

# MYLAND AND BRAISWICK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2016 - 2032

JULY 2016



COMMUNITY FOCUS ON QUALITY OF LIFE

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## FORWARD

This is the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan.

As part of the 2011 Localism Act the Government introduced the idea of neighbourhood plans. Through such plans greater local level influence is possible over how communities are shaped. Our Neighbourhood Plan will have extra powers under planning law and once voted for through local referendum Colchester Borough Council (CBC) must use it in determining planning applications. It will form part of the statutory development plan for the area, sitting alongside CBC's Local Plan.

Because north Colchester is under intense development pressure Myland Community Council (MCC) and Braiswick Residents Association (BRA) joined forces to produce the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan focuses on the protection and enhancement of the community's quality of life within an ongoing passage of housing and other development.

The Neighbourhood Plan area is shown on the map at Appendix A. The map highlights how developments have led to distinct areas within Myland and Braiswick which we have called sub-neighbourhoods. It covers the whole of Myland Parish plus Braiswick (sub-neighbourhood 8). It reveals the urbanisation of Myland and Braiswick.

The Plan builds upon the *Myland Design Statement*, the *Myland Parish Plan* and various community engagement exercises concluding with a survey questionnaire to every Myland and Braiswick household. The Plan will be for the years 2015 to 2032 to cover the next CBC Local Plan period 2017 – 2032. It will be constantly monitored with formal review points at 2020 and 2025.

The Plan is based on evidenced community feedback which has been interpreted and developed by a working group comprising representatives from MCC, BRA and the local community. It seeks to put in place policies that enhance community quality of life for the residents of Myland and Braiswick. This approach is supported by CBC who state "Overall, it is considered that the document sets out a clear desire for the achievement of a sustainable community and sustainable development, and this is considered to be entirely consistent with the purpose of neighbourhood planning".

Colchester Borough Council appointed an independent examiner, Dr. Angus Kennedy OBE, MA, MRTPI, MCIH to examine whether the Plan met the necessary basic conditions and legal requirements and should proceed to referendum. The modifications proposed by the examiner, in his report dated 5 May 2016, were accepted by both Colchester Borough Council and Myland Community Council.

The decision statement, published by Colchester Borough Council 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2016, confirmed that "The Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Development Plan, as revised, complied with the legal requirements and Basic Conditions set out in the Localism Act 2011, and could therefore proceed to referendum."

The Referendum on the Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan was held on 15th September 2016 with 87.4% in favour.

The Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan was adopted by Colchester Borough Council 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016.



## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 A Brief History of Myland and Braiswick

*A History of the County of Essex: Volume 9* tells us that Mile End probably took its name from its original settlement a mile north of Colchester town. It had become a separate parish by 1254, when the original church was recorded, and presumably a settlement already existed. By the late 13<sup>th</sup> century it was sometimes called **Myland**. In the middle-ages settlement seems to have been scattered over the un-wooded areas of the parish including Tubswick, recorded from 1295, and **Braiswick** which seems to have originated as a medieval freehold.



Much of Mile End was woodland and heath but much of Mile End's woodland had been cleared by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. All of the parish was subject to royal forest jurisdiction. Kingswood included all of the parish except probably the part west of Nayland Road. The north part of Kingswood became the estate called Kingswood and Kingswood Heath, later known as the Severalls and Mile End Heath. Part of the south became the land of Mile End Manor. West of Nayland Road lay part of the ancient wood of Cestrewald or Chesterwell in the north; in the

south was part of the Braiswick Estate.

There were potters living in the north-west of the parish in the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Nursery gardens become important in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1801 the population was recorded at 299 and there were 44 houses. By 1901 the population increased to 1,373 with 300 houses largely influenced by the coming of the railway. Employment centred mostly on arable farming on cleared land.

The nineteen hundreds saw gradual expansion but the parish retained much of its rural feel. However, growth began to increase significantly late in the century with a population of around 6,000 by 1999.

### 1.2 Myland and Braiswick Today

The release of NHS and other land and the bisecting of Myland by the Northern Approach Road (NAR) to enable development of Cuckoo Farm has urbanised this once semi-rural part of Colchester Borough.

Since 1999 Myland Parish has undergone substantial change. This has accelerated in recent years to growth on an unprecedented scale. Based on recent and known future housing growth and applying the CBC formula of 2.33 persons per dwelling we can expect there to be a population well in excess of 21,000 by 2032. Such growth brings with it many changes that challenge the sustainability of the area. From a semi-rural environment centred round Mile End village, the area will be a patchwork of diverse urban neighbourhoods with direct impacts on the adjacent neighbourhood of Braiswick. This transformation is already evident and has brought with it a number of issues that challenge economic, social and environmental sustainability. (Appendix A & B).

The Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan has therefore to look holistically across the area, its various sub-neighbourhoods, and if necessary its adjacent communities, when identifying the impacts of growth and the consequent needs of the community as a whole. Whilst much of the Neighbourhood Plan area is subject to agreed masterplans, the future of a large part of the Plan area is currently under review. This area known as the 'Northern Gateway' is important to the future of our community and the Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity for it to shape that future with CBC. MCC and BRA are supportive of Colchester Borough Council's proposals for the Northern Gateway area of Colchester, set out in the Master Plan Vision document (June 2012).

The Northern Gateway area covers over 100ha on either side of the A12, east of the new Junction 28. It is considered that the development of this area will contribute important opportunities for the community to partake in sport, leisure and recreation activities. MCC and BRA will seek to ensure their continued involvement in the development of these proposals including the retention of a significant portion of the existing Rugby Club land, Mill Road, as Local Green Space. (Appendix D).

MCC and BRA are also aware of a small area of proposed development at St Botolphs Farm in Braiswick, submitted in response to the CBC 2015 Call for Sites exercise. MCC and BRA anticipate being included in discussions with CBC and developers if this site becomes an option.

## 2 CONTEXT AND SCOPE

The Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to challenge developments included in Colchester Borough Council's existing Local Plan, it will have to "conform generally to the strategic policies and proposals of the Local Plan" and care has been taken to do this.

The Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) seeks to ensure the delivery of "sustainable developments". By sustainable development the Framework means that we enhance quality of life for our residents now and for future generations. This Neighbourhood Plan is therefore concerned with working alongside the development of housing and other sites within Myland and Braiswick to establish policies to address identified shortfalls in economic, social and environmental conditions within and surrounding our neighbourhoods.

The Plan establishes a number of policies. Which are defined in the following pages. They fall within the subject areas covered in the most recent and major community engagement survey and mirrored in our objectives. To these we have added an overarching policy for Development & the Public Realm. The main policy areas are:

- Housing
- Education
- Employment
- Environment
- Social Amenity
- Sport and Leisure
- Roads and Transport
- Development & the Public Realm

The full range of survey material taken into account consists of:

- June 2000: An all-households survey carried out on creation of Myland Parish Council.
- March 2007-10: Local events in response to Colchester Borough Council's Core Strategy Policies, culminating in a Masterplan for Myland.
- 2009-2010: Local events and questionnaires on the *Myland Design Statement* and *Myland Parish Plan*.
- March 2010: Local events and communications on the response to the Chesterwell development masterplan proposals.
- October 2012: A local community engagement exercise covering Myland and run by Essex University on behalf of Colchester Borough Council.
- May 2013: Myland Development Committee public meeting.
- 2013-14: All households survey for the Neighbourhood Plan with related and other communications via the Mylander magazine and Community Council website.

### 3 OBJECTIVES AND VISION

#### 3.1 Objectives

Community input to previous documents such as the *Myland Design Statement* and *Myland Parish Plan*, enhanced by other community engagement exercises and culminating in the most recent survey coverage of every household in the Neighbourhood Plan Area provided a strong basis upon which the Plan could be developed. From the circa 800 responses to the latest survey the working group have interpreted feedback into the following objectives:

- **Housing** growth will provide a mix of high quality, well designed dwellings that meet the different needs across the community.
- **Education** provision for all ages and requirements will be in-step with housing growth.
- Local **employment** opportunities will be created to support housing growth, minimise related travel burdens and boost the local economy.
- High-speed broadband will be encouraged as a standard infrastructure feature in all new business and housing developments.
- Sensitive development design will help meet the challenge of climate change and protect and enhance the natural and historic **environment**.
- **Social amenity** will be provided by developments that bring facilities and services to support social cohesion, health and well-being and sense of place.
- Housing growth will be matched by health and well-being opportunities through **sport and leisure** provision including the protection and provision of open space.
- Developments will be supported by **road and transport** strategies that provide effective and environmentally friendly travel solutions.

#### 3.2 Vision

Collectively the objectives provide a vision for our future:

**The neighbourhoods of Myland and Braiswick will continue to be desirable places to live. Quality of life will be supported by suitable housing, the necessary education provision and local employment opportunities. Health and well-being will be gained through access to social amenity including sport and leisure, green open space, a network of public rights of way (multi-use tracks) and community venues. Ours will be a cohesive community that enjoys the benefits that flow from connectivity across neighbourhood areas.**

## 4 POLICIES

### 4.1 Housing

#### Objective

Our objective for housing is that growth will provide a mix of high quality, well designed dwellings that meet the different needs across the community.

#### Policies

The following housing policies are applied:

HOU1 – Housing in Myland and Braiswick will have a variety of choices, design and living styles that meet the needs of residents, including the elderly, and respect the scale and character of the existing street scenes and environment. Developers should achieve the highest quality of design commensurate with current national and local design guidance.

HOU2 – New housing will need to respect the setting of any nearby designated local heritage assets, including, but not restricted to:

- Grade II listed Administration Block, Severalls Hospital
- Grade II listed Braiswick Farm House
- Church Farm House
- Grade II listed Park and Gardens, Severalls Hospital
- War Memorials
- Myland Primary School
- Churches

#### Rationale and Evidence

The main housing development programmes in Myland and Braiswick are encompassed by the Colchester Borough Council 'Local Plan'. Planning permission exists on identified development sites. This Neighbourhood Plan does not therefore seek to promote further significant housing development.

Our latest survey results found that a clear majority of residents (63%) have no current intention to move. It is a reasonable conclusion therefore to identify a need for housing that meets peoples changing circumstances whether that means expansion or down-sizing.

Indeed, this aligns with paragraph 50 of the NPPF which recognises the need to cater for a wide range of needs and states that local planning authorities should plan for “a mix of housing needs of different groups in the community, e.g. families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes”.

Some specific needs which impact on housing types are highlighted at pages 11 and 26 of Colchester Borough Council's '*Local Plan Issues and Options, January 2015*'. “The number of people over 65 years is projected to increase by 50% between 2012 – 2032” and “As predictions indicate an ageing population the impact of smaller, older households on services and housing will need to be managed”.

MCC and BRA support NPPF paragraph 50. We will seek to influence and encourage owners of development land and developers to deliver serviced land for older people accommodation and the provision of land for self-build needs.

The Severalls Phase 2 site has outline planning permission for housing. The Northern Gateway site, although primarily focussed on sport and leisure, will also accommodate some housing.



Our recent research also shows that residents feel strongly that housing design should provide adequate and suitable living space and should be of a scale in keeping with the neighbourhood. This is consistent with both the *Myland Design Statement* and the *Myland Parish Plan*. It would also seem sensible, given the pressure on housing in terms of space demand, to utilise well insulated head height roof spaces to enable optimisation of living/storage requirements, e.g. to provide an extra bedroom or home office.

It is therefore reasonable for MCC and BRA to expect emerging housing developments to meet the above needs.

### **Relevant CBC Housing Policies**

The above policy aligns with the key Borough Council Housing policy:

H3 – Housing Diversity – “Colchester Borough Council intends to secure a range of housing types and tenures on developments across the Borough in order to create inclusive and sustainable communities...”



The Grade II listed Braiswick Farmhouse. (See policy HOU2 above).



## 4.2 Education

### Objective

Our objective for education is that it will be in-step with housing growth.

### Policies and Projects

Local education provision across the spectrum of needs is recognised as key to quality of life and raises the following policy.

EDU1 – CBC as the Local Planning Authority will give due regard and support to infrastructure requirements for, as a minimum, early years, primary and secondary education needs for Myland and Braiswick. Such needs, including provision of safe and accessible walking/cycling routes will be identified and confirmed at the time of development application.

### Rationale and Evidence

The *Myland Parish Plan* expressed a vision for the future “that local children will not need to travel or be driven across Colchester to go to school” and “There will be enough local school places for children from the same family to attend the same school”.

In December 2014 it was reported that 58 primary age children from Myland would need to travel to schools elsewhere in the Borough. The Parish Plan vision therefore remains valid. Our research also finds that the community sees a need for wide-ranging education provision from childcare and pre-school through to primary and secondary education, as well as skills and vocational training through to further education including retirement skills.

This kind of dilemma and need is recognised as a key component of sustainable development at pages 18 and 27 of CBC’s ‘*Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report*’, “The provision of day care, nursery education and out-of-school care remains an issue for the Borough, with there being more demand than formal supply” and “...ensuring that school places, including early years, are available in the right location is a key issue”.



### Relevant Education policies / guidance

CBC Core Strategy Policy SD2 – Delivering Facilities and Infrastructure embraces education provision.

MCC and BRA note paragraph 72 of the NPPF which states “The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement and to development that will widen choice in education”. MCC and BRA policies are consistent with Government guidance.

### 4.3 EMPLOYMENT

#### Objective

Our objective for employment is that local opportunities will be created that support housing growth and minimise related travel burdens and boost the local economy.

#### Policies

EMP1 – The North Colchester Strategic Employment Zone effectively delivers the local employment opportunities to support housing growth in the area commensurate with CBC Strategic Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development Locations.

EMP2 – The provision of a broad range of business unit sizes will be encouraged to facilitate new start-ups and help growing businesses to remain in North Colchester.

EMP3 – High-speed broadband will be encouraged as a standard infrastructure feature in all new business and housing developments to promote both formal and home working environments.

#### Rationale and Evidence

It is recognised that employment and the opportunity to find local work feature strongly in people's health, well-being and hence quality of life. Indeed, access to employment is central in contemporary guidance such as the BREEAM Communities Social and Economic Well-Being coverage. This is a concern as page 28 of CBC's '*Local Plan Sustainability Scoping Report*', July 2014 states "...a key issue for the Borough's economy is that the rate of job creation...is less than the rate of growth of the working age population".



A feature that has emerged during research for both the *Myland Design Statement* and the *Myland Parish Plan* is the requirement to help reduce commuter travel need and time and to boost local business enterprise by providing, for example, small workshops such as Cuckoo Farm Studios, flexible office accommodation and business incubator units. Reliable high performance communications such as fibre-optic broadband is also regarded as essential. This would also bring benefits to schools and in the home to enhance education, business opportunity and the use of communication media.

This is replicated in our most recent survey which also suggested types of employment the Plan should encourage. The results clearly identify that residents see North Colchester as an area of opportunity for employment across a wide range of businesses from tourism and leisure to office accommodation, from retail to restaurants and cafes and from community services to small businesses and start-up units. Tourism would be commensurate with CBC's acknowledged attraction of the Borough and businesses related to medicine and health would be geographically situated with the hub of the Borough's health provision in north Colchester.

Our latest survey results also reveal that 16% of residents work locally within Myland and Braiswick, including Severalls Business Park, a further 39% work elsewhere in Colchester and 25% commute to London. Neighbouring towns such as Ipswich, Clacton and Chelmsford collectively account for 13%. Train travel accounts for 23%, walking for 14%, cycling 7% and buses 6%. By far the most workers, 48%, travel by car. This adds to local road and transport issues covered later in this Plan.

It is important therefore that opportunities are taken to promote and deliver local opportunities for this essential aspect of quality of life.

### **Relevant CBC Employment policies**


The following are seen as the key CBC policies relevant to employment considerations in this Plan:

CE1 – Centres and Employment Classification and Hierarchy – “The Borough Council will encourage economic development...through the allocation of land necessary to support employment growth at sustainable locations.”

CE2c – Local Centres – “Neighbourhood Centres will be protected and enhanced to provide small scale shops, services and community facilities for local residents...”

CE3 – Employment Zones – “Employment Zones will accommodate business developments that are not suited to Mixed Use Centres, including industry and warehousing... The Council will seek to deliver approximately 45,100sqm (gross) of industry and warehousing floor space, primarily within the North Colchester and Stanway Strategic Employment Zones...The Council will encourage the provision of incubator units and grown-on space to support the development of small and medium enterprises.”

The Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan policies are in compliance with the above current CBC policies.



“Planning for sustainable development includes building a strong economy that is well connected to global markets. This includes trying to provide local jobs for residents moving in to new housing to minimise the need to travel”.

*CBC, New Local Plan, Issues and Options,  
January 2015.*

## 4.4 ENVIRONMENT

### Objective

Our objective is that Sensitive development design will help meet the challenge of climate change and protect and enhance the natural and historic **environment**.

### Policies

Collectively this local and national support evidences the vital role that our natural environment and heritage play in maintaining health and well-being in sustainable communities. The following policies are therefore proposed.

ENV1 – Development design will maximise opportunities for the creation, restoration, enhancement, expansion and connectivity of Green Infrastructure within and between development sites. All major developments should seek to include elements of Green Infrastructure and Ecological Networks, such as but not limited to Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), allotments, street trees, green roofs, recreational areas, areas of new and existing natural habitat, green corridors through the sites and waterbodies. Specific attention should be given to:

- The protection of mature trees, shrubs and historical hedgerows and important features that define the local landscape character.
- Specified areas of green space within the Chesterwell development will be delivered and will be provisioned as wildlife areas with effective connecting green corridors, such as native species woodland in sound attenuation areas, flower meadows and balancing lakes suitable to support aquatic related wildlife. This will be in accordance with the Colchester North Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Ecological Design Scheme.
- The Severalls Phase 2 development will retain existing parkland features to a significant degree as shown in the masterplan and not result in harm to the character and appearance or significance of the Registered Park and Garden.
- If Colchester Rugby Club is relocated a significant proportion (not less than 4.5 hectares) of the current sports fields will be retained as local green space in accordance with proposals agreed with CBC as part of the Northern Gateway stakeholder consultation (see Appendix C). MCC will seek to secure this key portion of the existing Mill Road sports fields as designated Local Green Space, in line with NPPF paragraphs 76 – 77, or as a village green.
- MCC and BRA will urge relevant bodies to set aside unused green space adjacent to the Braiswick School for local green space in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 76 -77.

ENV2 – In partnership with CBC and other relevant parties, MCC will explore the opportunity for the Fords Lane sports field and its extension, agreed as part of the Chesterwell development, to be reconfigured to provide recreational space adjacent to the proposed community centre.

ENV3 – Drainage for new developments should be based on the principles of sustainable drainage as outlined in the Essex County Council SuDS Guide. Wherever possible this should be designed using the ‘above ground’ drainage features to help ensure robust treatment to improve the quality of water entering into local water bodies. The system should also promote wildlife habitats and green and blue corridors running through new development.

ENV4 – Highwoods Country Park is a valuable and important asset. Planning applications must ensure the protection and enhancement of Highwoods Country Park.



## Rationale and Evidence

The local environment in respect of green open space and natural features has registered strongly in all community engagement exercises in regard to what residents value most about Myland and



Braiswick. In particular High Woods Country Park (as shown in Appendix B) is cherished as accessible natural green space. The Park covers approximately 370 acres and is a significant 'green lung' within an increasingly urbanised area. It is managed to protect and enhance flora and fauna that is accessible to the community through a network of footpaths and cycle routes. The *Myland Design Statement* states "...important features that define the local landscape character should be protected". The *Myland Parish Plan* vision is that

"Development on protected or unallocated green spaces will have been kept to a minimum with the retention of existing hedges, mature trees and footpaths, and bridleways. Natural green areas will be provided as a refuge for wildlife".

Inevitably urbanisation through the release of land has brought with it significant loss of green open space together with its integral wildlife habitats. Similarly, registered park land at Severalls will be severely diminished. Efforts to contain the loss of such key assets and to see the provision of adequate green space feature strongly in this Plan. Likewise historic and natural features attract the same importance as highlighted in the latest resident survey. Over 90% of respondents agree or strongly agree on the need for provision of green space (97%), the protection of historic and natural features (94%) and the protection of the varied local wildlife (93%).

Other important documents endorse these requirements. Page 28 of CBC's '*Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report*' clearly states "All future developments will need to take account of current cultural and heritage assets as well as continuing to protect and enhance them. One key consideration will be the preservation of countryside areas and strategic green gaps between settlements".

This is not just a local requirement. Page 2 of the document '*Planning for a healthy environment – good practice guidance for green infrastructure and biodiversity. July 2012*' (listed in Appendix E) more robustly claims "Maintaining and restoring the natural environment will play a fundamental role in sustaining our collective future". Page 9 of that document reminds us that "The NPPF identifies (paras 6 & 17) sustainable development as the purpose of the planning system and conserving and enhancing the natural environment as a 'core planning principle'". Similarly, the NPPF identifies the historic environment as a key component of environment consideration and important to community 'sense of place'.

As well as the loss of habitat referred to above, increased development can lead to a change in the natural drainage of a site; if not carefully managed this can lead to increased flood risk both within the area and further downstream. The inclusion of sustainable drainage systems as part of new development can help to minimise the runoff from a new site, as well as improve water quality locally. The use of above ground drainage features such as swales, detention ponds, bio-retention areas and wetland areas help to ensure that areas of green and blue space are maintained within the development.

### **Relevant CBC Environment policies**

The CBC Strategic Policy relevant to this aspect of the Plan is;

ENV1: - "The Borough Council will conserve and enhance Colchester's natural and historic environment, countryside and coastline. The Council will safeguard the Borough's biodiversity, geology, history and archaeology through the protection and enhancement of sites of international, national, regional and local importance."

The above Myland and Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan policies are in compliance with this CBC Policy.



Oak tree lines such as those above on the Chesterwell site will be retained as important ecological, biodiversity and 'sense of place' features.

## 4.5 SOCIAL AMENITY

### Objective

Our objective is that social amenity will be provided by developments that bring facilities and services to support social cohesion, health and well-being and sense of place.

### Policies

Given the above NPPF and other recognised guidance/standard references to the importance of social amenity to sustainable communities it is essential that the following policies are applied.

SAM1 – MCC and BRA will actively seek to encourage developers to provide and CBC to support the provision of community facilities and services on the Chesterwell, Severalls Phase 2 and Northern Gateway developments such as but not restricted to:

- Community Centres
- Post Office and/or bank
- Local market
- Coffee shop(s)
- Activity venues
- Library facilities
- GP Surgery(s)

SAM2 – MCC and BRA will encourage the ultimate developer of Severalls Phase 2 to explore the retention of suitable existing buildings that would serve the purpose of amenity venue provision.

### Rationale and Evidence

House building to-date in Myland and Braiswick has fallen short in providing sustainable developments in terms of social amenity. Whilst developer s106 contributions will provide some alleviation including community centres at Severalls and Chesterwell there is much to be done towards community cohesion.

Whilst the two local pubs and the ASDA café appear to be favourite spots and Myland Parish and Methodist Church halls are busy venues, for example with scouts, guides, nurseries etc. and the Dance Studio, Rugby Club and Golf Club are all well supported, there is a whole host of attractions that residents seek to improve their quality of life. For example, informal meeting venues and shops, local markets and craft centres, library and bank and/or post office facilities, young people venues and

general meeting/activity centres for young and old alike are sought.



The Myland Parish Plan sees the community centres offering leisure, educational and entertainment events as well as being focal points for socialising for residents of all ages.

The above requirements align well with paragraph 70 of the NPPF which says “To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision

and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments”. This is particularly relevant to a population growth reaching 21,000 plus by 2032.



Representation has also been received that this Neighbourhood Plan should seek to provide more GP surgery access. Although Myland is home to the Town's General Hospital and Walk-In Centre these serve the whole Borough. Myland has only one GP Surgery that already has access issues including parking limitations.

The importance of community amenity is reflected in the contemporary guidance '*BREEAM Communities*' (currently 2012) which sets out eleven mandatory standards, one of which is 'demographic needs and priorities. Equally the '*Building for Life*' standard asks the question, "Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?"

### **Relevant CBC Social Amenity policies**

The CBC Strategic Policies relevant to this aspect of the Plan are;

SD2 – "The Borough Council will work with partners to ensure that facilities and infrastructure are provided to support sustainable communities in Colchester. New facilities and infrastructure must be located and designed so that they are accessible and compatible with the character and needs of the local community. New developments will be required to provide the necessary community facilities..."

SD3 – "The Borough Council will work with partners to deliver key community facilities to support the Sustainable Community Strategy...The Council will also provide facilities for the local communities, based upon an analysis of need, with particular regard to disadvantaged groups."

The Myland and Braiswick policies and initiatives are in compliance with these CBC Policies.



This is an example of integrated green space, play facilities, cycle and footways off Bergholt Road that link people to popular destinations.



## 4.6 SPORT AND LEISURE

### Objective

Our objective in this area is that housing growth will be matched by health and well-being opportunities through sport and leisure provision.

### Policies

The following policies are focused more specifically on access to sport and leisure and should be seen as complementary to other policies with a health and well-being focus.

SPL1 – In harmony with active lifestyles afforded by greenspace provision MCC and BRA will encourage developers and CBC to enable the provision of sport and leisure facilities, as far as possible on the Chesterwell, Severalls Phase 2 and Northern Gateway developments.

SPL2 - As amenities that facilitate both sustainable transport and bringing benefit to health and well-being, Myland and Braiswick footpaths and public rights of way will be maintained and protected (if necessary by authorised diversion) and new rights of way, including bridleways, encouraged commensurate with the Essex Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan. This will include Public Rights of Way suitable for vulnerable users.

SPL3 – CBC and developers will liaise with MCC and BRA, local sports clubs and societies as key stakeholders in determining sport provision in north Colchester in harmony with the most up to date CBC Sports Strategy and Action Plan available.

### Rationale and Evidence

Similar to the loss of green open space at 'Environment' above, Myland and Braiswick have seen major loss of sports and associated leisure venues, e.g. Flakt Woods, Severalls, Turner Village and Royal London are all sites that offered a range of sports and linked social activities, not only to their employees but also to the wider local community.

Prominent sports activities currently pursued include rugby, cricket, football, dance and by far the most, keep-fit. In response to a survey question on what other sporting facilities would be used locally, residents commenting via the 2013/14 survey scored the following activities in the following manner:

Swimming	46%	Athletics track/field	9%
Cycling recreational	29%	Skate park	9%
Tennis	23%	Squash	9%
Tree walking/zip wires	23%	Paddling pool	8%
Badminton	19%	Basketball/handball/netball	6%
Outdoor gym	19%	Cycling (competitive)	6%
Aerobics	13%	Fishing	6%
Running cross country	11%	Hockey	2%
Horse riding	10%		

Mindful of CBC policies DP4 'Community Facilities' and DP15 'Retention of Open Space and Indoor Sports Facilities' that both offer to replace lost sport and leisure facilities, Myland and Braiswick would be hopeful that the adopted *Myland Design Statement* aspiration "New developments in Myland should incorporate accessible, varied sport and leisure facilities for residents" will be met. The importance attached to sport and leisure as key components of health and well-being are recognised in CBC's *Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report* which says at page 27 "Access to recreation, leisure and open space is as important as access to formal health facilities".



MCC and BRA identify the emerging Northern Gateway proposals as having the potential to deliver an array of sport and leisure facilities which will provide much needed opportunities for sport and recreation and which will make an important contribution to the sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. To that end MCC and BRA will work with CBC to ensure the proposed Northern Gateway sports and leisure development area will help to satisfy resident aspirations. The CBC Sports Strategy and Action Plan, published July 2015 will help to inform these discussions. After all "access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities" is a message at paragraph 73 of the NPPF.

There is also a high demand for cultural aspects of leisure on a more local basis, for example performing arts, arts and crafts, further education, cinema and clubs of various types for all ages. These may be catered for in the promised community centres or may need to be found other dedicated venues. See also Social Amenity above.

### **Relevant CBC Sport and Leisure policies**

The relevant CBC strategic policy is:

"PR1 Open Space – The Borough Council aims to provide a network of open spaces, sports facilities and recreational opportunities that meet local community needs and facilitate active lifestyles by providing leisure spaces within walking distance of people's homes, school and work"

The Myland and Braiswick policies and initiatives comply with this policy.



Colchester United's Weston Homes Stadium is within Myland.

## 4.7 ROADS AND TRANSPORT

### Objective

Our overall objective is that developments will be supported by road and transport strategies that provide effective and environmentally friendly travel solutions.

### Policies

MCC and BRA conclude that, to ensure that Myland and Braiswick do not end in perpetual gridlock, there needs to be an overall reduction in car use and a modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking. Accordingly, MCC and BRA will promote policies that encourage a more sustainable travel choice.

RAT1 – Ongoing development in north Colchester will provide an effective and integrated transport solution by considering the following:

- Maximising opportunities to walk and cycle.
- Maximising the use of the Park and Ride service.
- Promoting the Essex Car Share Scheme.
- Ensuring developments are provided with secure, sheltered bicycle storage.
- Ensuring multi-use routes are provided between popular destinations, such as community facilities.
- New developments will take into account the recommendations of Sustrans and Town and Country Planning Association, as well as other recognised design documents, thus enabling the integration of North Colchester through walking and cycling and multi-use routes between and within neighbourhoods.
- Ensuring public transport (bus) routes are to popular destinations and where appropriate integrate effectively with other providers, such as, railway services.
- Ensuring public transport (bus) services are frequent, reliable and clean.
- Bus stops to be provided with shelters and 'real-time' service information.

RAT2 – Ongoing development of north Colchester will ensure all dwellings have sufficient off-street parking spaces commensurate with property size and adopted policies.

RAT3 – MCC and BRA will pursue with partners the provision of a multi-use bridge across the A12 to re-establish connection from footpath 39 to The Essex Way and other footpath networks.

### Rationale and evidence

An adequate and effective transport infrastructure is an absolute necessity for any community. Traffic volumes, congestion and on-street parking are already of major concern to residents of Myland and Braiswick. Inevitably, the current and proposed developments within Myland and Braiswick will bring increasing traffic volumes. Community survey responses reveal the main concerns as being traffic volume (82%), traffic congestion (80%) and on street parking (74%). Other concerns range from danger to pedestrians, traffic speed and air quality.

Whilst MCC and BRA acknowledge that the Neighbourhood Plan can only have a limited effect with respect to overall transport policy, it seeks to utilise the Neighbourhood Plan to attempt to both mitigate the current traffic problems and promote alternative forms of transport. Improved cycle, walking and bridleway routes to prime destinations are seen as important actions. In harmony with this, improved, reliable and better quality bus services are another important factor in shifting people from cars to alternatives.

The basis of policy has been derived from results of the resident's survey, previous MCC transport studies and both Government and independent institution design guides.

MCC's policies recognise the *North Colchester Transport Strategy* (NCTS). Although it is likely to be amended its key feature will remain modal shift away from private car usage.



Myland and Braiswick, and all the villages north of Colchester, are separated from the rest of the borough by a physical barrier, the main line railway. The road network of these communities is focused towards North Station, a congestion hot-spot. The residents have to negotiate this pinch-point to access Colchester Town Centre, the A12 and the majority of leisure, retail and commercial facilities. The only other route across the railway line is an unlit, narrow pedestrian tunnel and footpath which runs from Petrolea Close and eventually to the Cowdray Business Centre.

Whilst the completion of the Northern Approach Road (NAR) network, the connection with the A12, and Park & Ride are regarded as potential mitigation for current problems, MCC and BRA remain concerned that these and other planned highway improvement works may not be sufficient for increased traffic volumes.

As part of the 2013/14 community survey the residents of Myland and Braiswick were asked for their views on the road network, public transport, cycling and walking. Residents were also asked where they worked and how they currently travelled there. The results reveal that whilst the majority of Myland and Braiswick residents (53%) work within the Borough of Colchester, only a minority (27%) use public transport, walk or cycle. By far the biggest mode of transport is the car (48%).

With regard to parking, many residents (43%) 'Disliked or Strongly Disliked' the parking facilities within Myland and Braiswick. Virtually all residents (96%) wanted the Neighbourhood Plan to focus on adequate off-road parking.

Residents generally considered that public transport should be affordable, have cheaper fares and family tickets, more regular/frequent buses - especially in the mornings and evenings, direct local destinations e.g. General Hospital and PCT Centre, better display of bus times and more information and that the buses should be 'friendlier and cleaner'. Bus priority at North Station was also suggested. Nevertheless, 68% 'Strongly Liked' or 'Liked' the existing local public transport, only 25% of respondents stated that they would use a hopper bus service if it was introduced with 46% stated they wouldn't use it.

The majority of residents (85%) stated that the Neighbourhood Plan should concentrate on pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre and 80% of residents on Public Rights of Way.



### Relevant CBC Transport Policies

The following are the key CBC policies relevant to road and transport considerations in this Plan.

TA1 – “Accessibility and Changing Travel Behaviour: The Council will work with partners to improve accessibility and change travel behaviour as part of a comprehensive transport strategy for Colchester...”

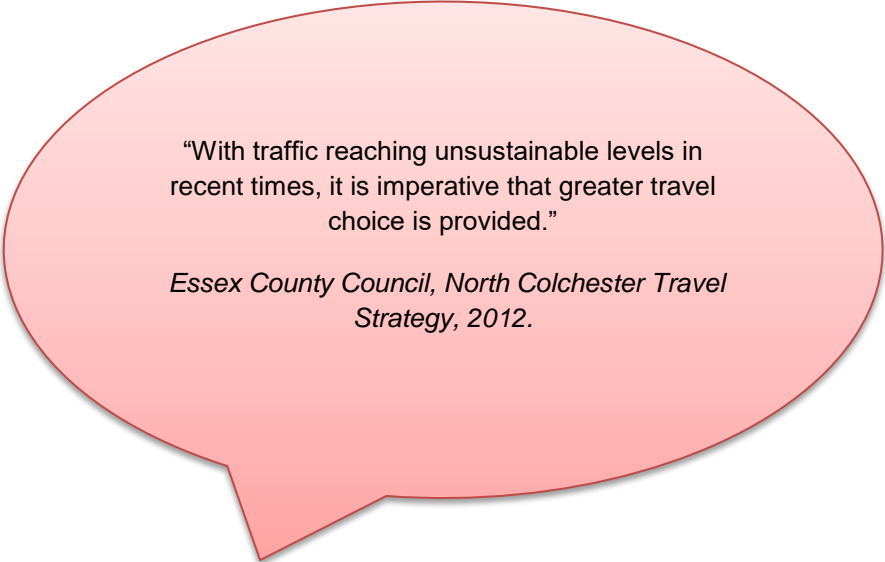
TA2 – “Walking and Cycling: The Council will work with partners to promote walking and cycling as an integral and highly sustainable means of transport...”

TA3 – “Public Transport: The Council will work with partners to further improve public transport and increase modal shift towards sustainable modes...”

TA4 – “Roads and Traffic: The Borough Council will work with partners to accommodate necessary car travel making the best use of networks and manage demand for road traffic...”

TA5 – “Parking: The Council will work with partners to ensure that car parking is managed to support the economy and sustainable communities...”

The MCC and BRA policies and initiatives are in compliance with the above CBC policies.



“With traffic reaching unsustainable levels in recent times, it is imperative that greater travel choice is provided.”

*Essex County Council, North Colchester Travel Strategy, 2012.*

## 4.8 DEVELOPMENT AND THE PUBLIC REALM

### Policies

In order to contribute to the achievement of the vision set out in this Neighbourhood Plan for Myland and Braiswick to continue to be desirable places to live it is important that high levels of design quality and overall sustainability are achieved in the development of new communities. The following policy is therefore applied.

DPR1 – Developments will aim to attain the highest quality and design standards and where appropriate encourage the use of relevant national standards by developers in order to achieve the highest possible levels of overall sustainability in the design and layout of new developments.

### Rationale and Evidence

As stated under “Context and Scope” this section of the Plan is additional to the subjects covered in the most recent community survey. ‘Development and the Public Realm’ brings together those survey themes and is important to realising the Myland and Braiswick ‘vision’.

Developments to-date across Myland and Braiswick have given rise to an area of diverse sub-neighbourhoods and this will continue with the development of the Chesterwell, Severalls Phase 2 and Northern Gateway sites, see Appendix B. How events have urbanised the once semi-rural nature of north Colchester is evident in the map of distinct neighbourhoods provided at Appendix A.

It is important that the community can be integrated through access to amenities and venues and connectivity can be achieved through road and multi-use routes that provide leisure and destination. This suggests that developments will need to embrace the concept of ‘life time neighbourhoods’. These are described as neighbourhoods that “provide all residents with the best possible chance of health, well-being and social inclusion, particularly as they grow older. This would require an accessible and pleasant built environment...”. Indeed some criticism has been laid at the density and narrowness of roads within recent developments with resultant problems such as chaotic parking.

Social cohesion is critical and highlights the importance of integrating new and existing communities. There is much current guidance from Government and industry sources that support best practice towards achieving this. The 2007 discussion paper *‘Towards Lifetime Neighbourhoods: Designing sustainable communities for all’* (as listed in Appendix D) sees the central themes as: social cohesion and sense of place; the built environment; social inclusion, services and amenities; housing; and innovation and cross-sectoral planning.

Similarly the *‘Building for Life’* (as listed in Appendix D) industry standard, endorsed by Government, constructs sustainable development around: Integration into the neighbourhood (connections / facilities & services / public transport / meeting local housing requirements); Creating a place (character / working with the site and its context / creating well defined streets and spaces / easy to find your way around); and Street & Home (streets for all / car parking / public and private spaces / external storage and amenity space).

This evidences ample support and guidance from both Government and the Industry for what this Neighbourhood Plan aspires to achieve in respect of its vision for quality of life for current and future residents of Myland and Braiswick. A policy is required that brings focus to what should be attainable.

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINE

Implementation of the Plan will be spread over a number of years. It will run alongside future development phases in north Colchester and CBC's Local Plan. Implementation detail will emerge as it becomes clear the extent to which potential actions need to be initiated. Thus this implementation outline does not include planning policies and does not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan rather it anticipates projects that need to take place to support the Plan policies and aspirations of the community.

It is evident from the projects set out below that MCC and BRA will need to maintain on-going liaison and close co-operation with other organisations. This will be necessary, for example, to stay abreast of developments, infrastructure and facility provision and identification of potential shortfalls. This will form the basis upon which additional funding requirements will become known and action plans defined.

Where it becomes apparent that development contributions through S106 (Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as substituted by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991) and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) is not sufficient to meet the needs of the community it may be necessary to consider a range of options such as forming a non-profit making Community Enterprise Company, working partnerships with charitable and other non-profit making organisations or a combination of these. Sources of funding in addition to S106 and CIL contributions will also embrace grant streams so as to minimise reliance on local council taxes.

The question of funding was covered in the most recent community survey where residents were asked which potential funding sources should be used. The response was that a combination of several sources should be utilised: Central Government 49%; Local council tax 47%; Pay as you use 42%; Privately funded 35%; and Fundraising 24%.

An associated detailed Implementation Forecast Plan identifying needs and exploring and recommending options will be produced replicating the CBC Local Plan period. This will contain details of how projects and actions will be monitored against progress and achievement. As referred to above, MCC and BRA anticipate a range of local projects (LP's) that will need to be undertaken to activate some of the policies and what they aim to provide. An overview of those already under consideration is outlined below as an indication of what may be undertaken.

LP1 – Housing: MCC and BRA have identified the need for elderly day and social facilities, including residential care. This is not currently included in development master-plans. If necessary MCC will exercise the 'Community Right to Bid' procedure to identify and bid for land under the NPPF regulations to locally operate such facilities.

LP2 – Housing: MCC will review and where necessary enhance the existing Myland Design Statement in light of emerging guidance, revised standards and the policies contained within this Neighbourhood Plan.

LP3 – Housing: MCC and BRA will strongly oppose any allocation of housing on sites currently earmarked for social amenity, e.g. school sites, green space proportion of the Rugby Club.

LP4 – Housing: MCC will lobby industry bodies and professional organisations against further reductions in housing living space standards.

LP5 – Education: MCC and BRA will consistently monitor identified education needs, including non-statutory needs against those in place and will examine alternative means of provision including if necessary the right to bid for sites or buildings.

LP6 – Employment: MCC and BRA will consistently review business growth, including the creation of business and work opportunities for local young people. This will include if necessary exploring local financing and ‘right to bid’ opportunities.

LP7 – Environment: Northern Gateway - If Colchester Rugby Club is relocated ensure a significant proportion (not less than 4.5 hectares) of the current sports fields is designated Local Green Space or as a village green to which the public will have full access to and use of, subject to restrictions on some activities, to be controlled by Myland Community Council. Ensure that plans for the residential development and any other uses will respect the natural features, particularly trees and hedgerows, and seek to incorporate them in development proposals and to protect them during and after construction, replacing them if damaged.

LP8 – Environment: Historic, natural and local features, including buildings of interest, pertinent to the legacy and ‘sense of place’ within Myland and Braiswick will be identified and registered with CBC to ensure their protection.

LP9 – Social Amenity: MCC and BRA will examine in partnership with appropriate representatives, the need for a future multi-faith centre.

LP10 – Social Amenity: MCC and BRA will identify gaps and/or opportunities in amenity provision and examine methods for meeting those gaps/opportunities through local initiatives, including the ‘right to bid’.

LP11 – Social Amenity: MCC and BRA will maintain liaison with health providers concerning adequate provision of primary care (GP surgeries) as the Neighbourhood Plan develops further.

LP12 – Sport & Leisure: Where necessary MCC and BRA will examine alternative methods of providing sport and leisure opportunities including the ‘right to bid’ option on sites and buildings.

LP13 – Roads & Transport: MCC and BRA will lobby Colchester Borough Council/Essex County Council to introduce resident parking permit schemes to areas shown to be adversely affected by commuter parking.

LP14 – Roads & Transport: MCC and BRA will lobby the Colchester Borough Council and local bus companies to provide a comprehensive bus network to Myland and Braiswick with real-time information at main bus-stops and improved information at other bus stops.

LP15 – Roads & Transport: MCC will lobby Colchester Borough Council to upgrade the footpath with an adjoining cycle-way which runs from Petrolea Close through the Cowdray Centre direct to the Colchester Leisure Centre.

LP16 – Roads & Transport: MCC will continue to pursue the provision of a multi-use bridge across the A12 in association with policy RAT3.

LP17 – Development & the Public Realm: MCC and BRA will investigate means by which assessment methods such as BREEAM Communities 2012 may be applied at no cost to developers.



**APPENDIX A**

**Myland & Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan and Sub-Neighbourhoods Area map**

**APPENDIX B**

**Myland & Braiswick Neighbourhood Plan Boundary and Key Features map**

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Remaining Major Development Areas in Myland**

**APPENDIX D**

**Northern Gateway / Mill Road Green Space**



## APPENDIX E

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## APPENDIX F

### Acknowledgements

The following participants enabled this Neighbourhood Plan to be produced:

The residents of Myland and Braiswick

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

- Ken Aldred, resident
- David Clouston, Councillor, MCC
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- Helen Harris, Clerk, MCC
- Pete Hewitt, Councillor, MCC
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