to this issue, an un uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

5.309 All land at Marks Tey lies within SPZ 3. Furthermore, residential site option 10690 contain parts of a waterbody which could be affected by run off as construction occurs and site option 10747 is located relatively close to this type of feature. As such, a significant negative effect has been recorded policy-off for site 10690 and a minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10747 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policies PP17

and PP18 require the development of sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the significant and minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable for these policies. Policy PEP5 and PEP6 do not include any requirements that would help address water resources in the area. Given that at both locations, employment development could occur within areas of SPZ 3, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policies PEP5 and PEP6 allocate and safeguard land for employment uses that would be located close to a Listed Building. The policy text for these policies could require the development of the site to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). It is recognised that the conditions associated with the planning permission for the development of the land identified in relation to Policy PEP6 is likely to help mitigate a range of effects relating to the potential development of this land.

Council response:

- Text was added to Policy PEP5. Policy PEP6 safeguards a site with planning permission and these issues will have been considered through the determination of the application.

Tiptree

- Policy PP19: Land North of Oak Road, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 600 homes

■ Policy PP20: Land at Bonnie Blue Oak, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 30 homes.

■ Policy PP21: Highlands, Kelvedon Road, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 10 homes.

■ Policy PP22: Telephone Exchange, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for approximately 5 homes.

■ Policy PEP7: Highland Nursery, Tiptree

Safeguarded for employment uses in accordance with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan.

■ Policy PEP8: Land South of Factory Hill, Tiptree

Proposed for allocation for employment uses. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.34: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10657	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP19	Site 10261	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP20	Site 10262	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP21	Site 10991	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP22	Policy PEP7	10527	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP8
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	-	-	++	++	++	++	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	+	+	+
SA4: Transport	-	+/-	-	0	-	0	-	0	0	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Chapter 5 Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10657	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP19	Site 10261	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP20	Site 10262	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP21	Site 10991	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP22	Policy PEP7	10527	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP8
SA6: Services and facilities	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?	-?	0?	-?	-?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	+	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	+	-?	-?	-?	-?	0?	0?	-?	0?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Chapter 5 Appraisal findings for topic-based policies in the Local Plan

SA objectives	Site 10657	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP19	Site 10261	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP20	Site 10262	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP21	Site 10991	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP22	Policy PEP7	10527	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP8
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-

5.310 The safeguarding of land for employment uses at Highlands Nursery through Policy PEP7 in accordance with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan would likely result in the loss of greenfield land which contains Grade 3 agricultural soils. Given that the Local Plan policy does not seek to address the efficient use of land resources at the site, a significant negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. The remaining policies appraised in this section also do not consider the potential to promote more efficient use of land resources as part of development and therefore the effects recorded reflect those reported for the policy-off appraisal of the associated site options.

5.311 Only policies PEP7 and PEP8 relate to the potential delivery of employment uses in the District. Through Policy PEP7 the Land at Highlands Nursery is safeguarded for employment in the Local Plan in accordance with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. Policy PEP8 allocates land South of Factory Hill also for employment uses. Given the relatively small nature of both areas of land, the positive effect expected in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth** is minor. The effect expected for Policies PP19, PP20, PP21 and PP22 reflects the policy-off appraisal of the associated sites given that the policy text included does not seek to address economic growth in the plan area.

5.312 Sites 10657, 10261, 10262, 10991, and 10527 are all within close proximity to multiple bus stops, although each site is located some distance from the closest railway station and cycling route. The requirement included in Policies PP19, PP20, PP21, PP22, PEP7, and PEP8 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area as development occurs and is occupied. Furthermore, all policies promote the incorporation of active travel links to enhance connectivity to the surrounding area. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP20, PP21, PP22 and PEP8 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. For Policy PP19 the improved effect is reported as minor positive given the policy requirement for development to secure a new link road. The effect is combined with a minor negative given that while this improvement is likely to help address congestion in the area, it will do little to encourage travel by active

modes. While Policy PEP7 has not been appraised policy-off, the land safeguarded is well related to existing bus stops but is not close to a railway station or PRoW. Given the existing accessibility of this safeguarded site and the requirements included in the policy text, an overall negligible effect is recorded in relation to Policy PEP7 for SA objective 4.

5.313 Policies PP19, PP20, PP21, and PP22 require residential development to include safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any PRoWs. The policies also stipulate that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement. These requirements are likely to support the health and wellbeing of new residents in terms of access to recreation. Policy PP19 also requires the delivery a Tiptree Country Park of approximately 27ha. As such the requirements of Policy PP19 are likely to have benefits that exceed those reported for the other policies appraised in this section. However, with the exception of the site allocated through Policy PP22, all residential sites are not located close to a healthcare facility. Given that access to healthcare facilities is not addressed in relation to any of the residential site allocation policies for Tiptree a significant positive effect is not considered appropriate for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing**. As such no change is expected to the minor positive effect recorded for Policies PP19, PP20, PP21 and PP22. The employment land safeguarded and allocated through Policies PEP7 and PEP8 support active travel routes as part of any new employment growth. However, these policies do not address access to open space that might otherwise support improved recreational access for employees at these locations. As such a minor positive effect is recorded for Policies PEP7 and PEP8 in relation to SA objective 5.

5.314 Site 10657 is located close to both a primary and secondary school, although is some distance from the district centre. Policy PP19 requires the delivery of a link road within the site to connect the B1022 and B1023 which could support improved access to local services and facilities. Furthermore, this policy requires that development of the site should meet the specific infrastructure requirements of the IDP which could support education provision in the area. The policy requirements are not considered to be of the scale to

warrant a significant positive effect and therefore the minor positive effect identified through the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities** remains applicable. The remaining residential site allocation policies appraised in this section (PP20, PP21 and PP22) do not include requirements that would support improved service provision in the area and therefore the policy-off appraisal remains applicable. The appraisal of Policies PEP7 and PEP8 also reflect the proximity of the land safeguarded and allocated for employment uses to town centre locations with no relevant requirements included in the policy text. Given that the land safeguarded through Policy PEP7 is not well related to Tiptree District Centre but that the land allocated through Policy PEP8 is within 300m of that centre, a minor negative and minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6 for these policies, respectively.

5.315 Sites 10657, 10261, and 10262 are located close to a number of Listed Buildings at the northern edge of Tiptree and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of these sites. Policies PP19, PP20 and PP21 which allocate these sites set out that development should conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets. Site 10991 is located within the southern boundary of Tiptree and is approximately 150m from two Grade II Listed Buildings and an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of this site. Policy PP22 includes similar requirements for development to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of each policy, an improved effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for each allocation. As such an uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP19, PP20 and PP21 and an uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP22 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect recorded for Policies PP19, PP20 and PP21 acknowledges the potential sensitivities of each location in relation to the historic environment. Policies PEP7 and PEP8 safeguard and allocate land for employment uses that could also have implications for the historic environment. Land is safeguarded for employment uses beyond the northern boundary of Tiptree by Policy PEP7. There is potential for impacts on Hill Farmhouse Grade II Listed Building that is adjacent to this land. However, the policy requires that development at the site conserves and where appropriate, enhances the significance of heritage assets

(including Hill Farmhouse). Therefore, an uncertain minor effect is recorded for Policy PEP7 in relation to SA objective 7. While mitigation is set out in the policy requirements, the residual minor negative effect reflects the potential sensitivities of the location. Policy PEP8 allocates land at the south boundary of Tiptree that is within 110m of a Grade II Listed Building. Given that no mitigation is required by Policy PEP8, an uncertain minor negative effect remains applicable for this policy.

5.316 Sites 10261, 10262 and 10991 are close to areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that there is potential for development of site 10262 to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area, while the development of sites 10261 and 10991 is likely to result in little/no harm, particularly given that the habitats in question are considered to be in poor-moderate or poor condition. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of these three sites in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Site 10657 contains a large element of the Eden Wood Local Wildlife Site and overlaps a portion of the Inworth Wood Local Wildlife Site. This site also contains an area of priority habitat hedgerows. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that there is potential for development of site 10657 to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area. The priority habitats within and adjacent to the site are recorded to be in moderate condition. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to SA objective 8. Policies PP19, PP20 and PP22 emphasise the achievement of onsite biodiversity net gain and include mitigation that relates to the specific habitats identified within the land set out by these policies (e.g. grassland, woodland and hedgerows). Furthermore, Policy PP19 requires that the development of the site is to incorporate a new country park which is likely to help support new habitat provision in the area. Policy PP21 does not include reference to biodiversity net gain but requires that development should mitigate loss of hedgerows and grassland. As such an improved effect is expected for each policy in relation to SA objective 8, with a negligible effect recorded for Policies PP20, PP21 and PP22. For Policy PP19 a minor positive effect is recorded. While this site has increased sensitivities given that it includes land within a Local Wildlife Site, the delivery of the new country park at this location is expected to have substantial benefits for ecology in the area. Policies PEP7 and PEP8 safeguard or allocate land for employment uses that could have

impacts on biodiversity assets. The land safeguarded by Policy PEP7 lies close to Perry's Wood Local Wildlife Sites and the land allocated by Policy PEP8 includes an area of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies the potential for development at land allocated by Policy PEP8 to have significant harm on biodiversity assets. No mitigation is set out in Policy PEP7 in relation to biodiversity, however, Policy PEP8 requires that employment uses at the site should protect and ensure the area of priority habitat within its boundaries. As such an unchanged minor negative effect remains applicable for Policy PEP7 and an improved minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PEP8 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.317 The land surrounding Tiptree is identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. As such the residential sites proposed for allocation that lie beyond the settlement boundary (10261, 10262 and 10657) are identified through the policy-off appraisal as having an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP19 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. Furthermore, the development of the site to incorporate a new country park could provide opportunities for improving the transition of the settlement edge to the countryside. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9 for Policy PP19. The other policies proposing residential allocations in this section (PP20, PP21 and PP22) do not include requirements that would benefit the local landscape. As such an uncertain minor negative effect remains applicable for Policies PP20 and PP21. A negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP22 as it lies within the boundary of Tiptree. Policies PEP7 and PEP8 set out employment land for safeguarding and allocation beyond the northern boundary of Tiptree and within its southern boundary, respectively. The land identified through Policy PEP8 is required to be developed to retain the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation which is likely to help mitigate the potential for adverse effects on existing settlement boundary and the transition from the settlement to the countryside. As such an uncertain minor negative effect and uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PEP7 and PEP8, respectively, in relation to SA objective 8.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PEP7 safeguards land for employment uses in line with the adopted Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood plan will help to address the sensitivities of the site should the safeguarded land progress towards development. However, the site is adjacent to the Grade II listed Building Hill Farmhouse and the policy could help to mitigate adverse effects relating to this heritage asset by requiring that its setting is appropriately considered in relation to its conservation and enhancement.
- Council response: The following text was added to Policy PEP7: Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes the Grade II listed Building Hill Farmhouse.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PEP8 proposed land for allocation that includes areas of priority habitat. The policy could be strengthened by requiring development to protect and enhance these areas.

Council response:

The following text was added to Policy PEP8: Protection and enhancement of the areas of priority habitat within the site.

SA team recommendation:

- The land proposed for allocation through Policy PEP8 forms part of the existing settlement edge and development could be required by the policy to maintain the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation to limit the potential for adverse impacts on the landscape setting.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PEP8: Retain the existing boundary hedgerows and vegetation to limit the potential for adverse impacts on the landscape setting.

West Mersea

- Policy PP23: Land East Dawes Lane, West Mersea

Proposed for allocation for approximately 300 homes.

Table 5.35: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10627a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP23
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A

SA objectives	Site 10627a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP23
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	0	0

5.318 The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement, including the district centre. A minor negative effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from both a railway station and cycle route but is within 300m or less of a bus stop. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

5.319 The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of open space of at least 5ha within the site. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10627a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirements of the policy will not address access to healthcare facilities from the site it will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and therefore an improved minor positive effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 5.

5.320 Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of a Listed Building that lies within 100m of its southern boundary. Policy PP23 includes

requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.321 Site 10627a is within 1km of Blackwater Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat. The minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity** reflects the proximity of the site to nationally designated biodiversity sites. Development at the site could potentially result in disturbance and other forms of degradation of habitats at Blackwater Estuary. However, Policy PP23 requires development at the site to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures including enhancement of retained grassland, delivering of standing freshwater habitat to support the Essex LRNS and requirements for development to avoid impacts on overwintering birds. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

5.322 Site 10627a is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site has therefore been recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP23 includes requirements that development must include screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape and reflects and reinforces rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- The site is located on the settlement edge some distance from the nearest district centre and services and facilities at this location. Policy PP23 could include requirements for improved links to the district centre, including by public transport and active travel.

Council response:

- Text was added to policy PP23 to refer to connection to the district centre.

Wivenhoe

- Policy PP24: Land North West of the Fire Station, Wivenhoe

Proposed for allocation for approximately 175 homes.

Table 5.36: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10755a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP24
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+

SA objectives	Site 10755a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP24
SA6: Services and facilities	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.323 The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Wivenhoe. A minor positive effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from a railway station but is within 300m or less of a bus stop and 800m or less of a cycle route. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes. However, they are not of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded. Therefore, a minor positive effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

5.324 The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents and community integration given that it requires the provision of a new community space and pedestrian access to the proposed adjacent allotments. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10755a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity

to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirements of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and other facilities that support wellbeing. However, it does not address access to healthcare facilities from the site and therefore the minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable.

5.325 The development of the site is required by Policy PP24 to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The site is located close to a primary school and local centre but some distance from the nearest secondary school and higher order centre. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP24 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.326 The development of the site has potential to harm the setting of the several designation heritage assets which lie 101-250m from the site. Policy PP24 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

5.327 Site 10755a is within 600m of Upper Colne Marshes SSSI and is also within 250m of Colne Local Nature Reserve and areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat. However, as the site is close to a nationally and locally designated biodiversity site, a significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10755a in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP24 requires development at the site to provide tree belts and/or hedgerows to screen the site and to enhance hedgerow condition and establish grassland habitats along road verges. Considering the policy requirements and the findings of the Biodiversity Assessment, an improved minor negative effect is expected for Policy PP24 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.328 Site 10755a is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site has therefore been recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Given the screening requirements set out in Policy PP24, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

5.329 The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP24 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Abberton and Langenhoe

- Policy PP25: View Park, Abberton and Langenhoe

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes.

Table 5.37: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10618a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP25
SA1: Housing	+	+

SA objectives	Site 10618a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP25
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.330 The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the provision connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Abberton and Lagenhoe. A minor negative effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from both a railway station and cycle route but is within 300m or less of a bus stop. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a

positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

5.331 The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10618a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirements of the policy will not address access to healthcare facilities from the site it will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space. However, the improvements are not considered to be of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being identified and therefore no change is recorded in relation to the minor positive effect expected for SA objective 5.

5.332 Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of the several historic assets (including Grade II Listed Buildings Tudhoe House and Gun House) which lie less than 100m from the site. Policy PP25 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.333 Site 10618a is adjacent to several areas of priority habitat (traditional orchards). The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat, given that it includes grassland which is in poor condition and hedgerows in moderate condition. Considering the proximity of the site to priority habitats to the east and the findings of the Biodiversity Assessment, a minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10618a in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Development at the site could potentially result in disturbance and other forms of degradation of habitats at the sites in question. However, Policy PP25 requires development at

the site to achieve biodiversity net gain and to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures including enhancement of higher distinctiveness grassland and retention of mature trees and hedgerows. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

5.334 Site 10618a is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site was therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9:**

Landscape. Policy PP25 includes requirements that development must incorporate screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

5.335 The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water.** Policy PP25 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Boxted

- Policy PP26: Land North of Boted Straight Road, Boted Cross

Proposed for allocation for approximately 150 homes.

Table 5.38: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10676	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP26
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	--?	--?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.336 The policy requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the securing of active travel links and connections to the settlement of Boxted. A minor negative effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any

requirements included in the policy given that it is some distance from both a railway station and cycle route but is within 300m or less of a bus stop. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP26 in relation to SA objective 4.

5.337 The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10676 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. The requirements of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their ability access to opportunities for recreation. However, it does not address the ability of residents in the area to access healthcare facilities and therefore the minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable for Policy PP26.

5.338 The development of the site is required by Policy PP26 to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. The site is located close to a primary school but some distance from the nearest secondary school and town, district or local centre. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP24 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.339 Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of the several heritage assets which are adjacent to the site to the south, including Grade II Listed Buildings Wheelwrights House, Box Cottage and Medlars. Policy PP26 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.340 Site 10676 is within 250m of several areas of priority habitat such as an area of deciduous woodland adjacent to the north and a traditional orchard to the west within 100m. However, the Biodiversity Assessment concluded that the site itself has limited natural value with development likely to have little/no harm on biodiversity asset. Given the proximity of areas of priority habitat which might be affected by development, a minor negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. However, Policy PP26 requires development at the site to achieve biodiversity net gain including through providing buffering to the woodland priority habitat and potentially creating areas of higher distinctiveness grasslands. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

5.341 The site lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP26 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Chappel and Wakes Colne

- Policy PP27: Swan Grove, Chappel

Proposed for allocation for approximately 35 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

- Policy PP28: Land West of Station Road, Wakes Colne

Proposed for allocation for approximately 200 homes.

■ Policy PEP12: Land at Wakes Hall Business Centre

Proposed for allocation for employment uses.

Table 5.39: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 11113	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP27	Site 10649	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP28	Site 10647	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP12
SA1: Housing	+	+	++	++	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+	+	++	-	-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?

SA objectives	Site 11113	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP27	Site 10649	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP28	Site 10647	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP12
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	-	-
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	0	--	-	-	-

5.342 Sites 10647, 10649 and 11113 are all located relatively close to Chappel and Wakes Colne Railway Station, with site 10649 located within 100m of the station. There are multiple bus stops within 300m of sites 11113 and 10649, however site 10647 is not located close existing bus stops. All three sites are located some distance from the nearest cycle route. The requirement included in Policies PP27, PP28 and PEP12 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, Policies PP27 and PP28 include additional requirements for pedestrian access to be achieved within and throughout the development sites to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections should be secured to the nearby settlement. Policy PP28, specifically, requires site 10649 to include a link road between Station Road and the A1124, restrict

through-traffic on Station Road, and create a pedestrian priority route along its lower section for safe access to the railway station. The more substantial requirements set out through Policy PP27 and particularly Policy PP28, given the potential to support increased connectivity to the railway station, are expected to help encourage travel by active modes. An improved significant positive is therefore recorded for Policy PP28 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. The requirements set out through Policy PP27 are not considered substantial enough for a significant positive effect to be recorded and therefore the effect recorded in relation to SA objective 4 remains minor positive. The requirements of set out through Policy PEP12 are not expected to greatly encourage travel by sustainable modes and therefore the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 4 also remains applicable.

5.343 All three sites are located close to public open space and PRoWs. While site 10649 is close to the railway line, less than 25% of its area is affected by noise from this source and sites 11113 and 10647 are affected by this issue. However, Chappel and Wakes Colne are not located close to an existing healthcare facility and new residents at sites 11113 and 10649 would have to travel some distance to access this type of facility. Policies PP27 and PP28 require residential development to include safe pedestrian access connecting to existing footways and PRoWs and to incorporate green infrastructure and ensure recreational access to the countryside. Policy PP28 requires that green infrastructure delivered at that site should amount to approximately 8ha to provide open space, recreation and community uses. These requirements are likely to help encourage physical activity among new residents. However, there is no requirement in either policy to address the lack of access to healthcare facilities in the area. As such the policy requirements are not considered substantial enough to warrant a significant positive effect and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable in relation to **SA objective 5: Community and health** and wellbeing for Policies PP27 and PP28. Policy PEP12 seeks to ensure the safe development of land at Wakes Hall Business Centre for employment and does not address issues relating to health and wellbeing. Therefore, the minor positive effect previously recorded in relation to SA objective 4 also remains applicable for this policy.

5.344 All of the sites proposed for allocation at Chappel and Wakes Colne are located close to designated heritage assets. Sites 10649 and 11113 are located adjacent to the Chappel Conservation Area which also contains numerous Listed Buildings, while site 10647 is located close to several Grade II Listed Buildings. As such, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of all sites in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Policies PP27, PP28 and PEP12 require the development of sites to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for Policies PP27, PP28 and PEP12. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.345 Site 10649 is adjacent to the Acorn Wood Local Wildlife Site, while sites 10647 and 11113 are within close proximity to priority habitats. Site 11113 is also close to Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that there is potential for development of sites 10647 and 10649 to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area. The Assessment states that development at site 11113 is likely to result in little/no harm to biodiversity assets, however it notes the proximity of Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green Local Wildlife Site. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of each site in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The requirement of Policies PP27 and PP28 to provide green infrastructure is set out in the text to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation and to benefit landscape. Furthermore, Policy PP27 requires that onsite biodiversity net gain measures should focus on enhancing hedgerow condition, buffering Chappel Ponds and Millennium Green Local Wildlife Site, and maintaining and strengthening ecological connectivity. Policy PP28 requires onsite biodiversity net gain measures to buffer and extend Acord Wood Local Wildlife Site, improve north-south connectivity, and also seeks to establish standing freshwater or woodland habitats in line with the Essex LNRs. These measures are likely to help protect and enhance local biodiversity. As such, an improved negligible effect is expected for Policies PP27 and PP28 in relation to SA objective 8. Policy PEP12 does not include any requirement for development to address the protection of biodiversity

assets in the area and therefore the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 8 remains applicable.

5.346 Much of sites 11113, 10649 and 10647 are located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal for these sites was therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP27 and PP28 stipulate that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. Similarly, Policy PEP12 states that development of the site in question should promote the use of natural screening. These measures are likely to help ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.347 Sites 10647, 10649 and 11113 lie within SPZ 3. Site 11113 lies close to a waterbody and site 10649 includes part of a waterbody. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10647 and 11113 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** and a significant negative effect is recorded for site 10649. Policies PP27 and PP28 require the development of sites to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the significant and minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable for these policies. Policy PEP12 does not include any requirements that would help address water resources in the area and therefore the minor negative effect previously recorded in relation to SA objective 14 also remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendations:

- Policy PEP12 could require the development of employment uses at the site to consider the setting of nearby heritage assets given that it lies within 100m of several Grade II Listed Buildings.
- Policy PEP12 could require the development of employment uses to achieve onsite biodiversity net gain to improve habitat quality and connectivity. This is particularly relevant given its proximity to the areas of deciduous woodland priority habitat to the north west.
- Policy PEP12 allocates land that is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work. The policy could include specific reference to mitigation measures, such as requiring development of the site to promote the use of natural screening including through the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and supporting the incorporation of new native features.

Council response:

- Text was added to Policy PEP12 to address heritage assets. The following text was added to the policy about landscape: Promote the use of natural screening through the retention of existing trees and hedgerows and incorporation of new native features. Policy EN2 includes the biodiversity net gain requirement (which is mandatory).

Copford

- Policy PP29: Land East of School Road, Copford

Proposed for allocation for approximately 300 homes. The land proposed for allocation was appraised policy-off as sites 10226 and 10611.

Table 5.40: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10226	Site 10611	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP29
SA1: Housing	++	+	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	0	0	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	0
SA7: Historic environment	-?	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	0

5.348 Policy PP29 requires that the development of site 10226 and 10611 should be supported by a Minerals Resource Assessment. This requirement is likely to help support more efficient use of land and natural resources by

preventing the loss of access to viable minerals in the plan area. However, the policy would not mitigate the loss of greenfield land and Grade 2 and 3 agricultural soils within the site. As such the significant negative effect recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land** remains applicable.

5.349 Sites 10226 and 10611 are located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300 metres of the sites. The requirement included in Policy PP29 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections are provided to the settlement. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes and therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.350 Sites 10226 and 10611 are within close proximity to a play space, and other areas of public open space. The sites are also adjacent to a PRoW. Policy PP29 supports these opportunities by requiring that residential development includes safe pedestrian access connecting to the site to existing footways and PROWs. The policy also stipulates that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents particularly given its close proximity to both an existing area of open space and PRoW. However, the sites are not located close to an existing healthcare facility. The policy does not directly address this issue, however it requires the delivery of a replacement village hall within the sites, which is likely to support community integration. Additionally, provision for appropriate services, facilities, and uses to create a Local Centre will be integrated into the masterplanning process. This Local Centre could help meet some of the community needs, such as local retail and some additional social amenities. However, although the site is relatively close to an existing primary school in Copford, there is no existing secondary school or town centre location within the settlement. As such, given the policy requirements, an improved minor positive effect is recorded for in relation to **SA**

objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing, whilst an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**.

5.351 The land proposed for allocation lies within 250m of a number of Grade II Listed Buildings, and as such, an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Policy PP29 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets, noting the assets in close proximity. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for the sites.

5.352 Land within the proposed site allocation boundary is adjacent to Pits Wood Local Wildlife Site, which consists of ancient woodland and priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment noted that the development of site 10226 could result in medium harm in relation to the Local Wildlife Site, with site 10611 identified as likely to result in low harm in relation to biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP29 promotes biodiversity net gain by requiring the creation of a buffer zone around the Local Wildlife Site, incorporating a mix of grassland, scrub, and woodland habitats. This buffer is likely to help protect the Local Wildlife Site from recreational pressures associated with the new housing, safeguarding the biodiversity of the area. The policy also seeks to deliver a strategic open space to provide a naturally landscaped community space that is well connected to the wider network of public footpaths. These measures are likely to help contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, an improved negligible effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP29 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.353 Much of sites 10226 and 10611 are located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal for both sites was therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP29 requires that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the

development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are included.

Dedham and Dedham Heath

- Policy PP30: Land South of Long Road, Dedham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes.

Table 5.41: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10547	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP30
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	-	0
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?

SA objectives	Site 10547	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP30
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.354 Site 10547 proposed for allocation is located within close proximity of some bus stops. However, it is not within close proximity of a railway station or cycle route. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP30 requires development at the site to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

5.355 A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10547 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the site's close proximity to a PRow and its position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. However, the site is not within close proximity of a GP surgery or open space. Policy PP30 promotes access to safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. This will help address issues in access

to open space and therefore Policy PP30 is expected to have an improved negligible effect in relation to SA objective 5. However, it is acknowledged that the measures set out in the policy will not address access to healthcare facilities.

5.356 Site 10547 is not within close proximity of historic assets. Therefore, an uncertain negligible effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP30 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. However, as there are no heritage assets close to the site, the effect for Policy PP30 is also expected to be uncertain negligible in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**.

5.357 Site 10547 is within 250m of some priority habitats. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that development of the site would result in little/no harm on biodiversity given that the site itself has limited natural habitat value and is also isolated. However, since the site is within close proximity of priority habitats, a minor negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP30 does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets. Instead, it requires onsite BNG measures to focus on retaining and enhancing the condition of grassland, the retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site, in addition to the provision of hedgerows and/or woodland along the site boundaries. As such, an improved uncertain negligible effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP30 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.358 Site 10547 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP30 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures will help to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

5.359 Site 10547 lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP30 requires development of site 10547 to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14.

Recommendations

SA team recommendations:

- The site is located on the settlement edge some distance from the nearest district centre and services and facilities at this location. Policy PP30 could include requirements for improved links to the district centre, including by public transport and active travel.

Council response:

- The district centre is some distance from the site and it would not be proportionate to require connection to this given the distance and scale of development.

Eight Ash Green

- Policy PP31: Land North of Halstead Road East of Wood Lane, Eight Ash Green

Proposed for allocation for approximately 180 homes.

- Policy PP32: Land North of Halstead Road West of Fiddlers Wood, Eight Ash Green

Proposed for allocation for approximately 250 homes.

- Policy PEP9: Bullbanks Farm, Eight Ash Green

Proposed for allocation for employment.

Table 5.42: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10090	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP31	Site 10656a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP32	Site 10488	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP9
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	++	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0	+	+	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	++	+	++	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?	--?	-?	--?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	--	-	-	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?	-?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0

SA objectives	Site 10090	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP31	Site 10656a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP32	Site 10488	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP9
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.360 Sites 10090, 10656a and 10488 proposed for allocation are located within close proximity of bus stops (particularly site 10656a). However, they are not within close proximity of railway stations or cycle routes. As such, minor negative effects are recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10090 and 10488 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**, while a minor positive effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10656a. Policies PP31, PP32 and PEP9 require development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, policies PP31 and PP32 require pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the sites (10090 and 10656a respectively) to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Eight Ash Green and Tollgate District Centre. Policy PEP9 requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity between the site (10488) and existing footways, and to maximise opportunities for enhanced connectivity to the surrounding area. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded for PP31 (10090) and PEP09 (10488). Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for both site allocation policies in relation to SA objective 4. As PP32 (10656a) already receives a minor positive effect, this remains the same.

5.361 Minor positive effects are expected for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10090, 10656a and 10488 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health**

and wellbeing. In terms of the residential sites (10090 and 10656a), this reflects their proximity to areas of open space and PRowS, and their position away from areas of odour producing uses. However, they are not within close proximity of GP surgeries and experience some noise pollution. For the employment site (10488), this reflects the employment site's proximity to areas of open space and PRowS. Policies PP31, PP32 and PEP9 promote access to safe and active travel routes, while policies PP31 and PP32 also support the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Policies PP31 and PP32 also support contributions towards the provision of a new village hall in Eight Ash Green, and any other site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP. Therefore, policies PP31 and PP32 are both expected to have significant positive effects in relation to SA objective 5, while policy PEP9 is expected to have a minor positive effect. It is acknowledged that the measures set out in policies PP31 and PP32 will not address the issue of access to healthcare facilities and noise pollution.

5.362 Sites 10656a (within a settlement) and 10488 (outside of a settlement) are within 100m and 500m of an historic asset, respectively, while site 10090 (within a settlement) is within 101 to 250m of an historic asset. Therefore, uncertain significant negative effects have been recorded for sites 10656a and 10488 policy-off, while an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for site 10090 policy-off. Policies PP31 and PP32 require development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of these two policies, an improved uncertain minor negative effect and an improved uncertain negligible effect for sites 10656a and 10090, respectively, are recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. The uncertain significant negative effect site 10488 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in PEP09 regarding the historic environment.

5.363 Site 10656a contains a priority habitat (deciduous woodland) and is within 250m of other priority habitats. Site 10090 is also within 250m of priority habitats. All three sites (10090, 10656a and 10488) are within 250m of a Local Wildlife Site, while site 10090 is also within 250m of an area of ancient woodland. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that there is potential for development at all three sites to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area,

albeit low. Given each site's proximity to the aforementioned sites, a significant negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10656a in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**, while minor negative effects were recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10090 and 10488. Policies PP31 and PP32 require onsite BNG measures and the delivery of grassland or woodland habitats within or adjacent to sites 10090 and 10656a, in addition to tree belts, hedgerows and/or areas of woodland. Further to this, policy PP31 (site 10090) requires biodiversity mitigation to include a buffer to the watercourse and to the adjacent ancient woodland to protect it from recreational and other disturbance, while policy PP32 (site 10656a) requires the adjacent Local Wildlife Site to be safeguarded, buffered and protected from recreational pressure associated with new housing. Given the requirements of these two policies, an improved minor negative effect and an improved negligible effect for sites 10656a and 10090 are recorded in relation to SA objective 8, respectively. The minor negative effect site 10488 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in policy PEP9 regarding biodiversity.

5.364 Sites 10090, 10656a and 10488 are located within areas identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisals of the sites are therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative effects in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP31 and PP32 stipulate that screening measures comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures will help to ensure that development of sites 10090 and 10656a are sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, improved uncertain negligible effects are recorded for PP31 and PP32 in relation to SA objective 9. The uncertain minor negative effect site 10488 is expected to have remains, as no mitigation is provided in PEP09 regarding the landscape.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- All of the sites are located some distance from the nearest town, district or local centre. However, Eight Ash Green is relatively well related to Tollgate District Centre and the range of services and facilities at this location. Policies PP31, PP32 and PEP9 could include requirements for improved links towards the district centre, including by public transport and active travel.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policies PP31 and PP32: and to Tollgate District Centre.

Fordham

- Policy PP33: Land East of Plummers, Fordham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 25 homes.

Table 5.43: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10508	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP33
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--

SA objectives	Site 10508	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP33
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.365 Policy PP33 requires that development at the site provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way as well as securing active travel links and connections to the settlement of Fordham. A minor positive effect is identified for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included in the policy given that the site is some distance from a railway station but is within 301-600m of a bus stop and 200m of a cycleway. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes in the area. However, they are not of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded. Therefore, the minor positive effect recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4, remains applicable.

5.366 The policy is likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that it requires the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of site 10508 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects its close proximity to areas of open space and a PRoW, but also its location some distance from the nearest GP surgery. While the requirement of the policy will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space, it will not address access to healthcare

facilities from the site. As such the minor positive effect recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 5 remains applicable.

5.367 Development at the site has potential to harm the setting of the several designated heritage assets including Grade II Listed Buildings Plummers Farmhouse and Thrifts Cottage which lie less than 100m from the site. Policy PP33 includes requirements that development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets close to the site. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for Policy P33. The residual uncertain negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.368 Site 10508 is within 250m of a number of priority habitats and Rectory Wood Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that the site itself has limited natural habitat. As such a minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10508 in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP33 requires development at the site to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures including provision of woodland habitat within or adjacent to the site to support the delivery of strategic creation opportunities in the Essex LNRS. These requirements will help promote the protection of biodiversity at the site and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 8.

5.369 The site is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site was therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP33 includes requirements that development must include screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Great Horkesley

- Policy PP34: Land North of Coach Road, Great Horkesley

Proposed allocation for approximately 400 homes. The land proposed for allocation was appraised policy-off as sites 10691 and 10767.

- Policy PP35: The Old School, Great Horkesley

Proposed allocation for approximately 13 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.44: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10691	Site 10767	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP34	Site 10122a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP35
SA1: Housing	++	++	++	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	++	++
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	-	0	-	0

SA objectives	Site 10691	Site 10767	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP34	Site 10122a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP35
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	-	0
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	0	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	-?	0?	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	--	-	-	-	-

5.370 Sites 10691, 10767, and 10122a are located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300m. The requirements included in Policies PP34 and PP35 for

development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, both policies require pedestrian access to be achieved within and throughout the respective sites to existing footpaths and PRowWs and for development to secure active travel links and connections to the settlement of Great Horkesley. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP34 and PP35 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.371 Policies PP34 and PP35 require residential developments to provide safe pedestrian access connecting the site to existing footways and PRowWs, with PP34 emphasising connections south of Coach Road and links to the existing village hall. Both policies also stipulate that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement, and in the case of Policy PP34, to the existing Village Hall. However, the policy-off appraisal identified that site 10122a lacks nearby access to exiting open space, and all sites are not well related to a healthcare facility. While Policies PP34 and PP35 are likely to support health and wellbeing benefits in relation to access to open space and other community facilities, they do not directly address access to healthcare. As such the minor positive effect identified through the policy-off appraisal for Policy PP34 remains applicable in relation to **SA Objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** and an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to this SA objective for Policy PP35.

5.372 The requirement to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets is set out in Policies PP34 and PP35. Site 10691 is adjacent to a Grade II Listed Building and close to a Scheduled Monument. Site 10767 is also close to a Scheduled Monument and includes Grade II Listed Building (Woodhouse Farmhouse) within its boundaries. Similarly, site 10122a contains two Grade II Listed Buildings (Church of England School and School House) and has several others nearby. As such, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for all sites in relation to **SA Objective 7: Historic environment**. Given that both sites proposed for allocation include heritage assets, it is likely to be difficult to fully mitigate adverse effects relating to integrity and setting. Therefore, a residual uncertain

minor negative effect remains in relation to SA Objective 7 for Policies PP34 and PP35.

5.373 All sites are within close proximity to areas of priority habitats. The Biodiversity Assets identifies that the development of the each of the sites would result in little/no harm with the areas in question of limited natural habitat value. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisals in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP34 requires the retention of hedgerows within the site, and establishment of standing freshwater, grassland or woodland habitats to align with the Essex LNRS, while Policy PP35 supports the retention of mature trees within the site. These measures are likely to help protect and enhance local biodiversity and contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, considering the proximity of the sites to priority habitats but their assessed limited habitat and the mitigation required in the policy text, an improved negligible effect is expected for Policies PP34 and Policy PP35 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.374 All of the land allocated by Policies PP34 and PP35 falls within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the sites in question has therefore been recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Both policies require that features that could support natural screening, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland should be retained as part of development. These measures will help to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

5.375 The land allocated by Policies PP34 and PP35 lies within SPZ 3. The land allocated by Policy PP34 is also adjacent to a water body. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for both proposed allocations in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Both policies require the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Both policies could include reference to the heritage assets within their boundaries and the need to ensure the protection of the assets in question and their respective settings. Where viable, the heritage assets should be brought back into appropriate use.

Council response:

- It is considered that appropriate coverage relating to the historic environment is included in Policies PP34 and PP35.

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP35 could include text to require mitigation measures relating to landscape such as screening through the protection and enhancement of existing hedgerows and mature trees at the northern and eastern edges of site.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PP35: existing hedgerows should be retained and enhanced at the northern and eastern edges of site to provide screening.

Great Tey

- Policy PP36: Land at Earls Colne Road, Great Tey

Proposed for allocation for approximately 125 homes.

Table 5.45: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10686	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP36
SA1: Housing	++	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	+
SA9: Landscape	-?	0
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.376 Site 10686 is located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300 metres. The requirement included in Policy PP36 for development to provide safe and suitable site access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to

warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.377 Policy PP36 requires residential development to include safe pedestrian access connecting to the site to existing footways and PROWs, especially north of Earls Colne Road. The policy also stipulates that development must incorporate green infrastructure, ensure recreational access to the countryside, and establish active travel links to the nearby settlement. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents particularly given its close proximity to both an existing area of open space and PROW. However, the site is located over 1,200 metres from the nearest GP surgery. While Policy PP36 would promote a range of benefits relating to health and wellbeing, it does not directly address this issue and therefore a significant positive effect for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** is not considered appropriate and the minor positive effect remains applicable.

5.378 Site 10686 is required by Policy PP36 to be developed to respond to the historic settlement pattern of the area, including through use of materials which are appropriate to the local landscape character. Policy PP36 also requires the site to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. The site is within 250 metres of two Grade II listed buildings, and within 325 metres of the Great Tey Conservation Area. As such, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.379 The site is not within close proximity of any international, national or local biodiversity and geodiversity assets. Furthermore, the site was assessed as having limited natural habitat value in the Biodiversity Assessment work and likely to result in little/no harm to biodiversity should it be developed. This is reflected in the negligible effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP36 encourages onsite biodiversity net gain measures and the establishment of standing freshwater or woodland habitats to align with the Essex LNRS. These measures are likely to help

enhance local biodiversity and contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, an improved minor positive effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP36 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.380 Much of site 10686 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of site 10686 was therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policy PP36 stipulates that screening measures, such as tree belts, hedgerow, and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures are required by the policy to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce the area's character, tranquillity, and visual quality. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP36 could acknowledge the proximity of site 10686 to the Great Tey Conservation Area, which is within 325m to the south. The policy text could require development to respond positively to the setting of the Conservation Area.

Council response:

- The HIA work undertaken in support of the plan does not identify the site as forming part of the setting of the Conservation Area. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to include a heritage related criterion in the policy.

Langham

- Policy PP37: Land north of Park Lane, Langham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 900 homes.

■ Policy PP38: Land opposite Wick Road, Langham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 10 homes.

■ Policy PEP10: Lodge Lane, Langham

Safeguarded for employment uses. *This land benefits from existing planning permission.*

Table 5.46: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10664	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP37	Site 10291	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP38	Policy PEP10
SA1: Housing	++	++	+	+	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--/+	--	--/+	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	++
SA4: Transport	+	+	-	0	--
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	-
SA6: Services and facilities	-	0	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	--?	-?	--?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	--
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	-?	-?

SA objectives	Site 10664	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP37	Site 10291	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP38	Policy PEP10
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-

5.381 A significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10664 and 10291 in relation to **SA objective 2: Efficient use of land**. This reflects the sites' location on greenfield land and soils of Grade 2 agricultural value. Development within these sites would result in inefficient use of land, including development of best and most versatile agricultural land. The land proposed for safeguarding for employment uses by Policy PEP10 also comprises Grade 2 agricultural soils and a significant negative effect is also recorded for this policy.

5.382 Policy PEP10 outlines that land at Lodge Lane is safeguarded for employment uses. This will support the long term viability of Colchester's economy and therefore a minor positive effect is expected for Policy PEP10 in relation to **SA objective 3: Economic growth**. The minor negative effect recorded for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 3 reflects the policy-off appraisal given that no requirements relating to employment provision are set in the policy text in question. These sites are located some distance from the nearest town centre location and in an area where there is a low concentration of existing jobs.

5.383 Policies PP37 and PP38 require that development provides safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the

development sites to existing footways, as well as active travel links and connections to the settlement of Langham. A minor negative effect is identified for site 10291 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport** without considering any requirements included given that it is not close to a railways station or a cycleway, but is within 300m of a bus stop. A minor positive effect is identified for site 10664 in relation to SA objective 4 through the policy-off appraisal work given that it is some distance from a railway station but is within 300m of a bus stop and 200m of a cycleway. The policy requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes at both locations, and an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP38. However, the policy requirements set out are not considered strong enough to warrant a significant positive in relation to SA objective 4 and therefore the minor positive effect remains applicable for Policy PP37. Policy PEP10 does not address the potential to promote sustainable travel from the land safeguarded. A significant negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 4 given that the land safeguarded is located some distance from the nearest railway station, bus stop and cycleway.

5.384 Policies PP37 and PP38 are likely to support the health and wellbeing of residents given that they require the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Policy PP7 also requires the delivery of a new strategic open space to serve as a community space. The minor positive effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10664 and 10291 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** reflects their close proximity to areas of open space and PRowWs, but also their location some distance from healthcare facilities. For site 10664 the effect also reflects the potential for loss of part of an existing open space as a result of development within its boundaries. While the requirements of the policies will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and community space and they will not support improved access to healthcare facilities in the area. As such the minor positive effect remains applicable for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 5. Policy PEP10 does not address issues relating to health and wellbeing or community integration. A minor negative effect is expected for this policy in relation to SA objective 5 given that the land safeguarded is located some distance from the nearest area of open space but is located close to a PRowW.

5.385 Langham includes a primary school but is some distance from the nearest secondary school and town, district or local centre. The development of site 10664 is required by Policy PP37 to meet any site specific requirements of the IDP, which is expected to include education provision. As such, given that the development of the site would support service provision in the area, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP37 in relation to **SA objective 6: Services and facilities**. There is no text included in Policy PP38 to address service provision in the area and therefore minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 6 reflects the location of site 10291 some distance from the nearest secondary school and town centre location. Similarly, Policy PEP10 does not include text to address service provision in the area and its lack of access to nearby services and facilities at town centre locations means that a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 6.

5.386 An uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10664 and 10291 in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** given that these sites are within 100m of designated heritage assets within Langham, including Grade II Listed Buildings School Farmhouse, Pond Farm Cottage and Mantons. Policies PP37 and PP38 include requirements for development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements set out, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 7. The residual negative effect recorded for these policies denotes the potential sensitivities of the locations. The land safeguarded for employment uses through Policy PEP10 lies within 500m of Grade II Listed Building Langham Lodge. Given that the land in question lies outside of the settlement of Langham, development at the site has potential to result in effects on setting that would be transmitted across a relatively large distance. The policy does not seek to address the potential for effects relating to the historic environment and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 7.

5.387 Sites 10664 and 10291 are both within 250m of areas of priority habitat such as deciduous woodland and traditional orchard. Site 10664 is also within 250m of Black Brook Local Wildlife Site. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that development of these sites would result in little/no harm to biodiversity

assets given that they have limited natural habitat. A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of both sites in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policies PP37 and PP38 require development to incorporate several ecological mitigation measures, including the retention and enhancement of hedgerows and trees and creation and/or enhancement of grassland habitats. The text set out through Policy PP37 requires the delivery of this type of habitat to support the achievement of the Essex LNRS. These requirements will help protect biodiversity and therefore an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP37 and PP38 in relation to SA objective 8. The land safeguarding for employment uses contains an area of priority habitat and is also relatively close to Kiln Wood Local Wildlife Site. As such, given that this policy does not include requirements that would support mitigation in relation to the natural environment, a significant negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8.

5.388 The land at Langham lies within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. As such there is potential for development at this location to result in impacts on more valuable landscapes in Colchester. Policy PP37 includes requirements that development must incorporate screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for this policy in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP38 and PEP10 do not include requirements that would substantially mitigate impacts relating to landscape character and therefore an uncertain minor negative effect is expected for both policies in relation to SA objective 9.

5.389 Langham lies entirely within SPZ 3. Furthermore, site 10664 and the land safeguard for employment through Policy PEP10 is relatively close to a waterbody. Policies PP37 and PP38 require that the development of the sites in question to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. Policy PEP10 does not include any requirements relating to the protection of water resources. As such, a minor

negative effect is recorded all three policies in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- The land safeguarded for employment uses by Policy PEP10 is relatively sensitive in terms of the historic environment and ecology. Furthermore, the land is relatively isolated in terms of its access to sustainable transport links. The policy could require development to incorporate natural screening to help limit the potential for impacts relating to the historic environment and landscape setting. Furthermore, the development of the site could be required to protect and enhance green infrastructure to support the priority habitat within the site. It is recognised that the conditions associated with the planning permission for the development of the land identified in relation to Policy PEP10 is likely to help mitigate a range of effects relating to the potential development of this land.

Council response:

- Policy PEP10 safeguards a site with planning permission and these issues will have been considered through the determination of the application.

Layer de la Haye

- Policy PP39: Land at The Furze, Layer de la Haye

Proposed for allocation for approximately 10 homes.

- Policy PP40: Land West of The Folley, Layer de la Haye

Proposed for allocation for approximately 60 homes.

Table 5.47: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10759	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP39	Site 10758	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP40
SA1: Housing	+	+	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	0?	0?	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	-	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-

5.390 Both sites proposed for allocation are located some distance from the nearest railway station. Site 10759 is also not close to a cycle route, while site 10758 is within 600m of a cycle route. There are multiple bus stops within 300m of both sites. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of both sites in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policies PP39 and PP40 require development at both sites to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policies require that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the sites to existing footpaths and PRowS. Furthermore, the development of the sites should secure active travel links and connections to the settlement of Layer de Haye. These requirements are likely to encourage connectivity and safety for new residents and help to encourage travel by active modes. However, given the relatively limited existing transport provisions at both sites, the requirements set out in the policies are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP39 and PP40 in relation to SA objective 4.

5.391 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10759 and 10758 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the sites' close proximity to areas of public open space, and a PRow and their position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. Both sites are also relatively well related to Malting Green Surgery at Malting Green Road. Policies PP39 and PP40 promote access to and provision of safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. While these requirements are likely to help support the health and wellbeing of new residents, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded in relation to SA objective 5. Policy PP39 and PP40 are therefore both expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective.

5.392 Site 10759 is not located close to any designated heritage assets, while site 10758 is located within 250m of a Grade II Listed Building to the north. This is reflected in an uncertain negligible and uncertain minor negative effect recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**, for sites 10759 and 10758, respectively. Policies PP39 and PP40 requires the development of

sites 10759 and 10758 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for Policy PP40. No change is recorded for the effect for Policy PP39 given the location of the proposed allocation further away from heritage assets in Layer de la Haye.

5.393 Sites 10759 and 10758 are both located within 250m of areas of priority habitat. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of both sites has the potential to result in harm in relation to nearby biodiversity assets. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. No requirements are included in Policy PP39 that are likely to address biodiversity at the site and therefore no change in effect is reported in relation to SA objective. Policy PP40 requires development to achieve onsite biodiversity net gain measures, the retention of mature trees and hedgerows within the site, and the consideration of the creation of Lowland Dry Acid Grassland at the site. These measures are likely to help protect local biodiversity and contribute to habitat connectivity. As such, an improved negligible effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP40 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.394 Much of sites 10759 and 10758 are located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of both sites is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. Policies PP39 and PP40 requires that screening is achieved along the sites' boundaries, through the incorporation of hedgerows and trees. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10758 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce existing character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP39 and PP40 in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PP39 could include text regarding mitigation measures such as screening through the retention of existing hedgerows, trees and vegetation, particularly along The Folley at its eastern boundary. This would help to support the sensitive integration of the site into the existing landscape.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PP39: Screening through the retention of existing hedgerows, trees and vegetation, particularly along The Folley at its eastern boundary to support the sensitive integration of the site into the existing landscape.

Rowhedge

- Policy PP41: Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes. *This site is carried forward from the adopted Local Plan.*

Table 5.48: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10956a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP41
SA1: Housing	++	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	++?	++?
SA3: Economic growth	-	-

SA objectives	Site 10956a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP41
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	0

5.395 The site was considered policy-off as having capacity for more than 100 homes and as such a significant positive effect was recorded. The developable area of the site has subsequently been reviewed and the site capacity set out in Policy PP41 is 50 homes. As such a revised minor positive effect is recorded for Policy PP41 in relation to **SA objective 1: Housing**.

5.396 Site 10956a is not located close to a railway station or a cycle route, but it is within close proximity of several bus stops. As such, a policy-off minor negative effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP41 requires development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy stipulates that pedestrian access must be achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRowWs and that active travel links and connections should be provided to the settlement of Rowhedge.

These requirements are likely to encourage travel by active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP41 in relation to SA objective 4.

5.397 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10956a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** given that it is adjacent to areas of open space, and a PRoW and is also relatively close to Rowhedge Surgery along Rectory Road. Policy PP41 supports this positive effect by promoting active travel routes and requiring the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. These requirements are likely to help protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of new residents. However, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant the identification of a significant positive effect. As such no change is expected in relation to the minor positive effect recorded in relation to SA objective 5.

5.398 Site 10956a is adjacent to a Listed Building, and within 500 metres of the Rowhedge Conservation Area. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP41 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets, including that of the Conservation Area. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.399 Site 10956a contains part of an area of priority habitat, is adjacent to Rowhedge Pits Local Wildlife Site and is close to the Roman River SSSI. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that there is potential for development to result in harm to biodiversity assets in the area, although it is noted that the priority habitat within the site may already be in poor to moderate condition. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP41 does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets. However, it requires development to safeguard woodland, retain existing tree cover and

open space, and requires that onsite biodiversity net gain measures are focussed on enhancing the adjacent woodland and improving open mosaic habitats to support ecological resilience. As such an improved minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP41 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.400 Site 10956a is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP41 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries, and that trees will be retained within the site. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10956a is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for site 10956a in relation to SA objective 9.

5.401 Site 10956a lies within SPZ 3, and is adjacent to a watercourse. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP41 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

West Bergholt

- Policy PP42: Land at White Hart Lane, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for approximately 50 homes.

- Policy PP43: Land North of Colchester Road, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes.

- Policy PP44: Land off Colchester Road, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for approximately 100 homes.

- Policy PEP11: Land at Patterns Yard, West Bergholt

Proposed for allocation for employment.

Table 5.49: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10526	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP42	Site 10229	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP43	Site 10749	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP44	Site 10566	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP11
SA1: Housing	+	+	++	++	++	++	N/A	N/A
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0	+	+	+	+	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?	-?	0?	--?	-?	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?	-?	0?	--?	-?	-?	0?

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SA objectives	Site 10526	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP42	Site 10229	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP43	Site 10749	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP44	Site 10566	Site considering mitigation in Policy PEP11
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

5.402 Sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 proposed for allocation are located within close proximity of bus stops, with sites 10229 and 10749 also located within close proximity of a cycle route. None of the sites are within close proximity of a railway station. As such, minor positive effects are recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10229 and 10749, while minor negative effects are recorded for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10526 and 10566. Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 require development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the sites to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. Policy PEP11 supports the provision of 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure, which could incorporate active travel routes. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded for policies PP42 (10526) and PEP11 (10566). Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP42 and PEP11 in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. As policies PP43 (10229) and PP44 (10749) already receive minor positive effects, these remain the same.

5.403 Minor positive effects are expected for the policy-off appraisals of sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. In terms of the residential sites (10526, 10229 and 10749), this reflects their proximity to areas of open space, PRoWs, GP surgeries (particularly 10229 and 10749) and their position away from areas of noise and odour producing uses. For the employment site (10566), this reflects the employment site's proximity to areas of open space and PRoWs. Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 promote access to safe and active travel routes, while Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 also support the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Policies PP43 and PP44 also require any site specific infrastructure requirements from the IDP. Policy PEP11 supports the provision of 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure, which could incorporate active travel routes. Therefore,

improved minor positive effects are recorded for Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 in relation to SA objective 5.

5.404 Sites 10526 (within a settlement) and 10749 (within a settlement) are within 100m of an historic asset, while site 10229 (within a settlement) is within 250m of a heritage asset. The employment site, 10566 (outside of a settlement), is within 500m of a heritage asset. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for sites 10526, 10749 and 10566 policy-off in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**, while an uncertain minor negative effect has been recorded for site 10229 policy-off. Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 require development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of these three policies, improved an uncertain minor negative effect is expected for Policies PP42, PP44 and PEP11, while an improved uncertain negligible effect is expected for Policy PP43 in relation to SA objective 7.

5.405 Sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 are within 250m of priority habitats. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of sites 10526, 10229 and 10566 would result in little/no harm, while the development of site 10749 would result in low harm. Given each site's proximity to priority habitats, a minor negative effect has been recorded for the policy-off appraisal of these sites in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. However, Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland along the site boundaries, in addition to green infrastructure provision. Policy PP44 requires onsite biodiversity net gain measures to focus on hedgerows and enhancing the condition and distinctiveness of grassland, while Policy PEP11 requires the provision 0.7ha of open space and/or green infrastructure. Given the requirements of these policies, an improved negligible effect is expected for all four sites.

5.406 Sites 10526, 10229 and 10566 are located within areas identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan, while site 10749 is located in an area with high inherent landscape value. The policy-off appraisal of sites 10526, 10229 and 10566 was therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative in

relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**, while site 10749 was recorded as uncertain significant negative. Policies PP42, PP43, PP44 and PEP11 require that screening measures comprising locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland are incorporated along site boundaries, with Policy PP44 also requiring no harm to the coalescence break defined in the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan. These measures will help to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policies, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policies PP42, PP43 and PEP11, while an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for Policy PP44 in relation to SA objective 9. The uncertain minor negative effect site 10566 is expected to remain, as no mitigation is provided in Policy PEP11 regarding the landscape, although the provision of open space and/or green infrastructure may help protect the landscape.

5.407 A minor negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of sites 10526, 10229, 10749 and 10566 in relation to **SA objective 14: Water** as the sites are located within SPZ 3. However, Policies PP42, PP43 and PP44 require development to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. These requirements are not expected to address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- Policy PEP11 could be strengthened by including wording regarding the protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and townscape. It could also require that development is delivered to incorporate appropriate screening through the protection and enhancement of native trees and/or hedgerows to ensure screening from the wider landscape.

Council response:

- The following text was added to Policy PEP11: Screening from the wider landscape through the protection and enhancement of native trees and hedgerows. A heritage criteria was also added to the policy.

Aldham

- Policy PP45: Land off New Road, Aldham

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes.

Table 5.50: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10535a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP45
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0

SA objectives	Site 10535a	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP45
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.408 Site 10535a is located some distance from the nearest railway station and cycling route, although there are multiple bus stops within 300m. The requirement included in Policy PP45 for development of the site to provide safe and suitable access, could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Furthermore, the policy requires that pedestrian access is achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRoWs and that active travel links and connections are provided to the settlement of Aldham. These requirements may help to encourage travel by active modes. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.409 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10535a in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** given that it is within close proximity of a green space (at St Margaret's Church), and within walking distance of a PRoW. The effect recorded also reflects the location of the site some distance from the nearest healthcare facility but also areas affected by noise pollution and odours. Policy PP45 is likely to support the positive effect by promoting access to and provision of safe and active travel routes, green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. However, the policy does not directly address access to healthcare. Therefore, no change is recorded for Policy PP45 for minor positive effect previously recorded in relation to SA objective 5.

5.410 The site is close to Grade II* Listed Building Church of St Margaret and St Catherine as well as a number of Grade II Listed Buildings and as such an uncertain significant negative effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal in

relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment**. Policy PP45 requires the site to be developed to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.411 The site is not within close proximity of any international, national or local biodiversity and geodiversity assets. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that the site has limited natural habitat value and its development would result in little/no harm. This is reflected in the negligible effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Policy PP45 stipulates that any loss of hedgerows to allow for suitable access must be compensated for. Further to this, the provision of green infrastructure connections could benefit biodiversity by supporting habitat connectivity. However, the requirements outlined in the policy are not sufficient enough to warrant the identification of a positive effect in relation to SA objective 8. As such the negligible effect remains applicable.

5.412 Site 10535a is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP45 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries and that development should respond to the historic settlement pattern and use materials which are appropriate to local landscape character. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10535a is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for site 10535a in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are included.

Birch and Layer Breton

- Policy PP46: Land at Birch Green, Birch

Proposed for allocation for approximately 15 homes.

Table 5.51: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10121	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP46
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	+	+
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	-	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0

SA objectives	Site 10121	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP46
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.413 The development site 10121 is required by Policy PP46 to secure active travel links and connections to the settlement of Birch Green. As such there is potential for the policy to support increases in travel by active modes in the area. The site is relatively close to existing bus stops along Birch Street and part of the National Cycle Network but is not close a railway station. The requirements of the policy are not considered to be of a scale to result in an improvement to the minor positive effect already recorded in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**.

5.414 Policy PP46 requires that the development of site 10121 provides an area of open space onsite and links from this new area to the existing open space to the north. Furthermore, development should also ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. These requirements are likely to help promote the health and wellbeing of new residents. While Policy PP46 includes a range of benefits relating to health and wellbeing, the policy would not address the lack of access to a healthcare facility at the settlement. As such a significant positive effect for **SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing** is not considered appropriate and the minor positive effect remains applicable.

5.415 The development of site 10121 is required by Policy PP46 to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). The site is within close proximity to Mill House and Whitecroft Grade II Listed Buildings and therefore an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The

residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.416 Site 10121 lies adjacent to an area of priority habitat to the east and relatively close to a Layer Breton Heath Local Wildlife Site to the south east. The Biodiversity Assessment identified that the development of the site would result in little/no harm given that natural habitat with the site noted to be of limited ecological value. This is reflected in the minor negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. Given that the policy sets out the requirement for mitigation including grassland compensation and any mitigation set out in protected species surveys as well as BNG measures such as tree planting, an improved negligible effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 8**.

5.417 The site lies within a more rural area of Colchester at the relatively small settlement of Birch Green. It lies on land identified as having a medium landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of site 10121 in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape** was therefore recorded as uncertain minor negative. The requirement of the policy for screening comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows to ensure that development is sensitively integrated is likely to help mitigate adverse impacts on the immediate surroundings. Therefore, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Fingringhoe

■ Policy PP47: Land at Picketts Farm, Fingringhoe

Proposed for allocation for approximately 5 homes.

Table 5.52: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10600	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP47
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	-
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.418 Site 10600 proposed for allocation is located within close proximity of some bus stops. However, it is not within close proximity of a railway station or cycle route. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP47 requires development at the site to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

5.419 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10600 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the site's close proximity to areas of public open space and a PRow, and its position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. However, the site is not within close proximity of a GP surgery, which could limit people's access to healthcare. Policy PP47 promotes access to safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. While these requirements are likely to help support the health and wellbeing of new residents, they are not considered to be of a scale to warrant a significant positive effect being recorded in relation to SA objective 5. Policy PP47 is therefore expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective.

5.420 Site 10600 is within 500m of Fingringhoe Conservation Area, which contains a number of listed buildings. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off. Policy PP47 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.421 Site 10600 is within 250m of the Upper Colne Marshes SSSI, Local Wildlife Sites and priority habitats. However, the Biodiversity Assessment concluded that the site itself has limited natural value with development likely to have little/no harm on biodiversity. Given the site's proximity to the aforementioned sites, a significant negative effect was recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP47 requires the creation of a grassland habitat with regard given to the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which identifies a strategic opportunity for grassland habitat north of the site. Policy PP47 also supports the provision of tree belts and hedgerows along the site boundaries. The creation of a grassland habitat will contribute towards habitat connectivity, but not necessarily mitigate any adverse effects development might have on the nearby biodiversity assets. Overall, therefore, a minor negative effect is expected for the site allocated through Policy PP47 in relation to SA objective 8.

5.422 Site 10600 is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP47 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate tree belts and/or hedgerows will be required along site boundaries. This measure, in addition to the creation of a grassland habitat, will help to ensure that development of site 10600 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the existing rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for site 10600 in relation to SA objective 9.

5.423 Site 10600 lies within SPZ 3. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP47 requires development of site 10600 to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 14.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Messing

- Policy PP48: Kelvedon Road, Messing

Proposed for allocation for approximately 25 homes.

Table 5.53: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10634	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP48
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	-	-
SA7: Historic environment	-?	0?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	0	0
SA9: Landscape	-?	0?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0

SA objectives	Site 10634	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP48
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A
SA13: Air quality	0	0
SA14: Water	-	-

5.424 Site 10634 is located some distance from a railway station, and cycling route, although it is close to multiple bus stops. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP48 requires development to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy stipulates that pedestrian access must be achieved within and throughout the site to existing footpaths and PRowWs and that active travel links and connections should be made to the settlement of Messing. These requirements are likely to help encourage travel by active modes. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP48 in relation to SA objective 4.

5.425 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10634 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing** given that it is adjacent to areas of open space (including an area of allotments), and a PRowW. The effect recorded also reflects the site's location some distance from the nearest healthcare facility and outside of areas affected by noise pollution and odours. Policy PP48 supports the potential benefits associated with the site's location by promoting access to and provision of safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Furthermore, the development of the site is required to incorporate a minimum of 1.7ha of public open space. These requirements are likely to support the health and wellbeing of new residents. However, given that the policy requirements would not address access to healthcare facilities from the site, the minor positive effect previously identified in relation to SA objective 5, remains applicable.

5.426 Site 10634 is within 250m of the Messing Conservation Area and this is reflected in the minor negative effect previously recorded for the site in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** in the policy-off appraisal. Policy PP48 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain negligible negative effect is recorded in relation to SA objective 7 for Policy PP48.

5.427 The site is not close to any biodiversity assets or sites. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that its development would result in little/no harm to biodiversity assets given that it has limited natural habitat value. As such a negligible effect is recorded for the site through its policy-off appraisal, in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity**. The policy includes requirements for the development of the site to support the establishment of standing freshwater habitats, which align with opportunities outlined in the Essex LNRS. The requirements are not considered substantial enough to warrant the identification of a positive effect and therefore the negligible effect remains applicable in relation to SA objective 8.

5.428 Site 10634 is located within an area identified as having medium inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain minor negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP45 requires that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. These measures will help to ensure that development of site 10634 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce rural character. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain negligible effect is recorded for Policy PP48 in relation to SA objective 9.

Recommendations

- No recommendations are proposed.

Peldon

■ Policy PP49: Land at St Ives Road, Peldon

Proposed for allocation for approximately 25 homes.

Table 5.54: Summary of SA findings

SA objectives	Site 10621	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP49
SA1: Housing	+	+
SA2: Efficient use of land	--	--
SA3: Economic growth	-	-
SA4: Transport	-	0
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	+	+
SA6: Services and facilities	--	--
SA7: Historic environment	--?	-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--	--
SA9: Landscape	--?	-?
SA10: Climate change	N/A	N/A
SA11: Flood risk	0	0
SA12: Waste	N/A	N/A

SA objectives	Site 10621	Site considering mitigation in Policy PP49
SA13: Air quality	-	-
SA14: Water	-	-

5.429 Site 10621 proposed for allocation is located within close proximity of some bus stops. However, it is not within close proximity of a railway station or cycle route. As such, a minor negative effect is recorded for the policy-off appraisal of the site in relation to **SA objective 4: Transport**. However, Policy PP49 requires development at the site to provide safe and suitable site access, which could help limit the potential for congestion in the area. Additionally, the policy requires pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and public rights of way, as well as the provision of green infrastructure connections and securing active travel links and connections to the settlement. These policy requirements may help to encourage travel by sustainable and active modes; however, they are not of a scale to warrant a positive effect being recorded. Therefore, an improved negligible effect is recorded for the site in relation to SA objective 4.

5.430 A minor positive effect is expected for the policy-off appraisal of site 10621 in relation to **SA objective 5: Community health and wellbeing**. This reflects the site's close proximity to areas of public open space and a PRow, and its position away from areas of noise pollution and odour producing uses. However, the site is not within close proximity of a GP surgery, which could limit people's access to healthcare. Policy PP49 promotes access to safe and active travel routes, the provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside. Moreover, it supports the provision of up to 0.6ha of open space within the site. While these requirements will not address access to healthcare facilities from the site, they will benefit residents at the site and surroundings in terms of their access to open space and therefore Policy PP49 is expected to have a minor positive effect in relation to SA objective 5.

5.431 Site 10621 is within 100m of several Listed Buildings. Therefore, an uncertain significant negative effect has been recorded for the site policy-off.

Policy PP49 requires development to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of nearby heritage assets. Further to this, it requires development to respect the setting of and conserve the local distinctiveness of the Church of St Mary at Peldon, which forms a prominent landmark and is visible from much of the surrounding landscape. Given the requirements of the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded in relation to **SA objective 7: Historic environment** for the site. The residual negative effect is recorded to note the potential sensitivities of the location.

5.432 Site 10621 is within 1km of the Blackwater Estuary SSSI and 250m of a number of priority habitats. The Biodiversity Assessment identifies that there is potential for development to result in medium harm to nearby biodiversity assets, as well as impact established grassland and native hedgerows with trees on site. This is reflected in the significant negative effect recorded for the policy-off appraisal in relation to **SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity**. Policy PP49 does not directly address the mitigation of effects relating to these biodiversity assets. Instead, it requires development to retain mature trees and hedgerows within the site, in addition to the provision of hedgerows and/or woodland along site boundaries. These requirements are not expected to be sufficient enough to alter the site's policy-off effect. Therefore, overall, Policy PP49 is expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to SA objective 8.

5.433 Site 10621 is located within an area identified as having high inherent landscape value in the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken in support of the plan. The policy-off appraisal of the site is therefore recorded as an uncertain significant negative effect in relation to **SA objective 9: Landscape**. However, Policy PP49 stipulates that screening measures comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along site boundaries. This measure, in addition to the creation of a new open space within the site, will help to ensure that development of site 10621 is sensitively integrated into the landscape, to reflect and reinforce the rural character of the area. As such, given the mitigation set out in the policy, an improved uncertain minor negative effect is recorded for site 10621 in relation to SA objective 9.

5.434 Site 10621 lies within SPZ 3 and is within close proximity of some water bodies. As such, a minor negative effect has been recorded policy-off for the site in relation to **SA objective 14: Water**. Policy PP49 requires the development of the site to demonstrate adequate wastewater management capacity. However, the requirements included will not address the potential for contamination of water resources during construction. As such, the minor negative effect recorded in relation to SA objective 14 remains applicable.

Recommendations

SA team recommendation:

- The location of the site at the smaller settlement of Peldon means that residents at the site will lack immediate access to a range of services and facilities. Policy PP49 could include requirements for improved links to larger settlements in the plan area, including by public transport and active travel.

Council response:

- The recommendation is not proportionate given the distance to larger settlements and scale of development.

Chapter 6

Cumulative effects

6.1 The cumulative effects assessment considers the total effects of the policies and site allocations in the draft Local Plan document taken as a whole on each of the SA objectives. A summary of the likely sustainability effects of these is presented in Table 6.1 below. The effects of each individual policy (including the site allocation policies) set out in the plan are presented in Table 6.2 later in the chapter.

Table 6.1: Cumulative effects of the draft Colchester Local Plan

SA objective	Cumulative effect of Local Plan policies
SA1: Housing	++
SA2: Efficient use of land	+/-
SA3: Economic growth	++
SA4: Transport	++/-
SA5: Community and health and wellbeing	++/-
SA6: Services and facilities	++/-
SA7: Historic environment	+/-?
SA8: Biodiversity and geodiversity	--/+
SA9: Landscape	+/-?
SA10: Climate change	+/-
SA11: Flood risk	+/-
SA12: Waste	+

SA objective	Cumulative effect of Local Plan policies
SA13: Air quality	+/-
SA14: Water	+/-

Total effects of policies in the draft Local Plan document

SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

6.2 In line with Policy ST5: Colchester's housing need, the draft Local Plan requires the delivery of at least 20,800 new homes up to 2041, equating to an annual average of 1,300 dwellings, which will meet the housing need in Colchester District. This figure aligns with the Housing Needs Assessment [See reference 29] undertaken in support of the Local Plan. The overall distribution of new housing across Colchester is guided by the spatial strategy (Policy ST3), which focuses development within the urban area and also includes substantial development at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. Further development is allowed for at the large and medium settlements. Limited amounts of development are to be delivered within the small settlements, which could support home ownership for local people at these locations. While meeting the housing need in Colchester, the Local Plan will also help to provide a mix of housing sizes types and tenures in line with Policy H1: Housing mix. The delivery of affordable homes in Colchester will be of particular importance, where average house prices have increased in recent years. Policy H2: Affordable housing, requires larger developments to deliver 30% affordable housing. The provision of specialist housing (such as housing for older people)

and custom and self-build housing is supported through Policies H5: Specialist housing including housing for an aging population and H6: Self and custom build. Furthermore, the specific housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople is addressed through Policy H7. This policy sets out that permissions will be granted to meet the need of approximately 15 pitches between 2024 and 2041. The policy also sets out a number of criteria that this type of development should meet to ensure that accommodation encourages social inclusion and sustainable patterns of living including by providing good access to local services. The criteria will ensure that the accommodation provided is of a suitable quality to ensure good health and wellbeing.

6.3 It is important to note that there is some potential tension between the policies in the Local Plan that support new housing development and those that seek to protect and enhance the natural and built environment, such as Policies EN1: Nature conservation designated sites, and LC1: Landscape. However, it is expected that such measures will serve to direct growth to the most appropriate locations within the Local Plan area and will not prevent the delivery of the required level of development over the plan period.

6.4 Overall, a cumulative significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 1: Housing.

SA objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

6.5 The plan area largely comprises large swathes of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land to the west and urban land and non-agricultural land to the east, around the City of Colchester. The spatial strategy (Policy ST3) directs much of the development required to the urban area and the larger settlements that sit directly below this in the settlement hierarchy and supports the re-use of previously developed land. However, large amounts of development are also directed to greenfield sites that comprise best and most versatile agricultural land, particularly to the north and west of the main urban area. It is notable that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community comprises a large greenfield site that takes in areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural soils.

6.6 Given the scale of growth required over the plan period the loss of greenfield land that comprises best and most versatile agricultural land is unlikely to be fully mitigated in Colchester. It is noted that the development principles included under the spatial strategy for the District set out that the highest areas of sensitivity will receive the lowest levels of growth in the Local Plan, which could limit the loss of higher value soils. This approach could be strengthened through the implementation of Policy PC4: Development density, which requires development densities to make efficient use of land. Further to this, Policy ENV9: Pollution and contaminated land states that developments on contaminated land may be required to be supported by remedial works. This policy is likely to support a more efficient use of land resources, allowing for polluted land to be brought safely back into use.

6.7 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 2: Efficient use of land.

SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

6.8 Through Policy ST6: Colchester's employment needs, the draft Local Plan sets out the delivery of at least 41.7ha of employment land. This will be achieved through existing and new allocations together with existing planning permissions up to 2041 and will contribute significantly towards job creation and economic growth. The amount of employment land set out in the plan aligns with the evidence of the Employment Study [\[See reference 30\]](#). Land allocated and safeguarded for employment is largely focussed within the urban area and the large settlements in the settlement hierarchy including Tiptree and Marks Tey. These are locations at which a high number of residents will be able to access new employment opportunities including by sustainable modes of transport. The plan also includes some employment land at the medium settlements of Chappel and Wakes Colne, Eight Ash Green, Langham and

West Begholt to safeguard and allow for small expansions at these locations that will support access to jobs away from the urban area. Importantly, the Local Plan also recognises the importance of key employment supporting sites such as the Knowledge Gateway (Policy PEP2) and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (Policy ST9) as well as the nearby University of Essex as supporting research and learning in Colchester (Policy UE1). These elements of the plan are expected to be particularly important in terms of supporting a range of highly skilled job opportunities and driving innovation.

6.9 The plan sets out the overarching approach to the protection and enhancement of employment provision in a range of locations across the Colchester area through Policy E1: Protection of employment. Further to this, Policy E4: Retail and centres is included in the plan to protect and strengthen the vitality and vibrancy of the town, district, and local centres, that complement the job offer at key employment sites in the plan area. Growth of the tourist and visitor economy is supported in the Local Plan through Policy CS5: Tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage. The Local Plan also includes policies to provide for rural economic growth (Policy E2) as well as diversification at these locations (Policy E3), ensuring that an appropriate level of growth is allowed for in the less developed parts of Colchester.

6.10 Overall, a cumulative significant positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 3: Economic growth.

SA objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

6.11 The amount of development proposed in the Local Plan will likely result in an increase in the numbers of private vehicles on the road as new homes are occupied, particularly given the current reliance on the car as the primary mode of travel in Colchester. There is also potential for the existing issue of

congestion in and around the centre of the Colchester urban area to continue and potentially increase as development in this area continues.

6.12 However, the spatial strategy (Policy ST3) seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable locations which is likely to help reduce the need for new residents to have to travel longer distances. Within the urban area the sites proposed for allocation will benefit from good access to regular bus services. The sites proposed for allocations towards the city centre, as well as those within the Hythe Opportunity Area and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will also benefit from access to existing railway stations and the new RTS. Furthermore, while the spatial strategy includes a level of growth within the small settlements to prevent their stagnation, from which there could be increased need to travel, the distribution of growth also seeks to make good use of railway stations beyond the urban area. This includes the substantial growth to be provided at Marks Tey as well as growth at Chappel and Wakes Colne, both of which benefit from rail links. The scale of employment growth to be delivered over the plan period and its focus mostly towards the urban area and broadly to align with areas of higher housing growth, will also help reduce the need for out commuting from the plan area. It is expected that the inclusion of larger sites for allocation through the plan will support new service provision that will reduce the need to travel for new residents and those in the surrounding areas. Most notably this includes the large scale sites at the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey that will support new infrastructure delivery in line with the evidence of the IDP. The spatial strategy is supported by transport modelling [\[See reference 31\]](#) that identified that the mitigation of growth could be achieved through sustainable travel measures that could achieve a reduction from the volume of business as usual car trips at preferred allocations, committed development and existing settlements.

6.13 Further to this, the Local Plan includes a number of policies that seek to encourage modal shift and increase levels of sustainable transport use and will help to mitigate the increasing population and need for this population to travel. This includes Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel, which requires development to create places that maximise opportunities for active and

sustainable travel for all. This policy requires that development supports the provision of infrastructure to encourage more sustainable modes of travel.

6.14 Overall, a cumulative mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA Objective 4: Transport.

SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

6.15 By directing growth to align with the settlement hierarchy, the spatial strategy (Policy ST3) is likely to help ensure that many new residents have good access to healthcare facilities. These areas also have best access to services and facilities that could help promote community integration. However, it is noted that the scale of development could result in some overburdening of existing provisions. Furthermore, a limited amount of development is directed towards the smaller settlements at which there are no access healthcare facilities, although residents at these locations could benefit from good access to the countryside. The distribution of the A-roads and railway lines in the plan area also means that some of the sites proposed for allocation for residential use could result in residents being exposed to higher levels of noise pollution. This is particularly the case for some of the sites set out for allocation at Marks Tey, Eight Ash Green and Braiswick given the location of the A12, A120 and A1124 roads close to or through these settlements. The potential for new residents to be adversely affected by odours is less of an issue in Colchester. Only the proposed residential allocation to the north of the A120 at Marks Tey lies close to a potential source of odours.

6.16 The potential for increased pressures on healthcare infrastructure, is addressed in the Local Plan by prioritising the retention and delivery of new essential social and healthcare infrastructure. Policy ST1: Health and wellbeing is set out to ensure that residents benefit from a healthy built environment within which there is good access to health facilities and services, open space and a

healthy food environment. This policy also includes a specific requirement for larger developments to be supported by Health Impact Assessments. Furthermore, Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities and CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities will help ensure that social infrastructure needed to support healthy lifestyles and social inclusion are retained and improved in Colchester. Sources of pollution that might adversely affect the local population (such as air, light, noise and water) are required to be avoided or mitigated through Policy ENV9: Pollution and contaminated land. The plan also seeks to ensure that residents can access healthier food options and can make use of active travel that could support improved levels of public health. These aims are addressed directly through Policies PC1: Healthier food environments and PC2: Active and sustainable travel. Several sites proposed for allocation in the plan are of the scale to support substantial service provision to support health and wellbeing and integration. This includes the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree sites as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey. The site at Tiptree, includes the delivery of a new country park which could supplement the benefits of new service provision in the area.

6.17 Overall, a cumulative mixed significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 5: Community and Health and Wellbeing.

SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

6.18 The spatial strategy (Policy ST3) focuses development towards the higher order settlements, which are typically well-connected by public transport and have services and facilities located within convenient walking distance. Development at these locations will also support the viability of town centre locations and existing services in these areas. Furthermore, while many of the proposed residential allocations are not close to secondary schools, all are located at settlements with primary schools, with the exception of Peldon and Aldham. However, as reported in relation to SA objective 5 the relatively large

amount of development set out in plan, including a focus on the urban area, could put increased pressure on local services and facilities. Additionally, the limited level of growth within more rural locations will mean that some residents are likely to have to travel longer distances to access certain types of services and facilities. However, the focus of large amounts of growth at sites including the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey is expected to support new service provision in Colchester and in some cases the delivery of new local centres.

6.19 The Local Plan makes provision for new infrastructure delivery through Policy ST7: Infrastructure and connectivity, which stipulates that development must be supported by provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified as being needed to serve the needs arising from the development. Policies CS1: Retention of community facilities and CS2: Enhancement of and provision for community facilities will help ensure that new development in the plan area is supported by the required level of social infrastructure. Furthermore, Policy CS3: Education provision addresses the provision and retention of education in the District.

6.20 Overall, a cumulative significant positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA Objective 6: Services and Facilities.

SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

6.21 Colchester has a rich and diverse history, and as such it benefits from an abundance of heritage assets. This includes several assets that are on the Heritage at Risk Register. Some of the larger settlements in the District, including Colchester City, Wivenhoe and West Mersea, are partially covered by Conservation Areas. The urban area benefits from numerous Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments, some of which are associated with the area's

Roman past. Due to the extent of designated heritage assets across the Local Plan area, the vast majority of site allocations proposed are located within close proximity to at least one designated heritage asset. This indicates the potential for development to cause harm to the significance of heritage assets and their respective settings.

6.22 Policy ST8: Place shaping principles sets out the design requirements that developments should reflect, including the protection of historic assets and responding to established character and is expected to help mitigate these risks. The strategic approach to ensuring the positive contribution of development to the District's historic environment is set out under Policy EN6: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This policy outlines measures that will help ensure the protection of different types of heritage assets and supports the appropriate adaptive reuse of assets. Additionally, Policy EN7: Archaeology provides guidance on safeguarding archaeological resources and ensuring their preservation during development. Other Local Plan policies that will help to address the conservation of heritage assets indirectly, include design related policies such as Policies PC4: Development density, PC5: Domestic development and PC6: Design and amenity. These policies include further principles relating to the design of developments to help protect existing character in Colchester. Further to this, all of the proposed site allocations which are located within close proximity to a heritage asset have been informed by the undertaking of heritage impact assessment work and are required to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets. This should help to mitigate the potential negative effects of new development on cultural heritage.

6.23 Overall, a mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 7: Historic environment. The effect is uncertain given that effects will be influenced in part by the design of specific development proposals which are yet to come forward.

SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

6.24 Colchester contains or is close to numerous sensitive biodiversity and geodiversity assets. Much of the coastline is designated under international notifications including the Essex Estuaries SAC, the Blackwater Estuary SPA and the Colne Estuary SPA and the south of the District also contains Abberton Reservoir SPA. These SAC and SPAs are notified as Ramsar sites under the Ramsar Convention. Furthermore, the Stour and Orwell Estuary SPA and Ramsar site lies to the north east of the plan area boundary and Hamford Water SAC, SPA and Ramsar lies within 14km of the plan area to the east close to Walton-on-the-Naze. There is also one NNR (Colne Estuary), and nine SSSIs within the plan area, namely Marks Tey Brickpit, Upper Colne Marshes, Roman River, Abberton Reservoir, Blackwater Estuary, Tiptree Heath, Bullock Wood, Cattawade Marshes and Wivenhoe Gravel Pit. Given how constrained Colchester is, there is potential for adverse impacts as a result of the development of many of the residential and employment sites proposed for allocation in the Local Plan. Many of these sites lie close to areas of priority habitats and/or Local Wildlife Sites. However, many of the site allocation policies include mitigation measures, primarily the requirement to achieve biodiversity net gain and/or the provision of green infrastructure to maximise benefits for biodiversity and habitat creation. The sites allocated near internationally and nationally designated areas, including those set out through Policies PP9: North-East Colchester, PP10: Land South of Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester, PP18: Land North of A120, Marks Tey and PP41: Rowhedge Business Park, Rowhedge are of particular importance in terms of the potential for adverse effects on important ecological assets. These sites are close to parts of Bullock Wood SSSI, Roman River SSSI and Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI. Given their sensitive ecological contexts, the policies allocating these sites incorporate specific mitigation measures to address potential environmental impacts. The land proposed for allocation at Tiptree through Policy PP19 could support ecological improvements in the south west of the plan area given that it would include the delivery of a sizeable new country park.

6.25 In addition, the Local Plan includes policies against which development proposals will be decided upon and are likely to help mitigate adverse effects and to bring about some enhancements to the District's ecological networks. The development principles set out under Policy ST8: Place shaping principles require development to protect and enhance the natural environment. The overarching approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity assets and the wider natural environment is set out under Policy EN3: Biodiversity and geodiversity, which requires developments to avoid harm to key species and designated sites. The approach to achieving a more connected and multifunctional network of green and blue infrastructure is set out under Policy GN1: Green network and waterways principles, while Policy EN2: Biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain includes the approach to achieving environmental gains. In addition, the creation and enhancement of the green infrastructure network and elements that could complement the wider network in Colchester is supported through Policies GN3: Local green spaces, GN4: Tree canopy cover and GN6: Retention of open space. Furthermore, the approach to preventing harm to internationally important biodiversity sites in Colchester through the provision of alternative greenspace to divert visitors is set out through Policy GN5: Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace.

6.26 Alongside the SA, a separate HRA of the Local Plan has been undertaken to consider the potential for the Local Plan to impact upon internationally designated biodiversity sites. The Appropriate Assessment undertaken as part of the HRA could not conclude that there would be no adverse effects on integrity of Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar as a result of potential air pollution impacts resulting from the A137. It was concluded that traffic modelling would be required of the A137 to inform the assessment of air pollution. Additionally, it could not be concluded that there would be no adverse effects on integrity of Hamford Water SAC, SPA and Ramsar or Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar as a result of potential water quality issues, in the absence of information from the updated Water Cycle Study. Further work required to inform the Appropriate Assessment will be undertaken to inform the next stage of planmaking.

6.27 Overall, a mixed minor positive and significant negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity.

SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

6.28 The Local Plan seeks to deliver a relatively high number of new homes in Colchester, which could have adverse impacts on the character and quality of the landscape, particularly given the greenfield land take required. It is noted that the Local Plan also provides opportunities to achieve enhancements through high quality and appropriately located new development which may benefit the landscape. The Local Plan spatial strategy (Policy ST3) directs much of the growth to less sensitive locations within the more developed urban area and large and medium settlements. The approach is set out to avoid coalescence between existing settlements in Colchester and to conserve their settings. However, many of sites proposed for allocation are located on greenfield land with a medium inherent landscape value and these locations have a moderate sensitivity to development. A smaller number of sites are located on land with high inherent landscape value, including areas close to Dedham Vale, a designated National Landscape. Additional sites proposed for allocation in areas of higher value landscape include those to the west of the urban area towards Chappel and Wakes Colne and those to the south of the urban towards Abberton, Peldon and West Mersea. The inclusion of appropriate mitigation measures will be of particularly importance when considering proposals for these sites. Most sites included for allocation in the plan incorporate provisions to minimise impacts on landscape character, including screening measures such as locally appropriate tree belts, hedgerows and/or woodland along site boundaries.

6.29 The Local Plan also includes policy that specifically aims to conserve and enhance the quality and character of the landscape, namely Policy LC1: Landscape. In addition, Policy LC2: Dedham Vale National Landscape ensures the protection of the purpose, natural beauty, and special qualities of the National Landscape. The protection of important elements of the coastal landscape and seascape is set out through Policy LC3: Coastal areas. A number of additional policies in the plan (e.g. PC6: Design and amenity and ST8: Place shaping principles) support high quality design within developments

which will further help to enhance the local landscape as well as the existing townscapes and established character.

6.30 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 8: Landscape. The effect is uncertain given that effects will be influenced in part by the design of specific development proposals which are yet to come forward.

SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions

6.31 The analysis of this SA objective does not repeat the discussion of greenhouse gas emissions associated with travel. Instead, this issue is covered in more detail under SA objective 4: Transport. The policies in the plan are drafted to respond to the locally declared climate emergency, and the Council's aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The spatial strategy for the District (Policy SP3) guides the distribution of growth and focuses the most development to the most sustainable and accessible urban areas. In summary, the overall level of growth set out is likely to increase emissions associated with transport as well as construction and the occupation of new homes and businesses, however the distribution of growth to the most sustainable locations and large scale growth points would help to mitigate increases associated with transport. Furthermore, the large scale sites included for development, such as the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, the north east of Colchester, Park Lane Langham and north of Tiptree sites as well as the sites to the north and south of Marks Tey may provide increased potential for new low carbon energy infrastructure (such as district heating and combined heat and power (CHP)) to be provided and for a high number of homes to be connected.

6.32 The plan includes numerous policies that are set out to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. In particular, Policies NZ1: Net zero carbon development (in operation) and NZ2: Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon require the development of energy-efficient, fossil-fuel free buildings, at

which embodied carbon has been minimised through the incorporation of sustainable design and materials. Furthermore, support for the transition away from fossil-fuel powered energy is set out through Policy NZ4: Renewable energy. The plan includes further mitigation through a number of policies that support the use of sustainable materials and the creation of green infrastructure and natural spaces, which is likely to encourage reduction and sequestration of emissions as well as climate resilience. These policies include Policies ST2: Environment and the green network and waterways, GN3: Local green spaces, and PC6: Design and amenity. Through the inclusion of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre (Policy NZ3: Wastewater and water supply), the plan also supports efficient resource use while ensuring that necessary infrastructure is in place to help support increased water efficiency and address water stress in the District. This policy also sets out the overarching approach to ensuring that the District has the required capacity in water supply and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development. The issue of water supply is expected to be of increasing concern in Colchester in light of climate change as the plan period progresses.

6.33 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 10: Climate change.

SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

6.34 The District includes several areas of higher flood risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3) associated with the River Colne, River Stour, Layer Brook, and Roman River and the tributaries of these water courses. These areas take in parts of the south of the District and parts of urban area where the River Colne flows towards Chappel and Wakes Colne. Parts of the District's northern boundary is formed by the River Stour and there are areas of higher flood risk in these locations. Tidal flood risk is a concern along the coastal frontage adjacent to Mersea Island. Furthermore, there are areas of higher surface water flooding risk distributed across the District. The overall scale of development set out in the Local Plan could increase the risk of flooding in the area, as greenfield land

take results in increases in impermeable surfaces. However, very few of the sites proposed for allocation include a substantial area of land affected by Flood Zones 2 and/or 3. These are the sites set through Policies PP15: Hawkins Road, Colchester, OA1: King Edward Quay Opportunity Area and OA2: Land East of Hawkins Road Opportunity Area. The SFRA [\[See reference 32\]](#) undertaken in support of the Local Plan identifies that in addition to these sites, the site proposed for allocation through Policy PP14: Gas Works and Hythe Scrap Yard Site lies within an area of increased flood risk. At least 5% of this site is located within Flood Zone 3b. However, the site allocation policies for areas at risk of flooding contain mitigation to minimise flood risk.

6.35 The development principles set out in Policy ST8: Place shaping principles require that development proposals should address issues of flooding and surface water. Furthermore, development management policies are included in the Local Plan to directly address flood risk in the plan area. Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) supports the positive management of flood risk and water resources including through the requirement for SuDS in new developments. This policy also includes requirements for developments to avoid flood-prone areas and not to increase flood risk on or off-site, as well as promoting proposals that include measures to enhance the flood resilience of new or renovated buildings. In addition, a number of policies support the enhancement and creation of green infrastructure and relates features, in particular Policies EN3: Biodiversity and geodiversity, EN5: New and existing trees and GN1: Green Network and Waterways Principles. These policies have the potential to indirectly contribute to reductions in flood risk by promoting the natural filtration of water resources and incorporation of features that will slow the flow of rainwater, absorb rainwater and reduce erosion.

6.36 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 11: Flood risk.

SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

6.37 The overall scale of housing and employment growth proposed through the Colchester Local Plan will require substantial amounts of natural resources (including water) and inevitably result in an increase in waste generated within Colchester. The allocation of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre will directly help to address the management of wastewater in Colchester as development occurs. However, beyond this allocation, the Local Plan will have limited implications for waste management. The effects of development in terms of minimising waste and managing it in a sustainable manner will depend on factors such as the incorporation of waste management systems and recycling infrastructure at developments, rather than on the location of sites proposed for allocation.

6.38 The Colchester Local Plan includes policy that will help reduce waste generation at new developments through Policy NZ2: Net zero carbon development – embodied carbon, which is expected to encourage the re-use, refurbishment and recycling of existing materials as part of construction. Furthermore, the requirement for new developments to provide refuse and recycling storage area is set out through Policy PC6: Design and amenity. Policy ST7: Infrastructure and connectivity does not specifically refer to waste, but it is assumed that the provision of new infrastructure and developer contributions will support waste management functions in the plan area.

6.39 Overall, a cumulative minor positive effect is expected in relation to SA objective 12: Waste.

SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

6.40 The analysis of this SA objective does not repeat the discussion of air pollution associated with travel. Instead, this issue is covered in more detail under SA objective 4: Transport. The spatial strategy for the District (Policy

SP3), which guides the distribution of growth focuses on directing the most development to the most sustainable and accessible urban areas. In summary, the overall level of growth set out is likely to increase air pollution associated with transport as well as construction and the occupation of new homes and businesses, however the distribution of growth to the most sustainable locations and large scale growth points would help to mitigate increases associated with transport. The District contains an AQMA that is focussed towards the centre of the urban area where there are also noted to be issues related to congestion. While the spatial strategy presents opportunities to reduce the need to travel in the plan area and the uptake of electric and more efficient vehicles will help reduce air pollution from cars, there is potential for growth focussed within the urban area to contribute to the intensification existing air quality issues at the AQMAs.

6.41 Policy ENV9: Pollution and contaminated land directly seeks to address the issue of air quality in the plan area. Developments should not result in unacceptable risks to public health due to a number of sources of pollution, including air pollution. This policy also seeks to address developments that would occur in the AQMA, requiring that these types of proposal should be located so that emissions are reduced. The Local Plan also includes several policies that seek to promote sustainable and active travel in the plan area. Most importantly this includes Policy PC2: Active and sustainable travel which seeks to ensure that development is planned around a network of safe and accessible active travel routes to create places that maximise opportunities for active and sustainable travel for all. Furthermore, the principles guiding new developments set out through Policy PC6: Design and amenity require that developments provide attractive, well connected and legible streets, which prioritise walking, cycling and public transport.

6.42 Overall, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 13: Air quality.

SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

6.43 SPZs are identified to areas of higher risk in terms of safeguard drinking water quality. These areas relate to the risk of contamination of water resources as a result of various activities. The majority of Colchester is covered by areas of SPZ with the exception of its southern edge, including West Mersea, East Mersea and parts of Tiptree. Most of the plan area falls within SPZ 3, the least sensitive of the zones designated by the Environment Agency with very small areas of SPZ 1 within the urban area and areas of SPZ 2 along the District's northern boundary. Furthermore, Eastern England is classified as severely water stressed. Therefore, ensuring that there is enough water to serve residents and businesses in the District will be challenging during the plan period. The Revised draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024 [See reference 33] sets out measures to ensure that water supply is maintained in the wider area. Most sites included for allocation in the plan are located within SPZ 3, with some also located close to watercourses and/or water bodies, with increased potential for contamination of water resources through run off as construction and site occupation occurs.

6.44 The Local Plan includes a number of policies that aim to protect and improve water quality in Colchester. Policy NZ3: Wastewater and water supply states that the Council will work with suppliers and developers to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the water supply and wastewater infrastructure to serve new development. This policy also allocates land to allow for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre, which is expected to help address water stress in the area. Further to this, the policy supports the sustainable management of water resources, including promoting more innovative solutions such as rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling at new developments which will aid in ensuring there is sufficient water for the lifetime of a development. The development principles included under Policy ST8: Place shaping principles also prioritise measures to address water efficiency and the provision of appropriate water and wastewater and flood mitigation measures in new development. Furthermore, Policy EN8: Flood risk and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) supports the positive

management of flood risk and water resources, including the requirement for SuDS in new developments. The potential for pollution that affects surface or ground water sources is addressed through Policy ENV9: Pollution and Contaminated Land.

6.45 As such, a cumulative mixed minor positive and minor negative effect is expected in relation to SA objective 14: Water.

Table 6.2: Total effects of policies included in the draft Local Plan document

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
Vision	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0
Theme 1	0	++	0	0	0	+	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0
Theme 2	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	++	+	0	+	+
Theme 3	++	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theme 4	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
ST1	+	0	+	+	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
ST2	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	+	++	++	+	+	0	+	+
ST3	++	--/+	++/-	++/-	++/-	++/-	--/+	--/+	--/+	+/-	-	0	++/-	-?
ST4	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	++	+	+	0	+	0
ST5	++	--	+	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	-?	-?	-?	+/-?	-?	-	+/-?	-
ST6	0	--	++	+/-?	+	0	-?	-?	-?	+/-?	-?	-	+/-?	-
ST7	0	0	+	++	++	++	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	++

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
ST8	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
ST9	++	--	++	++/-	+/-	++	-?	+/-?	++/-?	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	-
EN1	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN2	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN3	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN4	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN5	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
EN6	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	++	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
EN7	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EN8	-?	0	-?	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	0	++
EN9	-?	+	-?	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	++	+
GN1	0	0	0	+	++	0	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
GN2	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
GN3	-?	0	-?	0	++	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
GN4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
GN5	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	+	+	0	+	+
GN6	-?	0	-?	0	++	0	0	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
RA	-?	+	-?	+/-	0	+/-	0	+	++	+	+	0	+/-	+
LC1	-?	+	-?	0	0	0	+	+	++	+	0	0	0	0
LC2	-?	0	+/-?	0	0	0	+	+	++	0	0	0	0	0
LC3	-?	0	-?	0	+	0	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	+
NZ1	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	+	0
NZ2	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	+	0
NZ3	0	++	+	+	+	-	0?	--	--?	++	+/-	0	-	++/--
NZ4	0	-	0	+	+	0	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	++	0	0	+	0
H1	++	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
H2	+++?	0	0	+/-	++	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	0
H3	++	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
H4	++	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	+	0
H5	++	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
H6	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
H7	++	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	±	+
H8	++	+	+	+/-	0	-	-	-	+/-	0	+	0	+/-	0
E1	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
E2	0	+	+	+/-	+	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	+	+/-	0
E3	0	+	+	+/-	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	0
E4	0	+	++	+	+	++	+/-?	0	0	0	0	0	+/-	0
E5	0	--	+	+	0	+	-	-	-	0	0	0	+	-
CS1	0	+	0	+	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS2	0	+	0	+	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS3	0	+	0	+	+	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS4	0	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
CS5	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
CS6	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
PC1	0	0	0	+	++	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+
PC2	0	0	0	++	++	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
PC3	0	+	+	++/-	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
PC4	+	++	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0
PC5	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0
PC6	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+
PC7	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
PC8	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
CC1	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+
PP1	++	++	-	++	+	+	-?	0	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PP2	++	++	-	++	+	++	-?	0	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PP3	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP4	+	--	0	+	+	-	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP5	+	--	0	++	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP6	++	++	+	++	+	+	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP7	++	--	0	+	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
OA4	++	--	+	++	++	+	0?	0	0?	+	0	0	0	-
PEP1	N/A	--	+	+	+	-	0?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP8	+	--	0	+	-	+	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP3	N/A	--	+	+	+	+	--?	--	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP4	N/A	--	0	+	+	-	--	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP9	++	--	+	+	+	+	0?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP10	++	--	-	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP11	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	0	-
PP12	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	0	-
PP13	+	++	-	++	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	0	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP14	++	++	-	++	+	+	-	-	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PP15	+	++	-	++	+	-	-	-	0?	N/A	+/-	N/A	-	-
PP16	+	++	-	++	+	-	-	0	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
OA1	++	++	-	++	+	-	-?	--	0?	N/A	+/-	N/A	-	-
OA2	++	++	-	++	+	-	-?	-	0?	N/A	+/-	N/A	-	-
OA3	++	++	+	++	+	+	-?	0	0?	N/A	+	N/A	-	-
PEP2	0	+	++	+	+	+/-	-?	0	0?	0	0	0	0	-
UE1	0	+/-	+	+	+	++	0?	0	-?	0	0	0	0	-
PP17	++	--	-	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	--
PP18	++	--	-	+	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP5	N/A	--	+	0	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP6	N/A	--	+	+	+	-	--?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP19	++	--	-	+/-	+	+	-?	+	+	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP20	+	-	-	0	+	+	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP21	+	++	-	0	+	+	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP22	+	++	0	0	+	+	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PEP7	N/A	--	+	0	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	0	0
PEP8	N/A	--	+	0	+	+	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP23	++	--	-	0	+	--	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP24	++	--	-	+	+	0	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP25	+	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP26	++	--	-	0	+	0	-?	0	--?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP27	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP28	++	--	-	++	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP12	N/A	--	-	-	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP29	++	--	-	0	+	0	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP30	+	--	-	0	0	--	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP31	++	--	-	0	++	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP32	++	--	-	+	++	-	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP9	N/A	++	-	0	+	-	--?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP33	+	--	-	+	+	--	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP34	++	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP35	+	++	-	0	0	--	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP36	++	--	-	0	+	-	-?	-	0	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP37	++	--/+	-	+	+	0	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP38	+	--/+	-	0	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP10	N/A	--	++	--	-	-	--?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP39	+	--	-	0	+	-	0?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP40	+	--	-	0	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP41	+	++?	-	0	+	-	-?	-	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	0
PP42	+	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP43	++	--	-	+	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Chapter 6 Cumulative effects

Policies	SA1	SA 2	SA 3	SA 4	SA 5	SA 6	SA 7	SA 8	SA 9	SA 10	SA 11	SA 12	SA 13	SA 14
PP44	++	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PEP11	N/A	--	-	0	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP45	+	--	-	0	+	--	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP46	+	--	-	+	+	-	-?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP47	+	--	-	0	+	-	-?	-	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-
PP48	+	--	-	0	+	-	0?	0	0?	N/A	0	N/A	0	-
PP49	+	--	-	0	+	--	-?	--	-?	N/A	0	N/A	-	-

Cumulative effects with development proposed by other relevant plans and projects

6.46 Development proposed in the Local Plan will not be delivered in isolation from development proposals in plans covering the surrounding areas. This section outlines the development proposed by the Local Plans of the four neighbouring authorities which may combine with the Colchester Local Plan to produce cumulative effects.

Surrounding development plans

6.47 Colchester District is adjoined by the neighbouring districts of Maldon, Braintree, Babergh and Tendring. The main development proposed by the respective Local Plans is summarised below.

Maldon

6.48 Maldon District Council adopted their Local Development Plan in July 2017. The Local Development Plan makes provision for a minimum of 4,650 dwellings between 2014 and 2029 (310 per annum) and the creation of 2,000 net additional jobs by 2029. This growth will be focused within the South Maldon Garden Suburb, North Heybridge Garden Suburb and strategic allocations at the settlements of Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch, in addition to a proportion of new development directed to the rural villages. The creation of new jobs will be achieved through the regeneration, modernisation and expansion of existing employment sites, and through the provision for new employment sites at South Maldon Garden Suburb and some of the strategic

allocations. These locations are not within close proximity of Colchester District, and so any effects between the two plans will be limited.

6.49 Maldon District Council approved its new Local Development Scheme in October 2024 and is currently working on a Local Development Plan Review. Adoption of the Local Development Plan Review is anticipated in Summer 2026.

Braintree

6.50 Braintree District Council's Local Plan provides a vision/planning framework for how the District will develop and grow up to 2033. The Plan is in two sections:

- Section 1 is the strategic plan for North Essex and was adopted in February 2021. It is shared with Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council and covers all three authorities.
- Section 2 contains policies, maps and sites for development, and was adopted in July 2022.

Section 1

6.51 Section 1 supports the development of 43,720 new homes in North Essex in the period 2013-2033, 14,320 of which will be in Braintree (716 per annum), 18,400 in Colchester (920 per annum) and 11,000 in Tendring (550 per annum). It also supports 54.9ha (baseline) / 93.3ha (higher growth scenario) of employment land to 2033. Some of this growth will be focused at the Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community.

Section 2

6.52 Section 2 sets out the spatial strategy for Braintree District and directs most development to the towns of Braintree, Witham and the A12/Great Eastern

Mainline corridor, in addition to Halstead followed by the key service villages. The town of Halstead and some key service villages (Earls Colne, Coggeshall and Kelvedon with Feering) where development is allocated are located near the boundary Braintree District shares within Colchester District and so could cumulatively contribute towards housing delivery and economic growth. Development at Halstead and these key service villages is likely to result in an increase in journeys into and out of Colchester District, cumulatively contributing towards greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

6.53 Braintree District Council is currently working on a Local Plan Review, with adoption anticipated in December 2026.

Babergh

6.54 Babergh District Council has been working with Mid-Suffolk District Council on a Joint Local Plan. Part 1 of the Joint Local Plan was adopted in November 2023 and will guide development in the Districts until 2037. In Babergh District, the Joint Local Plan Part 1 seeks to deliver a minimum of 7,904 net additional dwellings (416 dwellings per annum) and 190ha employment land over the Plan period. Although the spatial distribution for housing allocations will be determined in the Joint Local Plan Part 2, the proposed employment land is primarily concentrated in the central area of the District. Therefore, it is not near the boundary Babergh District shares with Colchester District and so any effects between the two Plans will be limited.

6.55 Following publication of the Government's new National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024, the Councils are now proceeding with a full Joint Local Plan review rather than a Joint Local Part 2 Plan. The Councils is expected to publish a new Local Development Scheme to set out the timetable for the preparation of the new plan by March 2025.

Tendring

6.56 Tendring District Council's Local Plan is also in two sections. They share the Section 1 Local Plan (adopted February 2021) with Colchester and Braintree (see above). Their Section 2 Local Plan (adopted January 2022) sets out specific policies relating to Tendring District.

Section 2

6.57 Section 2 sets out the spatial strategy for Tendring District and directs most development to the settlements of Clacton-on-Sea, and Harwich and Dovercourt, in addition to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. This is followed by some smaller urban settlements. A significant amount of development is proposed along the boundary Tendring District shares with Colchester District, at the Colchester Tendring Borders Garden Community. This strategic site allocation would cumulatively contribute towards housing and employment growth between the two districts. However, it could have adverse effects on both Districts through an increase in the number of cars in the area and associated air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, in addition to disturbance to the natural and built environment.

6.58 Tendring District Council is currently working on a Local Plan Review. The Local Development Scheme sets out that the Local Plan is expected to be adopted in early 2026.

Chapter 7

Monitoring

7.1 The SEA Regulations require that:

“the responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action” and that the environmental report should provide information on “a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring”.

7.2 Monitoring proposals should be designed to provide information that can be used to highlight specific issues and significant effects, and which could help decision-making.

7.3 Monitoring should be focused on the significant sustainability effects that may give rise to irreversible damage (with a view to identifying trends before such damage is caused) and on the significant effects where there is uncertainty in the SA and where monitoring would enable preventative or mitigation measures to be taken.

7.4 The new Colchester Local Plan is at an early stage in its development. As such, monitoring measures have been proposed in this SA report in relation to all of the SA objectives in the SA framework. As the new Local Plan is progressed further and the likely significant effects are identified with more certainty, it may be appropriate to narrow down the monitoring framework to focus on a smaller number of the SA objectives for which significant (including uncertain) effects are identified.

7.5 The suggested indicators for monitoring the potential sustainability effects of implementing the new Local Plan are set out below. As this stage, the monitoring framework reflects the indicators included in relation to the SA framework set out in the SA Scoping Report (2024). It also reflects indicators received as part of consultation on the SA Scoping Report.

7.6 The data used for monitoring in many cases will be provided by outside bodies. Information collected by other organisations (e.g. the Environment Agency) can also be used as a source of indicators. It is therefore recommended that the Council continues the dialogue with statutory environmental consultees and other stakeholders that has already commenced and works with them to agree the relevant sustainability effects to be monitored and to obtain information that is appropriate, up to date and reliable.

Proposed monitoring framework for the Colchester Local Plan

SA objective 1: Provide a sufficient level of housing to meet the objectively assessed needs of the city to enable people to live in a decent, safe, and sustainable home which is affordable

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Housing completions per annum (net)
- Percentage of affordable housing units provided on qualifying sites
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation provision (net)
- Total Empty Properties (classified as empty for Council Tax purposes)

- Length of time Total Empty Properties have been empty
- Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households
- Households on the Housing Register Homelessness households

SA objective 2: Support the efficient use of land

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Employment floorspace granted on previously developed land
- Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census
- Take-up of Travel Plans

SA objective 3: Achieve a prosperous and sustainable local economy that improves employment and training opportunities and supports the vitality/viability of centres

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Permissions granted for employment and leisure by type
- Economically active population
- Universal Credit (including Job Seekers Allowance)
- Economically inactive population
- Number of businesses (total)
- Visitor trips numbers
- Visitor spend/value

- Tourism related employment

SA objective 4: Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable and active transport options to reduce congestion

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Monitor modal splits and self-containment via Census
- To obtain an agreed Travel Plan for all major commercial/community developments
- Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport
- Bus patronage

SA objective 5: Promote stronger, more resilient, inclusive communities; improve health and wellbeing; and reduce levels of deprivation

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations
- Life expectancy
- Obesity rates
- Percentage of the city's population having access to a natural greenspace within 400 metres of their home.
- Length of greenways constructed.

- Hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 population.

SA objective 6: Provide access to services, facilities, and education

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Key community infrastructure delivered through planning obligations
- Educational attainment
- Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services by public transport

SA objective 7: Conserve and enhance the townscape character, and heritage and cultural assets

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Recorded loss of Listed Buildings Grade I and II+ (by demolition), Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological sites and assets on the Colchester Local List to development
- Number of Listings on the Heritage at Risk Register
- Number of Historic parks and Gardens Additions to Colchester's Local List
- Number of Conservation Areas

SA objective 8: Protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and promote and conserve geodiversity

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Amount of development in designated areas
- Number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA
- Number and area of local nature reserves (LNRs) and local sites (LoWS) within Colchester
- Condition of SSSIs
- Compliance with Essex Coast RAMS (Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy)
- Increase in open space
- Biodiversity net gain habitat sites
- Area of ancient woodland
- Number of planning approvals that generated any adverse impacts on sites of acknowledged biodiversity importance.
- Percentage of major developments generating overall biodiversity enhancement.
- Hectares of biodiversity habitat delivered through strategic site allocations.

SA objective 9: Conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the landscape

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Amount of development in designated areas
- Amount of new development in National Landscape with commentary on likely impact.

SA objective 10: Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions reporting Local Authority Carbon Management Plan
- Renewable energy installed by type

SA objective 11: Manage and reduce flood risk from all sources

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes
- Recorded flood events

SA objective 12: Reduce waste generation and increase levels of reuse and recycling

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Percentage of residual waste produced per household
- Percentage of household waste reused, recycled and composted

SA objective 13: Protect and improve air quality

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Number of AQMAs
- Exceedances of air quality objectives

SA objective 14: Protect the quality and quantity of water resources

Proposed monitoring indicators

- Number of major schemes incorporating water management schemes

Chapter 8

Conclusions and next steps

8.1 This document has considered the sustainability implications of the policies and proposed site allocations set out in the Colchester Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan. These have been subject to assessment against SA objectives developed at the scoping stages of the SA process.

8.2 In general, the policies appraised have been found to have a wide range of minor positive and significant positive effects in relation to the SA objectives, although a number of potential minor and significant negative impacts have also been identified. Negative effects have largely been identified in relation to the substantial land take required to support the level of development over the plan period and the location of development in relation to sensitive environmental receptors. While the spatial strategy included in the Local Plan, focusses much of development over the plan period to the main urban area and large and medium settlements, some growth is also allowed for within some of the smaller settlements. Furthermore, much of the development beyond the urban area will be on greenfield land. This includes the development of the large scale development at the Tendring Colchester Garden Community as well as further large scale sites at Marks Tey, Tiptree, and Langham. Furthermore, the District contains large areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural soils and many of the sites proposed for allocation lie within these areas.

8.3 Development within the District, particularly in the south, has the potential for negative effects in relation to the Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary and Essex Estuaries nationally and internationally designated biodiversity sites. There are further areas of SSSIs to the south of the Colchester urban area (including Abberton Reservoir, Upper Colne Marshes and Roman River) and to the east of the urban area (Bullock Wood) as well as towards Marks Tey (Marks Tey Brickpit). While the spatial strategy limits development to the south of the District, it includes development at Mersea at Dawes Lane and two further relatively small sites at Abberton and Peldon. There are numerous heritage assets dispersed across the District, and as such there is also potential for

adverse effects relating to the historic environment. The centre of the Colchester urban area, to which the spatial strategy allocates a relatively large amount of growth, is covered by a number of Conservation Areas which include numerous Listed Buildings and much of Colchester Castle Park Registered Park and Garden. Furthermore, the overall level of growth set out in the plan area also has the potential to intensify the issue of water stress which the District presently faces, particularly in light of the effects of climate change. Extensive greenfield development may also increase flood risk by disrupting natural drainage. It is notable, however, that while some areas, including those towards the Roman River, River Colne, and the coast, are more flood-prone, the spatial strategy allocates most development outside high-risk flood zones, reducing the potential for flooding events.

8.4 The spatial strategy directs much of the development within the main urban area, and large settlements, as guided by the settlement hierarchy, as well as the creation of the Tendring Colchester Garden Community, which is set to deliver 1,700 of the at least 20,800 new homes required by the draft Local Plan up to 2041. This approach will make good use of existing services and facilities in the large settlements and areas that allow for access to jobs. Large scale, mixed use and residential sites are included at or as extensions to urban areas, as well as the large and medium settlements, including Tiptree, Marks Tey and Langham. These large scale allocations will support housing delivery to benefit the affordability of housing and are of a sufficient scale to support the incorporation of new services and facilities to benefit existing and new residents. Growth is also allowed for within some of the smaller settlements to reflect their existing service provision and constraints, to support their long term viability. The draft Local Plan also sets out the required amount of accommodation to be provided over the plan period for Gypsies and Travellers. Furthermore, the plan includes policy to achieve the delivery of affordable, specialist and custom and self-build housing. These policies will help to provide accommodation for those who might otherwise be under represented in the housing market.

8.5 The approach of the spatial strategy to direct much of the development to the most sustainable and accessible locations will also provide many residents with good access to employment and support the viability of the town, district

and local centres in Colchester. The plan sets out the allocation and safeguarding of existing employment land to support access to jobs and the self-containment of many locations. Economic growth in Colchester will be further supported by land allocated within the Knowledge Gateway and research led at the University of Essex campus with potential for synergies to be achieved with the employment uses provided at the new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community site. In rural areas, growth will be more limited, however, some small scale economic development is allowed for through the plan to support local rural economies and maintain community vitality.

8.6 The plan also includes policies to conserve and enhance the District's key landscape and biodiversity assets, in light of the potential impacts that could arise from the planned growth. In particular, the settlement hierarchy set out in the spatial strategy seeks to avoid and minimise adverse effects by allocating the lowest levels of growth to the areas of highest sensitivity in the District. Growth in the southern parts of the District, close to biodiversity sites of international importance, is limited through the spatial strategy. This approach will also ensure that the settlements maintain their distinctive character and role with only a small number of sites proposed for allocation within the areas of highest landscape value in Colchester. There is also potential for the provision of a new country park as part of the allocation of Land North of Oak Road in Tiptree to support new habitat provision and improvements in landscape setting. The plan also makes substantial contributions to the protection, conservation, and/or enhancement of Colchester's green and open spaces and natural environment, including support for the delivery of the Essex LNRS, and delivery of suitable SANGs to mitigate effects relating to the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries SPAs and Essex Estuaries SAC. Specific policy text is included to ensure the protection of the purpose, natural beauty, and special qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

8.7 It is expected that the policies set out in the plan to achieve higher levels of travel by sustainable modes will also help to minimise negative impacts on air quality and help to mitigate climate change. This will be of particular importance towards the Colchester urban area, and higher order settlements. There is already increased potential to encourage travel by sustainable modes at these

locations given the wide range of services and facilities and public transport options that are easily accessible. Additionally, the incorporation of large scale development, such as the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will support new infrastructure and service provision to further promote self-containment in the District. The approach set out in the spatial strategy, which supports the undertaking of a higher proportion of journeys by sustainable modes, will also help to address the exist issues of congestion and air pollution in the urban area.

8.8 The policies in the Local Plan are framed by and support the Council's ambition of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. The plan includes requirements for development proposals to address the impact of climate change and support the incorporation of infrastructure necessary for renewable energy. Additionally, the allocation of land for the extension of the Anglian Water Services Colchester Water Recycling Centre, will support wastewater management in light of the water stress in the area. Given the District's serious water stress, this policy will be of particular importance in terms of promoting long-term climate resilience given its approach to promoting increased water efficiency. Mitigation is also set out through a number of policies that support the use of sustainable materials, reduced levels of embodied carbon and the creation of green infrastructure and natural green spaces, which could support a reduction in emissions and resilience to the effects of climate change.

8.9 In considering the total effects of all of the draft Local Plan's policies and site allocations together, the SA found that significant positive effects are likely in relation to:

- SA objective 1: Housing;
- SA objective 3: Economic growth;
- SA objective 4: Transport (combined with a minor negative effect);
- SA objective 5: Community and health and wellbeing (combined with a minor negative effect); and
- SA objective 6: Services and facilities (combined with a minor negative effect).

8.10 Significant negative effects were identified for the draft Local Plan in relation to:

- SA objective 8: Biodiversity and geodiversity (combined with a minor positive effect)

Next steps

8.11 This SA Report will be available for consultation alongside the Colchester Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Local Plan document from March 2025. The consultation responses on the Preferred Options document and this SA report will be taken into account in the next stage of the plan preparation.

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February 2025

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Report produced by LUC

Report produced by LUC

Bristol

12th Floor, Beacon Tower, Colston Street, Bristol BS1 4XE
0117 929 1997
bristol@landuse.co.uk

Cardiff

16A, 15th Floor, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Rd, Cardiff CF24 0EB
0292 032 9006
cardiff@landuse.co.uk

Edinburgh

Atholl Exchange, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG
0131 202 1616
edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

Glasgow

37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ
0141 334 9595
glasgow@landuse.co.uk

London

250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD
020 7383 5784
london@landuse.co.uk

Manchester

6th Floor, 55 King Street, Manchester M2 4LQ
0161 537 5960
manchester@landuse.co.uk

Sheffield

32 Eyre Street, Sheffield, S1 4QZ
0114 392 2366
sheffield@landuse.co.uk

landuse.co.uk

Landscape Design / Strategic Planning & Assessment / Transport Planning
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