

# **Local Development Framework**

## **Site Allocations Regulation 27**

### **Sustainability Appraisal Report Non-Technical Summary**

**Spatial Policy Team  
Colchester Borough Council  
(September 2009)**

## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

### **SEA Directive says:**

(j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings. Annex 1

### ***Introduction***

This is the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report for the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). The Site Allocations DPD, once adopted, will be the main tool for determining land use across Colchester Borough until 2021.

SA is about asking at various intervals during plan preparation: "how sustainable is my plan?" A range of objectives are established and all options are assessed against these objectives to compare their environmental, economic and social effects and ultimately to assess how sustainable an option is. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), SA is mandatory for Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

A SA scoping report was published for consultation in November 2007 and a revised scoping report was published for consultation in January 2009.

### ***Background and methodology***

#### Colchester's Local Development Framework (LDF)

The LDF comprises a number of documents that set out the blueprint for the future development of the Borough. Colchester's LDF will contain a series of Local Development Documents (LDDs), including Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The production of the LDF follows on from the development of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which was adopted in May 2008 and was also subject to SA. Colchester's LDF will need to demonstrate conformity with the RSS and compliment Colchester's Sustainable Community Strategy (2007).

The Core Strategy DPD is the main document within the LDF and includes an overall vision, which sets out how the area and the places within it should develop; strategic objectives for the area focussing on the key issues to be addressed; and a delivery strategy for achieving these objectives, which should set out how much development is intended to happen where, when, and by what means it will be delivered. The Development Policies DPD is being prepared alongside the Site Allocations DPD and will also be published in September for Regulation 27 consultation. The Development Policies DPD will include a number of criteria based policies that will be used by development control in the determination of planning applications. Various SPDs are also being prepared as part of the LDF.

The Site Allocations DPD will allocate land for a range of site specific uses which will provide the site detail for the strategic vision and objectives of the Core Strategy. The Site Allocations DPD will also set out policies and proposals relevant to the sites including detailed requirements for their development. Once completed the DPD will include a range of site proposals to deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy.

### SEA Directive

In addition to an SA, the DPD must also undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes. The objective of SEA, as defined in the Government's guidance on strategic environmental assessment, is *"to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans....with a view to promoting sustainable development"* (Article 1). SEA has been incorporated into SA and so this report includes both the SA and SEA.

### Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate that a SA has been carried out in compliance with national guidance on SA and the SEA Directive. The report also shows how and why allocations in the DPD were selected and shows that the DPD will contribute to sustainable development.

### Areas experiencing change during the plan period

The Spatial Strategy, set out in the Core Strategy DPD, emphasises the importance of the Town Centre and regeneration areas and these areas accordingly are expected to change the most during the plan period. The strategy directs development towards the most accessible and sustainable locations, and plans for the provision of transport, employment and community facilities to support the following growth areas.

### Technical Difficulties as part of the Sustainability Appraisal

The general difficulties encountered as part of the SA include limitations of information, incomplete data/evidence, changes to national planning policy and a lack of guidance for Site Allocations DPDs.

### Sustainability Objectives

The following sustainability objectives have been used in the appraisal:

1. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home.
2. To ensure that development is located sustainably and makes efficient use of land.
3. To achieve a prosperous and sustainable economy and improve the vitality of the town centre.

4. To achieve more sustainable travel behaviour and reduce the need to travel.
5. To improve the education, skills and health of the Borough's population.
6. To create safe and attractive public spaces and reduce crime.
7. To conserve and enhance the townscape character, historic and cultural assets of the Borough.
8. To conserve and enhance the natural environment, natural resources and the biodiversity of the Borough.
9. To make efficient use of energy and resources, and reduce waste and our contribution to climate change.

### **SA Topic Section**

The SA Report includes the key messages from the review of policies, plans and programmes, collection of baseline data and sustainability issues/problems relevant to each SA objective. In this non-technical summary the key messages from the review are summarised, the general characteristics of the Borough are set out and the key sustainability issues/problems are listed.

#### Key Messages

##### **Economic**

<b>Key Messages</b>	<b>Source</b>
Ensure that town centres provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment for businesses, shoppers and residents through the promotion of high quality and inclusive design, improvement of the quality of the public realm and open spaces, protection and enhancement of the architectural and historic heritage of centres and provision of a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic activity.	PPS6, Sustainable Community Strategy, By Design, Regional Economic Strategy
Schemes for rural diversification should be supported.	PPS7, The Taylor Review
Developments should take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment.	PPS9, Ramsar convention
Development should be located in areas which minimise the length and number of trips, especially by motor vehicles and can be served by more energy efficient modes of transport (this is particularly important in the case of offices, light industrial development and campus style developments such as science and business parks likely to have large numbers of employees).	PPG4, PPG13, RSS14
The countryside can provide opportunities for recreation and visitors can play an important role in the regeneration of the economies of rural areas.	PPS7, PPG17

Support business innovation and take-up of best practice in renewable energy technology and management.	Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development – from our origins to the future, RSS14, UK Renewable Energy Strategy
Provide for the needs of an expanding tourism sector.	RSS14, A Better Life
Harness the region's economic strengths specifically in science, technology and research.	IRS, Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Health Strategy
Create a framework for private investment and regeneration that promotes economic, environmental and social well being, particularly in deprived areas.	Sustainable Community Strategy, Corporate Strategy, Regional Business Plan for the Olympic Games, Regional Economic Strategy, PPS6, RSS14, PPS12, Regional Health Strategy
Olympic spirit: maximise the benefits from the Olympics coming to London in 2012 by playing a part and getting people involved and participating in sport (£600 million is the estimate economic impact for the East of England from the Olympic Games).	A Better Life, Regional Business Plan for the Olympic Games, Regional Health Strategy
Promote the development of the Haven Gateway as a New Growth Point.	Haven Gateway Programme of Development
LDFs should contain policies to support home based working.	The Taylor review
Protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choices for both passenger and freight movements.	PPG13

## Environmental

Key Messages	Source
The quality and extent of natural habitats and geological and geomorphological sites; the natural physical processes on which they depend; and the populations of naturally occurring species which they support should be protected and enhanced.	PPS9, RSS14, Future Water, IRS, Corporate Strategy, Johannesburg Declaration, Ramsar Convention, Water Framework Directive, Future Water, Essex Biodiversity Action Plan, Essex Minerals

	Development Document Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper, Essex Minerals Local Plan
Developments should take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification, contributing to a high quality environment and a better quality of life.	PPS9, RSS14, Sustainable Community Strategy, East of England Regional Social Strategy, Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan
Maximise the potential for landscape and biodiversity enhancement by securing the high quality restoration of land at the earliest opportunity, with appropriate aftercare to facilitate beneficial after uses.	PPS9, Sustainable Development Framework for the East of England, Essex Minerals Development Document Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper, Essex Minerals Local Plan, A Living Landscape
The biodiversity value of brownfield sites must be considered.	PPS9
Consideration should be given to the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands as regulators of water regimes and as habitats supporting a characteristic flora and fauna, especially waterfowl and the interdependence of man and his environment.	Ramsar convention on Wetlands of international importance especially as waterfowl habitat
Identify priority habitats and species which are important on an international and national scale, important in Essex or where there is a special responsibility.	Essex Biodiversity Action Plan, A Living Landscape
High quality green infrastructure should be delivered over the next 20 years to complement and support planned housing and development growth.	Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Strategy Study
Development should not be located on greenfield land outside of settlements.	PPS7, PPS3, RSS14
The partnership between urban and rural areas should be strengthened so as to create a new urban-rural relationship.	European Spatial Development Perspective
Landscape character should be protected.	RSS14, PPS7, Essex Minerals Development Document Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper, Essex Minerals Local Plan, A Living Landscape

Use resources more efficiently, minimising waste and increasing rates of reuse and recycling	Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development – from our origins to the future, RSS14, IRS, Sustainable Community Strategy, Corporate Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy, Sustainable Development Framework for the East of England, Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan
Sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources should be promoted.	Water Framework Directive, RSS14, Future Water
Identify land at risk (and the degree of risk) of flooding from river, sea and other sources.	PPS25, PPS25 practice guide
Safeguard land from development that is required for current and future flood management eg conveyance and storage of flood water, and flood defences.	PPS25, Future Water
Reduce flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).	PPS25, PPS25 practice guide RSS14, Future Water
Consideration of the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands as regulators of water regimes.	Ramsar convention on Wetlands of international importance especially as waterfowl habitat
Follow the flood risk management hierarchy (assess, avoid, substitute, control and mitigate).	PPS25, PPS25 practice guide
The pollution of groundwater must be reduced.	Water Framework Directive
Adopt a precautionary approach.	PPS23
Make the polluter pay.	PPS23
Noise-sensitive developments should be separated from major sources of noise (such as road, rail and air transport and certain types of industrial development) and development involving noisy activities should, if possible, be sited away from noise-sensitive land uses.	PPG24, Sustainable Development Framework for the East of England
The need for growth should be reconciled with the need to protect the historic environment.	PPG15, PPG16, RSS14, IRS, Corporate Strategy, ESDP, Sustainable

	Community Strategy, Essex Minerals Development Document Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper, Essex Minerals Local Plan
Areas must be maintained as attractive places to live, work and visit with their own distinctive identity.	PPS1, PPS3, PPS6, PPS7, RSS14, By Design, A Better Life
There should be an emphasis on design, quality and preserving and enhancing natural and built assets.	Sustainable Community Strategy
15% of energy nationally should come from renewable sources by 2020.	PPS22, RSS14, Johannesburg Declaration, UK Renewable Energy Strategy
Separate economic growth from increases in resource use, especially in terms of energy and water.	IRS
Development plans should contribute to global sustainability by reducing carbon emissions and addressing other causes & impacts of climate change.	PPS1, PPS12, RSS14, Sustainable Community Strategy, Sustainable Development Framework for the East of England, Essex Climate Change Strategy, Johannesburg Declaration, IRS, Code for Sustainable Homes, Adapting to climate change; a framework for action, Limiting Global Climate Change to 2 degrees Celsius: The way ahead for 2020 and beyond
Adaption will be crucial in reducing vulnerability to climate change and is the only way to cope with impacts that are inevitable.	Adapting to climate change; a framework for action, Limiting Global Climate Change to 2 degrees Celsius: The way ahead for 2020 and beyond
There is a need to look holistically at systems (ecological and human) affected by climate change.	Adapting to climate change; a framework for action
Open space and green infrastructure help wildlife to	Haven Gateway Green



adapt to the effects of climate change.	Infrastructure Strategy, PPG17, Regional Health Strategy
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## Social

Key Messages	Source
Access policies should be clear, comprehensive & inclusive.	PPS1
Community involvement is essential.	PPS1
The needs of the changing demographic should be met.	IRS, Regional Social Strategy
Support people in the region in 'active ageing' and adding life to years, linking in with the National Service Framework for older people.	Regional Health Strategy
Policies should promote high quality, inclusive design.	PPS1, Regional Economic Strategy, Regional Social Strategy, Regional Health Strategy
Housing developments must be located in suitable locations that make efficient use of land and offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.	PPS3, Corporate Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy, RSS14, PPS1, PPG13, Regional Health Strategy
Housing shortages must be addressed by securing a step change in the delivery of additional housing throughout the region and giving priority to the provision of affordable housing to meet identified needs.	RSS14, PPS3, IRS, Corporate Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy, Affordable Housing Strategy
The combination of high cost homes and low rural wages is putting rural housing out of the reach of many who work in the countryside.	The Taylor Review
Promote social inclusion, ensuring that both urban and rural communities have access to a range of main town centre uses and that deficiencies in provision are remedied.	PPS6, IRS, Regional Economic Strategy, East of England Regional Social Strategy, PPS3, PPS7
Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities promote social inclusion and are a means of promoting healthy living and preventing illness, and in the social development of children.	PPG17, Open Space SPD, Regional Business Plan for the Olympic Games, East of England Regional Social Strategy, Regional Health Strategy
Biodiversity should be enhanced in green spaces and among developments so that they are used by wildlife and valued by people, recognising that healthy functional ecosystems can contribute to a	PPS9, RSS14, Regional Social Strategy

better quality of life and to people's sense of well-being.	
Consistent with the aims of sustainable development, a balance between safeguarding the environment of Essex, and the quality of life of its residents must be achieved.	PPS9, RSS14, Sustainable Community Strategy, East of England Regional Social Strategy, Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan
Locate day to day facilities which need to be near their clients in local centres so that they are accessible by walking and cycling.	PPG13, RSS14, East of England Regional Social Strategy
Reduce levels of poverty and exclusion and promote well being through community cohesion and social capital.	RSS14, IRS, East of England Regional Social Strategy
Improve the skills base through increased learning opportunities for all.	IRS, Corporate Strategy, Sustainable Community Strategy, The Leitch Review of Skills
Those who live in the most deprived areas are likely to be multiply disadvantaged and without gainful employment are more likely to be socially excluded from the community at large.	Sustainable Community Strategy, East of England Regional Social Strategy
Olympic spirit: maximise the benefits from the Olympics coming to London in 2012 by playing a part and getting people involved and participating in sport.	A Better Life, Regional Business Plan for the Olympic Games
The timing and location of housing land should be informed by an understanding of how local land and housing markets interact.	Brownfield market signals

### Borough characteristics

The Borough of Colchester is located in the county of Essex in the east of England and is situated 62 miles north east of London. The Borough covers an area of almost 125 square miles (34,540 hectares) and has the main town of Colchester surrounded by a rural hinterland with centres of population in the larger villages of Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. These three prosperous and growing villages each have their own strong identity, aspirations and requirements. The remainder of the Borough is largely rural in character with a number of smaller villages and many small hamlets. The northern part of the Borough which borders with Suffolk lies within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Data from the mid-2007 population estimates that the population of the Borough is 175,500. Less than 7% of the population comprises ethnic minority groups, an increase of 3% since 2001. Two-thirds of the total

population is concentrated within the built-up areas of Colchester and Stanway.

Colchester's population has seen a growth of 12.5% since mid-2001. It accounts for 12.8% of the Essex County population and based on mid-2007 figures the average population density of Colchester was 533 people per square kilometre (sq km). This is an increase from 2001 when there were 329 people per sq km.

The population of Colchester is expected to grow by 30.9% (since mid-2006 population estimates) to 223,500 people in 2021. The largest growth will be in the older age groups (60+), whilst growth levels are expected to decline in the younger age groups (aged 19 or younger). This means that by 2021, there will be an 'ageing population' in Colchester, which will affect many areas of the community for example, the economy, housing and health. The aging population is evidenced by the fact that 16.1% of Colchester's population will be aged 65 or over in 2021.

As of 1 April 2009 there were 72,724 dwellings in the Borough; 80.5% of these are privately owned. The Borough has an annual requirement to deliver 825 dwellings per annum and this figure has been exceeded in recent years.

94.6% of the economically active population are in employment and 1,773 people within the Borough claim Job Seekers allowance. In 2006 there were 5,325 VAT registered businesses. The gross weekly pay for full time workers in Colchester is £479.

Whilst Colchester is relatively prosperous 5% of the population live in seriously deprived smaller areas according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Within the Borough there are 1,550 listed buildings, 22 conservation areas and 88 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs). Colchester contains a third of the total SAMs in the whole of Essex.

The Colne and Blackwater Estuaries are of international importance for nature conservation and are notified as Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. Abberton Reservoir is also of international importance for nature conservation and is notified as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar site.

Per capita carbon emissions in the Borough were 6.35 tonnes in 2006, which is less than the regional average. Daily domestic water consumption per capita is also less than average at 145 litres per person.

#### Sustainability issues and problems

Sustainability Issue/ Problem	How the DPD addresses the issue
Projections indicate an aging population, which will lead to smaller	The allocated sites will provide a mix of housing types.

and older households.	
The annual need for affordable housing is 1,082 dwellings <sup>1</sup> , which is far greater than the average annual number of total new (market and affordable) dwellings.	The allocated sites will provide affordable housing units on site.
There is a lack of provision for gypsies and travellers.	The DPD allocates land for gypsy pitches.
Some areas within the Borough are run-down and in need of regeneration.	The DPD directs sites to the five regeneration areas.
Some greenfield development will need to occur to meet housing need.	The SA has appraised a number of greenfield sites and the most sustainable sites have been allocated for development. Mitigation and enhancement measures have also been suggested as part of the SA to reduce the adverse impacts of greenfield development.
There are areas within the Borough at high risk of flooding.	Only a few sites within areas of flood risk are allocated and these sites have been subject to a flood risk sequential test and parts (a) and (b) of the exception test.
There is a high dependence on the private car.	Allocated sites are accessible and a mix of uses will be required as part of large sites, which will reduce the need to travel.
As the current economy of the Borough is generally good and unemployment is low the key sustainability issues for the economy are around maintaining a healthy, vibrant and diverse economy into the future.	The DPD allocates land to provide the 14,200 job target set out in the RSS.
The rural economy has been affected in recent years by falling incomes from farming.	The DPD allocates a number of rural employment sites, which will diversify farms and provide jobs for local people.
Outmigration of skilled younger workers is an issue.	A range of employment opportunities are supported in the DPD.
There is a high dependence on the private car.	Mixed use and accessible sites are allocated to reduce the need to travel. Furthermore, the DPD considers the opportunities for sustainable transport links for the allocated sites.
An ageing population will place greater stress on services, particularly	As the DPD is implemented regard will need to be had to service

<sup>1</sup> Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2008.

health services.	deficiencies to ensure that development does not place undue pressure on existing services.
Whilst Colchester Borough scores low on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation there are areas within the Borough which suffer from high levels of deprivation.	The DPD helps to facilitate the Borough's regeneration programme, which will help to tackle deprivation.
Rural isolation is an issue for some of the population.	This DPD provides rural employment sites, which will provide jobs for local people and may indirectly lead to improvements in public transport provision.
Whilst crime levels are low fear of crime is an issue.	The DPD encourages mixed use development, which helps to reduce the fear and incidence of crime by increasing natural surveillance. Furthermore, the DPD supports the Borough's regeneration programme which will reduce the fear and incidence of crime in these areas.
The Borough has a rich heritage and new development could impact on historic and/or cultural sites.	The DPD does not allocate any sites that are likely to significantly affect a historic or cultural asset.
There is pressure for development on land in-between settlements, which could cause settlement coalescence.	The DPD does not allocate any sites that could lead to settlement coalescence.
Within the Borough there are 3 Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites, which could be affected by development and a Special Area of Conservation.	Protection of these sites is addressed through a number of measures as detailed in the appropriate assessment report.
Development has the potential to adversely affect nature conservation.	The issue of nature conservation has been considered for each allocated site as part of the SA and where necessary mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed.
Development has the potential to adversely affect landscape character.	The issue of landscape character has been considered for each allocated site as part of the SA and where necessary mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed.
Development has the potential to adversely affect water quality.	It is clear in this DPD and the Development Policies DPD that notwithstanding the allocations in this DPD development will not be permitted unless there is capacity within the existing sewerage

	infrastructure system to cope with the development within the confines of existing consents.
Water usage is increasing both through new development and increased demand.	Allocated sites can be expected to be more water efficient; this issue is addressed through the Development Policies DPD.
The amount of waste produced is increasing.	There is little that this DPD can do to address this issue, but new development will be required to provide space for recycling facilities.
There are no renewable energy schemes within the Borough, with the exception of microgeneration.	The potential for on-site renewable energy was considered for each site and as the plan progresses and the levels of the code for sustainable homes increase the provision of renewable energy will increase.

### ***Appraisal of options***

#### Town centre

The town centre sites will result in development in accessible and previously developed locations, and will encourage regeneration. Options will enhance the town centre and key gateways and therefore help to develop a prestigious regional centre.

#### East Colchester Growth and Regeneration Areas and the University of Essex

Redevelopment in East Colchester will contribute to the regeneration objectives for this area and the Borough's housing and employment figures and support university expansion. There are a number of services and facilities already in the area which can be enhanced through further development and the town centre is approximately 1.5 km away. Hythe railway station has been upgraded to allow 12 car trains to stop, allowing a more frequent train service to the area, enhancing access for people to and from the area. There are frequent bus links to the Town via a number of routes which go on to serve the University and the major residential area of Greenstead. However, a significant part of the area is within Flood Zone 3, where there is a high probability of flooding. The sequential test has been applied within the regeneration area for each site and has demonstrated that there are no reasonably available alternative sites in areas of lower flood risk. Residential uses should be directed to upper storeys and commercial development should be included on the ground floor. Flood Risk Assessment will be required for all development proposals which will need to demonstrate that development will not increase flood risk and that safe access and egress can be provided.

#### Garrison

The preferred sites in the Garrison will contribute to the wider redevelopment of the area. There are a number of services and facilities already in the area which can be enhanced through further development. The Garrison is a sustainable location for new development given that the town centre is adjacent on the northern edge of the Regeneration and Growth Area.

### North Growth Area

The Accessibility Study carried out as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy identified that the average distance from the new housing area to key facilities is 2.1km and that all facilities are accessible by walking and cycling. The growth area has good access to the Town Centre, transport interchanges and other facilities and development will provide the opportunity to complete and improve transport connections. Particular improvements include the new junction on the A12, the Northern Approaches Road and busway, and improvements to the complex road network around the station. A substantial part of the new allocations comprise greenfield sites, however greenfield sites do have a higher likelihood of large areas of open space; sustainable construction and renewable energy technologies being provided; and contributions being secured towards open space, education, affordable housing and sustainable transport infrastructure. All the allocated housing sites within the Growth Area are very close to the established large job generators such as Severalls Business Park, the Hospital, and the town centre. Additional land will also be allocated for employment purposes, so future residents will be provided with good access to employment opportunities. The landscape north of the A12 is important for maintaining settlement separation between Colchester and villages to the north. Accordingly no development (except relocation of a service station, park and ride and appropriate recreational uses) will take place north of the A12.

### Stanway Growth Area

In the Stanway Growth Area several sites have been identified which will contribute to the delivery of housing and new jobs in the Stanway Growth Area. These sites will also support sustainable travel behaviour, investment in sustainable transport infrastructure and reduce car dependence. Greenfield sites should be more viable than brownfield sites which will ensure the provision of new facilities. Although the sites are greenfield they are located adjacent to existing development and the existing community will benefit from new facilities. Landscaping will help to soften the approach into Stanway and existing hedgerows should be retained where possible in addition to visually significant areas of trees and woodland (as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment). Major improvements will be needed to the existing sewer system to provide capacity; without major improvements the sewer system is likely to flood either internally or externally. This issue will need to be resolved before development commences on any of the new housing sites. Land between the A12 and B1408 London Road is served by Copford sewage treatment works (STW), which is already operating at capacity, development should not commence until there is an increase to the discharge consent at this STW. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should

be provided to protect groundwater quality and levels, and reduce the risk of flooding. Buffer zones should be created along the southern boundary of the sites in Warren Lane to protect Warren Lane Pit Local Wildlife Site and a buffer zone should be created between the A12/B1408 London Road to avoid settlement coalescence between Colchester and Copford.

### Tiptree

Tiptree was identified to take some limited growth in the Core Strategy. Several sites have been put forward to accommodate residential development and all sites adjacent to the existing settlement boundary have been assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Land is needed to deliver a small number of dwellings in Tiptree and the SA concluded that the allocation of one large greenfield site is more likely to deliver a range of housing types, including affordable housing, and other planning gain benefits than the allocation of several smaller sites. The site in Grange Road will also result in benefits to the community through the improved provision of recreational facilities and open space. There is a business park to the north of this site and further uses along Kelvedon Road becoming more sporadic towards Feering. The development of this site will help tie the business park into the settlement pattern of Tiptree. Part of this site is allocated in the Local Plan for employment development and this potential for employment development would be lost by the development of this site. However, the Employment Land Study concluded that this site is unlikely to come forward in the plan period. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) will be essential to reduce flood risk, replenish groundwater levels and reduce the likelihood and amount of pollutants entering the groundwater system. The wildlife area, landscaping scheme, allotments and open space are an important part of the scheme and development should avoid the area designated by Essex Wildlife Trust as a 'living landscape'. The option to allocate land for employment purposes adjacent to Wilkin & Sons factory will help to secure the future of the firm in Tiptree, which is an important part of Tiptree's culture and heritage.

### Rural employment sites

Although rural employment sites do not appear to be very sustainable as they are predominantly located in remote areas, served by poor public transport links, and often fail to promote regeneration, PPS7 states that limited development should be provided in rural areas to meet local business and community needs and to maintain the vitality of villages. Rural employment sites can help rural communities become more sustainable by providing jobs for locals and reducing the levels of out-commuting. To promote the re-use of existing buildings in the countryside and support the rural economy sites have been allocated as rural employment sites where there is an existing business on the site and/or buildings on the site.

### Borough wide

Whilst the majority of development is directed to the regeneration and growth areas there are some sites, outside of these areas, which would bring



regeneration benefits and should be supported. Furthermore, two extensions to holiday parks are supported, which will contribute to the tourist economy and help to sustain existing businesses.

### Gypsy and Traveller sites

Figures from the RSS Review state that Colchester Borough Council has to provide 30 gypsy pitches to meet demand by 2011. Gypsies are one housing group that the Council has a duty to allocate land for, indeed the government circular on gypsy and traveller sites states that the approach set out in the circular should be seen in the context of the government's key objective for planning for housing – to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home. Whilst the preferred option will result in adverse sustainability impacts; particularly in terms of accessibility and landscape impact, the first SA objective, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home, carries a significant amount of weight.

### ***Predicting and evaluating the effects of the DPD and mitigation and enhancement measures***

The effects of the DPD are as follows:

- It is extremely likely that this DPD will ensure the delivery of the required number of dwellings needed to support the growing population within the plan period.
- It is very likely that the delivery of affordable housing will increase.
- It is certain that good quality and sustainable homes will be delivered.
- It is likely that the housing needs of gypsies and travellers have been met.
- It is highly likely that this DPD will have a positive impact on the Borough's economy, including the rural and tourist economy.
- This DPD will promote regeneration; five regeneration areas are identified and development will principally be located at these accessible locations.
- 83% of new dwellings are predicted to be built on brownfield land.
- It is likely that the DPD overall will reduce the risk of flooding
- There is uncertainty regarding whether the findings of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) will be incorporated into the Site Allocations DPD.
- The DPD promotes mixed use development and allocates accessible sites, which will certainly reduce the need to travel. The allocation of rural employment sites may increase the need to travel; the impact is uncertain as it depends on whether rural employment sites provide jobs for rural residents or whether people travel by car from outside of the area.
- The DPD will contribute to the delivery of the Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Strategy, which will help to promote healthy lifestyles.
- None of the allocated sites will affect the historic core, scheduled ancient monument or a known historic asset.

- Greenfield allocations could affect archaeological deposits.
- The DPD avoids settlement coalescence, which will certainly help to protect the character of the Borough's settlements.
- It is likely that greenfield development will adversely affect landscape, biodiversity and environmental quality. However, greenfield development offers the opportunity to enhance biodiversity.
- Without mitigation, international sites will be affected by indirect effects; appropriate mitigation measures have therefore been put in place.
- The DPD is likely to reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from new build by delivering mixed use development at accessible locations, promoting sustainable design and construction measures, and increasing the opportunities for sustainable travel.
- Recycling will be improved through ensuring that the design stage includes facilities for storage and high density developments are accessible to waste collectors.

The following mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed:

1. Good design will be needed to ensure that flood risk is not increased and for sites within flood zones, that safe access and egress can be provided.
2. SuDS should be incorporated into all development to reduce the risk of flooding.
3. Greenfield sites should ensure that they are well connected to adjacent development to ensure that accessibility is good.
4. Coastal zone management areas should be included in the LDF to ensure that risks associated with coastal change are avoided.
5. Rural employment sites should avoid development on greenfield land and rural buildings should be re-used.
6. The guidance document, Designing out Crime, should be used at the design stage to help avoid the incidence and fear of crime.
7. Archaeological surveys will be required for all greenfield sites to ensure that archaeological deposits are not harmed.
8. Landscaping will help to improve the character of an area, enhance nature conservation and offers the opportunity to improve the gateways into the town.
9. Survey and monitoring of international sites will ensure that future development avoids adverse impacts, principally in terms of disturbance, and will identify where site management measures are necessary.
10. Well designed open space as part of or within close proximity to residential areas will reduce pressure on international sites in terms of disturbance and will help to improve water quality and reduce the risk of surface water flooding.
11. Infrastructure improvements required for new development, as outlined in the Water Cycle Study, and improvements required as part of the Water Framework Directive will improve water quality. The Development Policies DPD makes clear that notwithstanding the allocations in this DPD development will not be able to commence until necessary improvements are made, which ensures that the sewage

infrastructure network can cope with the development within the confines of existing consents.

12. Ecological surveys required at the development control stage should ensure that development supports Essex Biodiversity Action Plan targets (and any updates to this plan).
13. The Sustainable Construction SPD (adopted October 2007) will help to enhance the levels of sustainable design and construction and renewable energy.
14. Water management measures as set out in policy DP20 of the Development Policies DPD will reduce the amount of water used.
15. The Affordable Housing SPD will enhance the delivery of affordable housing by making it clear when and how affordable units will be required.
16. Village Design Statements and Parish Plans will enhance the provision of new facilities by highlighting local deficiencies in open space and community and recreational facilities.

### ***Implementation and monitoring***

A monitoring framework for the SA has been established and will be updated as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

### ***Consultation***

We welcome your comments on this SA Scoping Report for the Site Allocations DPD and comments should be sent to:

Spatial Policy  
Colchester Borough Council  
Freepost NAT4433  
PO Box 885  
Colchester  
CO1 1ZE

Alternatively email your comments to [planning.policy@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@colchester.gov.uk) .  
The consultation period will run from 18 September – 30 October 2009.