

A.2 APPENDIX 1

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Draft Plan

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Glossary

Appendix 1: Principles & Objectives

Chapter 1: Introduction

What is this document about?

This document is the first draft of a **Plan** setting out the detail of a new Garden Community proposed for land crossing the Tendring and Colchester border. It has been prepared by Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council, in partnership with Essex County Council ('the Councils'). This first draft is the subject of a formal consultation, and we are inviting comments from all interested parties including (but not limited to) local residents, community organisations, statutory consultees and businesses. The Councils will consider all comments received, review the evidence base, and update this draft **Plan** accordingly and will carry out a further consultation on a proposed final version. This final version will then go forward for public consideration and scrutiny by an independent, government-appointed Planning Inspector via an 'Examination in Public' before making decisions on whether the Plan will be adopted.

What is the Garden Community and why is it needed?

To meet the needs of a growing population over the next 30 to 40 years for housing, employment and associated community facilities and infrastructure, the Councils are working together to plan for a new Garden Community. The Garden Community will be on a large area of land east of Colchester, bordering Tendring District and adjacent to the University of Essex.

The Garden Community will be large enough to accommodate new homes and supporting community facilities and services, alongside employment land for business and industrial use. It will be served by a network of green and beautiful spaces to promote wildlife, attractive places, healthy living, recreational activity, sustainable drainage and to tackle the climate emergency; and new services, facilities and infrastructure including a new Rapid Transit System (RTS) and a new dual carriageway Link Road between the A120 and the A133.

Building a new Garden Community brings the opportunity to create a brand-new place for people to live, work and play, which will be planned from the start to provide high quality, energy efficient and innovatively designed homes. These homes will be located in well-designed neighbourhoods to meet a variety of needs and aspirations, as well as jobs, transport infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure and leisure and recreation facilities.

By building a Garden Community, the pressure for existing towns and villages to expand around their edges across North Essex can be more carefully managed, to avoid housing developments that can overwhelm existing facilities and infrastructure and compromise the character and feel of existing communities.

What has already been agreed?

In 2021, Tendring District Council (TDC) and Colchester Borough Council (CBC) both agreed to formally adopt the 'North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Local Plan' ([Section 1 Local Plan](#)) which, amongst other things, identifies the broad

location of the Garden Community and sets out the Strategic Policies and the overarching requirements and expectations that it will need to meet. The Garden Community will be underpinned by key 'Garden Community Principles' developed from the Town and Country Planning Association principles, in consultation with stakeholders, to be specific to North Essex.

The adoption of the Section 1 Local Plan followed years of technical analysis, public consultation, and an independent examination by a government-appointed Planning Inspector. The independent examination enabled the Planning Inspector to conclude that the Garden Community would be the most appropriate and sustainable option for meeting the need for long-term growth in the North Essex area – having considered and discounted a variety of alternative ideas and options.

To date, the content of this draft **Plan** has already been informed by technical evidence, masterplanning work and comments received through public engagement activities. However, like the Section 1 Local Plan, this more detailed **Plan** will also be the subject of a formal legal process of public consultation, decisions from locally elected Councillors, and an examination by an independent Planning Inspector once the final version is submitted. There is also now a legal requirement that this **Plan** will be reviewed every five years, to ensure it is kept up to date and responds, as necessary, to any changes in the economy or the environment, or actual changes on the ground, as well as complying with any new government policies.

Policy SP8 of the Section 1 Local Plan explains that this **Plan** must set out how the new Garden Community will be designed, developed, and delivered in phases, in accordance with a detailed set of principles. The Garden Community will be holistically and comprehensively planned with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context and is of sufficient scale to enable residents to meet the majority of their day-to-day needs, reducing the need for outward commuting. It will be comprehensively planned from the outset, with delivery phased to achieve the whole development, and will be underpinned by a broad package of infrastructure. Policy SP9 of the Section 1 Local Plan includes principles and requirements for the design, development, and delivery of the Garden Community under the themes of; Place-Making and Design Quality, Housing, Employment and Jobs, Transportation and Community Infrastructure. Relevant requirements from the Section 1 Local Plan are included in each of the themed chapters of this draft **Plan**.

In addition to the Section 1 Local Plan, TDC and CBC each have Section 2 Local Plans, which contain policies and allocations specific to each Council area. TDC adopted its Section 2 Local Plan in January 2022 and CBC is scheduled to adopt in Spring 2022. Requirements from relevant development management policies from TDC and CBCs Section 2 Plans have been included in this draft **Plan**. Therefore, proposals for the Garden Community will need to comply with all policies set out in this draft **Plan**, which replace all policies set out in Section 2 of either the CBC or TDC Local Plans. The Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan also apply to the Garden Community and plan policies will be applied where relevant.

Engagement

The Councils first step in the draft plan making process was the publication of a [Consultation and Engagement Strategy](#) in December 2020. The strategy outlined the approach the Councils would take to engage and communicate with various audiences, to help produce the content of the draft **Plan**. The strategy pointed out the different 'engagement' and 'consultation' activities that the Councils would run. A dedicated [website](#) was established to provide a central source of information on the Garden Community and an [engagement website](#) was established, providing different tools to engage people. All of the engagement feedback has been carefully considered by the Councils and two reports have been published summarising feedback received. One [report](#) was prepared by the Councils and summarises the Council led informal engagement activity that took place between February – October 2021. The report looks at the feedback received, via the various engagement opportunities that were made available to the community and stakeholders. The other [report](#) has been produced by [Traverse](#) and [Community Regen](#) who were commissioned to design and facilitate an engagement programme over the summer and autumn of 2021, in close collaboration with masterplanners [Prior + Partners](#), as part of their visioning work and for the preparation of the masterplan layout options. Each chapter of this draft **Plan** summarises the engagement feedback under each theme.

What does this draft Plan contain?

With the principle of a Garden Community already agreed, this draft **Plan** contains more detail about the development and the specific requirements that developers will be expected to follow, when applying for planning permission and carrying out the development. The draft **Plan** policies have been prepared to get the best possible design and placemaking. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a place for people to live, work and play in a better way.

The structure of this draft **Plan** follows some overarching 'themes' which emerged from the main requirements for the Garden Community set out in the Section 1 Local Plan, the [National Model Design Code](#), the main topics of interest raised and discussed during public engagement activities and wider evidence gathering. The chapter themes are listed below.

Chapter 2: Vision

Chapter 2 sets out a vision for what it is hoped the Garden Community will be like in the future - informed by the discussions with residents, stakeholders and other interested parties through the various engagement activities undertaken. From the vision, a set of specific principles and objectives have been identified – to which all the policy requirements, and guidance in this draft **Plan** will help to achieve.

Chapter 3: Land Uses and Spatial Approach

Chapter 3 confirms the boundary of the Garden Community, includes a Key Diagram, and explains how planning applications for development of the Garden Community will be expected to come forward.

The big decisions about what land will be included in the Garden Community; how the development will broadly be laid out; which areas will be allocated to housing, employment, open space or other uses or infrastructure; and which areas will be protected from development, are set out in the Key Diagram. The Key Diagram has been informed by an evidence base supported by technical analysis, survey work and the comments of local people, stakeholders, and other interested parties as part of public engagement activities.

Chapter 4: Nature

Chapter 4 sets out the Councils' expectations and its policy on nature within the Garden Community – including the protection and creation of open spaces and green and blue infrastructure; the planting of trees; tree-lined streets; the creation of wildlife habitats; the protection and enhancement of woodland, historic lanes and other important landscape, heritage, and biodiversity assets.

Chapter 5: Buildings, Place and Character

Chapter 5 contains the policy expectations for creating unique and distinctive places, buildings and neighbourhoods whilst respecting the character of nearby towns, villages, and heritage assets. It also sets out the details around the use of employment land; the promotion of economic growth and developing skills; as well as the creation of a variety of job opportunities across different sectors, including research and development, on-site construction and the service sector industries; and measures for embracing self-employment and home working.

Chapter 6: Community and Social Infrastructure

Chapter 6 contains the Councils' expectations and policy on ensuring the Garden Community is served by community services and facilities of the right type in the right location, including schools and sports facilities; as well as access to health services and how the development will incorporate measures to encourage inclusive, healthy, and happy lifestyles.

Chapter 7: Movement and Connections

Chapter 7 sets out policy and expectations around the focus on active travel and the creation of 'walkable neighbourhoods' in the Garden Community where walking, cycling and rapid public transport facilities are prioritised, convenient and available to all as the preferred means of travel. It also sets out requirements for car parking for residents, workers, and visitors with the aim of embracing advancements in electric vehicle technology.

Chapter 8: Sustainable Infrastructure

Chapter 8 sets out the Councils' aspirations and expectations for creating a Garden Community fit for the future and incorporates all measures aimed at tackling climate change, minimising carbon emissions and climate change adaptation.

Chapter 9: Infrastructure Delivery, Impact Mitigation and Monitoring

The final Chapter sets out the mechanisms for securing developer contributions towards infrastructure and social and community services, including contributions towards the A120-A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System. Chapter 9 also sets out a draft framework of ‘indicators’ that the Councils’ will use as measures to periodically monitor the progress and success of the Garden Community and to determine whether any changes in approach are required when this **Plan** is reviewed.

Each of the themed chapters outlined above includes a summary of the Section 1 Local Plan requirements, a summary of engagement feedback, the principles for the theme, the policy, justification, a summary of alternative approaches considered, and questions.

Sustainability Appraisal

The policies in this draft **Plan** have been assessed against a series of ‘sustainability objectives’ as part of a ‘Sustainability Appraisal’. The Sustainability Appraisal is a legal requirement of the planning system which has helped the Councils to ensure that the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies it has chosen have been identified and properly considered, and that the most appropriate strategy and policies have been chosen, when considered against reasonable alternatives. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that taken as a whole, the draft **Plan** sets out a positive plan for the achievement of the Garden Community. The policies of the **Plan** set a high standard which development will be required to meet, and it is considered consistent with the principles of sustainable development. This draft **Plan** contains references to the Sustainability Appraisal and any alternative approaches that were considered through the plan making process.

How can I comment on this draft Plan?

This draft **Plan** has been published for a period of six weeks for public consultation from **7 March – 5pm on 19 April 2022**. This draft **Plan** has been published on the TCB [Engagement website](#), with hyperlinks from the Council’s websites. Information has been presented online to enable people to view the whole draft **Plan** or jump to their areas of interest. Hard copies of the draft **Plan** are available to view at Colchester Town Hall, Tendring District Council Offices, Wivenhoe library, Greenstead library, Colchester library, and all libraries in Tendring district.

This draft **Plan** includes a number of questions. You can respond to all of these, or just those questions you are interested in.

You can comment on the draft **Plan** via our engagement website: [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://www.tcbgardencommunity.co.uk).

Alternatively, you can email your comments on the draft **Plan** to tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or send a letter to the following freepost address: **Freepost TCB GC**

What happens next?

Following the close of the consultation on this draft **Plan**, the Councils will carefully review and consider every comment received and prepare a final **Plan** to consult on, before submitting to the Secretary of State for examination. A Consultation Statement will be prepared summarising all comments received and how the Councils have taken these comments into account in preparing the final Plan. The graphic, below, summarises the indicative timeline.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Indicative timeline.



Chapter 2: Vision

The Vision for the Future of the Garden Community

The Garden Community provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a place to live, work and play in a better way. It is an opportunity to create a brand new community in a comprehensively planned way from the start, and the opportunity to embrace and deliver the very best in placemaking for the future. Its development is underpinned by a positive vision for the future which has been developed through engagement with residents, stakeholders, businesses, partners, and other interested parties.

The Strategic Brief includes the following Mission Statement for the Garden Community:

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community aspires to become an exemplar and forward thinking new community in its own right, while resulting in clear benefits to its surrounding area. The new Garden Community will enable its residents to live healthy, happy, green, sustainable, connected and thriving lifestyles. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a place to live, work and play in a better way.

The Vision for each of the five themes is set out at the start of Chapters 4-8 of this document. Each theme establishes purpose and identity and articulates the top-level description of the kind of place the Garden Community could become. The vision for each theme is supported by Strategic Principles and Objectives. The Strategic Principles describe the outcomes that will be achieved at completion. The objectives set out in more detail how the strategic principles will be achieved. They address both spatial and non-spatial implications and have been the core guiding elements within the masterplanning process. The Principles are included in the theme chapters and the objectives are included in Appendix 1.

Chapter 3: Land Uses and Spatial Approach

This chapter sets out the big decisions about what land will be included in the Garden Community, how the development will be laid out, which areas will be allocated to housing, employment, open space or other uses or infrastructure, and which areas will be protected from development.

The approach has been informed by a thorough masterplanning process, which has been supported by an appropriate evidence base with technical analysis, survey work and the comments of local people, stakeholders, and other interested parties as part of public engagement activities.

As well as explaining, in broad strategic terms, how different parts of the site are expected to be developed and protected, Policy 1 also sets out how this draft **Plan** will be followed by additional future masterplanning and design codes, for both the whole Garden Community and neighbourhoods within it, and how these will be adhered to when considering detailed proposals and specific planning applications.

Policy 2 in this Chapter then sets out the Councils' general requirements for all new development proposals in, or affecting, the Garden Community which alongside other policies in this **Plan** will be applied in the determination of planning applications. These requirements will not only apply to the development of the Garden Community itself, but also future applications for new developments, alterations, and changes of use in the Garden Community once it is established.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

In terms of overall land use and the spatial approach for the Garden Community, some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this draft **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan, include:

- a defined boundary for the new community and the amount of development it will contain (including 7,000-9,000 new homes, as well as 25 hectares of employment land, new 'centres', new schools and early years facilities, and provision for gypsies and traveller accommodation);
- land to accommodate the future expansion of the University of Essex;
- a conceptual plan showing the make-up and quantity of future land-uses;
- a three-dimensional indication of the urban design and landscape parameters which will be incorporated into any future planning applications;
- defined landscape buffers to maintain clear separation between the Garden Community, existing development in Colchester and the villages of Wivenhoe and Elmstead Market;
- the relationship and integration of the Garden Community with the A120-A133 Link Road and the Rapid Transit System (RTS) – including their proposed route and access points;
- designating a new country park along the Salary Brook corridor, incorporating Churn Wood; and

- a layout that draws upon the context and considerable assets within its boundaries (including woodland, streams, and changes in topography) and the opportunities afforded by the proximity of the University of Essex.

2. Engagement feedback

What we heard

Some of the main messages that have arisen through the engagement with residents, communities, stakeholders, and other interested parties in relation to how the Garden Community should be laid out, and which have informed the Councils' approach, include:

- Strong views from some that there should be **no development south of the A133** to ensure land between the Garden Community and Wivenhoe is kept open and the two do not merge or 'coalesce' together in the future.
- Similar concerns from residents of Elmstead Market and a suggestion that there should be a **green buffer between the new A120-A133 Link Road** and the village.
- Strong support for the creation of a new **country park**, to include Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve and Salary Brook slopes, that should be protected from development, to maintain the important green edge to Colchester.
- A desire for the **loose-knit rural character of Crockleford Heath**, and other dispersed dwellings within the broad location of the Garden Community, to be protected and respected through the layout of the development.
- Development should be of a density that allows space for **green corridors**, greenery, and openness in line with Garden Community principles.
- The layout of the development should not result in increased traffic congestion on existing roads and must attempt to promote and **prioritise walking, cycling and public transport**, whilst acknowledging sensible and practical provision for private car and van users.
- The development must provide a variety of **employment and education opportunities** across a range of sectors to maximise the opportunities for new and existing residents to access jobs and support the future growth of the university and its spin off activities.
- The development ought to make an **efficient use of land** and minimise sprawl into the open countryside, with a high level of open space and **green infrastructure** within the development.

What we've done

The Councils agree that development should make efficient use of land, promote sustainable travel, and include a high level of open space, green corridors, and green and blue infrastructure. Strategic green gaps between the Garden Community and Colchester, Wivenhoe, and Elmstead Market; and a country park, including Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve and Salary Brook slopes, are shown on the Key Diagram and required by Policy 1. The Councils agree that it is important to retain

the loose-knit rural character of Crockleford Heath and propose to designate Crockleford Heath as an Area of Special Character.

3. Policy 1: Land Uses and Spatial Approach

Taking forward the requirements of the Section 1 Local Plan and taking into account the views of local people and other stakeholders, Policy 1 sets out the key land uses and spatial parameters within which the Garden Community is expected to be built. It also sets out the Councils' expectations for the information that will need to be submitted and approved ahead of the determination of any outline or detailed planning applications for development of the Garden Community. This will enable the Councils to ensure that development will achieve a comprehensive approach that delivers garden community principles and the Councils' high expectations for design and quality as set out in this draft **Plan**.

POLICY 1: LAND USES AND SPATIAL APPROACH

The Garden Community will be an inclusive, safe, and healthy community. It will represent sustainable development and manage natural and heritage assets wisely for future generations. The Garden Community will make the fullest possible contribution to minimising greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the energy and waste hierarchies through ensuring resource efficiency, minimisation of waste, reduction in embodied carbon and the prioritisation of renewable energy. Proposals will mitigate against and improve resilience to the effects of climate change and contribute positively to the health, wellbeing and resilience of communities and the natural environment.

Part A: Settlement Development Boundary and Key Diagram

Development of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be confined to land within the 'Settlement Development Boundary' and will adhere to the land use parameters, as shown on the Key Diagram. Land within (and in some areas adjoining) the Garden Community site is specifically allocated or protected for the following uses:

- 7,500-8,000 new homes of varying size, type, tenure and densities developed within three distinct 'neighbourhoods', each served by at least one 'centre' (see Part B below) and a range of shops, jobs, services and community facilities, including education;
- 'Strategic Green Gaps' in key locations south of the A133, east of the new A120-A133 Link Road and in the north-west, designed to maintain physical separation between development at the Garden Community and nearby settlements (see Part C below);
- An 'Area of Special Character' at and around the settlement of Crockleford Heath, aimed at safeguarding its distinctive rural character (see Part D below);

- A new country park incorporating land and woodland at and around Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve (see Part E below) that connects with a wider network of green corridors and walking/cycleways throughout the Garden Community;
- Land for the future expansion of the University of Essex and associated growth sectors (see Part F below);
- Approximately 25 hectares of employment land to be distributed between a new Industrial Business Park south of the A120 and east of the new Link Road (see Part G below); within each of the new 'centres'; and land to the south west with strong links to the University;
- The two principal areas of employment land will be served by 'Park and Choose' facilities (see Part I below), which will be connected to the walking, cycling and Rapid Transit System routes through the Garden Community;
- Provision for the Rapid Transit System route; and
- Provision of land for the accommodation of gypsies and travellers within the northern neighbourhood of the Garden Community south of the A120 and west of the new Link Road (see Part H below).

Proposals for development at the Garden Community must be in general conformity with the Key Diagram and meet the specific requirements of policies elsewhere in this draft **Plan** and in the adopted Section 1 Local Plan.

To ensure a comprehensive approach to development that meets with the Councils' high expectations for design and quality and the key principles that underpin the development of Garden Communities, proposals seeking planning permission must also adhere to a 'Strategic Masterplan' and 'Strategic Design Code' for the whole site and more specific and detailed 'Neighbourhood Masterplans' and 'Neighbourhood Design Codes' for the relevant neighbourhood. These will be informed by use of design review and assessment frameworks such as the [National Design Guide](#), [National Model Design Code](#), [Building for a Healthy Life](#) and [Building with Nature](#), or similar. These Masterplans and Design Codes will be prepared and approved by the Councils, through a collaborative process with key stakeholders before the consideration of detailed proposals and determination of planning applications.

Land outside of the Settlement Development Boundary and the designated Strategic Green Gaps will be treated as 'open countryside' where new development will generally be limited to that related to agriculture and other activities consistent with a countryside location, or that are otherwise consistent with any adopted Neighbourhood Plans applicable to the land in question. Any proposal for land within or nearby the Garden Community site that would prejudice the comprehensive development of the Garden Community, as envisaged by the Key Diagram, the policies in this draft **Plan** or any subsequently approved Masterplans or Design Codes, will not be supported by the Councils.

Part B: Neighbourhoods

The Garden Community will deliver three distinct, but interconnected 'Neighbourhoods' – 'South', 'Central' and 'North'. Development within and across the three Neighbourhoods will be phased to ensure housing development is accompanied and/or served at the right time, by the necessary infrastructure.

Each neighbourhood will adopt appropriate approaches to architecture, design, character, development density and public space to achieve a distinctive sense of place for each area that will appeal to a variety of needs and lifestyles. The approaches to development will also reflect the varying levels of physical and environmental opportunities and constraints across the site, as well as proximity to existing communities, key features, and assets – such as green spaces, woodland, heritage assets, the University of Essex, new and existing roads, and walking and cycling connections.

Residents within each neighbourhood should have high accessibility to local services and facilities – within a 15 minute walk time or with high accessibility by cycling or public transport. To promote the use of walking, cycling and public transport as sustainable and convenient alternatives to the private car, each neighbourhood will contain at least one 'centre' containing facilities such as shops, services, and community facilities, and could include employment land and job opportunities, which will be located within walking and cycling distance of the new homes within that neighbourhood. Land and property will be provided in the form of 'hubs' within and around the centres to provide for a flexible range of local business needs alongside service sector jobs provided by new schools, nurseries, shops and community facilities. In addition, the new Rapid Transit System will connect to each of the neighbourhoods as part of a network, providing fast connectivity between them and key areas of employment both within the site and in surrounding areas, such as the University of Essex, Colchester Town Centre, Colchester General Hospital, and Colchester Sports Park.

Each of the three neighbourhoods will be accessible by private car and commercial vehicles but will be accessed independently from separate junctions on the new A120-A133 Link Road (as opposed to the A133 and A120 themselves) to give greater priority to the Rapid Transit System and other sustainable travel opportunities.

The Councils will also work with the University of Essex and other partners, where necessary and appropriate, to deliver key infrastructure relating to health, education, and other community activities to serve the early phases of development at the Garden Community, either on a permanent basis or on an interim basis ahead of the establishment of the first of the new centres.

Part C: Strategic Green Gaps

Land south of the A133, land east of the new A120-A133 Link Road and south of Allen's Farm, and land in the north-west are all designated as 'Strategic Green Gaps' and are defined on the Key Diagram. The purpose of this designation is to

give extra protection to the open countryside in key locations around the Garden Community, to maintain long-term physical and visual separation to the nearby settlements of Wivenhoe, Elmstead Market and Colchester. This will ensure their individual settlement character is maintained and not threatened by coalescence (merging).

Land within the Strategic Green Gaps will be protected from development that would prejudice the openness of the land in question, and that would either bring about or contribute towards coalescence.

Proposals for the construction of new buildings in the Strategic Green Gaps will only be supported where they represent the provision of appropriate development for a countryside location or facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), for outdoor sport or recreation (for example, new facilities associated with growth at the University of Essex or local schools), cemeteries and burial grounds or allotments. Any such development must conform with the purpose of the Strategic Green Gap designation, nor prejudice the delivery of the Garden Community.

Part D: Crockleford Heath Area of Special Character

Land and property comprising the rural community of Crockleford Heath, Ardleigh, is identified as an 'Area of Special Character' in recognition of its rural, loose-knit and sparsely developed settlement form and the distinctive and attractive network of green lanes and small fields that pass through it. The Area of Special Character is defined on the Key Diagram. The Area of Special Character will be treated in the same way as undesignated open countryside, outside of the Settlement Development Boundary where general 'countryside policies' will apply.

Any proposals for new development in the Area of Special Character will be considered on their individual merits as 'windfall' development which could include low density and individually designed self-build and custom build homes. In determining any proposals for development, the Councils will give special regard to preserving and/or enhancing the loose knit and low-density rural character of Crockleford Heath and its setting, reducing traffic on its narrow rural roads and ensuring the development of the Garden Community around Crockleford Heath also respects its rural setting.

Part E: Salary Brook Country Park

Land and woodland around Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve is designated as a new Country Park that will be promoted and managed for that purpose. The Country Park will be protected and enhanced as an important corridor for wildlife conservation, informal recreation, and education, and will connect to the wider network of green and blue infrastructure and walking/cycling routes serving the Garden Community and its neighbourhoods.

Part F: University Expansion Land

Land adjacent to the A133 and the University of Essex is allocated to accommodate new buildings and ancillary activities related to the University such as education, research and administrative functions. To maximise the potential use of such land, leisure, sports & recreation activities are not considered suitable as part of this specific designation and should be provided elsewhere.

Part G: Knowledge Based Employment Land

Land to the north of the A133 is allocated for knowledge based employment land to accommodate the expansion of those activities close to the existing Knowledge Gateway.

Part H: A120 Industrial Business Park

Land south of the A120 and east of the new A120-A133 Link Road is allocated for a new Industrial Business Park, principally for general business and industrial purposes, that could provide a range of unit sizes for different occupiers. The land will be accessed via the new A120-A133 Link Road and will be connected to the Rapid Transit System.

Part I: Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

A new site for the accommodation of gypsies and travellers will be delivered within the northern neighbourhood of the Garden Community south of the A120 and west of the new Link Road with good access to those roads. The precise location and size of the site and details of its layout and configuration will be determined through an up-to-date Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment, that will inform the detailed Neighbourhood Masterplan to be approved by the Councils ahead of any proposals for development at the northern neighbourhood.

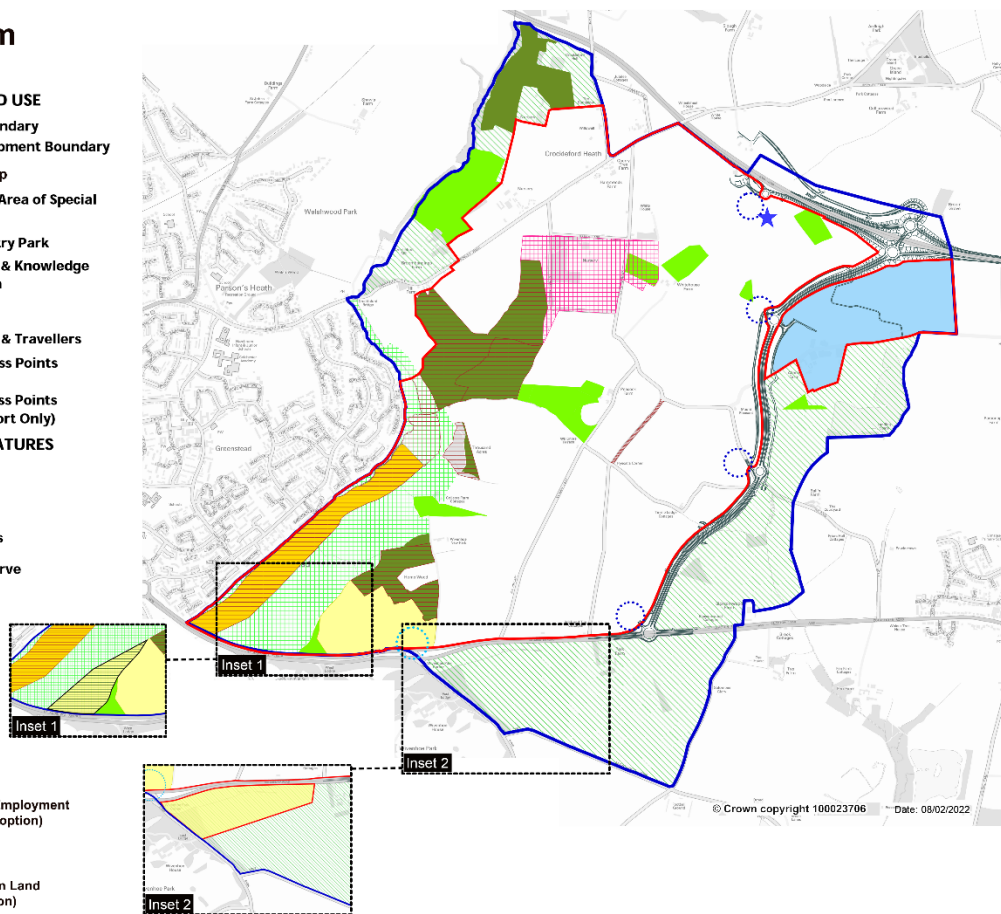
Part J: Park and Choose Facilities

Two new Park and Choose facilities will provide the opportunity for visitors by car to access the walking, cycling and Rapid Transit System networks that connect to the Garden Community, Colchester, and the wider area, will be located alongside the two principal areas of employment land for the site south of the A120 and east of the A120-A133 Link Road; and at, or on land, to the north of the University of Essex/ Knowledge Gateway.

Figure 1: Key Diagram

Key Diagram

- KEY - PROPOSED LAND USE**
- Area of Search Boundary
- Settlement Development Boundary
- ▨ Strategic Green Gap
- ▨ Crockleford Heath Area of Special Character
- ▨ Salary Brook Country Park
- ▨ University of Essex & Knowledge Gateway Expansion
- ▨ Business Park
- ★ Provision for Gypsy & Travellers
- ⊙ Vehicular Site Access Points (all modes)
- ⊙ Vehicular Site Access Points (RTS/Public Transport Only)
- KEY - PROTECTED FEATURES**
- ▨ Ancient Woodland
- ▨ Other Woodland
- ▨ Local Wildlife Sites
- ▨ Local Nature Reserve



4. Justification

The chosen strategy for development at the Garden Community confines the majority of development to land south of the A120, north of the A133, west of the new A120-A133 Link Road and east of the new country park to be designated around Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve. In addition, selected land and property in the area of Crockleford Heath has been specifically identified as an Area of Special Character, where it will be protected from anything other than small scale and sympathetic low-density development, appropriate for a countryside location and that respects the area’s loose-knit rural character.

With the exception of land immediately south of the A120 and east of the new A120-A133 Link Road, which is allocated for employment use in the form of a new Industrial Business Park, the land east of the link road, along with land south of the A133 and land in the north-west is to be designated as a ‘Strategic Green Gap’. Land within the Strategic Green Gap will be protected from most forms of built development to ensure the Garden Community does not extend or sprawl into locations where it could eventually merge or coalesce with Wivenhoe, Elmstead Market or Colchester – one of the main concerns raised by local people throughout the public engagement activities. Additional open space is proposed adjacent to

Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve to strengthen this area as a buffer to the Colchester urban area encompassing the steep adjoining slopes of the brook as well as nearby woodland.

Because the Councils have decided to restrict the development to land within tight boundaries defined by the proposed Strategic Green Gaps and the physical constraints formed by the existing and proposed roads, the total number of new homes expected at the Garden Community has been refined to approximately 7,500-8,000. This is towards the lower end of the 7,000 to 9,000 range set out in the adopted Section 1 Local Plan.

The 7,500-8,000 new homes will be delivered across three distinct but interconnected 'neighbourhoods' in the south, central and north parts of the site, each with associated facilities and infrastructure. Each neighbourhood will adopt its own approach to architecture, design, character, development density and public space to achieve a distinctive 'sense of place' for each area, that will appeal to a variety of needs and lifestyles. The number of homes and density of housing development will vary both within and across the neighbourhoods, with a general expectation that the overall average density of development will be higher in the southern neighbourhood to reflect its proximity to the University of Essex, and the opportunity for early connection to the Rapid Transit System; and lower in the northern neighbourhoods, further from the University, and which reflects the more sensitive nature of the landscape and existing communities further north.

Each neighbourhood will be served by at least one 'centre' and focused around high accessibility to the Rapid Transit System. Each neighbourhood will contain a range of employment land and job opportunities, shops, services, and community facilities, including green infrastructure, which will be located within close walking and cycling distance of the new homes, within the relevant neighbourhood, designed to help reduce people's reliance on private cars.

The Garden Community will be planned and developed on the concept of a "15-minute neighbourhood", and this draft **Plan** involves a range of interrelated policy actions that seeks to provide residents access to most of their daily needs within a short walk or cycle ride from their home. To help achieve this, higher density development will be focused around each centre. The 15-minute neighbourhood principle makes life more livable for residents, by improving air quality and making neighbourhoods safer, quieter, more diverse, inclusive, and economically vibrant.

Another way of minimising the reliance on private car use is to promote and prioritise sustainable travel choices such as walking, cycling and use of public transport, including the new Rapid Transit System, by making them as convenient as possible, whilst still accommodating the practical needs of private car users and users of commercial vehicles. To help achieve this, as well as providing services and facilities within walking and cycling distance of new homes, connectivity through and between the three neighbourhoods will be primarily limited to walking, cycling and public transport, including the Rapid Transit System. The neighbourhoods will be accessible by private car and commercial vehicles with appropriate levels of parking and electric charging facilities provided, however, access will be from separate

junctions on the new A120-A133 Link Road i.e. with more limited direct car or van access between the neighbourhoods. This approach will help to promote and prioritise sustainable transport choices and reduce the possibility of 'rat-running' through the Garden Community.

Two new 'Park and Choose' facilities are proposed for the Garden Community to enable visitors by car from the north and from the south to access more sustainable transport choices such as walking, cycling and the Rapid Transit System, which can also provide access to key areas of employment and services within Colchester. These are to be located alongside the two principal areas of employment land proposed for the site south of the A120 and east of the new Link Road and at, or on land to the north of, the University of Essex/Knowledge Gateway.

The approach taken to delivering employment and higher education at the Garden Community is designed to deliver a range of job and training opportunities across different sectors, which could include general business and industrial activity, to research and development, construction, and services. Two principal areas of employment land have been allocated – one south of the A120 and east of the A120-A133 Link Road primarily to serve the needs of general business and industry (which could include manufacturing of green technologies and modular components to assist in construction of the new homes and buildings at the Garden Community) and one north of the A133 adjacent to the University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway to accommodate the expansion of those activities. Suitable early years and childcare facilities, and primary and secondary schools will also be provided.

The Councils support the University of Essex in its future plans to expand services, increase student intake and provide business, research and development space and sports facilities, and will support appropriate proposals that will help to achieve this both within and beyond the plan period.

There are alternative sub-options presented as part of this consultation draft **Plan** for the employment land north of the A133 and for potential expansion of the University of Essex for which no preference is currently indicated in the draft **Plan**. The inclusion of these alternative options in the draft **Plan** follows on from engagement and communication with the University of Essex, which is keen to ensure the Garden Community provides the opportunity to support its long-term expansion and the creation of jobs. The alternative options involve different scales of development with different implications for connectivity with the existing Knowledge Gateway, commercial deliverability, accessibility, impact on land around Salary Brook, and the size of any green gap south of the A133 and north of Wivenhoe. These alternatives require further assessment and technical consideration, including taking into account public and stakeholder feedback, before the Councils make a final choice.

Land and property will be provided in the form of 'hubs' within and around the centres to provide for a flexible range of local business needs alongside service sector jobs provided by new schools, shops and community facilities. New homes and business premises will also be designed and served by the necessary digital infrastructure to accommodate and promote home working and self-employment.

At this early stage of planning for the Garden Community, it is not possible, nor sensible, for this draft **Plan** to contain full or precise details of design, layout and appearance of the new buildings and spaces that will be delivered. Instead, this draft **Plan** provides the overarching strategy and policies that will provide direction for more detailed Masterplans, Design Codes and, ultimately, planning applications to follow. To ensure the highest standard of design, quality, and distinctiveness in terms of architecture, layout and public realm, the Councils' expectation is for a further site-wide 'Strategic Masterplan' and 'Strategic Design Code' for the overall layout of the Garden Community to be prepared which, in turn, would be followed by more detailed 'Neighbourhood Masterplans' and 'Neighbourhood Design Codes' for the relevant neighbourhood, in addition to design codes on specific issues, such as water and biodiversity. The Masterplans and Design Codes will be prepared and approved by the Councils and developed through engagement with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. The Councils will expect planning applications for development to comply with these Masterplans and Design Codes.

5. Alternative approaches

In determining the approach set out in Policy 1 above, the Councils, in following a comprehensive masterplanning process, considered a range of alternative options and approaches – taking into account both technical evidence and the views expressed through public engagement. This included strategies that involved development expanding over a wider footprint onto land south of the A133 and/or east of the new A120-A133 Link Road as well as development at the lower and higher end of the 7,000 to 9,000 home range set out in the adopted Section 1 Local Plan. The masterplan options are detailed in the Masterplan Design Options document, which is part of the background evidence base.

The Councils also considered different ways of accommodating higher and lower densities of development across different parts of the site, alternative approaches to 'green/ landscape buffers' around the edge of the site and different approaches to accommodating 'centres', identifying locations for employment and routing the Rapid Transit System through the site. The Councils also considered different approaches to the special character of Crockleford Heath, and different levels of protection that could be given to the land and property in that area.

It is a requirement of the national planning system for the Councils to have considered a number of 'reasonable alternatives' in coming to a preferred option. These reasonable alternatives have to be the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal which considers the potential environmental, social and economic effects to assist the Councils in making the right choices.

The main reasonable alternatives considered by the Councils in respect of the overall spatial approach to the Garden Community and for which a Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken were:

- Maximum development area. A strategy that includes development on a wider area of land of the agreed 'broad area of search', including land south of the A133 and to the east of the new A120-A133 Link Road allowing for a lower

density of development. This option prioritises full site connectivity with the Rapid Transit System network - key to maximising the development opportunity and connecting through the whole Garden Community. It allows for four centres with differing roles and characters that respond to their setting and a range of residential densities. It provides employment clusters in the north-east and south.

- Maximum connectivity. A strategy that confines the majority of development to land north of the A133 and to the west of the new A120-A133 Link Road, but which delivers a higher average density of development with a reasonable level of open space and green infrastructure integrated into the development. It prioritises full site connectivity with the Rapid Transit System network - key to connecting all parts of the Garden Community and allows for four centres. It provides employment clusters in the north-east and south of the Garden Community.
- Additional sub-options have also been considered in respect of alternative approaches and extents of land uses around the University of Essex.

Each of the options have different consequences for the provision of open space and other green infrastructure and land for community facilities and employment, the potential for economic growth, and the impact on the landscape and the character of neighbouring communities. Details of these alternatives are included in the Masterplan Design Options document.

The Councils consider the most appropriate approach is to be based upon the maximum landscape option, when considered against the reasonable alternatives (option 3 in the Masterplan Design Options report). Whilst it requires a higher average density of new homes overall, it can still be accommodated with the flexibility to deliver different types of housing of different sizes, types, heights, and densities to be delivered in different locations across the site. Developing at high densities responds to the climate emergency and maximises opportunities for sustainable travel. This approach enables the development to be achieved to minimise overall land take whilst still providing space for a healthy network of open space and green infrastructure and to protect and respect the community and character of Crockleford Heath, and other sensitive features of the site.

The approach allows employment opportunities to be delivered both on key strategic sites and within centres and provides the means by which a Rapid Transit System can be routed through the three neighbourhoods of the Garden Community, separated from the A120-A133 Link Road and prioritised over private car access. The preferred option also ensures that the main residential communities within the Garden Community are not segregated by the new A120-A133 Link Road or the A133, and that there is space within the development to achieve the green and spacious approach that is key to the Councils' expectations of a Garden Community.

The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that this approach was found to perform more sustainably than the alternatives. This reflects the higher proportion of the site that would remain undeveloped, with increased benefits in terms of preserving local landscape character, the setting of nearby settlements and heritage assets and

greenspace for habitat provision and connectivity. This approach was also found to perform more favourably in terms of limiting the need to travel by car, given the higher density and more compact form of development that would result. This approach is considered mostly likely to provide residents with easy access to a range of services and facilities within the Garden Community at the new centres. The approach would also limit the potential for a portion of residents to be located to the south of the A133 (as would result through options 1 and 2) where they would experience a degree of severance from the rest of the Garden Community.

The Councils have also considered alternative sub-options in relation to expansion of the University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway. This requires further assessment and technical consideration before the Councils make a final choice and the views of the public and stakeholders are sought.

6. Questions

We welcome your comments on the emerging policy on **Land Uses and Spatial Approach**. Some questions we would like to explore are set out below:

1. Do you agree with the Councils' preferred approach? Do you have any specific preference on the sub-options for land adjacent to the University of Essex?
2. Would you prefer one of the alternative options or are there other approaches that the Councils should have considered?
3. Do you agree with the requirements set out in the **Land Uses and Spatial Approach policy**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:
 - The need for more detailed Masterplans and Design Codes to be approved by the Councils before planning permissions are granted;
 - The approach to having three distinct but interconnected neighbourhoods within the Garden Community;
 - The level of protection being given to the 'Strategic Green Gaps';
 - The level of protection being given to the land and property at Crockleford Heath;
 - The proposal for a new country park including land and woodland around Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve;
 - The proposals for new employment sites and Park and Choose facilities south of the A120 and east of the A120-A133 Link Road, and adjacent to the A133 and the University of Essex; and
 - The location of a gypsy and traveller site somewhere in the northern neighbourhood of the Garden Community close to the A120 and the new A120-A133 Link Road.

You can provide your feedback online **by following this link** [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://www.tcbgardencommunity.co.uk). Alternatively, you can email tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or write to **Freepost TCBGC**. When writing or emailing, please make sure you include your name and contact details and that you respond by the consultation closing date.

7. Policy 2: Requirements for all new development in the Garden Community

Policy 2 contains the minimum design criteria against which all development proposals for the Garden Community and any subsequent developments or changes of use will be considered. The requirements of this policy apply alongside other relevant policies relating to the Garden Community in the adopted Section 1 Local Plan, as well as other relevant policies in this draft **Plan**. They will also apply alongside any relevant Masterplans or Design Codes.

The requirements of this policy are broadly consistent with those applied by both Councils to other developments outside of the broad location for the Garden Community, as set out in their separate Section 2 Local Plans. They have been included in this draft **Plan** to ensure a consistent approach to new development in this cross-boundary location – both in the development of the Garden Community itself and any future planning applications for development or changes of use. This policy applies to all land within the ‘broad location’ for the Garden Community, identified in the Section 1 Local Plan.

POLICY 2: REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT

All new development (including changes of use) within the broad location for the Garden Community in the Section 1 Local Plan will be required to meet the criteria for design, practical requirements and impacts compatibility set out in Parts A, B and C of this policy below. These will apply to the development of the Garden Community itself and any future development proposals or changes of use in the area.

Part A: Design

All new development (including changes of use) must be designed to a high standard, maximise health and wellbeing, achieve high standards of amenity, make a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment, and protect or enhance local character. To achieve this, the following criteria must be met:

1. new buildings, alterations and structures are well designed, reflect relevant Masterplans and Design Codes and, where appropriate, respect or enhance local character and distinctiveness;
2. the development relates well to its site and surroundings, particularly in relation to its siting, height, scale, massing, form, design and materials;
3. the development respects or enhances local landscape character, views, skylines, landmarks, existing street patterns, open spaces and other locally important features;
4. the design and layout of the development maintains or enhances existing features of landscape, ecology, heritage, or amenity value; and
5. boundary treatments, and hard and soft landscaping, are designed as an integral part of the development reflecting the function and character of the development and its surroundings. The Councils will expect the use of locally distinctive materials and/or locally occurring and characteristic hedge species.

Part B: Practical Requirements

All new development (including changes of use) must meet practical requirements. The following criteria must be met:

1. access to the site is practicable with priority given to walking, cycling and public transport and, for developments likely to generate additional car or commercial vehicle use, the highway network (following any required mitigation) will be able to safely accommodate the additional traffic the proposal will generate, and not lead to a severe traffic impact, and complies with modal split targets as agreed by the Councils;
2. the design and layout of the development maintains and/or provides safe and convenient access for people with diverse mobility needs;
3. the development incorporates or provides measures that create safe social spaces and streets, that create active places with natural surveillance, and minimises opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour;
4. the developer can demonstrate how the proposal will contribute to minimise the production of greenhouse gases and impact on climate change, and deliver the specific policy requirements in this **Plan**;
5. buildings and structures are designed and orientated to maximise daylight, outlook and privacy for future and existing residents;
6. provision is made for adequate private amenity space, waste storage and recycling facilities, and vehicle and cycle parking; and
7. the development reduces flood risk and integrates sustainable drainage within the development, creating amenity space and enhancing biodiversity.

Part C: Impacts and Compatibility

New development (including changes of use) should be compatible with surrounding uses and minimise any adverse environmental impacts. The following criteria must be met:

1. during the construction phase, developers must comply with a 'considerate constructors' scheme which employs reasonable measures and techniques to minimise impacts and disturbance to neighbours, the existing wider community and damage to public or private property;
2. the development will not have a materially damaging impact on the privacy, daylight or other amenities of occupiers of nearby properties;
3. the development, including any additional road traffic arising, will not have unacceptable levels of pollution on: air, land, water (including ground water), amenity, health or safety through noise, smell, dust, light, heat, vibration, fumes, or other forms of pollution or nuisance;
4. the health, safety or amenity of any occupants or users of the proposed development will not be materially harmed by any pollution from an existing or committed use; and
5. all new development will need to comply with the adopted Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

Any measures necessary to meet the above requirements are to be established by the developer.

8. Justification

Policy 2 has been included in this draft **Plan** to set out the very minimum requirements that all proposals for development will be expected to meet within the broad location of the Garden Community, whether they relate to the development of the new Garden Community itself or whether they relate to future development proposals affecting the area once construction has taken place and a new community has been established, either in part or in whole.

Because this draft **Plan** is a joint plan crossing the administrative boundary of Tendring and Colchester, neither policies contained within the Section 2 Local Plans of TDC or CBC would apply to the broad location for the Garden Community. It is therefore important to ensure that any necessary policies that would apply elsewhere in Tendring or Colchester are included in this draft **Plan**, so they also apply to the Garden Community and the area within the broad location immediately surrounding it – ensuring a consistent approach on both sides of the administrative boundary. The requirements of the policy are broadly consistent with those applied by both Councils to other developments outside of the broad location for the Garden Community as set out in their separate Section 2 Local Plans, which have both proceeded separately through the process of independent examination by a government-appointed Planning Inspector.

Part A of the policy provides the minimum planning criteria for ensuring development is well designed and relates well to its surroundings. Part B ensures that practical requirements have been addressed and Part C ensures that potential impacts on surrounding uses and/or the local environment are identified, and measures are put in place to ensure any adverse impacts are minimized. Applications will also need to comply with relevant Masterplans and Design Codes and comply with the strategies and studies required in support of planning applications.

9. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternative to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the Plan.

The main problem with having no such policy is that the land and property within the broad location of the Garden Community would not be subject to the same minimum expectations applied to the land and property elsewhere within Tendring and Colchester, to which policies in Section 2 of the Councils' respective Local Plans apply. There would also be very limited guidance for the Councils to apply in the determination of future planning applications affecting the area once the new Garden Community had already been established, either in part or in whole.

Having a detailed policy in this draft **Plan** ensures that any subtle differences in wording between the policies in the Councils' respective Section 2 Local Plans are

addressed to avoid any confusion and ensure a consistent approach to dealing with proposals in this cross-border location.

10. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Requirements for all new developments**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- Do you agree that a policy is necessary to ensure the Councils take a consistent approach in the broad location for the Garden Community, that reflects the policies the Councils have in their separate Section 2 Local Plans?
- Do you agree with any of the minimum criteria set out in the policy?
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

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CHAPTER 4: NATURE

THE OUTDOOR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE GARDEN COMMUNITY WILL BE ITS BIGGEST ASSET. IT WILL COMPRISE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE WHERE NEIGHBOURS WILL SPEND TIME, PLAY, INTERACT AND GROW. IT WILL PROVIDE A NATURAL SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR BOTH PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE.

This chapter sets out the policy expectations in relation to nature and green infrastructure. The natural environment of the Garden Community will be its greatest asset. A well-connected, multifunctional green infrastructure network will help to create a community where neighbours can interact, live active lifestyles and where nature can thrive.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

Under the theme of Nature, some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this draft **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan, include:

- Create distinctive environments which are based on comprehensive assessments of the surrounding environment and that celebrate natural and historic environments and systems, utilise a multi-functional green-grid to create significant networks of new green infrastructure including a new country park at the garden community, provide a high degree of connectivity to existing corridors and networks, and enhance biodiversity.
- Natural measures to avoid, protect and/or enhance wildlife areas within and surrounding the site such as Bullock Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ardleigh Gravel Pits SSSI, Wivenhoe Pits SSSI, Upper Colne Marshes SSSI and habitats sites of international importance.
- Measures to incorporate biodiversity creation and enhancement measures.
- A network of multi-functional green (and blue) infrastructure incorporating key elements of the existing green assets within the site and also including new community parks, allotments, a new country park and the provision of sports areas and play areas with associated facilities.
- Provision of water and wastewater mitigation measures including the use of open space to provide flora and fauna rich sustainable drainage solutions.

2. Principles

A PLACE SHAPED BY NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

The Garden Community will incorporate important existing landscape features and provide a high degree of connectivity to existing green corridors and networks. Alongside a new Country Park provided along the Salary Brook Corridor it will also deliver a variety of new spaces - parks, fields, wild spaces, communal spaces, private places, secret spaces.

A PLACE WITH THRIVING ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

Net Gains in biodiversity and a thriving ecological network will shape the Garden Community ensuring native species thrive. Key assets within the Garden Community site including Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve, Welsh Wood Local Nature Reserve, ancient woodland, species rich hedgerows, areas of species rich grassland and valuable wetlands will be protected and/or enhanced and linked into the wider natural ecosystem network through habitat creation and management.

A PLACE WITH A PRODUCTIVE AND CLIMATE RESILIENT NATURAL LANDSCAPE

The landscape of the Garden Community will be informed by inclusive community design and provide a range of productive uses such as orchards, allotments, and growing fields. Natural flood risk management and carbon capture will be seamlessly incorporated in the ecological network, making the natural landscape “work hard” and deliver multiple benefits simultaneously.

3. Engagement Feedback

What we heard

Throughout our engagement processes, people emphasised how important the **natural world** is and the importance of the need for **green space** and access to nature in the Garden Community. People spoke about the **value of the natural world** to their family and social lives; their physical and mental wellbeing; and to the wider health of the community. People cited the importance of opportunities to enjoy walking, nature, publicly accessible open space, and green frontages and green spaces for places, such as schools. People underlined the contribution of the natural world to the character and identity of the area and highlighted the importance of **protecting natural spaces** to help build resilience to climate change.

People presented an ambitious vision about how the Garden Community can **work with, rather than against**, the natural world. This included protecting existing natural habitats, designing the Garden Community to incorporate nature, creating new wild spaces within and around the development, biodiversity net gain and habitat creation, and providing **plenty of opportunities to interact with nature**.

Most people saw the potential of the Garden Community to offer a **bold, radical, green alternative** to previous housing developments. While most comments across the engagement were aspirational and made suggestions about what the Garden Community should offer and could be, some of these participants were skeptical that their vision, or something close to it, would be realised. Often, their reservations were driven by skepticism towards the intentions of those behind the development. When reflecting on the theme of nature, most participants, even those with aspirations for the Garden Community, voiced concerns about the ecological impact of the development and whether it would be able to offset any damage.

When thinking about nature in the Garden Community, our visioning workshops, survey, and postcard from the future participants:

- Wanted to ensure that ecosystems won't be damaged by the development of the Garden Community.
- Wanted the Garden Community to integrate as seamlessly as possible into the natural environment.
- Wanted the Garden Community to benefit local biodiversity.
- Wanted to ensure that the Garden Community won't affect the area's rural identity.
- Wanted any environmental impact to be offset by the creation of new natural and wild spaces.
- Wanted the Garden Community to provide lots of opportunities for people to interact with nature.
- Were concerned that the green intentions of the Garden Community would be undermined by developers' desires to maximise profit.

When thinking about Nature in the Garden Community, our statutory stakeholders workshops, engagement website, and social media participants spoke of:

- The importance of the need for green space and access to nature in the Garden Community.
- The importance of green spaces that require low maintenance – such as wildflower meadows on verges to encourage wildlife.
- The importance of creating a Country Park incorporating Salary Brook Nature Reserve, its slopes, and the nearby areas of woodland.
- The importance of biodiversity and habitat creation and the need to be ambitious with biodiversity net gain and habitat creation.
- The importance and value of the wildlife already in the site – such as in mature woodland, mentioning species such as skylarks, barn owls, buzzards, rabbits and muntjac deer.
- Concerns at the loss of green space and quality farmland.
- The need for multi-functional, well planned, and strategic green infrastructure.

What we've done

The Councils agree with views about the importance of the natural environment and the benefits this brings to individuals, families, communities, and wildlife. The Nature policy aims to incorporate the feedback received from the engagement activities. The policy recognises the importance of a multifunctional green infrastructure network, and that this should form part of the character of the Garden Community, with green and blue (water) spaces integrated throughout the Garden Community. The policy emphasises the importance of protecting biodiversity and sets a minimum target for biodiversity net gain, which will lead to an increase in biodiversity within the site. The Councils recognise the need for landscape buffers to avoid coalescence (merging) between the Garden Community and existing communities, and the need to protect Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve and the slopes. Policy 1 and the Key Diagram show strategic green gaps between the

Garden Community and Colchester, Wivenhoe, and Elmstead Market. A country park is designated on land including, and beyond the boundary of, Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve.

4. Policy 3: Nature

The approach for the Garden Community is to protect existing green infrastructure and enhance the green infrastructure network for the benefit of people and wildlife. Green infrastructure has multiple benefits, including delivering biodiversity net gain by safeguarding, enhancing, restoring, and creating wildlife habitat, landscape character and features, and by integrating biodiversity into the built environment; responding to the climate emergency by reducing carbon, providing Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and facilitating active travel; and promoting healthy lifestyles.

There are numerous natural and historic assets, such as ancient woodlands and hedgerows, and the Wivenhoe Park Registered Park and Garden, within or adjoining the Garden Community. Development will protect and enhance existing assets and incorporate these into a well-connected green infrastructure network that contributes to the distinctive character of the Garden Community. Landscape buffers will form an opportunity for creating semi-natural greenspace or biodiversity net gain opportunities, visual containment, and air quality mitigation.

POLICY 3: NATURE

Biodiversity, geology, heritage assets, archaeology and landscape character will be protected and enhanced. A multifunctional green infrastructure network will be provided within and link beyond the Garden Community, providing space for nature, recreation and encouraging active travel; creating settings for the built environment; and enhancing local landscape character. This includes a country park along the western boundary of the Garden Community and a strategic east-west green corridor.

Part A: Green Infrastructure

The Strategic Masterplan for the Garden Community must include a Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy for the whole site, including clearly demonstrating green links within and beyond the site, and how proposed buildings reflect the landscape setting.

Connections must be made to the existing Colchester Orbital (a circular walking and cycling route around the town's perimeter) which runs along Salary Brook and through the site, linking some of the town's key open spaces, heritage sites and public rights of way (PRoW). The Colchester Orbital will be retained and enhanced as a significant green link within the development, connecting to substantial green corridors within the development formed around the existing green infrastructure network.

Existing landscape features, PRoW and the network of lanes within the site should be retained, enhanced and incorporated into the development to form part of the

green infrastructure network and public realm wherever possible. A variety of new open spaces and other green infrastructure will be created, including a Country Park along the Salary Brook corridor, including the slopes, and multiple green corridors. Proposals will need to create a site wide green infrastructure network and all open spaces must connect to this network.

Green infrastructure must deliver multiple benefits and proposals must demonstrate or provide:

1. A comprehensive landscape design framework and green infrastructure network, which conforms to the Strategic Masterplan and Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy;
2. How the amount, typology and function of new open space and other green infrastructure meets the standards in the Colchester and Tendring Sports, Recreation and Open Space Strategy (2022) or any updates to this strategy;
3. How biodiversity enhancement and net gain measures will be incorporated, including the use of habitat restoration and natural regeneration;
4. How the design supports the dispersal and migration of individual species and whole habitats, either as part of a regular movement pattern or through migrations in response to climate change;
5. How the green infrastructure proposed will be managed and maintained as part of the stewardship model;
6. That the strategy for selection of trees and other plants has been selected to enhance both nature and beauty and for food. For example, through drought tolerant or wetland planting approaches as appropriate;
7. How natural or free play areas have been incorporated into the urban setting as well as green spaces;
8. The provision of areas of wild bird cover for the benefit of farmland birds such; as turtle doves, linnets, and yellowhammers;
9. The creation of verges of priority habitat, hedgerow, wildflower-rich or rough grassland along roads, streets where appropriate, and pedestrian and cycle networks;
10. High quality, sustainable design and selection of public furniture, including play equipment, and lighting (where appropriate), which is essential to ensure that places are accessible and inclusive;
11. Inclusive and accessible to all, including people with varied mobility and sensory needs.

The green infrastructure network will provide Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANG) to reduce the amount of day-to-day recreational trips to the sensitive Essex coast. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that Natural England's latest guidelines on the provision of SANG have been met and that the following criteria is met:

1. At least one circular dog walk of 2.7km minimum;
2. A dedicated 'dogs off lead area';
3. Information to households to promote this area and other open spaces for recreation;
4. Dog waste bins; and
5. A commitment to the long term maintenance and management of these provisions.

Part B: Integrating Green and Blue (water) Spaces into Built Form

A key principle and part of the distinctive character of the Garden Community will be the green infrastructure network and celebration of the natural and historic environment. Proposals should take every opportunity to integrate green and blue spaces and will be required to demonstrate, both spatially and technically, how green and blue spaces have been integrated into the built form. Examples include: tree lined streets or streets that contain hedgerows appropriate to local character, habitats, and species; insect-attracting plants, hedgerows, log piles, and other places of shelter for wildlife refuge/hibernation within structural landscaping and open spaces; hedgehog friendly features such as hedgehog gravel boards for residential garden boundaries to create linked habitat; dark corridors for bat foraging; green walls and roofs and other measures of incorporating trees and plants into buildings; bat boxes, bricks or lofts and bird boxes; and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Part C: Protection of Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain

Proposals will only be supported where they:

1. Are supported with appropriate ecological surveys where necessary; and
2. Where there is reason to suspect the presence of a protected species (and impact to), or Species/Habitats of Principal Importance, proposals should be accompanied by an ecological survey assessing their presence and, if present, the proposal must be sensitive to, and make provision for their needs and demonstrate the mitigation hierarchy has been followed; and
3. Will minimise fragmentation of habitats; and
4. Maximises opportunities for the preservation, restoration, enhancement, and connection of natural habitats in accordance with the UK and Essex Biodiversity Action Plans and Nature Recovery Strategies or future replacements.

Sensitive habitats should be buffered with additional planting or other agreed appropriate measures wherever possible to discourage access. Appropriate interpretation/signage will be required to help divert visitors away from sites that are sensitive to recreational disturbance, including the use of marketing and promotional material at the point of house sales. Ecologically rich buffer landscapes against existing and new road corridors will be required. The minimum widths of these will be agreed through an appropriate design code or similar.

Proposals must deliver a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain, and must follow the latest [Defra Metric](#), and its accompanying guidance, as well as local guidance where applicable. Biodiversity net gain must be delivered in addition to following the mitigation hierarchy, sound ecological principles, and overall high quality urban and landscape design. Biodiversity net gain should include measures at the strategic and neighbourhood level. Other street and household level enhancements should form part of the general biodiversity and landscape enhancement measures.

Biodiversity net gain should be achieved within, or adjoining the Garden Community, with the use of offsite biodiversity units and biodiversity credits only considered as a last resort. Where offsite biodiversity units are needed to achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain, biodiversity units should fund biodiversity net gain schemes within Colchester or Tendring and be secured through an appropriate conservation covenant or agreement.

Part D: Tree Planting

Existing trees on the site, including hedgerow trees, should be retained. A variety of new trees will be planted (or allowed to regenerate where appropriate such as in the proposed country park and other net-gain areas), to include: street trees, trees in gardens, new and enhanced areas of woodland, orchards and hedgerows with trees. Areas for planting or regeneration should be set out and agreed in the appropriate landscape and green infrastructure strategies and management plans.

Proposals should increase the level of canopy cover within the application site by a minimum of 10%. This increase needs to be shaped in terms of biodiversity needs, landscape character, and green space design criteria. In circumstances where this is not possible or desirable, compensatory provision should be identified and secured through a legal obligation to be agreed with the Councils.

Part E: Productive Landscapes

Allotments and a range of productive uses such as orchards, growing fields, edible walkways and community gardens should be provided throughout the Garden Community to promote healthy lifestyles. Allotment provision must be well related to residential areas and community spaces, with suitable vehicular and sustainable transport access arrangements, water supply and fencing. Allotments must sit sympathetically in the landscape and make provision for people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Part F: Sustainable Drainage Systems and Blue Infrastructure

Proposals must include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for the management and disposal of surface water, in preference to piped systems, to avoid any increase in surface water flood risk or adverse impact on water quality. Proposals must demonstrate how the SuDS feature(s) reflect and respond to site circumstances, landscape character and the green infrastructure network, and have regard to Essex County Council's SuDS Design Guide.

SuDS should be designed as focal points by incorporating multifunctional green and blue infrastructure, provide amenity benefits, as well as linking habitats and creating enhanced areas for biodiversity by incorporating ditch habitat, reedbeds and pond networks. Consideration should be given to proposed health and safety measures for SuDS features and the design should address the usability, accessibility and safety of open space particularly for young children, the elderly and those with reduced mobility. Proposals must reduce post development run off rate back to the greenfield 1 in 1 year rate, with an allowance for climate change.

SuDS will be required to meet the following design criteria:

1. the design must follow an index-based approach when managing water quality. Implementation in line with the updated Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) SuDS Manual is required. Source control techniques such as green roofs, permeable paving and swales should be used so that rainfall runoff in events up to 5mm does not leave the site;
2. sensitively designed and integrated into the green and blue infrastructure to create high quality public open space and landscaped public realm;
3. maximise opportunities to enhance biodiversity net-gain;
4. improve the quality of water discharges and be used in conjunction with water use efficiency measures;
5. function effectively over the lifetime of the development;
6. the hierarchy of managing surface water drainage from any development in the Garden Community should be managed in accordance with this hierarchy: firstly, rainwater reuse; and secondly infiltration.

Proposals should be designed to include permeable surfaces wherever possible. Proposals for impermeable paving, including on small surfaces such as front gardens and driveways, will be strongly resisted unless it can be suitably demonstrated that this is not technically feasible or appropriate.

Part G: Integration of A120-A133 Link Road Mitigation

A comprehensive approach is required to ensure that the environmental mitigation for the A120-A133 Link Road, as specified in the conditions of the approved planning application, is fully integrated into the design of the Garden Community. This could include integrating those elements contained in the Landscape Plan, Landscape and Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (LEMMP), Ecological Design Strategy, Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy and Biodiversity Monitoring Strategy, which are conditions in the planning consent, with the landscape, multifunctional green and blue infrastructure, and ecological measures for the Garden Community.

Part H: Planning Application Expectations

1. A Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy for the whole Garden Community must have either been prepared and approved by, or otherwise submitted to and formally approved in writing by the Councils before the determination of any planning application for development of the site.
2. Proposals must include a green infrastructure plan, which demonstrates how the scheme reflects and complies with the Garden Community wide Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy. The green infrastructure plan, required for all proposals, must also demonstrate how green and blue spaces have been integrated into the built form.
3. A Canopy Cover Assessment is required to establish the existing canopy cover within the application site and identify where planting or regeneration will take place and how that meets the percentage canopy cover required, enhances landscape character, and delivers high quality design.

4. Proposals must be supported with appropriate ecological surveys and landscape and visual impact assessments where necessary and include a biodiversity net gain calculation, which follows the latest Defra Metric and guidance on biodiversity net gain.
5. The Councils will require the developer to enter into an appropriate legal agreement to ensure the long-term establishment, management, maintenance and monitoring of biodiversity mitigation, compensation, and net gain measures for a minimum of 30 years as part of the grant of any planning permission. It is anticipated that the developer will need to achieve this by entering into an agreement with a suitably qualified and experienced nature conservation management organisation to deliver the creation, and management of habitat in a development of this scale.
6. An indicative Drainage Plan for the whole Garden Community must be prepared and approved in writing by the Councils before the determination of any planning application for development of the site.
7. Proposals must include a Drainage Plan and SuDS Management and Maintenance Plan, which demonstrates how the scheme reflects and complies with the Garden Community wide indicative Drainage Plan setting out the long-term management and maintenance arrangements.

5. Justification

The Vision for the Garden Community is that the natural environment will be its biggest asset. Green infrastructure will allow residents to spend time, play, interact and grow and will provide a natural support system for people and wildlife and help to integrate built elements into the existing landscape. This reflects the Section 1 Local Plan requirement of the creation of distinctive environments, which utilise a multifunctional green-grid to create significant networks of new green infrastructure.

Measures to integrate green and blue spaces into the built form will form part of the green infrastructure network. This policy identifies examples of what sort of measures will be sought to maximise climate change mitigation and biodiversity extinction mitigation throughout the development. Appropriate ecological surveys and biodiversity net gain calculations will be required in support of planning applications and the mitigation hierarchy must be followed alongside good natural design principles. There is a requirement for sensitive habitats to be buffered, with additional planting or other agreed appropriate means to discourage access, and for substantial buffers against road corridors to be provided. Biodiversity net gain and a thriving ecological network is a strategic principle of the Garden Community. Where new areas of habitat are created, this should be targeted adjacent to or between retained existing areas of habitat in order to expand and link them, thus making them more resilient. Habitat creation and management should retain and enhance habitat links to the wider landscape, for example to the Colne Valley.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is required to avoid, minimise, and mitigate negative impacts on the existing and neighbouring countryside, heritage landscapes and existing townscapes and visual amenity of users (see Policy 4).

Properly managed trees and woodlands in urban and semi urban areas make a significant contribution to planning, design, and management of sustainable, resilient

landscapes. Increasing tree cover worldwide is one of the quickest and cheapest ways of mitigating climate change. Existing trees will be retained and canopy cover will be increased.

The importance of allotments and other productive landscapes was a key theme that came out of the engagement programme. Allotments and productive landscapes help to promote healthy lifestyles by promoting healthy eating and community integration. There are excellent examples of community gardens being beneficial for children and adults with disabilities (e.g. learning and sensory). The strategic principles for the Garden Community include the provision of space for a range of productive uses such as orchards, allotments, and growing fields. Their importance should not be underestimated, and opportunities for their creation should be provided throughout the Garden Community.

The strategic principles for the Garden Community recognise that natural flood risk management and carbon capture will be seamlessly incorporated in the ecological network, making the natural landscape “work hard” and deliver multiple benefits simultaneously.

The [NPPF](#) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out the requirements for the use for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise the risk of flooding from new development. The use of SuDS to manage water run-off is an important tool in minimising flooding by increasing the provision of permeable surfaces in an area that allows water to seep gradually into the ground, rather than running directly into a drainage network, thereby reducing the risk of overloading the system. SuDS can also reduce the impact of diffuse pollution from run-off and flooding. The effective use of permeable surfaces, soakaways and water storage areas should be incorporated. Early consideration should be given to the potential to use SuDS to identify when and where the use of such technologies is feasible and to also identify which type of SuDS is most appropriate to site conditions. Only where there is a significant risk of pollution to the water environment, inappropriate soil conditions and/or engineering difficulties, should alternative methods of drainage discharge of water from a site be considered.

A drainage plan and SuDS management and maintenance plan will need to be prepared to ensure that the need for SuDS has been properly considered as part of the planning application process. Developers will need to enter into early discussions with the Councils and the Lead Local Flood Authority and as part of discussions, maintenance and long term adoption responsibilities should be explored and agreed, as part of the SuDS approval process, prior to the start of development.

6. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternatives to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the Plan and reliance on the requirements of the Section 1 Plan, which are summarised at the beginning of this chapter.

Alternative 2: A more prescriptive policy, which lists exactly what biodiversity mitigation and net gain and SuDS requirements are required and where.

The Councils have rejected alternative 1 as the **Plan** is an opportunity to add further detail to the policy requirements in the Section 1 Plan and include policy that includes targets for biodiversity net gain and increased canopy cover.

The Councils have rejected alternative 2, at this stage, as there is a need for flexibility to ensure that proposals for the Garden Community are able to respond to changes to the natural environment over the lifetime of the Garden Community and changes to biodiversity net gain, protected species, priority habitats and SuDS features. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that this alternative would provide more certainty for developers in terms of what is expected to be provided on site to help limit adverse impacts relating to biodiversity assets in the Garden Community area. However, this approach would also be less flexible in terms of responding to changes in the natural environment over the lifetime of the Garden Community and changes in regard to biodiversity net gain, protected species, priority habitats and SuDS features.

7. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Nature**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- Is there anything missing from the policy?
- What kinds of open spaces should the Garden Community deliver?
- Should the biodiversity net gain target be higher or lower and what is the justification to vary the percentage in the policy?
- Should the canopy cover target be higher or lower and what is the justification to vary the percentage in the policy?
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

You can provide your feedback online **by following this link** [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://www.tcbgardencommunity.co.uk). Alternatively, you can email tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or write to **Freepost TCBGC**. When writing or emailing, please make sure you include your name and contact details and that you respond by the consultation closing date.

Chapter 5: Buildings, Places and Character

THE GARDEN COMMUNITY WILL PROVIDE THE RIGHT JOBS, HOMES AND SPACES FOR ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE. IT WILL CREATE THRIVING DISTINCTIVE PLACES FOR A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. IT WILL BE MEMORABLE FOR ITS LANDSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE AND WILL BE WIDELY RECOGNISABLE OF ITS PLACE IN NORTH ESSEX.

The Councils have very high expectations for how the Garden Community will create unique and distinctive buildings and neighbourhoods, whilst still respecting the character and visual amenity of nearby towns, villages, historic buildings, structures and the character and features of the landscape. The Councils also have high expectations for ensuring that residents of the Garden Community have access to a range of opportunities for employment, education, and training across a variety of sectors with the aim of achieving a minimum of one job per household, either close to home or within a sustainable commuting distance. The Councils have high expectations in terms of sustainable design and construction, and this is covered in Chapter 8: Sustainable Infrastructure.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

Under the theme of 'Buildings, Places and Character', some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this draft **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan include:

- the creation of a unique and distinctive place that responds positively to local character and context to preserve and enhance the quality of existing places and their environment – including assets of historic value;
- a wide range of jobs, skills and training opportunities – including 25 hectares of employment land and land for the expansion of the University of Essex;
- provide a mix of land uses and services with well-defined public and private spaces to create sustainable well-designed neighbourhoods;
- well-designed and integrated public realm with high quality landscape design, street furniture and other distinctive features that help to create a sense of place;
- integrates green infrastructure that creates spaces and places for healthy living, biodiversity recovery, play, noise, visual, heat and air quality mitigation, and natural SuDS;
- creating streets and places that are overlooked and active and promote inclusive access;
- development to be of appropriate densities which reflect both the context, place-making aspirations and opportunities for increased levels of development around centres and transport hubs;
- a mix of housing types and tenures including self and custom build and starter homes including a minimum of 30% affordable housing, phased through the development; and
- protecting the amenity of existing and future residents and users with regard to noise, vibration, smell, loss of light, overbearing and overlooking.

2. Principles

A PLACE WITH DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY

Inherently authentic, memorable and delightful, the Garden Community will have a locally-rooted character drawn from its surroundings, but also a strong identity of its own. The community will be varied in its built form, densities and architectural style. Its impact on the human and physical environment will be considered. Strong and purposeful buffers will provide separation where they are needed while in other areas strong connections and planned links will ensure it is never isolated.

A PLACE WITH A THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY

The local economy will be vibrant and provide a wide range of new and exciting economic opportunities, maximizing opportunities from the adjacent University of Essex and capitalizing on the success of the Knowledge Gateway. The site will provide a range of flexible and modern workspace together with state of the art digital infrastructure to allow for modern ways of working.

A PLACE THAT IS VIBRANT AND ACTIVE

The Garden Community will be designed to ensure interaction and activity is common. Centres will encourage a variety of mixed use, flexible spaces that are accessible in close proximity to homes and jobs. It will be known for its quality of livability, equitable prosperity, and social cohesion.

A PLACE WHERE HOUSING IS ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE AND INCLUSIVE

New housing will provide opportunity for young renters, flat sharers, first time buyers, growing families, empty nesters and ageing members of society to live side by side - there will be a real sense of belonging and community with homes designed to be more flexible and adaptable to whole life needs.

A PLACE WITH GREAT HOMES

The Garden Community will create high quality and desirable homes designed to meet the changing needs of society whilst ensuring high quality spaces.

3. Engagement Feedback

What we heard

Throughout our engagement processes, people emphasised the importance of development **respecting the character of existing settlements** both surrounding the Garden Community (such as Elmstead Market, Wivenhoe and Ardleigh) and those settlements and dispersed communities within the broad location of the Garden Community – such as Crockleford Heath, Turnip Lodge Lane and Mount Pleasant Cottages. People commented that development must not attempt to replicate or create an ‘imitation’ of an existing area and should have its **own unique character**, with architecture of different types and character in different parts of the development. People felt that there should be distinct and **definable landmarks** within the development that set it apart from other existing places. People stressed

that the Garden Community must be accompanied by new, **high quality jobs** to ensure it does not become a dormitory or commuter settlement or just another housing estate on the edge of Colchester. The importance of providing jobs in new **innovative sectors like renewable energy and modular construction**, which could provide employment over the full period of the Garden Community's development, was stressed. People also felt that measures to encourage home working, live-work units and self-employment should be maximised to reduce the need for people to commute from the Garden Community

When thinking about Buildings, Places and Character in the Garden Community, our visioning workshops, survey, and postcard from the future participants:

- Wanted the area to still feel rural and include tranquil space for reflection.
- Felt the Garden Community should make the most of the area's history.
- Wanted the area to have vibrant and bustling spaces for socialising.
- Wanted the Garden Community to feel distinctive.
- Wanted the houses to be adaptable, so that the houses can respond to the changing needs of their residents.
- Wanted the Garden Community to provide employment, working space, and training for all its residents.
- Were worried that the development will end up feeling like any other generic housing estate.
- Were concerned about the impact the Garden Community will have on the identity of the local area and of existing settlements nearby.
- Build modern housing with bold but considerate designs.
- Create houses that are green by design.
- Ensure an equitable distribution of amenities throughout the development.
- Use buffers to protect the surrounding areas.

When thinking about Buildings, Places and Character in the Garden Community, our statutory stakeholders workshops, engagement website, and social media participants spoke of:

- The cohesion, look and feel of the Garden Community.
- A few people spoke about beauty and creating space for people, such as a town centre with a parade and village green, and a central square with cafes and restaurants.
- Employment came up as an important point, specifically during the stakeholder workshops. Key points that came up centred around the nature and quality of jobs, especially around providing for the daily needs (good housing and transport etc) of keyworkers and attracting new workforces.
- Specific conversations also took place around employment for disadvantaged communities, young people, and people with disabilities or additional needs.

- Acknowledging that employment would not be an option for all people, there were also comments with regards to the importance of volunteering, training, and social enterprise opportunities.
- There were concerns raised around the buffers for the Garden Community under this theme.
- Landscape, Ecology and Green Infrastructure was also a common topic of discussion.

What we've done

The Councils agree that the Garden Community should have its own unique character and identity with different characters and architecture in the proposed three neighbourhoods. This will be achieved through a masterplan and design code for each neighbourhood. The importance of protecting the character and identity of existing settlements is recognised. Strategic Green Gaps are included to avoid settlement coalescence (merging) with neighbouring settlements and Crockleford Heath is designated as an Area of Special Character. The Councils agree that the Garden Community must include high quality jobs in a diverse range of sectors and expect a mix of employment opportunities to be distributed throughout the Garden Community.

4. Policy 4: Buildings, Places and Character

Taking forward the requirements of the Section 1 Local Plan and taking into account the views of local people and other stakeholders, Policy 4 sets out the Councils' expectation for the Garden Community to be unique and distinctive in its character and appearance, and for the new homes to meet high standards that will meet a variety of different needs and demands for people and families over the courses of their lives. It includes the Councils' expectations around housing mix, density, and space standards.

POLICY 4: BUILDINGS, PLACES AND CHARACTER

Part A: Creation of a Unique and Distinctive Place

The Garden Community will be a unique place with a distinctive character that takes a positive and innovative approach to architecture, urban design, landmarks, and public realm provision. It will adopt a landscape led approach to design and build, follow [healthy new towns](#) principles, and achieve [Active Design](#), and [secured by design certification](#).

The three 'Neighbourhoods' within the Garden Community will themselves adopt different approaches to distinctiveness to provide a rich variety of homes, spaces and other structures to appeal to different needs and lifestyles.

To achieve a unique place with a distinctive character, the Garden Community will be developed in accordance with a 'Strategic Masterplan' and 'Strategic Design Code' for the whole site and more detailed 'Neighbourhood Masterplans' and 'Neighbourhood Design Codes' for each of its three neighbourhoods. These

Masterplans and Design Codes will be prepared and approved by the Councils, through a collaborative process with key stakeholders before the consideration of detailed proposals and determination of planning applications. Masterplans and Design Codes will be the subject of public and stakeholder engagement in their own right.

Part B: Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

The proposed mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenure should reflect the latest available evidence of housing demand and need, either contained within the Councils' latest 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' (which will be updated on a periodic basis) or an assessment of housing demand and need otherwise produced by the developer, which will need to be submitted to the Councils and approved in writing.

To ensure the Garden Community makes suitable provision to meet the needs of first-time buyers, key workers and local people and families on lower incomes who cannot afford to buy or rent housing on the open market, at least 30% of all new homes across the Garden Community and within each of its three neighbourhoods must be provided in the form of 'affordable housing'.

Whilst it remains a requirement of government policy, 10% of all new homes will be expected to be provided for 'affordable home ownership' in line with the [NPPF](#) and these will count towards the overall provision of affordable housing. The mix, size, and tenure of the remainder of the affordable housing requirement will be determined by the submitted Housing Strategy and as agreed by the Councils, having regard to latest evidence of affordable housing need.

To ensure positive integration between the Affordable and Market Housing, there should be no difference in the appearance and quality between dwellings (and associated public realm) to be sold on the open market and those to be delivered as Affordable Housing. In addition, proposals must be accompanied by and delivered in accordance with an 'Affordable Housing Phasing Strategy' which could form part of the wider Housing Strategy, and which would have been approved in writing by the Councils, prior to the determination of relevant planning applications.

Part C: Housing Density

The 'density' of new housing development at the Garden Community and within its Neighbourhoods, typically expressed in 'dwellings per hectare' (dph) will vary, having regard to a variety of factors. Housing should be provided within a broad range of 30 dph in the most sensitive locations, up to 80-100 dph or higher in centres of activity and/or in locations with high accessibility to the Rapid Transit System, sustainable movement corridors and facilities, with an overall average across the settlement boundary of around 50 dph. Factors influencing the appropriate density for any given area include:

1. accessibility to existing and proposed centres, employment areas, services and facilities;

2. the need to achieve minimum internal floorspace and private amenity space standards, along with requirements for car parking set out within this draft **Plan**, Masterplans, Design Codes or Council guidance;
3. the required mix of housing;
4. the character of proposed development as determined through the relevant Masterplans and Design Codes;
5. the character and proximity to any designated and non-designated heritage or environmental assets, or the impact on their settings;
6. the need for an appropriate transition between built development and sensitive areas, such as the open countryside and the Crockleford Heath Area of Special Character; and
7. the land requirements for infrastructure to be incorporated as part of the development (including key transport corridors, existing and proposed green and blue infrastructure, open space, including green corridors and areas of biodiversity net gain, sustainable drainage systems, centres, footpaths, cycleways and highways, schools and other community facilities).

Part D: Internal Space Standards, Home-working and Adaptability in New Homes

To ensure homes provide a high standard of living conditions for the residents of the Garden Community, all new dwellings will, as a minimum, be expected to comply with the government's latest 'Technical housing standards – nationally prescribed standard'. Wherever possible, dwellings should exceed these standards to ensure a variety of dwelling sizes across the Garden Community and the neighbourhoods within it and to enable scope for homes and space within them to be adapted in the future to meet residents' and families' changing needs – including the potential for multiple generations of a family to live together.

To provide maximum scope for new residents to be able to work or operate a business from home, all new dwellings should include innovative approaches to home working.

All new dwellings must be built to [Building Regulations Part M4\(2\)](#) 'adaptable and accessible standards' (or subsequent equivalent building regulations standards). Within each of the three neighbourhoods, at least 10% of market dwellings and 10% of affordable dwellings should also be built to [Building Regulations Part M4\(3\)](#) 'wheelchair-user' standards' (or subsequent government standards). This will ensure that the needs of people living with disabilities and older households will be met, both from the early phases of development at the Garden Community, and into the future as people's needs change.

Part E: Private Amenity Space (garden) Standards

All new dwellings must provide for private amenity space (private gardens), either individually or communally, of a size and configuration which is comparable to the

size of dwelling and the character of an area. The approach to private amenity space will be determined through the detailed Masterplans and Design Codes, having regard to the standards set out in the latest [Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas](#).

Private amenity space should be located to be easily accessible from the dwelling(s) to which it relates. In determining the provision of private amenity space for dwellings, proposals should consider the opportunity to provide space both for growing food and the scope for adapting and extending properties to meet residents and families' future needs, whilst still maintaining an appropriate level of garden provision.

Part F: Self-Build and Custom-Built Homes

The provision and opportunities for constructing self-build and custom-built homes should form part of the mix of housing at the Garden Community and each of the neighbourhoods within it. This provision should be made in the form of serviced plots to be brought forward with individual planning applications by those looking to occupy those homes. Details of this provision should form part of any submitted Housing Strategy for the development and the neighbourhoods within it. The requirement for self-build and custom-built homes will be determined having regard to the Councils' 'self-build registers' and local market testing.

The Councils will also consider, on their merits, small developments of sensitively designed self-build and custom-built homes on land in close proximity to the Crockleford Heath Area of Special Character (as shown on the Key Diagram). In determining any proposals for development, the Councils will give special regard to preserving and/or enhancing the loose knit and low-density rural character of the area.

Part G: Care, Assisted Living and Other Specialist Housing

To meet the needs of older and disabled people who require specialist care, an element of residential provision in the form of high-quality care homes, assisted living and other specialist housing (including independent living) should be delivered as part of the overall mix of development. These should be located either within, or adjoining, each of the new centres.

The size and specification of any care home or extra-care housing will be determined through the Housing Strategy submitted by the developers (see Part B) and will be informed by evidence held by the Councils and their partners in the health sector.

Part H: Student Accommodation

To meet the needs of an increasing population of students at the expanding University of Essex, and other local educational establishments, the Housing Strategy for the development should consider and address the need for additional student accommodation as part of the Garden Community.

Part I: Gypsy and Travellers

As set out in Policy 1 of this draft **Plan**, a new site for the accommodation of gypsies and travellers will be delivered within the northern neighbourhood of the Garden Community, south of the A120 and west of the new A120-A133 Link Road, with good access to those roads. Gypsy and Traveller provision will be confined to the allocated site and will not be permitted elsewhere within the Garden Community, nor the countryside around it.

The number of pitches and thus the overall size of the site will be determined through an up-to-date Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment (GTNA) that will form part of the Housing Strategy for the wider neighbourhood. The GTNA should be based on the latest Essex wide or Council produced needs assessment. The site will be expected to include suitable circulation and amenity space and must achieve safe access for large vehicles from the road network, access to utilities and must be of high-quality design and landscaping, providing a good standard of residential amenity for occupiers.

Part J: Planning Application Expectations

1. To ensure proposals minimise impact on the existing landscape character and sensitive receptors, both on the site itself and in the surrounding settlements or countryside, a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of detailed proposals is required. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) must demonstrate how the layout and design of proposals has evolved to avoid or minimise harmful impacts.
2. Proposals for the Garden Community as a whole, and for each of the neighbourhoods within it, must be accompanied by a Housing Strategy. This must clearly set out how the development will deliver a mix of housing of different types, sizes and tenure that meet a variety of needs, demands and aspirations, including the size and specification of any care home or assisted living housing, the need for student accommodation and an up-to-date Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment. The Housing Strategy should relate and have regard to the demographic studies required by Policy 6.
3. An Affordable Housing Phasing Strategy should form part of the Housing Strategy for each neighbourhood. This must demonstrate how affordable housing will be integrated into the development in smaller clusters within each neighbourhood and delivered in phases, alongside market housing, throughout the development.
4. A mitigation strategy is required to demonstrate the measures that can minimise harm and maximise the potential to enhance the heritage significance of Elmstead Hall, the Church of St Anne and St Laurence, Allen's Farmhouse, and the Round Barrows (Scheduled Monument) on Annan Road.
5. An archaeological assessment of the proposals in the vicinity of the Round Barrows is required.

5. Justification

For the Garden Community to be successful, it is one of the Councils' main objectives to ensure it is unique, self-sufficient and can provide high quality design. To achieve this, the design and layout of the Garden Community will be developed in more detail through a 'Strategic Masterplan' for the whole site and an even more detailed 'Neighbourhood Masterplan' for each of the three defined neighbourhoods, with associated Strategic and Neighbourhood Design Codes, in addition to design codes on specific issues.

The Councils will expect the Masterplans and Design Codes to establish an innovative approach to development both across the Garden Community as a whole, and within each of the neighbourhoods. Masterplans and Design Codes will be informed by use of design review and assessment frameworks such as the [National Design Guide](#), [National Model Design Code](#), [Building for a Healthy Life](#) and [Building with Nature](#), or similar. These Masterplans and Design Codes will be prepared and approved by the Councils, through a collaborative process with key stakeholders, including the public, before the consideration of detailed proposals and determination of planning applications.

In assessing the range of densities that may be appropriate for the Garden Community, it is necessary to look at what density means in practice. There are various measurements of density, but the most commonly used measure is the calculation of the number of dwellings per hectare. Density is measured as a net figure, only including land directly associated with housing, including the following:

- Access roads
- Private garden space
- Car parking areas
- Incidental open space and landscaping
- Children's play areas

and excluding the following:

- Major roads (including major roads and spine roads)
- Schools and sports grounds
- Strategic open and public space
- Landscape buffers
- Major drainage installations
- Land for other educational or community purposes.

It is appropriate to use a 'blanket' average net density across a whole site for wider planning purposes such as for a Local Plan, but this can be a blunt instrument in trying to assess the capacity of a site, and the draft **Plan** takes a more refined approach for this particular site.

The density of new housing within the Garden Community will be expected to vary both across the Garden Community and within its constituent neighbourhoods in order to achieve the overall requirement of 7,500 to 8,000 homes. Densities will be

determined by a range of factors as set out in Policy 4. Across the Garden Community, there is a general expectation that the overall average density of development and the total number of new homes will be greatest in the southern neighbourhood of the Garden Community to reflect its proximity to the University of Essex, which might allow for the provision for some additional student accommodation, and the opportunity for early connection to the Rapid Transit System. The overall density and housing numbers across the northern and central neighbourhoods is expected to step down to lower levels to reflect the more sensitive nature of the landscape and existing communities further north. However, densities must also reflect the sensitive landscape and heritage value of Wivenhoe Park Registered Park and Garden and its setting that forms part of the University estate and abuts the southern boundary of the Garden Community. Overall housing numbers including their distribution between each of the three neighbourhoods will be determined by the Strategic Masterplan.

The density of housing development within each of the three neighbourhoods will itself vary to reflect the specific factors identified above and will generally be higher density within immediate proximity to the proposed centres and lower densities further out from those centres – particularly where development affects sensitive heritage or environmental assets and other sensitive features including existing dwellings or groups of dwellings.

As well as a range of densities, a mix of different sizes, types and tenures of housing will be expected to meet the needs of a wide variety of people with different requirements, demands and aspirations – including a minimum requirement of 30% affordable housing. The mix will be established through a separate Housing Strategy submitted for approval by the developer for the Councils' approval, that has taken into account the latest evidence and projections of need and demand and relates to a demographic study. There is also an expectation for all new homes to be built to an adaptable standard, to allow them to be easily upgraded to wheelchair accessible standard if or when residents' mobility needs change. 10% of homes will need to be wheelchair accessible on construction. The development will also be expected to provide for care and assisting living provision, self-build and custom-built homes and student accommodation. Providing homes that are suitable for people living with impaired mobility gives them a choice to remain living within their homes for longer and provides them with wider care options such as receiving domiciliary care instead of having to move to an institutional care setting, thus improving quality of life whilst also reducing pressures on adult social care and local health services.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) forms part of the evidence base. It ensures that a positive strategy for the historic environment is secured through the **Plan** and that the **Plan** avoids harming the significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, including their effects on setting.

The HIA suggests that the development of the Garden Community would potentially result in significant effects to Elmstead Hall, the Church of St Anne and St Laurence, Allen's Farmhouse, and the Round Barrows (Scheduled Monument) on Annan Road. This would primarily be through the development of the proposed employment areas

adjacent to the A120 and A133, the A120-A133 Link Road, and the proposed woodland planting which impacts on the open landscape that is an important element of the settings to these assets. The further erosion of the remaining open land surrounding the Round Barrows is also potentially detrimental to the scheduled monument's archaeological significance as well as its historic setting. It is recommended that an archaeological assessment of the proposals in the vicinity of the Round Barrows is undertaken. Non-significant adverse effects are likely on Salarybrooke Farmhouse, Lamberts, Collierswood Barn, Wivenhoe House, Hill Farm agricultural buildings, Wivenhoe House Lodges and Wivenhoe Park.

The HIA identifies the potential to provide enhancement opportunities through archaeological/cultural heritage pre-commencement work to more fully understand the historic development of the area and then to promote this information for the benefit of local people and visitors.

Landscaping will have a huge part to play in mitigating the impact on heritage assets and will need to be underpinned by Landscape Visual Impact Assessments, which is a planning application expectation in Policy 4. The design and landscaping must be carefully considered in each neighbourhood to ensure it responds to the local character (built and natural) to minimise the potential for adverse impacts and to achieve the best design quality which is an important consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

6. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternative to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the **Plan** and reliance on the requirements of the Section 1 Plan.

Alternative 2: A more detailed and prescriptive approach including a detailed Masterplan and Design Code and very detailed requirements and standards.

The policy set out above seeks to encapsulate all the Councils' high expectations for the quality, distinctiveness, and inclusiveness of the Garden Community and many of the ideas and preferences put forward by residents and other stakeholders during the engagement activities.

For each of the different parts of the policy there could also be alternative approaches, for example a higher or lower percentage requirement for adaptable housing and wheelchair accessible housing; lower or higher minimum expectations for internal space and garden space; or prescriptive requirements for the mix of housing density, sizes, types, and tenures.

The disadvantage of the Alternative 1 approach is that there would be very limited control over the development of the Garden Community and less of an opportunity for the Councils and the community to influence its design, character, and make-up and to achieve the quality and attributes of a Garden Community.

The disadvantage of the Alternative 2 approach of including the maximum level of detail in this draft **Plan** is that over the lifetime of the Garden Community

development (and even in the short-term running up to the first phases of development) expectations could change, and flexibility is required. For example, the housing market and the need and demands for certain kinds of homes will change over time and it would be better for the mix of housing to be determined by the most up to date evidence, than by a prescriptive requirement set out in this draft **Plan**. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) concluded that this alternative is likely to strengthen the positive effects and remove the uncertainty identified in relation to the potential impacts on SA objectives for biodiversity and geological diversity, historic environment and townscape, water resources and quality, flood risk, and landscapes. A positive effect would be expected for the SA objective on energy efficiency and climate change as it is likely that the design code would include a requirement to utilise renewable energy to generate electricity for the Garden Community and to incorporate passive design principles to optimise site layout, building form and orientation to minimise energy consumption.

The draft policy is considered to be the best option as it strikes a realistic balance between establishing minimum standards and expectations from the outset, and requiring additional work in the form of Masterplans, Design Codes and strategies to determine a greater level of detail going forward, based on the most up to date information available while still retaining an appropriate level of control.

7. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Buildings, Places and Character**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- The approach to housing density and the factors that should influence the number of dwellings per hectare in different parts of the site.
- The proposed minimum standards and general expectations around internal floor space for new homes, private gardens, and the need for all homes to be adaptable.
- The requirement for a mix of housing across the Garden Community and its neighbourhoods including private and affordable housing, care and assisted living, self-build and custom-built homes and student accommodation – and how the details should be determined through a separate ‘Housing Strategy.
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

You can provide your feedback online **by following this link** [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://tcbgardencommunity.co.uk). Alternatively, you can email tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or write to **Freepost TCBGC**. When writing or emailing, please make sure you include your name and contact details and that you respond by the consultation closing date.

8. Policy 5: Economic Activity and Employment

Creating opportunities for employment, education, and training at the Garden Community, both throughout its construction and for the lifetime of residents as the community becomes established, is going to be critical to its success. The approach

to maximising the economic potential of the Garden Community has been informed by the evidence base and discussions with education providers and businesses within different sectors. There will be an expectation that as many opportunities to create jobs at the Garden Community, and within a sustainable commutable distance, are followed up and delivered. Policy 5 explains how this will be achieved, with an aim of creating at least one job per new household.

POLICY 5: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT

Part A: Achieving a Balance of Homes and Jobs

Residents of the Garden Community will have access to a range of opportunities for employment, education, and training across a variety of sectors with the aim of achieving a minimum of one job per household, either within or close to home or within a sustainable commutable distance. To achieve this, the Councils, working with developers and other partners, will employ a variety of measures aimed at fostering the conditions for economic activity and employment.

These measures, which will be detailed in a separate Economic and Employment Strategy, which will be approved by the Councils following a collaborative process with the developers and other key stakeholders, will include:

- expansion of the University of Essex and the Knowledge Gateway through the allocation of land for expansion and ongoing development;
- creation of ‘centres’ serving each of the Garden Community’s new neighbourhoods providing facilities such as shops, services and community facilities, including schools, care facilities and flexible community buildings that can be used for a variety of purposes, including health provision, and could include employment land and job opportunities;
- establishment of a new industrial business park south of the A120 and east of the new A120-A133 Link Road for general business and industrial activities – benefitting from good accessibility to the existing and expanded strategic road network;
- delivery of the first phase of business accommodation in each employment area tied to occupation of housing and any future review of employment allocations will need to take account of market dynamics and best practice;
- construction of new homes with innovative approaches to home working and the highest standard of broadband access to promote home working, business creation and self-employment;
- creation of the Rapid Transit System to enable a rapid commute for residents to and from all neighbourhoods within the Garden Community to key areas of employment including the proposed industrial business park and centres as well as those outside of the Garden Community, such as the

University of Essex, Colchester Town Centre, Colchester General Hospital, Colchester Business Park and Colchester Sports Park;

- positive partnership working between the Councils, local educational establishments, and the developers to increase capacity and improve facilities to deliver training in identified 'growth sectors'; and
- working with government and other partners to secure government investment and to explore the potential for central government functions and related supply-chain industries to be relocated to either the Garden Community, or surrounding towns in Tendring and Colchester.

Part B: Protection of Employment Land

Land allocated for employment use in the draft **Plan** and any employment land or employment space created as part of the Garden Community will be protected for employment use unless a future review of this draft **Plan** or subsequent Strategic Masterplans determine otherwise. Proposals for non-employment uses for this land and premises will not be supported to ensure the Garden Community is served by a flexible range of land and property for the provision of commercial activity and jobs.

Part C: Employment and Skills Plan

All proposals for development must be accompanied by an 'Employment and Skills Plan' (ESP) (sometimes known as a 'Construction Workforce Development Strategy and Agreement') to maximise the potential for local people to be trained and employed in the long-term development of the Garden Community – and may include renewable energy and energy efficient technologies and on-site modular construction. The ESP will demonstrate the measures that will be employed to maximise the opportunities for local people to access training and employment in the construction of the Garden Community and associated supply-line industries and enable wider employment opportunities for those requiring additional support to enter the job market. The ESP will be developed in consultation with the Councils and, on approval by the Councils, developers will be expected to enter into a legal agreement to ensure the agreed measures are implemented.

Part D: Planning Application Expectations

1. An Economic and Employment Strategy will be required, which must be approved by the Councils, prepared collaboratively with the Councils and relevant stakeholders, and include the criteria in Part A of this policy.
2. An Employment and Skills Plan will be required.

9. Justification

The Garden Community can make a contribution to addressing the challenges of increasing productivity, delivering prosperity and productivity, and contributing

towards the creation of mixed and balanced new communities that are successful and sustainable in the long term.

A key objective is to ensure economic uses help to create a successful, integrated, and balanced community with vibrant centres that include a mix of employment opportunities and services. A mix of employment uses provides flexibility and the ability to respond to market strengths and opportunities. A realistic level of self-containment should also be achieved, with as many commuting journeys as possible undertaken through walking, cycling and public transport. Sustainable access to employment opportunities in neighbouring major employment centres will need to be provided.

It is critical that the delivery of the first phase of business accommodation in each employment area is tied to occupation of housing to provide an alignment between jobs and housing, and any future review of employment allocations will need to take account of market dynamics and best practice, and avoid sterilisation of parcels of land.

The Garden Community will contain a vibrant mix of occupiers, including suitable uses in the evening and night-time economy. Non-residential development on lower floors should be flexible and adaptable, including to accommodate a range of uses and sectors, including studio based Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) or third sector organisations.

Employment areas will need to offer a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly environment, including access to green spaces and amenities for employees. There will also be a commitment to futureproof broadband connectivity to all homes and businesses. Residential design and layouts will need to provide flexible and adaptable spaces to support homeworking.

In the current economic climate and national skills shortage, the Councils will expect the developer to prepare an 'Employment and Skills Plan' (ESP) to increase local construction employability levels and workforce numbers. Improving the skills of the local labour force will be key to improving the areas economic competitiveness. Through the ESP, increased skills and employability will enable residents to take advantage of opportunities created by new development at the Garden Community. The ESP will enable relevant and proportionate targets to increase the volume and quality of employment and skills interventions.

10. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternative to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the **Plan** and reliance on the requirements of the Section 1 Plan.

The Councils have rejected alternative 1 as the **Plan** is an opportunity to add further detail to the policy requirements in the Section 1 Plan and include policy that sets out what will be required in a separate Economic and Employment Strategy and the protection of employment land.

11. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Economic Activity and Employment**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- What employment uses should be located in the Garden Community?
- Do you agree with the location of the proposed industrial business park?
- Do you agree with the location of the proposed expansion to the University of Essex and Knowledge Gateway?
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

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CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

THE GARDEN COMMUNITY WILL BE KNOWN FOR ITS HEALTHY AND HAPPY COMMUNITY. IT WILL HAVE A VARIETY OF DIVERSE COMMUNITY SPACES, PLAY SPACES, GREAT LOCAL SCHOOLS AND A NETWORK OF SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES. IT WILL ESTABLISH LONG TERM AND PARTICIPATIVE STEWARDSHIP OF INFRASTRUCTURE FROM THE OUTSET.

This chapter contains the Councils' expectations and policy on ensuring the Garden Community is served by community services and facilities of the right type in the right location, including schools and sports facilities; as well as access to health services and how the development will incorporate measures to encourage inclusive, healthy, and happy lifestyles.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

Under the theme of Community and Social Infrastructure, some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this draft **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan include:

- Establishment of new district and neighbourhood centres of an appropriate scale and easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transit to the majority of residents of the Garden Community – each containing community meeting places.
- New secondary school, primary schools and early-years facilities.
- Measures for increasing capacity in, and accessibility to, primary health care – either through new infrastructure or the improvement, reconfiguration, extension, or relocation of existing medical facilities.
- Creation of healthy communities through the pattern of development, urban design, access to local services and facilities, and safe places for active play and food growing.
- The provision of new indoor leisure and sports facilities and/or contributions towards the improvement or expansion of existing facilities in the wider area.
- New community parks, allotments, a new country park and the provision of sports areas and play areas with associated facilities.
- An infrastructure delivery strategy and phasing plan that sets out how infrastructure, services and facilities will be provided.

2. Principles

A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN FEEL AT HOME

The Garden Community will be home to a multi-generation and multi-cultural community for people of different ages, ethnicities, interests and lifestyles. A variety

of spaces for social interaction will encourage existing and new communities to meet with facilities designed to be accessible and inclusive.

A PLACE WHERE IT'S EASY TO BE HEALTHY AND HAPPY

The Garden Community will be designed to make it easy for residents and visitors to live well. It will be about far more than the delivery of healthcare services but focused on creating environments that promote healthy living, are regenerative, restorative and relaxing - being active and tranquil will come naturally.

A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN LEARN

The Garden Community will be planned with lifelong learning in mind. While early years, primary and secondary education will all be planned for it will also develop a more holistic place that creates opportunity for lifelong learning, training and local opportunities with employers and key institutions such as the University of Essex.

A PLACE TO PLAY AND HAVE FUN

In addition to purpose-built sport and leisure facilities the Garden Community will include opportunities for recreation and activity including for children and young people.

A PLACE WHERE LONG TERM STEWARDSHIP IS CONSIDERED FROM THE OUTSET

Long term stewardship and governance will be considered and built-in from the initial stages of planning and designing the Garden Community. A clear understanding will be established from early on, of how the assets generated by the development process will be managed on behalf of the community in perpetuity and how income streams will be generated. Meaningful community participation will be established from the outset to enable people to engage in the management of their infrastructure. Community needs and opportunities will be identified in a participative manner and there will be local representation on delivery teams and partnerships

3. Engagement Feedback

What we heard

Throughout our engagement processes, people emphasised a **holistic view** of how health and general wellbeing can be supported in the Garden Community. People outlined how all aspects of the Garden Community can affect **mental** and **physical wellbeing** and emphasised the links between recreation and inclusivity to mental health. People said they wanted the Garden Community to foster **community spirit and a sense of shared responsibility** among future residents. People also focused on the importance of providing for the needs of all residents and ensuring that the community remains **vibrant**.

When thinking about Community and Social Infrastructure in the Garden Community, our visioning workshops, survey, and postcard from the future participants:

- Wanted all aspects of the Garden Community to support mental and physical wellbeing.
- Felt that interaction with nature and green space was essential for the wellbeing of residents.
- Wanted indoor and outdoor recreational spaces.
- Wanted the Garden Community to be accessible and provide opportunities for all people.
- Wanted to protect existing local infrastructure, particularly health and secondary education provision, from the pressures of increased population.
- Wanted the Garden Community to plan for the challenges of the future.
- Wanted the Garden Community to run community stewardship and development projects alongside the building process.
- Were divided on maintenance fees and how the development should be stewarded.
- Wanted a range of community spaces that cater to different types of groups.
- Felt that the development should foster social interaction.
- Wanted spaces specifically designed for children and young people.
- Felt that the wellbeing of existing residents should be a priority.

When thinking about Community and Social Infrastructure in the Garden Community, our statutory stakeholders, engagement website, and social media participants spoke of:

- The importance of ‘community’ in a general sense.
- Involving residents within the community in the management of green space (not necessarily ‘mown’ green space, but wildflower etc too) and developing community cohesion, as well as bringing people together through things like community orchards.
- People talked about how the design of a community can foster interaction.
- The importance of making community facilities within good reach of active travel was mentioned.
- Linked to this, the importance of a community focused layout/design was mentioned.
- The importance of taking a strategic approach to planning things such as sports provision.

What we’ve done

The Councils agree that the Garden Community should promote health and wellbeing and the draft **Plan** has had regard to the [Healthy New Towns](#) principles. Developing a strong, inclusive community is important and the draft **Plan** requires that a strategy for stewardship is agreed to ensure that open spaces and community assets are managed in perpetuity. Community and social infrastructure covers a wide range of services and facilities and this is reflected in the draft policy, which refers to a range of different uses, the importance of multifunctional facilities and the need for up to date assessments of need. The Councils recognise the importance of interaction with nature and green space. A green infrastructure network will be

provided and biodiversity enhancement measures, including biodiversity net gain are required (see the Nature policy). Green infrastructure has multiple benefits, including encouraging active travel. The Councils have discussed the education and health needs of the Garden Community with the lead authority for education and the local NHS commissioning teams and the policy reflects these discussions.

4. Policy 6: Community and Social Infrastructure

The Garden Community will provide a full range of services and facilities (e.g. schools, community uses, recreation), funded and delivered as part of the new development in a timely manner comparable with the phasing of the new community. The Garden Community will promote wellbeing and a happy, healthy community that is engaged, empowered and socially inclusive. Stewardship will be important to ensure that the new community has a stake in the long-term development and management of the Garden Community.

POLICY 6: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Garden Community will deliver local community services and facilities, including opportunities for joint provision and co-location to provide services which best meet people's needs, are accessible to all and which are multi-purpose and innovative. The community and social infrastructure needs of the Garden Community will be determined in accordance with detailed assessments and strategies, prepared and/or approved in writing by the Councils in partnership with the developer and infrastructure providers having regard to up to date evidenced need, informed by bespoke demographic studies. Phasing of the delivery of community and social infrastructure will be aligned with other aspects of the development to ensure that the needs of the community are met from the outset and that the development meets the principle of 'infrastructure first'.

Part A: Centres

Each of the three neighbourhoods must include at least one district or local centre. All centres must be accessible by a comprehensive sustainable travel network (walking and cycling) and have good access to one or more of the Rapid Transit System halts. All centres must include a diverse range of uses, including, but not limited to, education, retail, community space and a dedicated or flexible space to enable activities to support the wider determinants of health. All centres must include community meeting places, which can provide for a range of community uses and needs. All centres should be designed to meet local, day-to-day needs. Buildings should be designed flexibly to ensure they are resilient to respond to changing needs over time. The upper floors of buildings in centres may be used for residential uses where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity arising from noise, pollution or other impacts of the ground floor uses. The public realm must be inclusive and create a sense of place, safety, and interaction with nature.

Part B: Community Buildings and Spaces

Multifunctional community buildings and spaces must be provided throughout the Garden Community, including within each of the centres. Community buildings and spaces must be convertible and flexible to accommodate a variety of users, including faith groups, social prescribing activities, community fitness, and play. Community buildings and spaces must be inclusive and accessible to all, including those with mobility and sensory issues. Schools may be an appropriate location for such uses.

Part C: Education and Early Years and Childcare Nurseries

The Garden Community will provide for schools and early years and childcare facilities that are located centrally to the neighbourhoods they serve and away from primary traffic routes. Land and commensurate financial contributions are required for:

1. Up to two new secondary schools each on 7.9 hectares of suitable land allocated for education use.
2. At least five new primary schools, each with a co-located early years and childcare nursery and each on 2.1 hectares of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use.
3. Up to five new 56 place stand-alone early years and childcare nurseries, each on 0.13 hectares of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use.
4. One new 30 place stand-alone early years and childcare nursery on 0.065ha of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use.
5. One new 26 place stand-alone early years and childcare nursery on 0.058ha of suitable land allocated for education and childcare use.

Each of the three neighbourhoods must include at least one primary school and provision for stand-alone early years and childcare nurseries. Each secondary school site should be co-located with a primary school/early years and childcare nursery to provide for the option of an all through school. Additional space must also be provided for co-located Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision and any community uses being delivered by the school. Proposals should have regard to the Essex County Council '[Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions](#)' and '[Garden Communities and Planning School Places](#)' guide.

Vehicle free 'school zones' must be provided around schools, with the area around the main pupil entrance entirely traffic free and connected by safe and direct walking and cycling routes to the community/ neighbourhood the school serves. All schools should be well connected to the natural environment to provide the option of providing forest school sessions.

Part D: Sports, Recreation and Open Space

The sports and recreation requirements of the Garden Community, as set out in the Colchester and Tendring Sports, Recreation and Open Space Strategy (2022) or any updates to this Strategy, must be met in full in terms of the typology,

quantity, quality, and location of facilities provided. Opportunities should be taken to deliver multipurpose facilities well integrated into the built environment and well designed in terms of their landscape settings. The Councils will only consider offsite provision where it is well connected to the Garden Community and/or where it will deliver multiple benefits, including benefits to existing communities.

Part E: Health

The Garden Community will create an active environment that promotes health and wellbeing and builds a strong community. The conditions for a healthy community will be provided through the pattern of development, good urban and public realm design, access to local services and facilities, opportunities for local employment, high quality open space and landscape design and safe places for active play, biodiversity and food growing, and which are all accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. Proposals must take account of the [healthy new towns principles](#), the developing integrated neighbourhood model of working, as well as [Sport England's Active Design](#) principles.

Increased healthcare provision to serve the Garden Community will be achieved through the use of flexible space within centres and community buildings, and enhancements to existing facilities, including the wellbeing hub at the University of Essex. This should ensure that the facilities are flexible enough to be used as key assets in responding to the particular needs of the new community.

Proposals must be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) prepared in accordance with the advice and best practice as published by Public Health England and locally through the Essex Planning Officers' Association HIA Guidance Note, using the most up to date guidance. Any mitigation measures identified in the Health Impact Assessment should be incorporated into the proposed development.

Developers should enter into early conversations with the local NHS commissioning teams (Integrated Care Board post April 2022), the North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance, and other relevant partners to ensure that proposals reflect current health and social care models.

Part F: Stewardship

To help establish a strong community, arrangements for the sustainable long-term governance and stewardship of community assets must be agreed prior to the approval of any planning permissions related to the site (with the exception of those applications related to the provision of the A120-A133 Link Road or RTS). Provision will also need to be made and agreed to ensure Community Development Workers are employed to oversee the governance and stewardship. The preferred solution for community governance will need to be determined before the first planning consent is granted.

Developer contributions will be required to fund the initial set up and running costs, including staff, premises, and equipment costs. This support will need to be

provided for a minimum of 10 years from occupation of the first home or until community funding and stewardship has been established.

Part G: Planning Application Expectations

1. Proposals for the development of the Garden Community must include planning obligations enabling the phased delivery of community and social infrastructure.
2. Proposals must include a Phasing and Implementation Strategy, which explains how the rate of development will be linked to the provision of the necessary social, physical, and environmental infrastructure. This must be based on the latest evidence from infrastructure providers, statutory bodies and governing bodies and will include the employment of community development workers.
3. Proposals must be supported by bespoke demographic studies commissioned by the developer to provide a consistent evidence base for the planning of all social and community infrastructure.
4. Proposals must be supported by a Health Impact Assessment, prepared in accordance with the latest advice and best practice.
5. Proposals must be supported by a Healthy Living and Play Strategy. This Strategy should demonstrate how the development will be designed to encourage active lifestyles, independence, and wellbeing, through the provision of sites, facilities, and informal opportunities for people to play, socialise, play sport, keep fit and have fun.
6. A detailed strategy, supported by a business case, will need to be prepared and agreed in writing with the Councils which will need to establish the scope of the stewardship and community governance arrangements, how it will evolve and develop over time, and the long-term financial sustainability of the model. This strategy will need to show how the arrangements proposed would successfully interact with and work alongside existing town/parish councils.
7. Proposals should explain how information on a range of issues will be passed on to future residents, this could be by digital means such as a dedicated app developed for the Garden Community.

5. Justification

The Garden Community will be underpinned by a package of community and social infrastructure that is based on up-to-date evidence of need, to enable residents to meet the majority of their day-to-day needs. The Garden Community is an opportunity to explore, with service providers, new ways to provide and deliver the education, health and other community and social infrastructure needed to support the new community, and the Councils have worked with service providers throughout the production of the draft **Plan**.

Community and social infrastructure covers a wide range of facilities, such as health; education; sports, recreation and greenspace; places of worship; community halls; public houses and cultural infrastructure. Green infrastructure is another important element of community and social infrastructure and requirements for this are included in the Nature policy.

Infrastructure first is a Garden Community principle. The policy is clear that necessary community and social infrastructure will be provided but is flexible enough to respond to changing approaches to service provision as the Garden Community develops over time.

The provision of a centre within each of the neighbourhoods will provide residents with access to services and facilities, reducing the need to travel and contributing to the creation of 'walkable neighbourhoods'. Social interaction will be promoted through a mix of uses and layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections. This policy plans positively for the provision and use of shared space, multifunctional community facilities and other local services.

The availability of good quality schools is consistently ranked as amongst the most important indicators of a high quality of life. Schools will be an important part of the Garden Community and it is key that the size and location of each is carefully considered as part of the masterplanning process.

The scale of the Garden Community will require the provision of new education facilities that are comparable with the total number of homes built and the housing mix delivered. Garden Communities by their nature are unique developments and the precise level and pattern of demand for school places may differ from the norm that has been observed on other developments. Therefore, it is important that the planning of new schools is informed from the outset by bespoke demographic studies commissioned by the developer to provide a consistent evidence base for the planning of all social and community infrastructure.

Essex County Council's 'Garden Communities and Planning School Places' guidance document and the '[Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions](#)' provide detail on school and early years and childcare requirements and specifically new schools serving new Garden Communities in Essex. The Department for Education have published guidance, titled '[Education Provision in Garden Communities](#)', which should also be read in conjunction with these documents. There is an expectation that school buildings will be carbon positive, deliver exemplar learning environments and generate low lifetime costs.

[Healthy new towns principles](#) and Sport England's [Active Design principles](#) have been incorporated throughout this draft **Plan**. The policy explains the conditions for a healthy community will be provided through the pattern of development and good quality placemaking and design. Green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, allotments, and layouts that encourage walking and cycling are all important for healthy lifestyles, and these are incorporated into the policies of this draft **Plan**. To ensure proposals plan positively and address the determinants of health from the outset, proposals will be required to carry out a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The purpose of the HIA is to identify opportunities for positive health impacts and potential negative impacts and how they might be mitigated. The conclusions and recommendations of the HIA will need to be incorporated into proposals.

New community and social infrastructure, including open spaces, need to be managed and maintained in perpetuity. Stewardship is the term for the long-term

management of an asset, it means ensuring that the asset is properly looked after in perpetuity. For the Garden Community, the Councils consider that stewardship also includes the development of the community as a friendly, inclusive, happy, and healthy community where residents interact.

There are numerous stewardship models and types of stewardship bodies, and it is important for the long-term development of the Garden Community that stewardship is considered early on. The Section 1 Local Plan includes policy requirements to establish long term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets, including the provision of community support workers for a minimum of 10 years. Whilst a preferred stewardship model has not yet been established, the draft **Plan** takes this policy requirement a step further by requiring a strategy for stewardship for the whole Garden Community to be agreed prior to granting any planning consent and funding of this to be secured through the s106 agreement.

6. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternative to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the **Plan** and reliance on the requirements of the Section 1 Plan, which are summarised at the beginning of this chapter.

The Councils have rejected alternative 1 as the draft **Plan** is an opportunity to add further detail to the policy requirements in the Section 1 Plan and include policy that reflects discussions with statutory consultees, including the lead authority for education and local NHS commissioning teams.

7. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Community and Social Infrastructure**?
Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- Are there any other community and social infrastructure assets that should be specifically listed in the policy? If so what and why?
- What sports facilities do you think are needed in the Garden Community?
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

You can provide your feedback online **by following this link** [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://www.tcbgardencommunity.co.uk). Alternatively, you can email tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or write to **Freepost TCBGC**. When writing or emailing, please make sure you include your name and contact details and that you respond by the consultation closing date.

CHAPTER 7: MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIONS

THE GARDEN COMMUNITY WILL BE STRUCTURED AROUND A DENSE NETWORK OF TRAFFIC-FREE WALK AND CYCLE ROUTES WITH RAPID PUBLIC TRANSIT PRIORITISED AND SUPPORTED BY A RANGE OF INNOVATIVE MOBILITY MEASURES. THIS WILL ENSURE DAY TO DAY TRIPS ARE SHORTER, QUICKER AND CHEAPER WITHOUT A CAR.

This chapter sets out the policy expectations in relation to Movement and Connections. The key objectives and principles for the Garden Community are to ensure neighbourhoods are walkable, low traffic and livable, where residents can access most of their daily needs within a 15 minute walk or bike ride from their home. The Garden Community will be designed and built in a way that reduces the need to travel, especially by car, and enables new ways of working and service delivery that supports remote working and digital solutions.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

In respect of the topics covered under the theme of Movement and Connections, some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan, include:

- details of the design and delivery of the A120-A133 Link Road and the Rapid Transit System (RTS) and how they will be integrated as part of the Garden Community;
- delivery of the supporting transport infrastructure for the Garden Community;
- measures for sustainable transport provision and targets for 'modal share' – i.e. aiming to change travel behaviour to reduce car use and maximise walking, cycling and use of public transit;
- measures for ensuring sustainable transport measures are provided early, from the very first occupation of homes at the Garden Community;
- the network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways to enhance accessibility within the site and to the adjoining areas – including the University, Hythe station and Colchester Town Centre;
- innovative strategies for the management of private car use and parking, including the promotion of car clubs and car sharing, and the provision of electric car charging points;
- parking facilities that can be adapted if levels of private car ownership fall;
- park and ride facilities and other effective integrated measures to lessen the transport impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road network;
- measures for delivering reliable high speed/ultrafast broadband at all new and existing property; and
- longer term transport interventions designed to minimise the impacts on the strategic and local transport network and that fully lessen any environmental or traffic impacts arising from the development.

2. Principles

A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE HAVE PRIORITY

The starting point for the design of the Garden Community will be a network of people-focused streets and traffic-free routes that ensure it is quicker to walk, cycle and scoot than use the car. The streets will be for play and enjoyment first, with traffic and deliveries carefully managed such that the streets are seen as a key setting for community life. While the Garden Community will not design out the car it will purposefully be planned for a different future where reduced private ownership and shared modes are efficient, safe and cheaper. While access will be possible to every house by car, the design of the streets will mean that cars will move slowly and be understood as guests in the streetscape. The streets will be designed such that parking spaces, car parks and car courts can be repurposed as community spaces as car ownership falls in the future.

A PLACE WITH RAPID, EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A new Rapid Transit network will link the Garden Community to the wider area on high quality vehicles, operating at high frequencies and offering faster journey times to key destinations than by other means such as the private car. This will make Rapid Transit the first choice for trips into Colchester and beyond. This will be a huge benefit for existing communities and for those travelling in to use the Park and Choose site, making the area even more attractive as a place to live, work, play and visit.

A PLACE WHERE ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL IS THE NATURAL CHOICE

Journeys will be different. The streets will be designed for people not cars, while dedicated traffic-free links will make walking, cycling and shared transport the natural choice for most trips – whether this may be going to work, dropping the kids off at school on the way or meeting friends at the weekend. It will be more direct, quicker and cheaper to travel by active and sustainable modes and therefore there will be less need to own a car.

A CONNECTED PLACE

The Garden Community will have excellent strategic connections to Colchester, Tendring and beyond. Locally the Garden Community will be seamlessly connected with local destinations such as the University and residents will find it easy to connect to neighbours, both on- and off-site.

3. Engagement Feedback

What we heard

Feedback from our engagement processes included a push towards **renewable energy and alternative transport** and support for the provision of electric vehicle charging points. There were divided views on the overall approach the Garden Community should take to cars, but a recognition of the importance of car access

across the Garden Community for delivery access, maintenance and tradespeople, the emergency services, and for people with disabilities.

Feedback was that localised **green public transport should be at the heart** of transportation planning within the Garden Community and the Garden Community should encourage alternative forms of transport, such as **bicycles and e-scooters**. Most people agreed that the development should focus on ensuring that people want to use public transport, rather than discouraging car use. Some people felt that this means public transport should be affordable and accessible, at least as convenient as using the car and cheaper overall.

Some people said the **Rapid Transit System (RTS) should exceed expectations**. A few people felt that the RTS proposal was unclear and did not feel that the language used to describe what it offered was intuitive.

When thinking about Movement and Connections in the Garden Community, our visioning workshops, survey, and postcard from the future participants:

- Were divided over car-related infrastructure.
- Agreed on the need for electric vehicle charging points.
- Felt that the focus should be on providing high quality public transport.
- Wanted public transport to be green and attractive.
- Wanted public and all other forms of transport to work together.
- Wanted easy storage of alternative vehicles.
- Felt that cars should be separated from cyclists and pedestrians.
- Wanted easy access to amenities.
- Were concerned about the impact of population increases on traffic.

When thinking about Movement and Connections in the Garden Community, our statutory stakeholders workshops, engagement website, and social media participants spoke of:

- The importance of the Garden Community being walkable, cyclable and promoting active travel generally.
- The importance of linking the Garden Community to other walking and cycling networks; jobs; and particularly to day-to-day amenities.
- The importance of making travel choices clear and how the design of the community would help this.
- People talked about the need for early and quality public transport.
- Some people acknowledged that car ownership wasn't necessarily the focus, but car *use*.
- A few people talked specifically about making provision for the car.

What we've done

The Councils agree that the Garden Community should provide high quality, sustainable connections and environments that make walking, cycling and public transport the most attractive method of travel. The draft policy covers a wide range

of transportation topics, including active and healthy travel, public transport, parking, electric vehicle charging and the Rapid Transit System.

4. Policy 7: Movement and Connections

Taking forward the requirements of the Section 1 Local Plan and taking into account the views of local people and other stakeholders, Policy 7 sets out the Councils' expectation for the Garden Community to be walkable, low traffic and livable.

Policy 7. Movement and Connections

Part A: Vision and Design Approach

A place-based approach to achieving net zero carbon transport by 2050 for the Garden Community will be taken that focuses on creating better places and healthier, happier, more resilient communities. The Garden Community will be designed with active travel and the high frequency public transport RTS route at its core, with this being the starting point of both the Strategic Masterplan, the Neighbourhood Masterplans and the design of all neighbourhoods.

The Garden Community will:

1. Provide high quality sustainable connections and environments that make walking, cycling and public transport the most attractive method of travel by ensuring they are more pleasant, direct, and quicker than travelling by car.
2. Prioritise movement within the site for sustainable modes making walking, cycling and public transport the mode of choice for travel around the Garden Community by providing dedicated movement corridors where segregation from general traffic is the default.
3. Ensure the design creates permeable neighbourhoods for walking, cycling and public transport, with excellent connections to key destinations within and beyond the Garden Community, taking into account opportunities for future potential connections.
4. Comply with modal split targets (the number of trips by walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicle) that will be agreed by the Councils.
5. Ensure all active travel movement corridors and transport infrastructure hubs are designed with ecology and green infrastructure in mind.
6. Ensure all movement corridors are safe and accessible to all, with convenient, direct, inclusive routes that are well-lit with natural surveillance.
7. Integrate the design of any new road infrastructure, including the 120-A133 Link Road, to reduce severance.
8. Provide and fund improvements in local transport infrastructure where it is necessary and appropriate to do so.

Each neighbourhood will have a range of amenities and services such as education, community and leisure facilities, and shops all being accessible by active modes in accordance with walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods best practice guidance. Most importantly there will be provision for jobs and employment and convenient access to employment opportunities in neighbouring areas by active modes.

Proposals for the development of the Garden Community will include a planning obligation enabling the phased delivery of publicly provided transport infrastructure of a high standard of design, with the provision of key infrastructure for early phases of development to ensure sustainable travel patterns from first occupation.

Part B: Active and Healthy Travel

The Garden Community will be planned around a network of walking and cycling routes where dedicated traffic free links will make walking and cycling the natural choice for day-to-day trips, encouraging sustainable travel, and supporting healthy and active lifestyles.

The street and public realm design process will be designed around a modal or user hierarchy with pedestrians at the top of the hierarchy and considered first. Routes and streets will be designed as part of attractive spaces in accordance with the strategic and neighbourhood masterplans and design codes, so that people want to use them.

Proposals must demonstrate how the development contributes to the ease and prioritisation of active travel through all parts of the site. This will include:

- How the design and layout results in an attractive network of walking and cycling routes that are accessible, logical, convenient, safe, and secure with most homes within 400m of a traffic-free route.
- How walking and cycling infrastructure has been designed to ensure that it is inclusive, ensuring that people of all abilities can safely walk and cycle.
- Whether any cycling infrastructure is designed in accordance with the latest best practice (i.e. [LTN1/20](#) or subsequent updated guidance).
- How the design and layout is accessible, illustrating where safe, direct connections are being made both within the Garden Community, and how they link with the wider network of pedestrian and cycle routes and to key external destinations (such as the University, Colchester town centre and railway stations) and transport interchanges.
- How connections are being made to the existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and green infrastructure network, and how existing routes will be retained, preserved, and enhanced.
- How the design of the street and public realm will ensure that vehicle speeds and inappropriate parking are limited and easy to manage.
- How active travel routes and associated infrastructure hubs are designed as green corridors incorporating street trees, linear SuDS features, wildlife verges and other features as appropriate.
- Specific pedestrian and cycle routes that must be considered and identified with direct connections to the Garden Community with appropriate wayfinding and signage, and where contributions to improvements will be sought (but not limited to) include:
 - Direct link to Knowledge Gateway/University along north side of Clingoe Hill;
 - Enhanced connectivity to Colchester town centre including improvements to shared route between Hythe Station and central Colchester and improvements to Elmstead Road/Greenstead Road;
 - Cycle links to St Johns Road and Ipswich Road;

- Links to routes in the Colchester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan;
- Colchester Orbital enhancements to settings, surfacing and way-marking where appropriate, and links to and from it;
- Direct connectivity between the Park and Choose site and the pedestrian/cycle network to facilitate high quality links to the above-mentioned destinations, as well as key destinations within the Garden Community;
- Creation of links to Garden Community green spaces, as well as existing local provisions;
- Footway and cycleway along the A120-A133 Link Road;
- European Cycle Routes [EV2](#) and [EV12](#);
- National Cycle Route 1.

Proposals must follow the [Building for a Healthy Life](#) process when designing the public realm and streets and undergo a Building for a Healthy Life/Streets for a Healthy Life review. The proposals must not secure any “red” lights and there should be minimal “amber” lights in the review outcome otherwise changes to the design will be required.

The Garden Community street design and layout proposals must be in accordance with the updated [Manual for Streets](#) document and the [Essex Design Guide](#) unless otherwise agreed with the Highway Authority.

The public realm around key destinations and trip attractors within the Garden Community such as centres, mobility hubs, schools and leisure facilities will be designed so that access for general traffic is restricted, and pedestrians and cyclists have clear priority at most times. Where necessary there will be drop off/pick up zones, and access for freight, servicing and operational vehicles will be allowed at certain times.

All new schools within the Garden Community will be designed and built, in accordance with the latest School Streets Guidance in the Essex Design Guide with vehicular traffic access restricted around the vicinity of the school entrances. The area around the main pupil entrance must be entirely traffic free and connected by safe and direct walking and cycling routes to the neighbourhood the school serves.

Part C: Public Transport

C1: Public Transport Strategy

Proposals must demonstrate how the development contributes to:

- Ensuring public transport is a convenient and fast way of moving within the Garden Community and to access destinations further afield, such as Colchester town centre;
- Safeguarding of public transport routes and development of the Rapid Transit System (RTS) route through the Garden Community;

- The provision of high-quality transit stations or stops as part of the development proposal, ensuring that all residential dwellings and employment sites will be within 400 metres of a bus stop or RTS halt;
- Quality pedestrian and cycle routes linking to the RTS halts from the centres of the proposed development;
- Coordination and integration with the RTS Strategy for the Garden Community; and
- Ensuring that there is a convenient and high frequency bus service operating that is aligned with the first phase of the Garden Community which will need to be funded by the developer.

Where there are on-street bus routes away from the RTS corridor, buses will be given priority over general traffic through traffic management measures such as bus gates, bus lanes and bus only roads.

Roads and streets within the development, where bus routes are planned, must be designed and built to accommodate the efficient and smooth running of buses where inconsiderate parking or loading will not result in delays to services.

Provision and specification of bus stops/RTS halts along the key bus routes/RTS corridor must have regard to the Essex Bus Stop Guidance/Essex Design Guide with shelters, seating and real-time digital information displays if deemed necessary by the Highway and Transport Authority. Additionally, stops should include consideration for the provision of secure storage of active travel modes (i.e. cycle/scooter parking).

Development proposals must identify adequate land and space for the construction of public transport stops and hubs.

C2: Rapid Transit System (RTS) and Strategy

The Rapid Transit route will be constructed on a safeguarded alignment through the core of the Garden Community with the majority of the route dedicated to RTS buses/vehicles only. The RTS will need to provide a link to each centre directly on (largely) general traffic-free routes.

The RTS will be highly visible, serving residents of the Garden Community and beyond, and will be served by high quality stations or stops/halts situated to maximise accessibility (including parking provisions for safe/secure/covered storage of cycles/scooters). The halts should be an important component of centres and land/space needs to be identified and safeguarded for these stops and associated interchange and mobility hubs within development proposals. The design of the RTS routes, halts and associated infrastructure will comply with the design code for sustainable transport corridors in the strategic and neighbourhood design codes and adequate land needs to be safeguarded to accommodate the infrastructure.

Construction of the RTS and associated infrastructure needs to be delivered up front and align with the build out of the Garden Community. It should be ready for operation during the early phases of the development to influence sustainable

travel behaviour and embed the use of the system. The RTS services will need to be subsidised until the route becomes financially sustainable and commercially viable.

C3: Electric / Zero Emission Buses

Proposals will need to enable and/or provide adequate refuelling or charging facilities for buses and RTS vehicles. This might be in the form of rapid electric vehicle charging points or hydrogen fuelling stations at the Park and Choose sites or may be overhead charging poles at bus and RTS stops. The final decision must be agreed and approved with the Highway and Transport Authority.

C4: Taxis – Electric Vehicle charging ranks

Any Taxi Ranks located at sites such as centres or Park and Choose sites must have dedicated rapid electric vehicle charging points or similar technology installed adjacent to the rank.

C5: Park and Choose

The RTS will provide and support new Park and Choose facilities. These facilities are similar to Mobility Hubs, but on a larger scale with associated car parking. This will provide:

- high quality storage and provisions for the 'choose' modes of travel (both hire and privately owned);
- appropriate facilities for patrons, site staff and drivers;
- a building in a prominent position that can host a cycle and micro-mobility workshop, storage, information, and retail space for an operation centre for bike/scooter (etc) hire/support/repair/shop;
- appropriate power supplies/provisions to provide electric power charging for cars at the site and also the fleet of RTS vehicles, delivery vehicles and other modes (e-bikes, e-scooters, etc);
- provide ticketing and service information (including high-quality broadband network connection);
- space for a RTS operations room with a view to creating a central hub from which automated vehicles can be managed;
- space for RTS vehicle parking for reserve vehicles, cleaning and inspections, and parking whilst drivers are on breaks and change overs should be included;
- space to act as a transportation interchange hub for other bus services to support and reduce traffic movements within the wider Garden Community (i.e. school 'park and stride' drop off provisions, etc);
- car parking provisions (i.e. traditional Park and Ride facility) where the number of spaces will be agreed with the Highway Authority;
- Space to provide a delivery hub drop off area to facilitate an e-cargo bike last mile delivery service for the Garden Community and university.

Proposals should give consideration to the provision of a Park and Choose facility at an early phase, potentially as an interim facility until the RTS route is fully delivered and a permanent location becomes operational.

Part D: Parking

D1: Vehicle Parking

A Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Parking Guidance or design code will be developed by the Councils and all new development will be required to take account of the standards and the design requirements set out within these standards.

The following principles of parking for the Garden Community must be followed:

- Parking must not compromise placemaking, it must be accommodated in a variety of ways that facilitate walkable neighbourhoods, high quality public realm and active travel.
- The scale, location, pricing, amount, and type of parking must be considered as a whole across the Garden Community with the intention of facilitating the overall active travel mode share targets and related to public transport accessibility. Car free and car limited development will correspond to the density of development.
- The design, location and amount of parking must ensure that there is no resulting overspill and inappropriate parking on-street which negatively impacts on:
 - pedestrian and cyclist movement
 - road safety
 - emergency access
 - disabled access
 - delays and journey time impacts for buses and RTS
 - deliveries, servicing, and waste management access requirements
 - congestion and delays to general traffic
 - crime and personal security.
- The development must achieve the right balance between allocated and unallocated parking spaces with a set percentage of this being in remote (off plot) locations dependent upon the density of the neighbourhood.
- There should be a zonal approach to parking provision across the development dependent upon accessibility of the location to public transport and services, density of housing, proximity to commercial and employment land uses and overall anticipated demand for parking.
- Areas within the Garden Community should be designed to allow parking spaces, car parks and parking courts that can be repurposed as community spaces, should car ownership fall in the future.
- Provision of parking for people with disabilities and with mobility impairments must ensure there is fair and equitable access to all residential dwellings and other land uses across the Garden Community.
- Safe and secure parking for motorcycles and two powered wheeler vehicles must be provided where appropriate and reasonable.

D2: Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure and Standards

Provision for electric charging points should be provided for all proposed car parking spaces, associated within residential development proposals as set out in

the latest government guidance and standards. Where passive charging (the network of cables and power supply necessary so that at a future date a socket can be added easily) provision is proposed, this will still require the installation of all necessary infrastructure such as cabling, power grid capacity and supply to allow for the simple and efficient retrofit of a parking spaces anywhere in the development with additional electric vehicle charging points. Creative solutions will be encouraged where significant proportions of parking is off-plot. Provision for parking at non-residential and commercial land uses will be in accordance with latest government guidance and standards.

D3: Cycle Parking

Cycle parking must be provided at new homes, short stay destinations (such as shops and cafes), and long-stay destinations (such as work and education and transport interchanges and mobility hubs). Dedicated covered and secure cycle storage should be located in prominent and accessible locations as part of the design of new homes. Cycle parking at destinations should be easily accessible, prominent, safe, conveniently located, covered and secure.

Proposals will be required to take account of the standards set out in the Garden Community Parking Standards and any associated cycle parking design guidance referred to in the document. All proposals must demonstrate:

- The location, amount and type of cycle parking including security measures, form of shelter and access;
- How provision for cycle parking has taken account of all types of cycle and cycle user;
- How cycle parking has been designed to ensure it is clearly marked, overlooked, well-lit and integrated into the built environment;
- Both on-plot and off-plot cycle parking must be designed and delivered in accordance with [LTN1/20](#), any Garden Community Cycle Parking Design Guidance or the latest best practice guidance document;
- Places of employment must provide suitable and separate shower facilities, clothes drying facilities and lockers for employees that intend to cycle to work.

Part E: Travel Demand Management

The infrastructure identified to ensure that active and sustainable modes are the most attractive and convenient modes of travel within, and to and from the Garden Community, will be supported by a number of Travel Demand Management measures.

E1: Freight and Servicing

An Essex Garden Community Freight and Servicing Guide will be developed by the Councils, and all new development will be required to take account of the requirements set out within this document.

The Garden Community development proposals must include a Freight Management Strategy for approval which has regard to the adoption and implementation of the following methods to manage urban logistics:

- neighbourhood delivery and servicing hubs
- micro-consolidation centres
- e-cargo bike delivery schemes for last mile' deliveries for business and residential areas
- promotion of cargo-bikes to residents
- Freight & Servicing Plans for high trip generating sites.

E2: Travel Plans

Proposals will be required to take account of the necessary processes, measures and monitoring set out within the Travel Planning Guidance document for the Garden Community.

The Travel Plan will need to identify and deliver the sustainable transport interventions, behaviour changes and travel planning mechanisms required to ensure the development becomes net zero carbon transport and how they can be measured.

Proposals should include appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator. For employment proposals, the Travel Plan Co-Ordinator will be expected to provide assistance with business travel planning. Suitable digital travel information should be made available to all residents and occupiers across the site and keep up to date details of all active and sustainable travel information.

E3: Car Club

Proposals will be expected to contribute towards the start-up and operation of a car club across the Garden Community for a period of at least five years or until the operation becomes financial self-sustaining. This will include financial contribution through planning agreement/S106, provision of car club spaces where required, and promotion of the car club and free membership credit for all residents. All car club bays must have dedicated electric vehicle charging facilities. The car club should be used to reduce parking levels and facilitate car-free homes in certain locations.

E4: Mobility and Micro-mobility Hubs

Mobility hubs will be located at centres, public transport interchange locations and Park and Choose sites across the Garden Community ensuring there is a comprehensive hub and spoke network of sites across the development. This will allow for smooth and efficient interchange between public transport, shared transport services and micro-mobility modes such as e-scooters and e-bikes. All residential dwellings and employment sites should be within 800 metres of a mobility hub. Mobility hubs should be considered from the start of the design process, ensuring that they are attractive and complement the aesthetics of the public realm and street environment.

All proposals will be expected to fund the establishment of a bike/e-bike/e-scooter (micro-mobility) hire scheme in the Garden Community with the provision of docking stations located at Park & Choose sites, mobility hubs and micro-mobility hubs (docking stations) that are located at a distance of 400 metres radii across the site.

Part F: A120-A133 Link Road Connectivity

The Garden Community will be designed to integrate with the A120-A133 Link Road, particularly measures outlined in the approved planning application which maintain and promote walking, cycling and horse-riding connectivity throughout the site, including the shared footway/cycleway that will be provided along the western side of the road.

Part G: Monitoring, Management and Delivery

The modal share targets will be actively monitored throughout the phasing of the development and upon full occupation via the Garden Community Travel Plan. This Travel Plan document will be developed in accordance with the latest best practice guidance. Both internal and external mode splits will be measured and monitored, and robust management and oversight will be activated to ensure the targets are met.

The location, method, equipment, and reporting mechanisms used to undertake the monitoring will be agreed and approved by the Councils and the Highway Authority.

Resident and visitor perception surveys will be undertaken to assess levels of active travel, happiness, health, community cohesion and satisfaction with movement and transport in the Garden Community.

Permission for latter phases of development may not be given if modal split targets for early phases are not being met.

Part H: Planning Application Expectations

Any planning permission granted for the development of the Garden Community will include planning obligations enabling the phased delivery of transport infrastructure. Some of these have been detailed above. Notably, any planning permission granted for the development of the Garden Community will include a planning obligation enabling the phased delivery of publicly provided transport infrastructure of a high standard of design, with the provision of key infrastructure for early phases of development to ensure sustainable travel patterns from first occupation.

The following must be prepared and approved in writing by the Councils prior to determining any planning application for development of the site:

1. A Transport Assessment demonstrating how the development will encourage active and sustainable transport. Measures to mitigate traffic impacts should be

incorporated into the proposed development. The Transport Assessment should have regard to the principles of 'Predict and Provide' and must include a carbon assessment of transport related impacts of the development including the construction phase of the development. The Transport Assessment must include a Construction Logistics and Traffic Management Strategy that has regard to the latest best practice guidance and a copy of the results of the Healthy Streets for Life Assessment.

2. A Public Transport Strategy detailing all aspects of how public transport will be designed, delivered, funded, and operated within the Garden Community for a period of at least 20 years. This document will cover all elements of bus and public transport services including such things as vehicle specifications, route timetables, service frequencies as well as all associated infrastructure such as bus stops, bus priority and RTS interventions. This document will be submitted for agreement with the Highway and Transport Authority for the area at the time of the planning application submission.
3. A Parking Strategy and Management Plan in accordance with the Parking Guidance published by the Councils setting out how parking within the development will be allocated, managed, monitored and enforced over the lifetime of the development. It will detail the criteria for introducing parking restrictions and controls as well as charging for parking if there is a need to manage inconsiderate parking or excessive demand or to meet the mode share targets
4. A Freight Management Strategy setting out how freight and servicing will be managed and mitigated within the development.
5. A Travel Plan linked to phasing of the development to cover the following:
 - Details of the active travel measures available and how these will be promoted to residents, employees and/or visitors to the Garden Community;
 - Details of public transport available including offers and discounts on public transport and how these will be promoted to residents, employees and/or visitors to the Garden Community;
 - Details of the Garden Community car club, car sharing and other sustainable travel schemes and how this will be promoted to residents, employees and/or visitors to the Garden Community;
 - An Action Plan that contains specific actions with timescales;
 - Commitment to ongoing travel surveys including details of how they will be funded on an ongoing basis and how the data will be reported; and
 - Targets which are monitored and submitted for approval and review by the Councils annually from the outset.
6. A Mobility Hubs Strategy outlining the location of the mobility hubs and the mobility services and facilities provided at each hub. It will also include information on how the hubs will be managed, maintained, and operated throughout the lifetime of the development.
7. A Micro-mobility Management Strategy setting out details of ongoing operation, maintenance and management of the bike/e-bike/e-scooter hire scheme across

the development. The scheme will need to be integrated with and complement any current or future scheme within the existing Colchester urban area.

5. Justification

The design of the Garden Community and its neighbourhoods will have a significant impact on the travel choices residents will make both within the community and beyond. Following the publication of the [UK Net Zero Carbon Strategy and Transport Decarbonisation Plan](#) the Garden Community will need to ensure it contributes to meeting the UK targets.¹ Transport is the largest contributor to the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. While emissions from other sectors have fallen dramatically since 1990, those from transport have reduced by under 3%. In an average local authority, transport is responsible for 35.5% of all emissions, with the sector remaining 98% reliant on fossil fuels. For this reason, the carbon emission implications from transport associated with the Garden Community must be considered and will influence the design of the development and the transport policies in this **Plan** and any masterplan and design code.

Current and developing national, regional, county and borough/district transport policies are aligning on three key principles to determine the best tools for achieving net zero carbon transport and successful places, they are:

- Reduce the need to travel;
- Shift to active modes; and
- decarbonise residual travel/switch to zero emission fuels

The design and planning of the Garden Community and the neighbourhoods within it will ensure that there is a diversity of communities within reasonable walking distance of local facilities, services, employment, and fresh food. The result is that the need to make external trips outside the neighbourhood is reduced and the internalisation of trips by active modes is maximised.

The core principles of the walkable 15 minute neighbourhood are:

- Every neighbourhood has access to essential services and retail – with emphasis on fresh food and healthcare – within a 15-20-minute walk or cycle.
- Every neighbourhood has varied housing types, levels of affordability, and availability such that people can live nearby where they work.
- Retail, offices, co-working spaces and hospitality are spread throughout areas, people can work close to home and/or work from home.
- High environmental quality, availability of green spaces and clean air.

The Garden Community neighbourhoods and streets must be designed to ensure that pedestrian and cycle movements are prioritised through a network of attractive, low speed, low-traffic walkable neighbourhoods in which through access for the majority of vehicles is minimised and designed out. This will ensure that it is always

¹ <https://www.essex.gov.uk/climate-action>

quicker and more convenient to travel between two points in the community by active modes, rather than by car.

Proposals must be designed around the needs of people walking and cycling to facilitate safe and direct active travel journeys. Routes should be designed in line with walkable 15 minute neighbourhood, Gear Change and Building for a Healthy Life (Streets for a Healthy Life)¹ principles, so that they are:

- coherent (legible and clearly signposted)
- direct
- safe (appropriately lit; good sightlines; overlooked)
- convenient
- accessible.

It is important that cycling infrastructure can accommodate the full range of cycles available to ensure routes are accessible to all cyclists (i.e. trikes and cargo bikes), and designed and built in accordance with [LTN1/20](#) (or subsequent updated guidance documentation). Cycle routes should have a minimum width of 2m or 3m for two-way tracks. Where a route is also used by pedestrians, separate facilities should be provided for pedestrian and cycle movements.

A Rapid Transit System (RTS) will be in place to connect the Garden Community with the University of Essex, Colchester Town Centre, Colchester Railway Stations, Colchester Hospital, Community Stadium, Colchester Sports Park and the existing Park and Ride site in north Colchester. This will provide a high frequency, efficient public transport system with priority over general traffic within the Garden Community. The route, which will run alongside the A133 Clingoe Hill via the Knowledge Gateway, will link into the Garden Community. The final route will be confirmed with the Councils and agreed through the strategic masterplan.

A key feature of the RTS is the incorporation of Park and Choose facilities (P&C), provision of which is included in plans for the Garden Community. The concept for P&C is to be developed as part of, and support, the RTS being delivered. P&C extends the concept of park and ride to include choice and work as a central hub for other modes. Principally this will be cycle or electric cycle hire but in time could be extended to electric scooters, e-cargo, etc. It can also provide space for drivers to store their own bicycles. Providing choice could appeal particularly to nearby potential users travelling to the University of Essex, but also to those travelling to destinations in Colchester further away from RTS halts and interchanges.

The P&C should include space for a RTS operations room with a view to creating a central hub from which automated vehicles can be managed. Given RTS vehicles are expected to be electric, although alternative fuels such as hydrogen cells could be considered, space for charging or refueling of vehicles should be included. It would be expected that significant repairs to vehicles would be carried out elsewhere. However, space for RTS vehicle parking for reserve vehicles, cleaning and inspections, and parking whilst drivers are on breaks and change overs should be included. The design of the site (and wider TCBGC RTS network) should also reflect the use of this type/length of vehicle.

The Garden Community will be designed to make active and sustainable modes of transport favourable for journeys within, to and from the Garden Community. In turn, this helps achieve ambitious modal share targets for all journeys within, to and from the Garden Community. The agreed Modal Split Target for different locations and phases of the Garden Community will be agreed as the proposals develop, however the starting point for all discussions should be the ambitious mode shares set out in the [North Essex Movement and Access Study \(2017\)](#). To support proposals that make walking, cycling and public transport the most attractive method of travel within, to and from the Garden Community, it will be designed as a place where the car does not dominate. The parking strategy for the development will play a key role in determining overall car usage, and adequate parking provision in all instances will be required.

Cycle parking is integral to the cycle network and to the wider public transport systems. The availability of secure cycle parking at home, the end of the trip or at an interchange point has a significant influence on cycle use.

Vehicle trips and traffic generated by deliveries, freight and servicing are likely to be a significant proportion of overall movements in the Garden Community. These types of movements have increased over the past decade and continued to increase in the period since the Covid pandemic due to higher volumes of online shopping. These journey types are difficult to switch to active and sustainable modes but will need to be managed creatively through neighbourhood delivery and servicing hubs and other measures detailed in a freight and servicing plan.

As part of a package of 'mitigation' measures, Travel Planning is a key tool in helping to manage transport impacts and help achieve carbon reduction objectives. Moving to a new house is recognised as being a key life event and there is evidence to show that with the right behaviour change interventions at this time can be an ideal trigger to get that individual to consider their carbon emissions and rethink the way they travel and live.

The mobility hubs will be complemented by smaller scale micro-mobility hubs located at focal points in residential neighbourhoods and employment areas. All residential dwellings and employment sites should be within 400 metres of a micro-mobility hub.

The provision of a car club could encourage residents not to see the purchase of a car (or a second car) as a necessity and use a car club car for trips that may be more difficult using public transport.

The A120-A133 Link Road received planning permission in 2021 and is scheduled to open in 2024. Its objective is to support growth at the Garden Community, manage congestion in this wider locality and improve connectivity. It will comprise a new 2.4km road between the existing A120 and A133 in the east of Colchester; a new grade separated junction at the A120; and a new roundabout at the junction with the A133, to join into the existing highway network. Two intermediate roundabouts will also be provided along the Link Road for the Garden Community. Walking, cycling and horse-riding provisions associated with the Link Road have been designed to

provide new networks, permeability, and connections across the Link Road for existing and future land users, linked to existing or diverted Public Rights of Way.

To reduce the need to travel the Garden Community will provide excellent digital connectivity and a policy is included in the Sustainable Infrastructure chapter.

6. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternatives to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the **Plan** and reliance on the requirements of the Section 1 Plan, which are summarised at the beginning of this chapter.

Alternative 2: A less comprehensive policy but with further detail provided in design codes.

The Councils have rejected alternative 1, at this stage, as the **Plan** is an opportunity to add further detail to the policy requirements in the Section 1 Plan and include policy that reflects the masterplan for the Garden Community.

The Councils have rejected alternative 2, at this stage, as there is a need to ensure the full range of movement and connectivity requirements for the Garden Community are comprehensively detailed at this early stage. The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that this alternative is likely to result in more uncertain and negligible effects being identified as the policy would not comprehensively detail the requirements for movement and connectivity within the Garden Community.

7. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Movement and Connections**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- Do you support the approach to encouraging active and sustainable travel?
- Should the policy include specific parking standards?
- Are there any other transport requirements that should be specifically listed in the policy? If so what and why?
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

You can provide your feedback online by following this link [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://www.tcbgardencommunity.co.uk). Alternatively, you can email tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or write to **Freepost TCBGC**. When writing or emailing, please make sure you include your name and contact details and that you respond by the consultation closing date.

CHAPTER 8: SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

THE GARDEN COMMUNITY WILL MAKE LIVING SUSTAINABLY EASY FOR ITS RESIDENTS. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING SOLUTIONS WILL BE INTEGRATED FROM THE OUTSET AND FOLLOW BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS.

Chapter 8 of this draft **Plan** sets out the Councils' aspirations and expectations for creating a Garden Community fit for the future and which embraces Garden Community principles and incorporates measures aimed at tackling climate change, minimising carbon emissions and climate change adaptation. The policy sets high expectations for energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, water efficiency and water recycling. Tree planting, the provision of green infrastructure, facilities for electric vehicles and promoting walking, cycling and public transport are covered in other policies of the draft **Plan**.

Climate change is a global issue affecting everyone. Co-ordinated action from all sectors, national and local governments, and individuals is needed to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The science tells us that to avoid catastrophic effects we need to limit the increase in global temperature to 1.5oC. Mitigation measures are required to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit global temperature rise. However, even with efforts to limit the cause of global warming, further climatic changes are inevitable in the future and the UK will need to adapt to the growing risks from climate change.

The Garden Community is an opportunity to address the climate emergency through high quality design and place making, by designing climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into the Garden Community at an early stage. To ensure that proposals for the Garden Community can respond to changing technologies, new standards and best practice, design codes will be prepared and updated as necessary, which could include requirements for energy efficiency standards, passive energy design, low energy networks, onsite renewable sources, environmental standards, water use, and waste.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

Under the theme of Sustainable Infrastructure, some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this draft **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan include:

- measures to ensure environmental sustainability, including addressing energy and water efficiency;
- water and wastewater and flood mitigation measures;
- sustainable waste/recycling and minerals management facilities;
- measures for delivering reliable high speed/ultrafast broadband at all new and existing property; and
- consideration of potential on-site mineral resources.

2. Principles

A PLACE WHERE THE ENERGY SUPPLY IS SUSTAINABLE, SMART AND FUTUREPROOFED

The Garden Community will look at options which maximises energy efficiency, minimises energy use and promote renewable energy technologies. Smart technology and integrated data service will be used to accommodate people's needs and make their lives better. The Garden Community will ensure homes and infrastructure are futureproofed, affordable and adaptable to everybody's individual and collective needs now and in the future.

A PLACE DESIGNED FOR THE IMPACTS WHILE MINIMISING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The impacts of climate change will be actively tackled through developing initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that actively take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

A PLACE THAT OPTIMISES RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND RECYCLING ACROSS THE WHOLE DEVELOPMENT LIFECYCLE

The Garden Community will use as few resources as possible in the first place, keep resources in circulation for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them while in use, then recover and regenerate products at the end of service life.

A PLACE WHERE INFRASTRUCTURE COMES FIRST AND MEETS ITS INHABITANTS' NEEDS

Key to creating a vibrant and attractive Garden Community is the phased delivery of infrastructure and services on site which fully meets the future needs of residents and supports healthy and sustainable lifestyles. The range and nature of facilities considered should ensure that the majority of everyday needs can be met within the site.

3. Engagement Feedback

What we heard

People were in favour of using **green energy**, and some felt that the Garden Community should aim to go beyond net zero and present an **alternative model of housing** that other places aspire to. Some people felt that it was important that the Garden Community's green aspirations are seen through every aspect of the development. People spoke about the possible value of **hydroelectric, solar, wind, and geothermal energy** sources in the Garden Community.

Some people highlighted potential tensions and **trade-offs** between renewable energy and other plans for the development. People talked about the importance of the Garden Community **offsetting** its impact on the natural landscape through tree

planting, gardening, and the creation of wild spaces. Some people spoke about the importance of being **resilient to future shocks**, particularly flooding.

People also spoke about the importance of **waste management** across the community, with some suggesting different types of water reuse technologies, such as using rainwater to flush toilets or rainwater sprinkler systems. A few people questioned how sewage would be managed, and the extent to which the Garden Community's green vision applied to waste management more generally.

When thinking about Sustainable Infrastructure in the Garden Community, our visioning workshops, survey, and postcard from the future participants:

- Suggested a range of renewable energy sources that they would like the Garden Community to use.
- Highlighted some potential trade-offs that could come from using different green technologies, particularly around their long-term maintenance.
- Wanted the Garden Community to develop green spaces.
- Wanted systems of water recycling and reuse to be incorporated into the design of the Garden Community.
- Wanted homes in the Garden Community to be resilient to the impacts of climate change and able to cope with natural 'shocks', like flooding.
- Were concerned about the environmental impact of the building process, both in terms of carbon emissions and ecological impact.
- Wanted the Garden Community to develop green spaces to promote and expand the Green Infrastructure.

When thinking about Sustainable Infrastructure in the Garden Community, our statutory stakeholders workshops, engagement website, and social media participants spoke of:

- The need for renewable and low carbon energy. The following technologies were mentioned: solar panels (on homes and non-residential buildings); ground source heat pumps; air source heat pumps; energy storage; good insulation; south facing properties; solar glazing; heat networks; and double glazing.
- The "[passivhaus](#)" standard; solar panels on street lighting, street furniture and bus stops; and community energy schemes such as community heat pumps, community energy generation projects and neighbourhood heating schemes.
- Reusing heat from non-residential uses; the energy demand being provided by renewable energy sources on site; wind power to charge cars and making sure buildings meet [BREEAM](#) (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) outstanding.

What we've done

The Councils appreciate that the Garden Community is a unique opportunity to design and deliver an exemplar development that is net zero carbon. The Councils expect the provision of renewable energy technologies, this will be necessary to achieve net zero carbon buildings. The Councils recognise that adaptation is important for resilient communities and requirements for tree planting, green spaces and sustainable water management are incorporated into the draft **Plan**.

4. Policy 8: Sustainable Infrastructure

The Garden Community will be an exemplar development that addresses the climate emergency. The Garden Community will create energy efficient, sustainable buildings and places where communities can lead resilient and lower impact lives through energy efficient and smart buildings, reducing the need to travel and a biodiverse landscape which incorporates carbon sequestration and natural flood management.

POLICY 8: SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Garden Community will be an exemplar development that leads the way in meeting the very highest standards of energy efficiency, water efficiency and renewable energy generation to set the design quality, transition to a low carbon future and ensure that buildings are smart, future-proofed and will not require retrofitting in the future. All buildings must be net zero carbon and the Councils will encourage carbon positive buildings. Proposals must comply with approved design codes that set standards in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation and sustainable design.

Part A: Net Zero Carbon

All buildings must be net zero carbon and the Councils will encourage carbon positive buildings. A holistic area wide approach to energy and associated infrastructure will need to be implemented. Proposals must demonstrate the application of the 'energy hierarchy' to reduce energy demand for heating, lighting, and cooling and minimise carbon dioxide emissions using an energy assessment tool proportional to the scale of the development. The Councils will expect the integration of smart technology and integrated data services for controlling energy using activities and appliances.

Proposals must minimise carbon emissions associated with operational energy and construction, including materials, as well as wider emissions, for example those associated with transport.

Part B: Design and Construction

All buildings must be designed to reduce energy demand and maximise fabric energy efficiency including such measures as: building orientation; high levels of

insulation of roofs, floors, and walls; maximising airtightness; and using solar gain through window/door orientation whilst avoiding overheating.

Whilst all new residential development will meet the Future Homes Standard and non-residential development will meet the [Future Buildings Standard](#) as a minimum, exceeding these standards will be expected through, for example, meeting the [BREEAM Communities standard](#), [WELL Community standard](#), [Home Quality Mark](#), [Passivhaus](#) or [RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment for the Built Environment](#), or other recognised standards.

Part C: Renewable Energy

To achieve a net zero carbon development, that will not use fossil fuels, the Garden Community will generate energy from renewable sources and proposals will need to show how this has been maximized. This could include the following technologies: hydrogen, Biogas Anaerobic Digestion (sewage and food), heat pumps and thermal storage (for heat) and solar and wind and the associated various forms of storage (for power). The Councils will consider the development of a district heating network(s) and/or smart local energy systems that are viable, maintained and managed in the long term.

Part D: Water Conservation

All buildings must include water efficiency measures and seek to achieve water neutrality. All homes must include water saving measures and, as a minimum, meet the Buildings Regulations optional tighter water standard of 110 litres per person per day.

Proposals must include clear evidence on the approach to water conservation, including the potential for the re-use of 'greywater' and rainwater 'capture and use' and should also provide the infrastructure to support options for rainwater re-use in the building design, e.g. rainwater harvesting systems, water saving devices, greywater recycling or other agreed solutions. The Councils will require safe systems and measures to be implemented for all new development within the Garden Community.

Part E: Sustainable Waste Management

Proposals will look at all the options across the chain to use as few resources as possible in the first place, keep resources in circulation for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them while in use, then recover and regenerate products at the end of service life. The Councils support proposals for sustainable waste management facilities and proposals should incorporate best practice technologies to optimise opportunities for minimizing waste and recycling.

Part F: Ultrafast Broadband

Proposals must provide the new community with ultra-fast broadband. This definition is likely to evolve over the plan period and consideration of an up-to-

date definition of ultra-fast will be made at the time of the planning application submission based on government/ industry guidance.

Proposals must, unless an equivalent technology/approach delivers a better outcome, demonstrate early engagement with infrastructure providers and ensure the provision of fibre to the premises (FTTP) infrastructure.

Part G: Materials

All proposals must take into consideration the embodied carbon associated with materials using the [RICS Whole Life Carbon](#) approach or successor documents. Development must be designed to maximise resource efficiency and identify, source, and use environmentally and socially responsible materials, giving consideration to circular economy principles and design for deconstruction.

Part H: Planning Application Expectations

1. To ensure that development at the Garden Community does everything it can to address the climate emergency and help achieve the ambition of net zero carbon emissions, all proposals must be accompanied by a 'Carbon Reduction Strategy' which considers all the measures set out in this policy and puts forward detailed solutions for the Councils approval, which will then be implemented as part of the development.

Proposals will have to demonstrate how renewable energy and other sustainability measures appropriate to the buildings, site and location are to be included in the development. Planning permission will only be granted where, through the Carbon Reduction Strategy, it can be demonstrated that all reasonable renewable energy and energy efficiency measures have been fully considered and, where possible, will be incorporated into the design, layout, and construction. The Councils will consider the use of planning conditions to ensure the measures are delivered and monitored.

2. Proposals should include an Assured Performance Certification to address the performance gap between 'as designed' performance and 'as built' performance.

3. Proposals must submit to the Councils a scheme for approval demonstrating how the development will provide digital connectivity (including appropriate standards, timescales) having regard to approved connectivity strategies.

Part I: Minerals – Prior extraction

Proposals must be informed by a Minerals Resource Assessment, with evidence supplied in support of the scheme demonstrating how the scheme reflects and takes advantage of the opportunities afforded by prior extraction.

5. Justification

In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report which advised that we must limit global warming to 1.5°C, as opposed to the

previous target of 2°C. Tackling climate change requires action by every part of society – this includes all tiers of government, businesses, and residents. Individuals can influence the size of their carbon footprint by how much and what they buy and how they travel and the homes they live in.

In 2019, both CBC and TDC declared climate emergencies acknowledging that urgent action is required to limit the environmental impacts produced by the climate crisis. Both Councils aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. This is supported by ECC who established the [Essex Climate Action Commission](#) in 2020 to promote and guide climate action in the county and move Essex to net zero by 2050. It is an independent, voluntary, and cross-party body bringing together groups from the public and private sector, as well as individuals from other organisations. The Commission published its report [Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral](#) in July 2021 and its recommendations are relevant to Essex County Council, Essex local authorities, parish and town councils, as well as Essex businesses, residents, and community groups. The report sets out a comprehensive plan for Essex to: reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 in line with UK statutory commitments; and to make Essex more resilient to climate impacts such as flooding, water shortages and overheating. The report covers a wide range of topic areas including land use, energy, waste, transport, plus the built and natural environments. The report's recommendations are now incorporated into a Climate Action Plan and a focused work programme over the coming years to ensure the effects of climate change can be mitigated.

The Future Homes Standard (a 75-80% reduction in carbon emissions from new homes compared to current standards, with low-carbon heating and very high fabric standards) and Future Buildings Standard (pathway to highly efficient new non-domestic buildings which use low-carbon heat) will require new buildings from 2025 to be future proofed for 2050 with low carbon heating and world leading levels of energy efficiency. This means that connecting to the conventional gas grid will not be a feasible option. The government's [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#) explains that the future is likely to see a mix of low-carbon technologies used for heating and while there is work to be done to identify the best solutions for different buildings and areas, decisive, 'no regrets' action can be taken now. No regrets actions means actions that are cost-effective now and will continue to prove beneficial in future. For example, installing energy efficiency measures reduces consumer bills now, while making buildings warmer and comfier, but has the added benefit of making future installations of low-carbon heating more cost-effective. Buildings should be 'futureproofed' by setting high standards for new buildings and mitigating risks of overheating and poor ventilation leading to poor air quality.

Future proofing is a key design consideration and includes: the electrification of heat; the replacement of natural gas with Hydrogen and/or biomethane; decentralised 'smart' grids; LZC technologies; the electrification of transport and introduction of alternative fuel sources such as biofuel and hydrogen; smart machinery and automation; sustainable waste management; creating a circular energy economy; storage technologies for resilience; and super-fast fibre, 5G and WIFI enabled public spaces.

There are numerous national and international sustainability accreditation standards and the Councils will expect development to meet one of these standards. For example, [BREEAM Communities standard](#), [WELL Community standard](#), [Home Quality Mark](#), [Passivhaus](#) or [RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment for the Built Environment](#). These standards are a way to measure the sustainability of buildings in a holistic way and ensure that a wide range of sustainability considerations, including energy and water use, are considered and incorporated into the design.

Renewable power generators, such as solar PV and air and ground source heat pumps are established, well understood and mature technologies, which would be anticipated to be deployed across the site. The approach will be to deliver a net-zero/carbon positive site by providing a secure, reliable, and affordable energy system. There is opportunity for entrepreneurship and the ability to export energy (heat and/or power) will be explored.

A Carbon Reduction Strategy is required which will set out measures that will be incorporated into the design, layout and construction aimed at maximising energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. The Carbon Reduction Strategy must demonstrate how different measures have been considered and incorporated which could and should include: triple glazing; solar roof panels or solar tiles; air source heating systems; ground source heating systems; super insulation (walls and loft void); rainwater capture system; electric vehicle rapid charging points (provided to an individual dwelling or through and appropriate communal facility); superfast broadband and a flexible space within each home to enable home working and a reduction in the need to travel; Mechanical Heat Recovery Ventilation; solar thermal systems; and solar and battery storage systems. This list will be kept under review as techniques and technologies develop and evolve. Targets and requirements in design codes and guidance may include phased requirements to ensure that targets and requirements reflect latest techniques, technologies, and best practice. The sustainability of a development is not simply a measure of how it functions, it also includes how it is constructed and the sourcing of minerals used in that construction. This is made clear in the [NPPF](#) which states that minerals are a finite natural resource, and that best use needs to be made of them, including encouraging their extraction where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place.

Extracting minerals prior to development of the land doesn't just avoid their needless sterilisation, it is also an opportunity to design and shape landforms to support the masterplanning of significant developments. It provides the opportunity to create land topographies, transforming how the land is developed and used post extraction, through imaginative land reclamation and landscape enhancement that help create desirable places to live. Prior extraction itself is therefore not just an indication of sustainable development, it can be used as an opportunity in major developments to deliver a number of further sustainable development initiatives, such as those highlighted within this Plan, including:

- opportunities for biodiversity net-gain, green and blue Infrastructure and to grow natural capital;
- Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) and increase flood resilience;
- mitigation measures against climate change; and

- positive contributions to the health and wellbeing of communities through the provision of open space and recreational resources.

6. Alternative approaches

The Councils have considered the following alternative to this policy:

Alternative 1: No policy in the Plan and reliance on the requirements of the Section 1 Plan, which are summarised at the beginning of this chapter, and national policy.

The Councils have rejected alternative 1 as the Plan is an opportunity to add further detail to the policy requirements in the Section 1 Plan and include policy that includes measures to ensure environmental sustainability including addressing energy and water efficiency.

7. Question

Do you support the emerging policy on **Sustainable Infrastructure**? Some issues you may wish to consider are:

- How can the **Plan** best address climate change?
- How can the **Plan** best encourage energy efficiency and the provision of renewable energy?
- How can the **Plan** ensure that the scheme can respond to future technological advances and changes in future standards and requirements such as those envisaged by the forthcoming Future Home Standard and Future Buildings Standard?
- Does the policy cover an appropriate range of aspects or is there anything missing from the policy?
- Are there any elements of the draft policy that should be covered by a design code?

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Chapter 9: Infrastructure Delivery, Impact Mitigation and Monitoring

This chapter covers the requirements to ensure the Garden Community is supported by the required level of infrastructure. The Garden Community provides an opportunity to create an innovative, resilient, well-connected and inclusive place that will stand the test of time.

1. Section 1 Local Plan

Some of the main requirements expected to be covered in this draft **Plan**, as set out in the policies of the adopted Section 1 Local Plan include:

- All development must be supported by the provision of infrastructure, services and facilities that are identified to serve the needs arising from the development.
- An infrastructure delivery strategy and phasing plan that sets out how infrastructure, services and facilities will be provided.
- Comprehensive planning and development of the Garden Community, where each development phase is supported by suitable mechanisms to deliver the infrastructure both on and off-site.
- Providing new and improved transport (footways, cycle links, bridleways, roads) and communication infrastructure.
- Addressing education, healthcare, leisure and sports.
- Integrating a network of multi-functional green and blue infrastructure to create attractive and sustainable places.
- Ensuring adequate water and wastewater treatment capacity or infrastructure upgrades are in place prior to development proceeding.
- Planning consent and funding approval for the A120-A133 Link Road and Route 1 of the Rapid Transit System.
- Providing appropriate design and infrastructure that incorporates the highest standards of innovation in energy efficiency and technology to reduce impact of climate change, water efficiency (with the aim of being water neutral in areas of serious water stress), and sustainable waste / recycling management facilities.

2. Engagement feedback

What we heard

Throughout our engagement processes, a moderate amount of people spoke about how to **join up community facilities and generate income**. In stakeholder workshops specifically, people talked about **innovative approaches**, such as: opportunities to **co-locate facilities**, such as health and community assets; how multiple uses should be considered; the role a Country Park can play in meeting sport and recreation needs; and how **multi-functional sites** could be used (e.g., cricket ground can be used for football in the winter). In the workshops, it was also highlighted that the **role of existing assets** should be considered, especially at the

University of Essex and Colchester Sports Park, and how any new assets would interact with existing ones.

A lot of people in the local community contributed comments that the Garden Community will just be expensive houses, and that there will be **no provision of infrastructure** such as schools, health facilities, green space and employment. People are concerned about the impact of the Garden Community on health services in the area, mentioning that **health services are already strained**. Some participants noted that healthcare should be localised rather than centralised and fit in with the 15-minute neighbourhood model. Some people specifically talked about the importance of making sure the Garden Community was developed with an **infrastructure first approach**.

Most participants were **opposed to maintenance fees**, although some suggested that they might be necessary. A few people expressed concerns about the **intentions of the developers**, expressing feeling that profit would inevitably be prioritised over community infrastructure. This position was mirrored by CLG members, too.

What we've done

In order to make the Garden Community function sustainably, the Councils will require the timely and efficient delivery of the required infrastructure, services and facilities to support new residents and businesses. This includes the delivery of physical, social, and green and blue infrastructure, in addition to and alongside affordable housing. Delivery will need to be aligned and phased with development.

3. Policy 9: Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation

Planning and delivering the required infrastructure is at the heart of sustainable development for the Garden Community. Provision of appropriate and timely strategic infrastructure will be central to the delivery of the Garden Community and provides the opportunity to address infrastructure needs, maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure capacities and explore opportunities for new sustainable infrastructure.

POLICY 9: INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY AND IMPACT MITIGATION

Proposals for the Garden Community must demonstrate that the required infrastructure to support the development will be delivered in a timely and, where appropriate, phased manner.

Developers will need to make direct provision or contribute towards the delivery of relevant infrastructure as required by the development either alone or cumulatively with other developments, as set out in the relevant Infrastructure Delivery Plan and other policies in this draft **Plan**, where such contributions are compliant with national policy and the legal tests. Where necessary, developers will be required to:

1. enter into Section 106 agreements to make provisions to mitigate the impacts of the development where necessary or appropriate. Section 106 will remain the appropriate mechanism for securing land and works along with financial contributions where a sum for the necessary infrastructure is not secured via CIL; and/or
2. make a proportionate contribution on a retrospective basis towards such infrastructure as may have been forward-funded from other sources where the provision of that infrastructure is necessary to facilitate and/or minimise the impacts of their development (including the cumulative impacts of planned development).

Where a proposal requires additional infrastructure capacity, to be deemed acceptable, mitigation measures must be agreed with the Councils and the appropriate infrastructure provider. Such measures may include (not exclusively)

- financial contributions towards new or expanded facilities and the maintenance thereof;
- on-site provision of new facilities (which may include building works);
- off-site capacity improvement works; and/or
- the provision of land.

Developers must work positively with the Councils and other infrastructure providers throughout the planning process to ensure that the cumulative impact of development is considered and then mitigated, at the appropriate time, in line with their published policies and guidance.

The Councils will consider introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and will implement such for areas and/or development types where a viable charging schedule would best mitigate the impacts of growth. Section 106 will remain the appropriate mechanism for securing land and works along with financial contributions where a sum for the necessary infrastructure is not secured via CIL. For the purposes of this policy the widest reasonable definition of infrastructure and infrastructure providers will be applied. Exemplar types of infrastructure are provided in the glossary appended to this draft **Plan**.

Proposals will need to make financial contributions to the wider local transport infrastructure, including the A120-A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System in accordance with the conditions of the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

4. Justification

The Garden Community will require the provision of new physical infrastructure such as footways, cycleways, roads, and sewers; social infrastructure such as health, education, and community facilities; and green infrastructure such as open and recreational spaces. The Councils will work with developers and a range of partners such as the Highway Authority, National Highways, the lead authority for education, the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, utility companies, North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and National Health Service England Midlands and East England, and Sport England to bring forward the necessary infrastructure that is required to deliver the Garden Community.

For the purposes of this policy the widest reasonable definition of infrastructure and infrastructure providers will be applied. The term infrastructure can include any structure, building, system facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or wellbeing including (but not exclusively): footways, cycleways, bridleways and highways; public transport; drainage, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and flood protection; waste recycling facilities; education and childcare/nurseries; healthcare; sports, leisure and recreation facilities; community and social facilities; cultural facilities, including public art; emergency services; green infrastructure; open space; affordable housing; live/work units and lifetime homes; broadband/telecommunications; and facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

It should be recognised that infrastructure may be provided in various ways including new infrastructure, improvements to existing facilities/services or as co-located or expanded services/facilities. Where infrastructure cannot be provided within, or is not appropriate to be located on, the Garden Community site itself, developers will be expected to make a contribution to the cost to provide the infrastructure elsewhere.

In negotiating planning obligations, the Councils will require a fully transparent open book viability assessment and that all possible steps have been taken to minimise the residual level of unmitigated impacts. Developers may be required to enter into obligations that provide for appropriate additional mitigation in the event that viability improves prior to completion of the development.

The Councils will prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the Garden Community to identify the required infrastructure. Proposals will be expected to deliver or contribute to the necessary infrastructure requirements of the Garden Community as identified by the Council's IDP, where such contributions are compliant with national policy and the legal tests.

The Councils will seek contributions from developers to fund improvements to existing infrastructure and the environment and new infrastructure. Contributions will be made through the Community Infrastructure Levy (if adopted), which applies a standard charge to developers to fund supporting infrastructure such as transport, schools, community facilities and health facilities, and/or Section 106 agreements which address the provision of affordable housing and more site-specific infrastructure requirements. The necessary infrastructure requirements through the use of planning condition and/or planning obligation and/or financial contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges in accordance with [The Community Infrastructure Regulations 2019](#).

Some infrastructure providers will fund and deliver infrastructure themselves. Other infrastructure will be funded by developers and landowners, secured by planning obligations or the CIL (if adopted) or its successor as part of the planning permission. On-site infrastructure provision will usually be secured by planning conditions or legal agreements. Off-site provision will usually be secured by legal agreements and through other financial contributions.

Essex County Council, working with CBC and TDC, were successful in attracting funding under the Housing Infrastructure Fund (administered by Homes England) for the delivery of the A120-A133 Link Road, and the offsite sections of the Rapid Transit System. The awarding of the funding has been made on the basis that this transport infrastructure unlocks housing growth at the Garden Community, without which the Garden Community could not be developed to the scale proposed. In accordance with the conditions of the funding agreement with Homes England, the Councils will seek to maximise the recovery of this funding from the Garden Community as it is developed. The mechanism for the recovery of funding will be secured by legal agreement between the Councils and the developer(s), with the level of recovery informed by regular reviews of development viability so that an appropriate financial contribution towards recovery is set which takes into account other policy requirements and contributions required of the developer(s). Contributions received from this recovery mechanism will be recycled back into supporting additional housing growth in the area at the discretion of the Councils and Homes England, as set out in the conditions of the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

5. Monitoring

Monitoring is a way of assessing the effectiveness of a plan once it is adopted. It helps to identify if plan policies are not being implemented and whether an early review of the plan is required. Monitoring indicators for the **Plan** will reflect the indicators monitored in the Councils Authority Monitoring Reports and will be linked to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Framework. The table, below, outlines the Councils initial thoughts on monitoring. This has been guided by the recommendations in the SA Report and will be developed as the draft **Plan** progresses, as the Councils monitoring indicators evolve, and taking into account representations received.

| SA Objective | Most Relevant Policies | Monitoring Indicator |
|--|------------------------|---|
| 1. To create safe environments which improve quality of life, community cohesion | Policy 1 Policy 6 | Increase in areas of public open space All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum Number of new community facilities granted planning permission Number of new cultural facilities granted planning permission, including places of worship |
| 2. To ensure that everyone has the | Policy 4 | Housing Delivery |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| opportunity to live in a decent, safe home which meets their needs at a price they can afford | Policy 8 | Affordable housing completions Gypsy & Traveller provision |
| 3. To improve health/reduce health inequalities | Policy 1 Policy 3 Policy 6 Policy 7 | Increase in areas of public open space Percentage of new residential development within 30mins of public transport time of a GP or hospital Percentage of new residential development that adheres to Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards Percentage of new residential development within walking and cycling distance to schools Percentage of new residential development within walking and cycling distance to sport and recreation facilities Hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 population |
| 4. To ensure and improve the vitality and viability of centres | Policy 1 Policy 5 Policy 6 | Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses (sqm) |
| 5. To achieve a prosperous and sustainable economy that creates new jobs, improves the vitality and viability of centres and captures the economic benefits of international gateways | Policy 5 | Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type (sqm) Level 2 qualifications by working age residents Level 4 qualifications and above by working age residents |
| 6. To value, conserve and enhance the natural | Policy 1 Policy 3 | Number of planning applications approved contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood defence or water quality grounds |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| environment, natural resources, biodiversity and geological diversity | | Number and area of Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites Essex Coast RAMS Condition of SSSIs (per Natural England assessments) Area of land provided for biodiversity enhancement/ net gain |
| 7. To achieve more sustainable travel behaviour, reduce the need to travel and reduce congestion | Policy 7 | To obtain an agreed Travel Plan Percentage of journeys to work by walking and cycling and percentage of journeys to work by public transport |
| 8. To promote accessibility, ensure that development is located sustainably and makes efficient use of land, and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support new development | Policy 1 Policy 3 Policy 5 Policy 6 Policy 7 Policy 9 | Increase in areas of public open space Key infrastructure projects delivered Additional capacity of local schools / incidents of new school applications |
| 9. To conserve and enhance historic and cultural heritage and assets and townscape character? | Policy 1 Policy 3 Policy 4 | Recorded loss of listed buildings Grade I and II+ (by demolition), Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological sites and assets on the Colchester Local List to development |
| 10. To make efficient use of energy and reduce contributions to climatic change through mitigation and adaptation | Policy 8 | Percentage of household waste recycled and composted Carbon emissions and Climate Change Climate Change Adaptation Renewable energy installed by type |
| 11. To improve water quality and | Policy 3 | Number of planning applications approved contrary to Environment |

| | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| address water scarcity and sewerage capacity | Policy 8 | Agency advice on flood defence or water quality grounds Quality of rivers (number achieving ecological good status) |
| 12. To reduce the risk of fluvial, coastal and surface water flooding | Policy 3 Policy 8 | Number of planning applications approved contrary to Environment Agency advice on flood defence or water quality grounds |
| 13. To improve air quality | Policy 7 | Number of Air Quality Management Areas |
| 14. To conserve and enhance the quality of landscapes | Policy 1 Policy 3 Policy 4 | |
| 15. To safeguard and enhance the quality of soil and mineral deposits? | Policy 3 Policy 8 | Number and area of developments proposed within MSAs |

6. Questions

1. Do you support the emerging policy on Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation?

2. Do you support the emerging monitoring framework?

You can provide your feedback online **by following this link** [Creating a Place for Life \(tcbgardencommunity.co.uk\)](https://www.colchester.gov.uk/creating-a-place-for-life). Alternatively, you can email tcbgardencommunity@colchester.gov.uk or planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk, or write to **Freepost TCBGC**. When writing or emailing, please make sure you include your name and contact details and that you respond by the consultation closing date.

Glossary

Affordable Housing – The Councils definition will accord with the current definition in the National Planning Policy Framework (or any successor document) but will also include those uses eligible under Essex County Council's Independent Living Programme. It includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) – Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) – A report published annually by the Councils monitoring progress in delivering progress in Local Plan policies and allocations.

Biodiversity Net Gain - Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. The Environment Act contains a new biodiversity net gain condition for planning permissions. To meet this requirement biodiversity gains will need to be measured using a biodiversity metric.

Brownfield Land (also known as Previously Developed Land) - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Boundary treatment - How a building or development site relates to its boundary - open, closed, accessible, fence, landscaped etc.

Carbon Positive - Carbon positive moves beyond carbon zero by making additional 'positive' or 'net export' contributions by producing more energy on site than the building requires and feeding it back to the grid.

Carbon sequestration - Carbon sequestration is the process of storing carbon in a carbon pool. Carbon dioxide is naturally captured from the atmosphere through biological, chemical, and physical processes.

Centre - References to centres apply to town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. See definitions of local centres and district centres.

Community Facilities - Are buildings, which enable a variety of local activity to take place including, but not limited to, the following: Schools, Universities and other educational facilities; Libraries and community centres; Doctors surgeries, medical centres and hospitals; Public houses and local shops; Museums and art galleries; Child care centres; Sport and recreational facilities; Youth clubs; Playgrounds; Cemeteries; and Places of worship.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A mechanism by which Councils can set a standard charge on specified development in their area to pay for new infrastructure required to support growth.

Competent person (to prepare site investigation information) - A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.

Conservation credits – When a developer cannot achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain on their development site following application of the mitigation hierarchy, they will have the option to purchase biodiversity units from an offsite habitat market. If units cannot be sourced from local habitat markets, developers will be able to purchase their required units (as credits) which will be invested in habitat creation.

Design code - A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area.

Development – The definition in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is ‘means the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land’.

Development Plan – This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Development Plan is the starting point for decision making. This includes the Essex Minerals Local Plan and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

District Centre – Important role serving the day-to-day needs of their local populations as well as providing access to shops and services for neighbouring areas across and beyond the Borough, but not to a level comparable with Colchester Town Centre.

Energy hierarchy – The energy hierarchy is a classification of energy strategies, prioritised to assist progress towards a more sustainable energy system. The steps are: be lean, use less energy; be clean, supply energy efficiently; be green, use renewable energy; and offset.

European Sites - The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes SPA, SAC, and Ramsar sites). See also habitats sites.

Garden Community – Communities which are holistically planned new settlements that respond directly to their regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create developments underpinned by a series of interrelated

principles which are based on the following Town and Country Planning Association Garden City Principles: Land value capture for the benefit of the community; Strong vision, leadership and community engagement; Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets; Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable; A wide range of local jobs in the Garden Community within easy commuting distance of homes; Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food; Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience; Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods; Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

Green Infrastructure – A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Greenfield Site - Land which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

Gypsies and Travellers - Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such. In determining whether persons are "gypsies and travellers" consideration will be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters: a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) - The Habitat Regulation Assessment is a statutory requirement under the [Conservation \(Natural Habitats\) \(Amendment\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2010 \(as amended\)](#). An HRA is required for a plan or project which, either alone or in combination with, other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a European/ habitats site.

Habitats site - Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

Infrastructure - Infrastructure means any structure, building, system, facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or well-being including (but not exclusively): footways, cycleways and highways; public transport; drainage and flood protection; waste recycling facilities; education and

childcare; healthcare; sports, leisure and recreation facilities; community and social facilities; cultural facilities; emergency services; green infrastructure; open space; affordable housing; broadband; facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

Local Centre – An essential role providing a range of small shops and services to meet the basic needs of local communities, serving a small catchment.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) - This is the project plan for a three year period for the production of all documents that will comprise the Local Plan. It identifies each Local Development Document and establishes a timetable for preparing each.

Local Plan - The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#).

Local Wildlife Sites – Habitats identified by Essex Wildlife Trust as important for the conservation of wildlife.

Massing - The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces. This is also called bulk.

Main Town Centre Uses – As defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, main Town Centre uses include retail development (Including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities, the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Mineral Safeguarding Area - An area designated by the Minerals Planning Authority (Essex County Council) which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

Mitigation hierarchy - The mitigation hierarchy is a widely used tool that guides users towards limiting as far as possible the negative impacts on biodiversity from development projects. The steps are: avoidance, minimization, rehabilitation/ restoration and offsetting.

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) - Integrates various forms of transport services into a single mobility service accessible on demand. A MaaS operator facilitates a diverse menu of transport options to meet a customer's request, be they public transport, ride-, car- or bike-sharing, taxi or car rental/lease, or a combination thereof.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Government planning policy which replaces a large number of Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements with one single document. It sets out new planning requirements and

objectives in relation to issues such as housing, employment, transport and the historic and natural environment amongst others.

Natural surveillance - Natural surveillance is an urban design, architecture and landscaping technique that seeks to deter crime with social and highly visible spaces. Natural surveillance is based on the theory that isolation makes crime both easier and more likely.

Neighbourhood Plan - A plan prepared by a Parish Council, Neighbourhood Forum, or other locally constituted community group, for a particular neighbourhood.

Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) – The National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period. Further guidance provided in Planning Practice Guidance provides that ‘The assessment of development needs is an objective assessment of need based on facts and unbiased evidence. Plan makers should not apply constraints to the overall assessment of need, such as limitations imposed by the supply of land for new development, historic under performance, viability, infrastructure or environmental constraints. However, these considerations will need to be addressed when bringing evidence bases together to identify specific policies within development plans.’

Open space - All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Permitted Development Rights – The level of development that can take place before planning permission is required, as stated in [The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) Order 1995](#), as amended.

Planning Obligation/Section 106 Agreement – A legally binding agreement between a local planning authority and any person interested in land within the area of the local authority, or an undertaking by such person, under which development is restricted, activities or uses required; or a financial contribution to be made. Used to mitigate the impacts of development.

Planning Practice Guidance – Guidance and detail supporting the National Planning Policy Framework which is published online and regularly updated.

Previously Developed Land - see brownfield land above.

Ramsar Site – An area identified by international agreement on endangered habitats.

Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) – A tool used to manage and mitigate the adverse effects from increased recreational disturbance arising from new developments on European/ habitats Sites.

Self-build and custom-build housing – Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual.

Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Setting of a heritage asset - The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance (for heritage policy) - The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Land notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as an ecosystem of flora and/or fauna considered to be of significant national value and interest to merit its conservation and management.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - A site of European importance designated by the member states, where necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at favourable conservation status, of the habitats and/or species for which the site is designated.

Special Protection Area (SPA) - A site designated under the Birds Directive by the member states where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site is designated.

Starter Homes – Newly built properties that must be sold to someone who is a first-time buyer below the age of 40, with a discount of at least 20 per cent off the market value.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - This will set out the standards that the Council intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration, and continuing review of all Local Development Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the Council intends to achieve those standards. The Statement of Community Involvement will not be a Development Plan Document (see above) but will be subject to independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the Local Planning Authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Development Documents.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - A study prepared for the Councils Evidence Base further to national guidance which assesses the overall state of the housing market and advises on future housing policies used to inform the Housing Strategy.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – A document produced by the Council to add further detailed guidance and information on a particular subject such as Sustainable Construction or Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities. An SPD

is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - An appraisal of the economic, social, and environmental effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, so that decisions can be made that accord with sustainable development.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Sustainable Communities - places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built, and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Sustainable Construction – is the name given to building in an energy efficient way. The incorporation of many new technologies and energy saving techniques into a building can dramatically reduce the CO₂ emissions and carbon footprint of a building. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling, wind turbines and ground water heating systems.

Sustainable Development - Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) – A sustainable drainage system is designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments with respect to surface water drainage discharges.

Sustainable Transport - Sustainable Transport refers to walking, cycling and public transport, including train and bus. Sustainable Transport is transport that makes efficient use of natural resources and minimises pollution. In particular, Sustainable Transport seeks to minimise the emissions of carbon dioxide – a greenhouse gas associated with climate change – as well as nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, carbon monoxide and particulates, all of which affect local air quality.

Topography - the physical features of an area of land, especially the position of its rivers, mountains.

Town Centre - Area defined on the proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops.

Travel Plan - A plan demonstrating how a development would encourage its users to use more sustainable methods of transport to access a development.

Use Class - Different uses are given a classification as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended). For example, an E use refers to retail, restaurant, office, financial/professional services, indoor sports,

medical and nursery and a C3 use would refer to a residential dwellings (houses, flats, apartments etc).

Appendix 1. Principles and Objectives

To deliver the vision for the Garden Community, it will be important for all the policies and proposals in this draft **Plan** to contribute positively to the achievement of a number of principles and objectives. The vision, principles and objectives are set out in the Strategic Brief. The vision and principles are included in the theme chapters and the objectives are set out in this appendix.

Nature

A PLACE SHAPED BY EXISTING LANDSCAPE

- Across the Area of Search, there will be a minimum of 50% open space and multifunctional green infrastructure, that is seamlessly integrated with the built environment to connect people with nature.
- Existing landscape features conserved, enhanced and incorporated in the masterplan.
- Connectivity links established to existing green corridors and networks.
- New Country Park along the Salary Brook Corridor and including the slopes to the east.
- A variety of new connected open spaces created including parks, fields, wild spaces, communal spaces and private gardens.
- Streets with tree planting, Sustainable Drainage Systems and planting integrated.

A PLACE WITH THRIVING ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

- Existing habitats and wildlife sites conserved, protected and connected with new species rich habitat links.
- Hedgerow network protected and enhanced with existing hedge lined lanes protected and retained.
- Minimum 10% biodiversity net gain.
- Streets to include trees and other generous landscaping where appropriate.
- Ecologically rich buffer landscapes established against existing and new road corridors.
- Recreational pressures on existing sensitive habitats mitigated through the creation of new areas for recreation.

A PLACE WITH A PRODUCTIVE AND CLIMATE RESILIENT NATURAL LANDSCAPE

- Native, wildlife friendly planting and edible species.
- Allotments, community orchards and growing fields provided which maximise the good quality free draining soils.
- Canopy cover, use of green walls and planting maximised and hard surfaces minimised in built up areas.
- SUDS and rain gardens integrated.
- New links of woodland, meadow, grassland and wetland created to lock in carbon.

- Drought tolerant planting approaches used.
- Natural water management system integrated as an attractive biodiverse network with water features including swales, ponds and larger water bodies used in preference to piped systems.

Buildings, Place and Character

A PLACE WITH DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY

- The new community will be rooted in its place and the landscape
- Important views, vistas, landmarks, heritage assets, trees and hedges will be recognised, protected and enhanced
- Design Codes will be implemented and used consistently
- Drawing on the historic tradition of orchards within the local area to create a new productive landscape
- Green buffers designed to provide suitable distinction between neighbourhoods
- Green buffers to contribute to the landscape and biodiversity network, accommodate leisure routes and be productive
- Clear spatial hierarchy that directs the design of the neighbourhood and the building types
- Plan for a range of housing densities with higher residential densities at mobility hubs, centres of activity and along key movement corridors
- A range of building heights that add variety and interest to the streetscape, enhance internal legibility
- Architectural style, building form, materials and layouts that reflect the districts' character while catering to contemporary needs and societal trends

A PLACE WITH A THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY

- Medium/small-scale employment uses close to the district centres
- Maximise the opportunity from the University of Essex and the Knowledge Gateway
- Provision of live-work and co-working spaces
- Flexible and adaptable buildings with scope for expanding floorspace, helping to retain them within the garden community
- Larger scale industrial/storage space accessible via A-roads and the Link Road
- Respond positively to changing patterns of retail and leisure

A PLACE THAT IS VIBRANT AND ACTIVE

- Local centres and one district centre that deliver an increased mix of uses
- Create legible and well-designed focal points within the local centres

A PLACE WHERE HOUSING IS ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE AND INCLUSIVE

- Housing that caters for all stages of life including multi-generational families, co-housing, start-up homes
- Housing typologies that respond to different needs and abilities

- Tenure blind design
- Accommodation suitable for ageing population close to local centres
- Sites identified for co-living and self-build typologies

A PLACE WITH GREAT HOMES

- + Homes fit for the 21st century and beyond, digitally connected, with sustainable technologies and future proofed
- + Homes that offer privacy and external amenity spaces
- + Homes that positively address the streets and create clear entry points from the street
- + Provision of good storage areas to meet short and long term needs
- + Integrate utilities, including waste storage and management, such that they do not adversely affect the design of the built environment

Community and Social Infrastructure

A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN FEEL AT HOME

- Co-location of different uses to maximise activity throughout the daytime and evening and provide opportunities for diverse social interaction.
- Multi use spaces that are designed to cater and support people from different groups (age/culture/ability/LGBTQ+/family status etc.).
- Community spaces accessible by all modes of travel.
- Community spaces flexible for different uses.
- Ground floor uses that create interest and activity.

A PLACE WHERE IT'S EASY TO BE HEALTHY AND HAPPY

- Inclusive public realm that creates the feeling of safety, a sense of place and interaction with nature.
- High quality and accessible sports facilities, playing pitches and greenspaces.
- Creation of a safe and overlooked walking and cycling network.
- Provision of healthcare, leisure, social and community facilities accessible by all modes of transport.
- Promotion of social interaction through shared amenity spaces.
- Active travel promoted.
- Connections established into the wider long distance leisure routes.

A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN LEARN

- Provision of education facilities in close proximity to district and local centres, making them easily accessible.
- Feeling of safety and security promoted for students within and around these facilities.
- Education facilities within easy access to play and recreation spaces.
- Flexibility of use of the premises during non-school hours.

A PLACE TO PLAY AND HAVE FUN

- Play, sport and leisure facilities that cater to all ages, abilities and needs and are easily accessible by all modes of transport.
- Sport and leisure facilities within in close proximity to the neighbourhood it serves.

A PLACE WHERE LONG TERM STEWARDSHIP IS CONSIDERED FROM THE OUTSET

- A suitable stewardship model and the assets and services which will require management and maintenance in perpetuity identified
- Minimisation of the running and maintenance costs of buildings and landscapes embedded through design
- Community needs and funding priorities identified early on
- Local resident representation on the stewardship model
- Different and inclusive engagement and communication links established

Movement and Connections

A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE HAVE PRIORITY

- Dense network of traffic-free walking and cycling links
- Residential streets designed with low design speed with off-plot and sensitively incorporated car parking
- Non-residential streets designed with low design speed, with segregated cycle links
- All movement routes and corridors will be through safe, legible, attractive, tree-lined corridors for amenity, air quality mitigation, biodiversity and good mental health
- Off-plot car parking paid for separately to house purchase/rental
- On- and off-street car parking designed flexibly with future non-car uses in mind
- Streets designed to discourage informal parking, supported by Controlled Parking Zones
- Vehicle access and loading restrictions to manage servicing needs
- Streets and footpath links designed for all different users's needs including people with mobility impairments and parents with pushchairs
- Emergency and service access provided throughout the street network

A PLACE WITH RAPID, EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- RTS routes given priority through the Garden Community and off-site, linking local centres and providing easy access to halts and services
- RTS stops integrated in mobility hubs in all centres and residential areas
- RTS running from the first stage with high frequency
- Park and Choose to complement the function of RTS
- Integrated ticketing for RTS and other bus services

A PLACE WHERE ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL IS THE NATURAL CHOICE

- Transit oriented development with higher density around mobility hubs, centres of activity and key corridors
- Network of mobility hubs established with a range of facilities connecting Rapid Transit System to first/last mile options on-site
- Plentiful secure and covered cycle parking provided at key destinations and residential areas
- Cycle and scooter hire docking stations provided at key destinations and community centres
- Robust travel plans put in place, linked to mode share targets
- Car club promotion to reduce the need for car ownership
- Horse riders provided for with a network of bridleways

A CONNECTED PLACE

- Link Road providing good connections to the A120 and A133
- Walking and cycle routes connected to Rights of Way and to high quality and direct links to the University and Colchester
- Hierarchy of street types to provide for the different routes, vehicular types and places.

Sustainable Infrastructure

A PLACE WHERE THE ENERGY SUPPLY IS SUSTAINABLE, SMART AND FUTUREPROOFED

- Net-zero energy demand and supply
- The energy grid will combine renewable sources such as solar power, wind and battery storage to ensure the focus is on green energy production
- Energy demand is monitored and active support provided to minimise consumption
- Support new models of ownership and operation

A PLACE DESIGNED FOR THE IMPACTS WHILE MINIMISING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- Environmental net gain through nature based solutions and urban greening
- A system of surface water drainage that will minimise the risk of flooding to the site, improve water quality, biodiversity and amenity value.
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which will mimic natural hydrological processes and reduce the impact of climate change
- Water recycling to combat increasing demand on water supply
- Overheating minimisation measures
- Use of green walls and tree planting to reduce urban heat effect/ provide shading
- Incorporation of energy producing landscapes
- Promote access to green routes that reduce the need for travel by car
- Create Green Infrastructure that supports our adaptation to a changing weather pattern through, for example, flood control
- Grey water recycling system integrated to new buildings

A PLACE THAT OPTIMISES RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND RECYCLING ACROSS THE WHOLE DEVELOPMENT LIFECYCLE

- Energy demand reduction and embodied carbon (whole life), waste water, waste management
- Minimisation of waste water discharge on the public network
- Maximisation of waste water treatment at source before discharge
- Zero waste and circular economy principles
- Fastest possible broadband network installed throughout the site to residential and non-residential development

A PLACE WHERE INFRASTRUCTURE COMES FIRST AND MEETS ITS INHABITANTS' NEEDS

- Establishment of on-and off-site infrastructure delivery strategy and phasing plan that will align with the phases of development
- Secured timely delivery of on- and off-site infrastructure aligned with each phase of development.