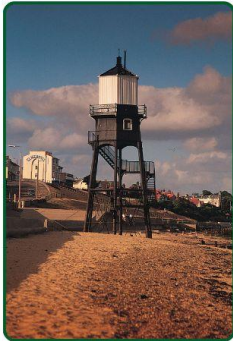


# Tendring District Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Consultation Document



# **Notice of Public Consultation on Issues and Options and Call for Sites for the Tendring District Local Plan Review**

## **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012**

The Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond was adopted in two parts: **Section 1** (which was prepared jointly by Tendring District, Colchester City, and Braintree District Councils, and contains strategic policies that are common between all three authorities) was adopted January 2021, and **Section 2** (which contains policies that are specific to the Tendring District) was adopted in January 2022.

To ensure Plans remain effective, they are required to be reviewed and updated at least every five years. Tendring District Council has begun the process of reviewing and updating the Local Plan, in order to plan for and manage development in the Tendring District up to 2041.

The Council hereby gives notice of the first stage of public consultation that will be part of this process: 'Issues and Options'.

Through this Issues and Options consultation residents, businesses, community representatives, developers, landowners, and anyone else with an interest in the future of Tendring can submit their views about what should be included in the updated Local Plan. Through the consultation document, the Council has highlighted the main areas it thinks will need to be looked at as part of the review and is inviting people to respond to a series of questions that relate to those areas.

Alongside the Issues and Options consultation, the Council will also be inviting proposals and suggestions for housing and mixed-use developments of different scales, commercial development, community-led or environment-led proposals for community facilities, habitat creation and open space. This is a continuation of the 'Call for Sites' consultation that took place last year.

The consultation period for 'Issues and Options' and the 'Call for Sites' runs from **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025** until **5pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025** – a period of just over six weeks.

### **Where You Can View the Consultation Documents**

The consultation document is available to view online at: [www.tendringdc.oc2.uk](http://www.tendringdc.oc2.uk).

Paper copies will also be available at public libraries around the District and at Clacton Town Hall, during usual opening hours.

### **How to Comment (make 'representations')**

Responses can be made using online response forms, available via the link above.

Where this is not possible, paper copies of the response forms are available at public libraries around the District and at Clacton Town Hall during usual opening hours. They can also be requested from the Planning Policy Team (contact details below). Written comments should

be returned to: Planning Policy, Tendring District Council, Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton on Sea, CO15 1SE or [planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk).

## **Consultation Events**

The Council will be holding drop-in events in four locations around the District. The events will be held between 3pm and 7pm, and Officers will be available to answer questions and assist with responding to the consultation.

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<b>Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>	Harwich	1912 Centre Cow Lane Harwich CO12 3ER
<b>Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>	Brightlingsea	Brightlingsea Parish Hall Victoria Place Brightlingsea CO7 0BP
<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>	Lawford	Venture Centre 2000 Bromley Road Lawford CO11 2JE
<b>Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>	Walton on the Naze	The Columbine Centre Prince's Esplanade Walton on the Naze CO14 8PZ

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## **Deadline for Responses**

All representations and submissions need to be received by the Council no later than 5pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

## **Further information**

If you have any questions or require further information about the consultation, please contact the Planning Policy Team on (01255) 686177, or by email at: [planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk).

# Contents

1	Introduction .....	3
	Our Local Plan .....	3
	Issues and Options Consultation Document .....	4
	Submitting Your Comments.....	5
2	Local Plan Review – Guiding Principles .....	7
	Section 1 of the Local Plan .....	7
	Guiding Principles .....	7
3	Vision and Objectives.....	14
	Vision for Tendring District.....	14
4	Sustainable Places.....	22
	Settlement Hierarchy.....	23
	Planning for Future Growth – Considering Options for a New Spatial Strategy .....	27
	Settlement Development Boundaries.....	42
	Sustainable Design .....	42
5	Healthy Places .....	44
	Improving Health and Wellbeing .....	44
	Multifunctional Open Green Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities .....	44
	Community Facilities .....	47
	Cemeteries, Crematoriums and Burials .....	47
6	Living Places .....	49
	Housing Supply.....	49
	Housing Choice.....	49
	Housing Layout and Density .....	50
	Affordable Housing.....	51
	Self-Build and Custom-Built Homes.....	52
	Gypsy and Traveller Sites .....	53
	Care and Assisted Living, HMOs and Bedsits.....	54
7	Prosperous Places .....	55
	Retail and Town Centres .....	55
	Employment Sites .....	56
	Tourism .....	56
	Rural Economy .....	57

8	Protected Places .....	58
	Climate Change .....	58
	Biodiversity and Geodiversity .....	59
	Flood Risk, Coastal Protection Belt and the Rural Landscape .....	61
	Strategic Green Gaps .....	62
	The Historic Environment.....	62
9	Connected Places and Delivering Infrastructure .....	64
10	Other matters .....	67

# 1 Introduction

## Our Local Plan

- 1.1** It is a legal requirement for councils to produce a ‘Local Plan’ for their area to guide future planning and development, and to make sure that the Local Plan is kept up to date. The purpose of the Local Plan is to deliver sustainable development and the coordinated provision of housing, jobs and infrastructure whilst best protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment. As well as being the blueprint for future growth in the area, Local Plans contain the rulebook of policies that councils follow in deciding whether or not to grant planning permission for different types of new development or changing the use of land or buildings.
- 1.2** Tendring District Council already has a Local Plan which was formally adopted in two sections, by its elected councillors, in January 2021 and January 2022 respectively. However, the Government requires councils to review and update their Local Plans every five years to ensure they remain up-to-date and effective, comply with latest national policy and are adjusted accordingly to respond to changing circumstances. The Council has already started work on reviewing the Local Plan for Tendring with the aim of completing all the necessary stages of the process so that an updated Plan can be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination early in 2026. Public consultation and engagement are an essential part of the legal process of reviewing Local Plans and this **Issues and Options Consultation Document** has been prepared especially for what will be the first of at least three consultation exercises.
- 1.3** Through this Issues and Options consultation, the Council is inviting residents, businesses, community representatives, developers, landowners, and anyone else with an interest in the future of Tendring to put forward their views on what should be included in the updated Local Plan. In this document, the Council has highlighted, in as simple terms as possible, the main areas it thinks will need to be looked at again as part of the review and is inviting people to respond to a series of questions that relate to those particular areas. These areas most notably include:
- the overarching vision and objectives for the Local Plan that will shape the future of our district up to 2041 and beyond;
  - the potential location for any additional housing or commercial development (over and above that already planned for in the existing current Local Plan) that might be required to meet longer-term projected needs and government requirements, particularly in the period 2033 to 2041;
  - policies aimed at delivering the right mix of new homes including family housing, specialist housing (including for older people) and supported accommodation, affordable housing for people and families with lower incomes as well as opportunities for people to build their own homes;
  - the approach to delivering new and improved infrastructure across our district to support the needs of a growing population and economy, including medical and health services; schools and other education provision; transport infrastructure (including walking, cycling and public transport as well as roads); open spaces,

sports and leisure facilities; coastal defences; and utilities like drainage and sewerage;

- the policies and proposals aimed at maximising the economic potential of our district and creation of new jobs, particularly following the designation of a ‘Freeport’ around the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe (a government incentive aimed at boosting investment in the economy) and recognition of Tendring, by the Government, as an area for ‘Levelling Up’;
- the policies aimed at delivering energy-efficient homes and other buildings along with measures to reduce carbon emissions and contribute towards the global fight against climate change; and
- the policies aimed at protecting and enhancing wildlife habitats in the District, delivering and expanding upon new government requirements for ‘biodiversity net gain’.

**1.4** In December 2023, the Council’s Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee agreed to commence the review of the Local Plan in line with a focussed set of ‘overarching guiding principles’ – with a key aim of updating, amending, improving, and carrying forward as much of the Council’s current Local Plan as practical rather than re-writing it from scratch. This will maintain continuity around the approach going forward and make the most effective and efficient use of council resources and tax-payers money at a time of significant financial pressure. These overarching principles are referred to throughout this document and people are invited to comment on them in their responses to this consultation.

### Issues and Options Consultation Document

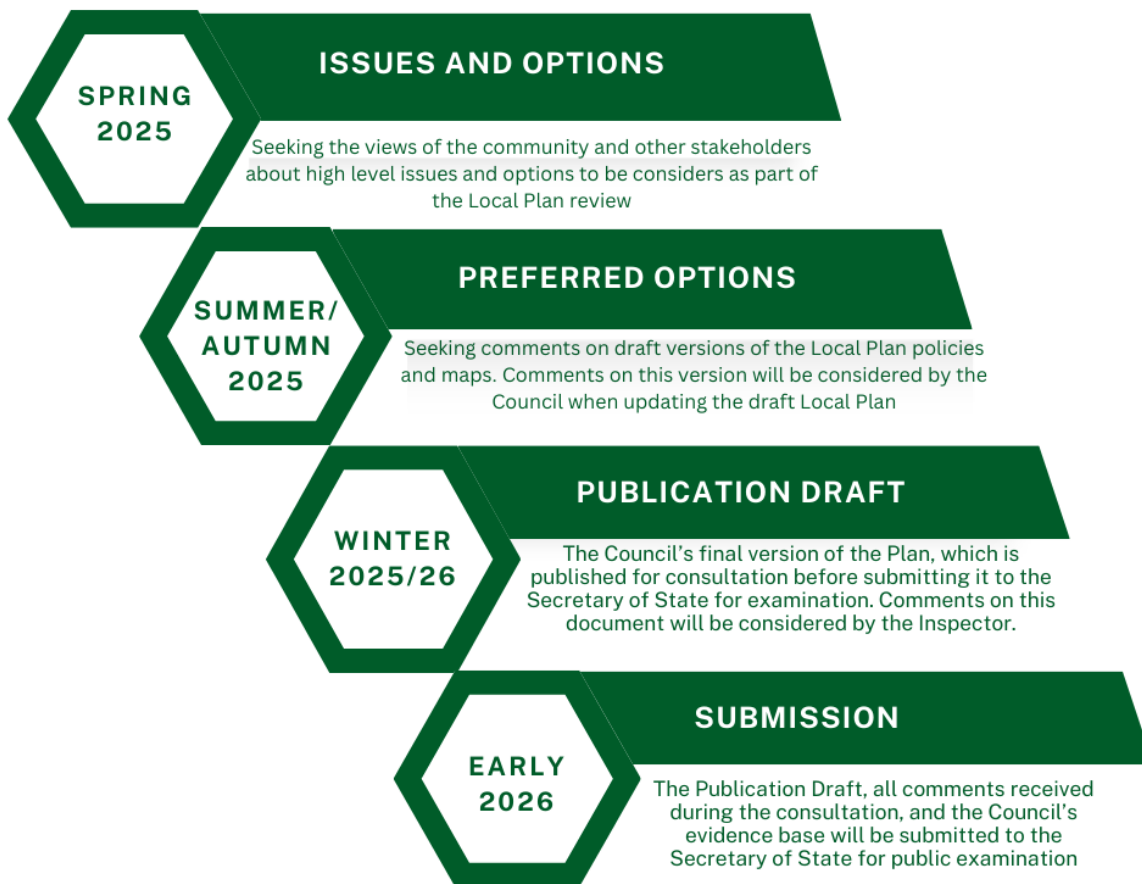
**1.5** The Issues and Options Consultation is one of the earliest stages of the review process, and is the first opportunity for residents, businesses, developers, and other interested parties to share their views with us. The main purpose of this document is to ensure the review of the Local Plan will cover the right issues and that all suitable options for accommodating change are considered.

**1.6** The questions within this document ask about changes and updates to the existing Local Plan’s policies. The adopted Local Plan can be viewed on the Council’s website: [www.tendringdc.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/localplan).

**1.7** Because this is such an early stage of the review process, this document does not provide specific details of potential changes to policy wording or site development proposals. These will follow further work and consideration of the responses to this consultation – and will be presented later on in 2025, when we consult the public on preferred options.

**1.8** The review of the Local Plan will follow a similar process as the preparation of the previously adopted Local Plan, including the same stages of public consultation. The timeline the Council is working towards is set out below and will be updated as the review progresses.

## Local Plan Review Timeline



**1.9** Once the updated Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State, it will be examined by a government appointed Planning Inspector to determine whether it is sound and legally compliant. This examination will be held in public, and those who submit representations during public consultations will be invited to take part in hearing sessions if they wish.

### Submitting Your Comments

**1.10** This document asks specific questions about each of the key issues the Council has identified relating to the Local Plan Review. You can answer as many or as few of these focussed questions as you choose to, and at the end of the document we give you an opportunity to raise any other issues or comments you feel are relevant.

**1.11** The consultation exercise will run for six weeks (**3<sup>rd</sup> March – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025**) and all comments must be received before the close of consultation at 5pm on **14<sup>th</sup> April 2025**.



**1.12** Please make sure that your response clearly sets out which question or subject each of your comments relate to. **You must include your name and contact details**, as anonymous responses will not be accepted. Please also note that following the close of the consultation and once all comments have been processed, all responses will be made publicly available.

**1.13** We would encourage you to submit your response via our Consultation Portal: [www.tendringdc.oc2.uk](http://www.tendringdc.oc2.uk). However, responses can also be submitted in writing to:

Planning Policy  
Tendring District Council  
Town Hall  
Station Road  
Clacton on Sea  
CO15 0SE

**1.14** If you have any queries or problems in relation to the Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation, please contact the Planning Policy team by phone: **01255 686177** or email: [planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk).

**1.15** Following the close of the consultation exercise, the Planning Policy team will collate and summarise the representations received, and these will be reported to the Planning Policy & Local Plan Committee before the Council makes a decision on what should be included in the new Local Plan. The comments will then be used alongside the evidence we will be gathering to produce the Local Plan 'Preferred Options Document' which will be published for another round of public consultation.

## 2 Local Plan Review – Guiding Principles

### Section 1 of the Local Plan

2.1 The Council’s current Local Plan was adopted in two sections:

- **Section 1** was prepared jointly by Tendring District, Colchester City, and Braintree District Councils, and contains strategic policies that are common between all three authorities. Section 1 was examined first and was formally adopted by the three councils in 2021.
- **Section 2** contains policies that are specific to the Tendring District and was examined separately from Section 1. The examination of Section 2 took place in 2021, and the Plan was formally adopted by the Council in January 2022.

2.2 The main purpose of the shared Section 1 Local Plan was to facilitate the delivery of a Garden Community on the border of Tendring and Colchester as part of a wider strategy for growth across North Essex. The Garden Community now has its own Development Plan Document, with policies specific to that development, which in May 2024 was examined by a government-appointed Planning Inspector. Due to the advanced state of that document, and the ongoing joint working between TDC and Colchester City Council, it has not been necessary for Tendring, Colchester and Braintree to review their Local Plans jointly and instead the councils have been able to carry out their five-yearly Local Plan reviews independently – focussing on the issues most relevant to each area.

2.3 It is proposed, therefore, that the reviewed Local Plan will be a single document that will, on adoption, supersede both the existing Sections 1 and 2. The new Local Plans for Tendring and Colchester will however need to include a planning policy relating to the proposed Garden Community, to ensure the policy requirements set out in the shared Section 1 are carried forward. This policy will set out the approach to delivering that new community through partnership and cooperation between the two councils.

### Guiding Principles

2.4 In December 2023, the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee took the decision to commence the review of Tendring’s Local Plan. As part of that decision, they agreed on a set of ‘overarching principles’ that will guide the focus and scope of the review, to ensure that the review is undertaken in a structured manner. These principles were subsequently updated, to reflect the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024.

2.5 The principles are set out over the following pages, and key elements are discussed in further detail throughout this consultation document.

2.6 **FOCUS:** The Council will approach the review of the Local Plan with the intention of updating the current adopted Plan as opposed to a more fundamental re-write or starting completely from scratch. This will involve extending the Plan’s timeframe; making improvements to selected policies where necessary; topping up the supply of housing

and employment land to meet longer-term needs; and ensuring the Plan aligns with the latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 2.7 PROCESS:** The Council will update the Local Plan following the current statutory plan-making process which will include public consultation on issues and options, a first draft ‘preferred options’ document and a final ‘submission’ draft with the latter being submitted to the Secretary of State to be examined by a government-appointed Planning Inspector. The Council will aim to submit the updated Local Plan to the Secretary of State early in 2026. This will enable the Council to attribute increased weight to the emerging policies, following the five-year anniversary of the adoption of the current Local Plan.
- 2.8 EVIDENCE:** The review of the Local Plan will be informed by proportionate, necessary and affordable updates to relevant technical evidence – with the aim of ensuring the updated Plan has a sound basis whilst achieving best value for money for Tendring’s residents at a time of significant financial pressure.
- 2.9 STATUS:** The updated version of the Tendring District Local Plan will, on adoption, supersede both Section 1 and Section 2 of the existing Local Plan (2013-2033 and Beyond) which were adopted in 2021 and 2022 respectively and will then form part of the statutory ‘development plan’. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.10 TIMEFRAME:** The timeframe for the updated Local Plan will be extended by eight years to 2041 so that the Plan covers the 18-year period 2023-2041 i.e. with a statistical base date of 1st April 2023 and an end date of 31st March 2041. The aim will be to ensure a minimum of 15-years’ coverage beyond the anticipated date of adoption (in line with paragraph 22 of the NPPF).
- 2.11 FORMAT:** The general format, chapter headings and policy subject order in the updated Local Plan will broadly follow that of the current Section 2 Local Plan – accepting that some policies may be added and others deleted, as necessary. This will ensure a sensible level of continuity and understanding and to minimise confusion for residents, parish and town councils and other interested bodies - particularly given how recently the current Local Plan was put in place.
- 2.12 THE GARDEN COMMUNITY:** The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be carried forward into the updated Local Plan through the inclusion of a single policy agreed between Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council. This policy will discharge the Council’s requirements under the legal ‘duty to cooperate’ and will refer, as necessary, to the separate Development Plan Document (DPD) that contains more detailed expectations and requirements for the development. The policy will also set out the agreed position for the division of housing, employment land and gypsy and traveller pitch numbers between the two authorities for the extended period to 2041.
- 2.13 STRATEGIC POLICIES:** The list of policies set out in the contents pages of the updated Local Plan will indicate which of those policies are to be classed as ‘Strategic Policies’ in line with paragraph 21 of the NPPF. Strategic Policies are those expected to set out an

overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for:

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

**2.14 VISION AND OBJECTIVES:** The vision and objectives within Section 2 of the current Local Plan adopted in 2022 will be carried forward into the updated Local Plan to apply to the extended period to 2041. They will however be amended selectively and as necessary to reflect changes in national policy; updated evidence; the potential opportunities arising from Freeport status, particularly in relation to Harwich, Bathside Bay and the A120 corridor; and any implications of the new spatial strategy to accommodate the ambitious housing target set through the new methodology in government planning policy.

**2.15 SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY:** The ‘Settlement Hierarchy’ forming part of the overall spatial strategy for the Local Plan (Policy SPL1) is likely to be carried forward, broadly unchanged, from the existing into the updated Plan, if possible. Revisions to the Settlement Hierarchy may be required to reflect any spatial strategy involving the creation of new ‘garden villages’. The current settlement hierarchy promotes a sustainable pattern of growth that sees:

- Clacton, Harwich/Dovercourt and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community as the main focus for growth;
- the ‘smaller urban settlements’ of Frinton/Walton/Kirby Cross, Manningtree/Lawford/Mistley and Brightlingsea accommodating the second largest proportion of future growth;
- The ‘rural service centres’ of Alresford, Elmstead Market, Great Bentley, Little Clacton, St. Osyth, Thorpe le Soken and Weeley seeing modest increases in housing stock that is proportionate, achievable and sustainable; and
- other ‘smaller rural settlements’ across the District accommodating smaller-scale development that is sympathetic to their rural and often historic character.

**2.16** If, however, it becomes apparent that it is not possible to accommodate additional future growth to 2041 following this broad approach, the Council may need to consider alternative options that categorise some settlements differently.

**2.17 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS:** The updated Local Plan will give greater recognition to the role of Neighbourhood Plans and encouragement to town and parish councils, and other

community groups, to consider the production of Neighbourhood Plans to promote positive change in their areas to compliment, supplement and help guide the policies in the updated Local Plan.

- 2.18 SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES:** The updated Local Plan will continue to define settlements (both towns and villages) within ‘Settlement Development Boundaries’ as a means of managing the pattern of growth. These boundaries will be adjusted as necessary to accommodate additional growth to meet longer-term needs for housing and other development up to 2041 in accordance with the overarching spatial strategy.
- 2.19 HIGH QUALITY, BEAUTIFUL AND SUSTAINABLE DESIGN:** The updated Local Plan, in its approach to design and quality and other relevant policies, will be updated to better reflect the ambition within latest national policy to promote high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places.
- 2.20 INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS:** The updated Local Plan will include more guidance on the information required with planning applications when proposing development that might justify or result in the loss of a community facility, a care home, an employment site, a holiday park or other sites or buildings that the Council would otherwise seek to protect for their existing use.
- 2.21 OPEN SPACE AND SPORTS PROVISION:** The approach to the protection and delivery of open space and sports provision in the updated Local Plan will reflect both the Council’s updated strategies on open space and sports provision and latest evidence on quality and accessibility. For the development of these policies, the input of town and parish councils being particularly welcomed.
- 2.22 CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIUMS:** The policy for cemeteries and crematorium will be revisited to ensure it allows for future needs to be met and to reflect the growing demand and interest in alternative forms of burial.
- 2.23 HOUSING REQUIREMENT:** The updated Local Plan will need to plan for additional new homes over the extended 18-year period reflecting updated demographic projections and/or any new requirements of national planning policy. Approximately 10,000 homes are already expected to be delivered on sites allocated in the current adopted Local Plan and sites with planning permission or that are already under construction. However, additional sites will likely be required to address an increasing housing requirement and longer-term needs post 2033.
- 2.24 OPTIONS FOR ACCOMMODATING MORE HOMES:** To accommodate and deliver any ‘residual’ housing requirement, the Council will consider and assess a range of reasonable options, will consult the public and other interested parties on those options and will undertake a ‘sustainability appraisal’ of those options before selecting a preferred approach to include in the updated Local Plan. The higher the housing requirement, the greater the challenge of identifying an appropriate strategy and the more communities that are likely to be affected.

- 2.25 LIMITING ADDITIONAL HOUSING GROWTH AROUND CLACTON AND THE GARDEN COMMUNITY:** Significant housing development is already planned on sites on the edge of Clacton on Sea (most notably, approximately 1,700 homes at Hartley Gardens) and land at the new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, both through allocations in the current adopted Local Plan and from developments with planning permission or under construction. These developments are already expected to make a significant contribution towards housing growth in Tendring for an extended Local Plan period up to 2041. The options for accommodating any homes to address additional requirements are therefore unlikely to involve any significant additional housing growth around Clacton or the proposed Garden Community.
- 2.26 MAINTAINING STRATEGIC GREEN GAPS:** The Council will look to carry forward and potentially expand upon the ‘Strategic Green Gaps’ in the current Local Plan around Clacton; the Garden Community; Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross; Manningtree, Lawford & Mistley; and other communities in the District for the extended period to 2041. This is to ensure the principle of maintaining the separate identity of settlements and preventing the coalescence of settlements for the long-term carries forward into the future.
- 2.27 10% HOUSING ON SMALLER SITES:** In accordance with paragraph 69 of the NPPF, the updated Local Plan will seek to deliver at least 10% of all new homes on smaller sites of less than 1 hectare in size. This could include some developments in rural areas to enable villages to grow and thrive and to enhance and maintain the vitality of rural communities in line with paragraph 79 of the NPPF.
- 2.28 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL):** The Council will actively and positively explore opportunities to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule alongside the updated Local Plan as a means to secure financial contributions from developments across a range of sizes towards the delivery of new and improved infrastructure including transport, schools, health facilities, open spaces and others – with a proportion of funds going to town and parish councils. This will require technical evidence on infrastructure requirements and economic viability to justify the setting of an appropriate level of CIL which will apply to development on a ‘per square metre’ basis and which could vary across different types of development and different parts of the District. The introduction of CIL could be particularly important if the strategy for housing growth in the updated Local Plan includes an increase in small to medium-sized developments spread across different parts of the Tendring District.
- 2.29 HOUSING MIX AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** The Council will update its Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), either alone or in partnership with other councils, to provide up to date evidence on the mix of housing size, type and tenure likely to be required in the future - including the requirement for affordable housing. The Council will review the wording of the Local Plan’s affordable housing policy with the aim of maximising affordable housing delivery to meet the needs of lower-income households.
- 2.30 SELF-BUILD AND CUSTOM BUILT HOMES:** The Council will specifically review its policy on Self-Build and Custom-Built Homes to widen the opportunities for people to build their own homes and to support the local construction industry – balanced carefully against the need to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth and to prevent inappropriate

development in the countryside. This might involve setting out more detailed guidance on the information required with planning applications.

- 2.31 GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS:** The Council will use the findings of the latest Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to determine whether or not the updated Local Plan needs to identify any sites to meet projected needs for Gypsy and Traveller pitches – taking into account existing sites and the provision already being made through the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.
- 2.32 EMPLOYMENT LAND AND FREEPORT EAST:** The Council will specifically review the supply of land for new business and industrial development in the Local Plan, informed by updated technical evidence. In particular, the Council will consider the need to allocate additional land in and around Harwich and the A120/A133 corridor to maximise the potential for new business investment following the designation of ‘Freeport East’ and the start of the Bathside Bay Container Port expansion development; and to enable existing businesses in the District to relocate, expand and diversify and to free up property on existing employment sites for the establishment of new and/or growing local businesses.
- 2.33 ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN:** The Council will specifically review its policies on the protection and enhancement of ecology and biodiversity to ensure they properly reflect government requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) with the aim of increasing BNG expectations to above 20%. This could include the identification of specific sites for the creation and enhancement of ecology and biodiversity.
- 2.34 TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL:** The Council is likely to carry forward its current policies on retail and town centre development into the updated Local Plan – given that the current approach aligns with national policy and the Council’s existing technical evidence is considered to be fairly recent and up to date.
- 2.35 HOLIDAY AND CARAVAN PARKS:** The Council will review both its policies and evidence on the protection of caravan and holiday parks and, in particular, whether there is any justification for allowing certain sites to accommodate residential park homes. This is in response to a growing trend for park homes, improvements in the quality and efficiency of park homes, the challenges faced in accommodating new housing development and an increase in the unlawful occupation of some sites on a year-round basis.
- 2.36 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND IMPACT:** The Council will update its Landscape Character Assessment to provide an up-to-date baseline of evidence that reflects the beauty and sensitivity of Tendring’s landscape and seascape. Against this baseline, the Council will assess the landscape impact of specific development options that will inform any decisions on a preferred strategy. The review of the Local Plan will also provide an opportunity to consider the future role of specific landscape designations, such as the Coastal Protection Belt, in ensuring the District’s landscape character is, as far as is possible, protected and enhanced.
- 2.37 CLIMATE CHANGE:** The Council will substantially update its policies aimed at tackling climate change and contributing towards the achievement of Net Zero Carbon. This will include strengthening the requirements around energy and water efficient design,

renewable energy generation, electric car charging and waste reduction. Considerable evidence and policy development has been advanced by Essex County Council, working with other councils, that provides a robust basis for an improved set of viable policies.

**2.38 TRANSPORT PROVISION:** The Council will work with Essex County Council in its capacity as the local transport authority to assess and consider the transport implications of any options for future growth to 2041, utilising and updating existing sources of data and modelling as appropriate. There will be a general expectation that the majority of additional development will be located in such a way to maximise the opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport and to help encourage a shift away from a reliance on private car use – but with realistic expectation that this might not be possible in all locations, particularly rural areas. Where modelling work reveals a need for additional transport infrastructure, the Council will work with relevant bodies to ensure this is put in place – which may involve the use of developer contributions secured through legal agreements or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

### QUESTIONS

- 1) Do you have any comments on any of the guiding principles agreed by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee set out above? Are there any other principles the Council ought to follow?



## 3 Vision and Objectives

- 3.1** The Council’s current Local Plan sets out an overarching vision and associated set of objectives to guide the planning of the District up to 2033. The vision and objectives underpin many of the policies and proposals in the Local Plan that the Council, working with partners, are seeking to implement over the Plan’s timeframe.
- 3.2** In reviewing the Local Plan and extending its timeframe to 2041, it will be appropriate to revisit the vision and objectives. Because the vision and objectives in the current Local Plan were already designed to cover the period to 2033 (some eight years away from now) and were only adopted by the Council as recently as 2022, it would be reasonable not to expect the update to bring about any fundamental change in the overall approach and direction – assuming that a positive vision for the District in 2033 can sensibly form the basis of a positive vision for the extended period to 2041. However, the Local Plan review naturally provides an opportunity to check that the vision and objectives are accurate and reflect the most up-to-date position – including the opportunities arising from Freeport East; the priorities in the Council’s latest Corporate Plan (Our Vision); progress on the Levelling-Up projects in the District; and the Jaywick Sands Place Plan.
- 3.3** The Council has produced a refreshed version of the vision and objectives for the Local Plan taking into account some of the above factors and we would like to invite people’s comments.

### Vision for Tendring District

#### VISION

In 2041, the Tendring District will be a vibrant, healthy and attractive place to live, work and visit. It will have a thriving, resilient and prosperous economy that promotes sustainable economic growth, making sustainable use of its natural and historic environments, maritime connections and popularity as a visitor destination.

The District’s residents will be able to enjoy a safe and healthy quality of life in communities that offer a range of high-quality new housing that meets local needs, with job opportunities across a variety of employment sectors and other important services and facilities, including modern health, education and retail/leisure provision. Residents and visitors will be able to enjoy a variety of landscapes including a tidy coast, the open countryside with its elements of natural beauty, a diverse range of attractive historic settlements, landscapes and assets, and an integrated and expanding network of protected wildlife-rich areas which are conserved and enhanced. The District will be home to people of all ages and abilities, providing a range of activities, attractions and facilities that will appeal to the retired, the young and residents of working age; and will also provide for the specialist needs of all people ensuring, in particular, that children and young people have the knowledge and skills for a good start in life.

Tendring District's coastal area places economic, social and environmental considerations at the forefront of climate change and therefore there will be a need for adaptation and mitigation against climate change at the centre of sustainable development.

### Seaside Towns

Clacton-on-Sea will have established itself as the place everyone wants to live, and the economy will have seen a significant resurgence with new job opportunities; particularly in the business, retail, leisure, hospitality and health sectors. This growth will have been driven, in part, by the rejuvenation of the town's attractive and safe beaches and multi-million-pound private investment in its seafront attractions, alongside public investment of Levelling Up funding in redeveloping the town centre's library and civic area. The town will have seen the emergence of a variety of attractive shops, restaurants and cafes and leisure facilities, as well as the creation of new country parks, the modernisation of premises across its business and industrial parks and the construction of hundreds of new high-quality, energy efficient, accessible and spacious houses, bungalows and retirement complexes. The people of Clacton and the wider area will have access to modern health facilities including the Diagnostic Centre at Clacton Hospital.

Clacton will have preserved and enhanced its heritage features and maintained its tourism roots, building a thriving local tourism industry. But as well as attracting holiday makers, the town will provide a range of activities and attractions that older residents can enjoy with their children and grandchildren at the weekends and during the school holidays, and a strong evening economy where people from the town and surrounding areas will come for a fun and relaxing evening with their friends and colleagues in some of the town's new and trendy restaurants, nightclubs and entertainment venues.

In Jaywick Sands, regeneration projects will continue to raise the standard of living in this part of Clacton – building on the success of the Sunspot Workspace Scheme, renewed sea defences, improved housing conditions and the delivery of other projects in the Jaywick Sands Place Plan. The people of Jaywick Sands will be able to enjoy a sustainable community with associated economic, community and employment opportunities.

Frinton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze will enjoy year-round prosperity whilst retaining their very distinctive individual characteristics. Walton will have seen the biggest change following an injection of new housing, holiday accommodation, shops and leisure attractions bringing vitality to the town centre and core visitor areas, with improved medical facilities serving the resident population. Frinton will have also seen some new homes and improvements to public spaces whilst continuing to deliver a unique and independent shopping and leisure offer to its residents and its visitors. Both settlements will have succeeded in preserving and enhancing their special historic character.

## Harwich, Freeport East and the A120 Corridor

The Harwich area will have experienced an economic resurgence following the designation of Harwich Port and other sites along the A120 corridor as part of 'Freeport East' (alongside Felixstowe Port and Gateway 14 in Suffolk). The tax, customs and other business incentives offered by Freeport status will have resulted in considerable private investment and new jobs for local people in industrial activities, logistics and emerging green energy sectors with new developments at Bathside Bay, Horsley Cross and other sites with good access to the A120 and the local population. Bathside Bay will be playing a critical role in the medium term, servicing the expansion, construction and maintenance of offshore wind farms with more jobs to come in the long-term through the construction and completion of a new container port and associated small boat harbour.

The increase in work opportunities will have generated a significant demand for training facilities and new homes in the Harwich and Dovercourt area particularly for working people and families both in the local area and moving in from elsewhere. This boost in demand in the housing market will have resulted in a number of high-quality housing developments. The Old Town of Harwich will offer new leisure activities and visitor attractions associated with its maritime history. Dovercourt Town Centre and seafront will have also improved its offer of a year-round shopping and leisure experience following significant public investment through the Levelling-Up Fund in its public spaces and improved connections. These benefits will have taken place whilst continuing to preserve and enhance the town's maritime heritage through careful consideration of its associated buildings, structures and coastal landscapes.

## Garden Villages

In order to meet the needs of a growing population, one or more new strategically located and comprehensively planned Garden Villages will be developed in accordance with detailed masterplanning and site-specific planning policies.

Our Garden Villages will provide necessary infrastructure and services, enabling residents to meet their day to day needs locally, reducing reliance on car travel. Designed to the highest standards, these villages will embody best practices in urban design and place-making, setting a benchmark for future developments in Tendring.

These exemplar communities will not only provide high-quality housing but also foster a sense of community and well-being, with green spaces, recreational facilities, and community infrastructure. By integrating innovative and sustainable design, our Garden Villages will create thriving, resilient communities that enhance the quality of life for all residents.

## Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

The neighbouring City of Colchester will have been the focus for significant growth in jobs and housing and will have continued to develop a thriving economy that will benefit Tendring District's residents, many of whom commute into the town each day for work. A new Garden Community will be developed to the east of Colchester, developed in accordance with a detailed Development Plan Document (DPD) and positive collaborative working with Colchester City Council, Essex County Council and the lead developers, which takes advantage of its strategic position in relation to Colchester and its proximity to the university to maximise the economic benefits to current and future residents of Tendring. The Garden Community will provide necessary infrastructure and facilities and a high-quality of built and urban design. With major investment in rapid transit services to the town centre, pedestrian and cycle connections and a new link road between the A120 and A133, the management of traffic congestion will have improved, along with provision of upgraded broadband infrastructure and services.

The University of Essex will be one of the leading research and development facilities in the country and, as a result, businesses will have moved to the area to benefit from its expertise and improved transport links. The new Garden Community crossing the Colchester City and Tendring District boundary will be a much sought-after place to live. It will provide the right balance of jobs, housing and infrastructure in the right locations and will attract residents and businesses who value innovation, community cohesion and a high-quality environment, and who will be provided with opportunities to take an active role in managing the community to ensure its continuing success.

Residents will live in high-quality and innovatively designed homes, which accommodate a variety of needs and aspirations and are located in well-designed neighbourhoods where they can meet their day-to-day needs. There will be a network of tree-lined streets and green spaces, incorporating and enhancing existing landscape features and also accommodating safe and attractive routes and space for sustainable drainage solutions; and leisure and recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors of the garden community.

Suitable models for the long-term stewardship of community assets will be established and funded to provide long term management and governance of assets. All Garden City principles as specified in the North Essex Garden Communities Charter will be positively embraced including where appropriate, new approaches to delivery and partnership working for the benefit of the new community. Central to this will be the comprehensive planning and development of the garden community, and the aligned delivery of homes and supporting infrastructure.

### Rural Heartland

In the District's substantial rural heartland, the smaller towns of Manningtree, Lawford, Mistley and Brightlingsea, along with some of the larger villages, will have seen varying levels of new housing and employment development that have helped to support local shops and services, address local issues, provide

for local needs and facilitate investment by local businesses in job opportunities. In some of the District's more remote villages, hamlets and other rural communities a flexible approach to small-scale housing development has helped keep those communities vibrant. Improvements to the telecommunications network and internet broadband services have given these areas a new lease of life with more people able to work, shop and learn from the comfort of their own home.

An increasing number of communities will be developing their own Neighbourhood Plans and promoting community-led development as a means of bringing about positive changes and meeting specific needs and aspirations of local people and businesses.

Throughout the District's countryside and farming communities, a diverse variety of employment and leisure opportunities will have grown up in support of the rural economy and achieving significant investment in securing the long-term custodianship of the environment. Many parts of the District will have witnessed the creation of diverse wildlife habitats that expand upon and enhance Tendring's intrinsic network of green infrastructure and attractive natural landscapes. Growth in ecology over the District will have not only helped support the diversification of the rural economy but will have made a critical and meaningful contribution in mitigating and adapting to climate change along with the delivery ambitious targets for biodiversity net gain.

Any new development will need to obtain the following outcomes:

1. Creating the right balance of jobs, housing and infrastructure;
2. Ensuring that development is sustainable in terms of location, use and form;
3. Balancing the development needs of the District with the protection and enhancement of the natural, historic and built environment;
4. Excellent services and facilities easily accessed by local communities and businesses;
5. More walkable places and an excellent choice of ways to travel;
6. Vibrant, well-connected town and productive countryside;
7. Avoid, then mitigate and, as a last resort, compensate for adverse impacts of development on the built, historic and natural environment to achieve a net gain in biodiversity while capitalising on these features;
8. Stronger, more self-reliant town and countryside with thriving centres;
9. Enhanced quality of life for all residents;
10. Working with partners and residents to develop a place where people really matter;
11. All new developments should reduce the causes of, adapt to and mitigate against climate change.

## **Objective 1: Housing Delivery**

- To provide new dwellings within Tendring District up to 2041 of sufficient variety in terms of location of sites, size, types, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of a growing and ageing population in full.
- To deliver high quality sustainable new communities.

### **Objective 2: Employment/Commercial**

- To create the conditions for economic growth and employment opportunities across a range of economic sectors including established business sectors and those sectors projected to grow in the future such as renewable energy and care and assisted living.
- To provide for the development of employment land on a variety of sites to support a diversity of employment opportunities and to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which will reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth in the period up to 2041.

### **Objective 3: Town Centre Development**

- To promote the vitality and viability of the town centres through the promotion of retail and other appropriate uses, exploiting the benefit of enhanced growth of the towns whilst retaining the best and valued aspects of their existing character, as well as responding appropriately to changes in the way people enjoy shopping and other leisure activities, and competition for trade arising from other centres, both within and outside of the District.

### **Objective 4: Infrastructure Provision**

- To make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure and ensure sustainable transport opportunities are promoted in all new development. Where additional capacity is required in the form of new or upgraded transport infrastructure, to ensure this is provided as necessary in connection with new development.
- To enable provision of upgraded broadband infrastructure and services.

- To ensure that new growth brings opportunities to enhance existing services, facilities and infrastructure for the benefit of existing and new communities.
- To ensure that flood defence infrastructure is considered so that future developments take into consideration the impacts of climate change.
- To ensure there is adequate capacity in the foul water sewerage infrastructure to meet existing and future needs, and to safeguard water quality and the special environment of the District.

### **Objective 5: Education and Health**

- To improve and provide good quality educational opportunities and prospects for Tendring's residents as part of sustainable community strategy. This includes practical vocational training and apprenticeships.
- To work with partners in the National Health Service, local health organisations, Essex County Council and local community groups to ensure adequate provision of healthcare and multi-use facilities to support growing communities.
- To work with Public Health to promote and encourage healthy lifestyles through developments and planning to ensure that the people of Tendring have opportunities to be as healthy as possible.

### **Objective 6: Sustainability**

- To locate development within Tendring District where it will provide the opportunity for people to satisfy their needs for employment, shopping, education, and other services locally or in locations which minimise the need to travel and where there are modes of transport available in addition to the use of the car.

### **Objective 7: The Historic Environment**

- To conserve and enhance Tendring District’s historic environment, including heritage; respecting historic buildings and their settings; heritage assets; landscapes; links; and views.

### **Objective 8: Biodiversity**

- To provide a network of interconnected multi-functional natural green and blue spaces which secures a net gain in biodiversity and geodiversity; promotes healthy lifestyles; and enhances the quality of the natural and built environment.

### **Objective 9: Water and Flood Risk**

- To reduce the risk of all types of flooding by securing the appropriate location and design of new development (incorporating SuDs where appropriate), having regard to the likely impact of climate change.

### **Objective 10: Tourism Promotion**

- To work with partners to provide an enhanced environment for tourism and the maritime sector and its associated services.

### **Objective 11: Climate Change**

- To provide developments that reduce carbon emissions and are ready to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

## **QUESTIONS**

- 2)** Do you agree with the updated Vision and Objectives for the future of Tendring as set out above?
- 3)** Would you suggest any changes?



## 4 Sustainable Places

- 4.1** The Council’s current Local Plan includes a Chapter entitled ‘Sustainable Places’ which, importantly, sets out the overall ‘spatial strategy’ and policies for managing the pattern of growth across the District as well as the main policy on design, functionality and compatibility will apply in the determination of most planning applications the Council receives.
- 4.2** Over the last ten years, 6,500 new homes have already been built in Tendring following this approach with a further 7,000 homes still to come between now and 2033 on sites that are already under construction or with planning permission and on sites already allocated for development in the existing Local Plan. Some of the larger developments proposed in the existing Local Plan (including the new Garden Community near Colchester and the Rouses Farm, Hartley Gardens and Oakwood Park developments on the edge of Clacton) are also expected to deliver new homes after 2033, potentially adding a further 3,000 homes between 2033 and 2041.
- 4.3** In reviewing the Local Plan and extending its timeframe to 2041, the Council might need to identify land for even more housing to keep up with projected population growth over that longer-term period and to comply with latest government requirements to boost housebuilding across the country. The Council will be carrying out further analysis this year to determine how much, if any, new extra housing might be needed – which, based on current government policy, could potentially be as much as 7,000 to 8,000 additional homes, over and above the 10,000 already accounted for in the current Local Plan.
- 4.4** Accordingly, through the review of the Local Plan, the Council will need to consider whether additional housing can be delivered, in the longer-term, following a similar spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy in the current Local Plan, or if a change in approach is going to be needed.
- 4.5** The spatial strategy for growth is particularly important for guiding the location for the housing development needed in the future to meet projected population growth and government requirements. The strategy in the current Local Plan is designed to distribute new housing across the District in line with a ‘settlement hierarchy’ designed to prioritise locations with access to the strategic road network, public transport and which have the potential to offer the widest range of services. In very simple terms, this approach directs most new housing to sites within or on the edge of the District’s existing larger towns of Clacton and Harwich and at the new ‘Colchester Borders Garden Community’ being planned on land in the west of Tendring; with lesser amounts of development in and around the District’s smaller towns and larger villages and much tighter limits on development in around our smaller and more remote rural villages and the wider countryside.
- 4.6** The settlement hierarchy in Policy SPL1 of the current Local Plan categorises locations in the District in four tiers as follows:

## Settlement Hierarchy

### **Tier 1: Strategic Urban Settlements and the Garden Community:**

- Clacton on Sea and Jaywick Sands
- Harwich and Dovercourt (which includes Parkeston and part of Ramsey)
- Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

**4.7** These locations have (or will have) the largest populations and a wide range of infrastructure and facilities, making them the most sustainable locations for growth. These settlements provide better opportunities for the use of public transport, walking and cycling to get from place to place and, because they have established town centres, employment areas and infrastructure, they provide locations where, with the right action, it is possible to create a significant number of additional new jobs and deliver sustainable housing growth on a larger scale. Each of these locations is receiving government funding aimed at stimulating the economy and/or delivering housing. Over the last ten years, 1,600 new homes were built in and around Clacton and Harwich and another 5,700 homes are already expected to be built between now and 2041 through existing Local Plan allocations and planning permissions. Development at the new Garden Community is expected to begin in 2026 and could deliver around 2,000 homes towards Tendring's housing requirements up to 2041.

**4.8** The Council believes that sufficient growth both for Clacton and the new Garden Community is already planned for between now and 2041 as set out in the guiding principles in Chapter 2. There could however be scope for Harwich and Dovercourt to accommodate a bigger increase in housing development through the Local Plan, particularly with the potential for new jobs to be created in the area as part of the Freeport East project.

### QUESTIONS

- 4)** Do you agree that Clacton, Harwich, and the proposed Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community should continue to be a key focus for future growth in Tendring through the Local Plan?
- 5)** Do you agree that Clacton and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community are already delivering enough housing development between now and 2041 through proposals in the existing Local Plan and therefore any additional homes that might be needed will need to be built elsewhere?
- 6)** Should any other locations in Tendring be included in Tier 1 of the settlement hierarchy to be a focus for major growth?
- 7)** Do you agree that Harwich and Dovercourt could, if needed, accommodate a significant increase in new homes between 2033 and 2041, particularly if there is potential for

hundreds of new jobs to be created at developments at Bathside Bay and Freeport sites along the A120 corridor?

### **Tier 2: Smaller Urban Settlements:**

- Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross
- Manningtree, Lawford & Mistley
- Brightlingsea

**4.9** These locations have large populations relative to rural settlements and benefit from a range of existing infrastructure and facilities. These settlements provide a range of opportunities for the use of public transport, walking and cycling and because they have established town centres, employment areas and infrastructure, they provide locations where, with the right action, it is possible to create a significant number of additional new jobs and deliver sustainable housing growth on a large scale. Over the last ten years, these locations have grown by 1,700 homes with most of the development taking place in and around Kirby Cross, Walton, Lawford and Mistley. A further 1,400 homes are expected to be built in these locations up to 2033 through existing Local Plan allocations and planning permissions.

**4.10** The Council believes there could be some scope for these locations to accommodate further additional housing development, if needed, between 2033 and 2041, but there will be practical limits to how much – particularly for Brightlingsea which only has one road in and out, and is completely surrounded by the flood zone.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 8)** Do you agree that Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross; Manningtree, Lawford & Mistley; and Brightlingsea should continue to be listed as the locations for the second biggest proportion of the District's future housing growth?
- 9)** Should any other locations in Tendring be included in Tier 2 of the settlement hierarchy to accommodate a larger proportion of future growth?
- 10)** Do you agree that these locations might be able to accommodate further additional housing development in the period 2033-2041?

### **Tier 3: Rural Service Centres:**

- Alresford
- Elmstead Market
- Great Bentley
- Little Clacton

- St. Osyth
- Thorpe le Soken
- Weeley

**4.11** For these villages, the current Local Plan identifies opportunities for a proportion of Tendring’s growth. Developments in these locations are intended to be of a scale that is proportionate, achievable and sustainable for each of the settlements concerned having regard to the existing size and character of each settlement; their more limited range of jobs, shops, services and facilities; and any physical, environmental or infrastructure constraints. These developments will make a meaningful contribution toward addressing local housing needs, supporting the village economy and assisting with the overall housing growth proposed for the District. Over the last ten years, these villages have seen significant growth with 1,100 new homes having already been built and a further 1,200 expected between now and 2033 through existing Local Plan allocations and planning permissions.

**4.12** The Council believes that some of these villages might be able to accommodate a proportionate amount of additional housing development in the period 2033 to 2041, but that the villages with railway stations (Alresford, Great Bentley, Thorpe and Weeley) might offer better locations for development than those villages without (Elmstead Market, Little Clacton and St. Osyth) - offering a wider range of opportunities to use public transport.

### QUESTIONS

- 11)** Do you agree that the seven villages listed above should continue to be listed as ‘rural service centres’ in Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy to accommodate a proportionate amount of the District’s future housing growth?
- 12)** Should any of the District’s other villages be included in Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy to accommodate a proportionate amount of Tendring’s growth?
- 13)** Do you agree that these villages might be able to accommodate some additional development between 2033 and 2041?
- 14)** Do you agree that the villages with railway stations offer better locations for future development than those without?
- 15)** Could the villages with railway stations be the focus for a more radical strategy for major long-term growth?
- 16)** Do you agree that Elmstead Market village should be protected against any additional development given the amount of development already underway in the village, its proximity to the proposed Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and the introduction of a new Neighbourhood Plan?

**Tier 4: Smaller Rural Settlements:**

- Ardleigh
- Beaumont-Cum-Moze
- Bradfield
- Frating
- Great Bromley
- Great Holland
- Great Oakley
- Kirby-le-Soken
- Little Bentley
- Little Bromley
- Little Oakley
- Ramsey Village
- Tendring
- Thorpe Station and Thorpe Maltings
- Thorrington
- Weeley Heath
- Wix
- Wrabness

**4.13** Other smaller villages within Tendring District’s rural heartland have much less in the way of job opportunities, local services, facilities and other infrastructure. Residents of these smaller villages are often reliant on neighbouring towns and villages for work, shopping and other services and frequently need to travel distances either by public transport (if it is available) or, more often than not, by private car. Because of this, these smaller villages are considered to be the least sustainable locations for growth and there is a concern that encouraging too much development in these areas will only serve to increase the number of people having to rely on cars to go about their everyday lives. However, these villages are still under pressure to grow and some small-scale development which is sympathetic to the rural and often historic character of the settlement might help younger people to continue to live in the area, keep local shops and services viable, and help bring balance to an ageing population.

**4.14** Over the last ten years, these settlements have seen around 700 new homes delivered. The majority of new development has taken place in Weeley Heath, Thorrington, Ardleigh and Frating, with each of these settlements growing by between 70 and 110 new dwellings over the period 2013-2023.

### QUESTIONS

- 17)** Do you agree that the villages and settlements listed above should continue to be listed as ‘smaller rural settlements’ in Tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy where a limited amount of housing development could be allowed to happen?

- 18) Are there any other villages or settlements in the District which aren't currently in the settlement hierarchy that should be included in this tier?
- 19) Should any of these locations accommodate more housing development, perhaps through larger scale developments or the establishment of a new Garden Village?
- 20) Should any of these locations be removed from the settlement hierarchy altogether, to discourage any further development?
- 21) Do you agree that Ardleigh village should be protected against additional housing development given its proximity to the proposed Tendring Colchester Garden Community and the introduction of a new Neighbourhood Plan?

### Planning for Future Growth – Considering Options for a New Spatial Strategy

- 4.15 National policy will require the Tendring District Local Plan to plan for the delivery of 1,034 new homes in Tendring every year from 2026. This is a substantial increase from the 550 homes requirement in the adopted Local Plan and means the updated Local Plan will need to allocate significantly more land above and beyond current housing allocations and sites with planning permission. The options available for delivering this level of new housing are limited, and the four spatial strategy options set out below are similar in many ways.
- 4.16 Through this Issues & Options consultation, the Council is inviting people to comment on a series of hypothetical options for accommodating an increase in housebuilding, potentially planning for up to 8,000 extra homes over the period to 2041.
- 4.17 Each of the options set out over the following pages include advantages and disadvantages, and it's possible that any strategy the Council ultimately chooses could be a variation on one or more of the options presented. The feedback provided in response to these initial options will guide decision-making over the coming months, and the Council intends to publish its preferred option for further consultation later on in 2025.

#### Harwich

- 4.18 In the adopted Local Plan, Harwich, Clacton and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community are each categorised as Strategic Urban Settlements. These are the largest settlements in the District and could logically be expected to accommodate the greatest levels of growth. The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is expected to deliver 7,500 new homes, Clacton has around 5,000 new homes planned, whereas Harwich is only currently expected to deliver an additional 715 new homes over the coming years.
- 4.19 Harwich & Dovercourt is therefore a location for significant growth in all four of the options with the expectation that around 2,000 new homes could be delivered in the area,

capitalising on the town's existing infrastructure and economic potential, particularly with the Freeport status and port developments.

### **Proportionate Growth**

- 4.20** To be able to deliver the number of homes required over the extended Local Plan period to 2041, all areas of the District will need to accommodate a degree of new development. Larger villages (for example Great Bentley or Thorpe le Soken) with a fair range of jobs, shops, services and facilities and access to rail services could accommodate more development than those (e.g. St. Osyth) without railway stations. In turn, medium-sized villages (like Thorrington, Great Oakley, or Bradfield) with less in the way of jobs, shops, services and facilities could see lower levels of development; and smaller and more remote villages (like Beaumont Cum-Moze, Little Bentley or Little Bromley) might only reasonably be expected to accommodate small increases in housing.
- 4.21** In each of the four options, development is expected across each part of the District – although the scale of development varies in some settlements depending on the thrust of the strategy.
- 4.22** Option A, for example, proposes a greater level of growth in villages on the Colchester to Clacton railway line – which would maximise the opportunity for future residents to use the rail network to travel between towns and villages, reducing the impact on the highway network. Options B-D, on the other hand, suggest a lower number of homes in these railway villages – with a greater number of dwellings being delivered in key locations on the strategic highway network.
- 4.23** In applying a sustainable, fair and proportionate level approach to the distribution of housing growth, medium-sized towns in the District (such as Frinton & Walton; Manningtree, Lawford & Mistley; and Brightlingsea) are likely to need to bear a greater number of new homes than the smaller villages. These settlements benefit from a greater level of existing services and infrastructure, public transport connections and employment opportunities, and the proposed growth presents the opportunity to secure improvements to these facilities to enable them to better serve existing and future residents.

### **Garden Villages**

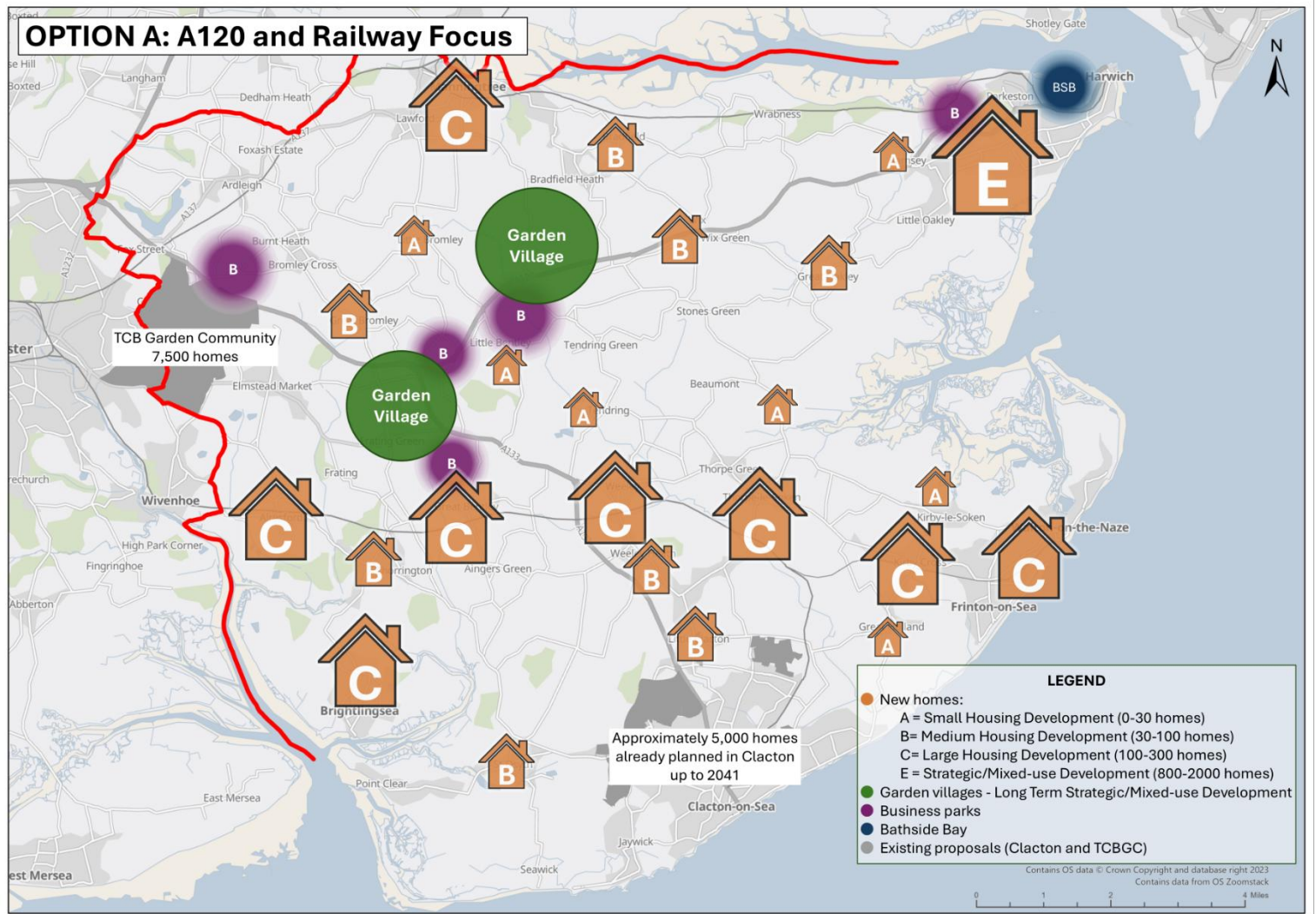
- 4.24** Even with what is considered to be high levels of growth in many parts of the District, there is still a shortfall in the number of homes that can be delivered by expanding and developing existing settlements. In order to stand a realistic chance of delivering on the Government's housing requirement for Tendring, a more radical approach will be necessary – to ensure our existing towns and villages are not overwhelmed by new developments and that the appropriate infrastructure, services and jobs can be delivered alongside new housing.
- 4.25** Each of the four options below propose the creation of entirely new 'Garden Villages' that could deliver around 2,000 homes in the period up to 2041 and potentially expand to up to 5,000 homes in the decades that follow. Delivered in strategically important locations on the District's transport network, these garden villages would be planned from the outset to deliver new jobs, shops, services and facilities along with infrastructure that

could benefit the wider district as a whole. The suggested locations reflect ideas that have been put forward in the past – either by the Council or by landowners and developers. The number of garden villages varies between options and is relative to the level of growth elsewhere in the District.



## Option A – A120 and Railway Focus

**4.26** In addition to significant growth at Harwich, and smaller scale development around villages across the District, this option proposes the establishment of two new garden villages of between 1,500 and 5,000 homes – one in the Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green area and one at Horsley Cross, as part of an A120-focussed growth strategy delivering road connectivity improvements. Medium levels of growth are also proposed at the larger villages with a railway station, and similar levels at Frinton and Walton; Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley; and Brightlingsea.



### Headlines

- Harwich & Dovercourt Area to accommodate around 2,000 new homes in the period up to 2041.
- The establishment of two strategically located garden villages, at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green and Horsley Cross, delivering up to 1,500 homes each up to 2041, and potentially expanding to 5,000 homes in total by the 2050s.
- Around 1,500 new homes spread between the larger villages with railway stations.
- Medium-sized towns (Frinton/Walton, Manningtree/Lawford/Mistley, and Brightlingsea) to accommodate (between them) around 1,000 new homes.

- 500 new homes to be delivered through smaller developments in and around other villages in the District.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locates a significant number of new homes within 800 metres walking distance of a railway station so that residents have maximum opportunity to travel between Clacton, Walton and Colchester using public transport rather than private cars.</li> <li>• In theory, could result in fewer car journeys and less carbon emissions and traffic than other options.</li> <li>• Would strengthen the case for more investment in rail services and the facilities at railway stations.</li> <li>• Growth in the Harwich area will reflect and support the economic growth and job opportunities at Bathside Bay and Freeport sites.</li> <li>• Brings the scale of housing growth at Harwich more in line with the strategic growth already planned at Clacton and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.</li> <li>• Development at scale enables a more efficient, more coordinated, and less complicated approach to the delivery and ongoing maintenance of new infrastructure – particularly schools, health facilities, transport provision and open spaces.</li> <li>• Multiple opportunities for small and medium-sized building firms, local builders as tradesman to find work.</li> <li>• New garden villages would be larger developments of between 2,000 and 5,000 homes that provide not only for development during the extended timeframe of the Local Plan to 2041, but beyond that into subsequent plan-periods.</li> <li>• The Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green option offers the opportunity to improve north/south connectivity in the District, both through the creation of a multi-directional A120/A133 interchange, and by extending the Colchester rapid transit service to Frating and beyond, improving access, by bus, for surrounding communities and nearby rail services.</li> <li>• Maximum opportunities for young people to obtain housing in the community they've grown up in, including in the rural areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alresford, Great Bentley, Weeley, Thorpe and Kirby have already seen significant development in recent years and further development at this scale would continue to profoundly alter their character.</li> <li>• Risk that development in these locations will be more attractive to incomers to the District rather than local people with the possibility that a large proportion of new residents will commute out of the area for work rather than find employment or set up businesses in the Tendring area.</li> <li>• A Garden Village at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green would affect a lot of residents and totally transform the existing village – this approach would require very strong justification and overriding public benefits for existing residents.</li> <li>• Practical limits to the amount of development the Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross area and Brightlingsea could accommodate without significantly impacting on their sensitive landscapes and local character.</li> <li>• A Garden Village in the west of the District would be very close to the TCB Garden Community and risks competing with it for house sales, potentially saturating the market and slowing the rate of development – risking housing delivery targets.</li> <li>• Many areas of the District will be under construction for a long period of time, with associated issues with construction traffic, noise, and dust.</li> <li>• Still involves a degree of smaller-scale development across other parts of the District with smaller developments providing less scope to deliver new infrastructure on site, whilst still placing pressure on existing infrastructure, services, and facilities - including emergency services.</li> <li>• Many developments will be in locations that are a long distance from jobs, shops, services, and facilities – resulting in the likelihood of more car journeys, carbon emissions and traffic.</li> <li>• There would be a greater reliance on the need to secure financial contributions from multiple new development and greater pressure on the Council and other public sector partners to spend those contributions in the right way and at the right time.</li> <li>• Garden Villages will only be successful if significant new infrastructure, services, and facilities are delivered ahead of new homes.</li> </ul>

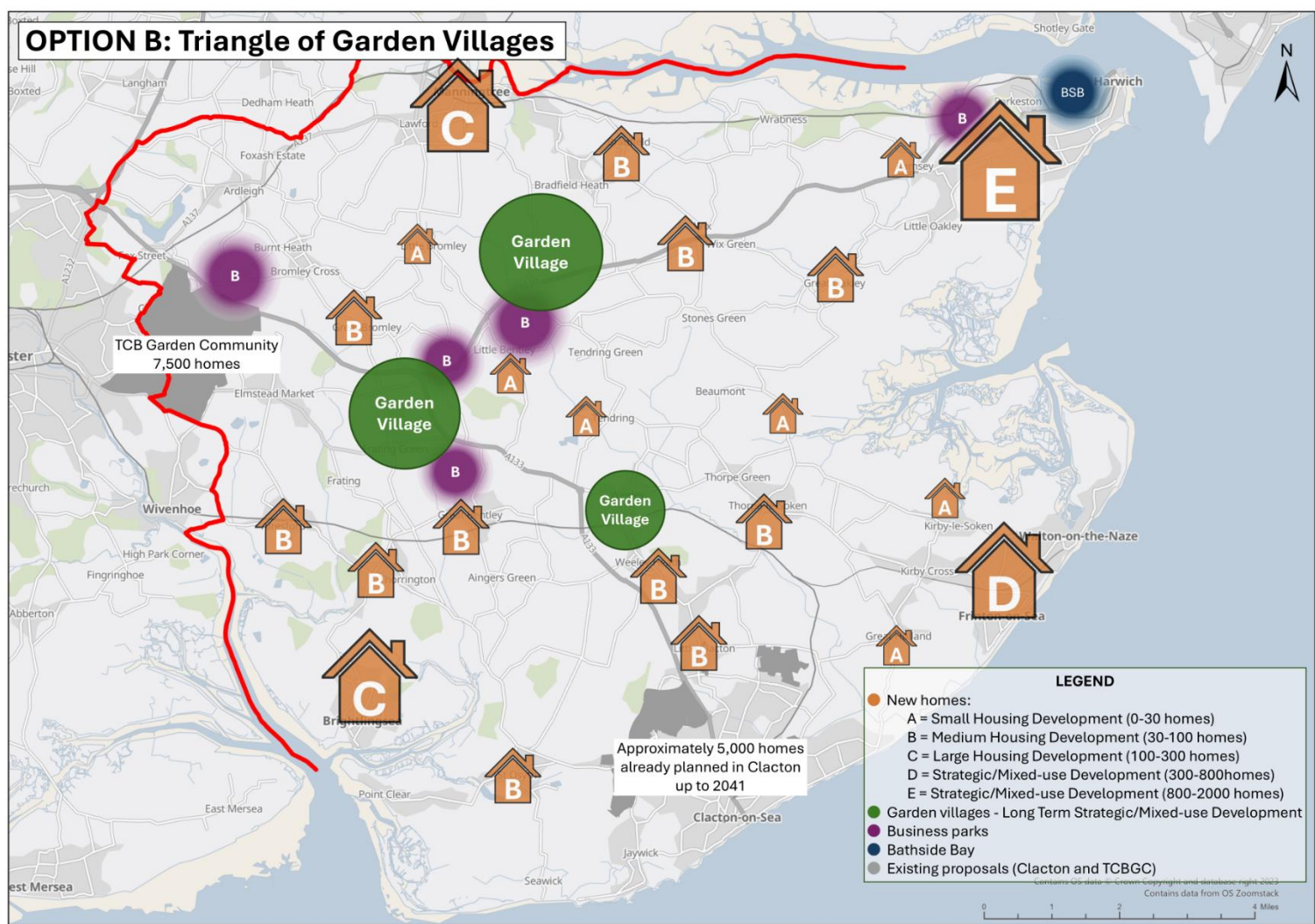
## QUESTIONS

**22)** Do you think there are any other **advantages** to Option A (A120 and Railway Focus)?

**23)** Do you think there are any other **disadvantages** to Option A (A120 and Railway Focus)?

## Option B – Central Triangle of Garden Villages

**4.27** In addition to significant growth around Harwich, and smaller scale development around villages across the District, this option (like Option A) proposes two new garden villages – one at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green and one at Horsley Cross, as part of an A120-focussed growth strategy delivering road connectivity improvements. A further new garden village achieved through expansion at Weeley is proposed, benefitting from the village’s central location in the District, with good rail and road connections, and delivering development of a scale (around 1,500 homes) that will secure new facilities the appropriate infrastructure improvements to ensure the needs of existing and future residents can be met. Villages on the Clacton railway line will experience a level of growth proportionate to their existing size, while medium levels of growth are also proposed at Frinton and Walton; Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley; and Brightlingsea.



### Headlines

- Harwich & Dovercourt Area to accommodate around 2,000 new homes in the period up to 2041.
- The establishment of two strategically located garden villages, at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green and Horsley Cross, delivering up to 1,500 homes each up to 2041, and potentially expanding to 5,000 homes in total by the 2050s.

- A third garden village at Weeley, delivering around 1,500 new homes through strategic expansion with good access to the rail and road networks.
- Medium-sized towns (Frinton/Walton, Manningtree/Lawford/Mistley, and Brightlingsea) to accommodate (between them) around 1,000 new homes.
- Proportionate levels of growth at medium-sized and smaller villages across the District.
- 500 new homes to be delivered through smaller developments in and around other villages in the District.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focussing Development at Weeley, rather than along the railway line, will ensure good access to the road network as well as the rail network.</li> <li>• Growth in the Harwich area will reflect and support the economic growth and job opportunities at Bathside Bay and Freeport sites.</li> <li>• Brings the scale of housing growth at Harwich more in line with the strategic growth already planned at Clacton and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.</li> <li>• Development at scale enables a more efficient, more coordinated, and less complicated approach to the delivery and ongoing maintenance of new infrastructure – particularly schools, health facilities, transport provision and open spaces.</li> <li>• Multiple opportunities for small and medium-sized building firms, local builders as tradesman to find work.</li> <li>• New garden villages would be larger developments of between 2,000 and 5,000 homes that provide not only for development during the extended timeframe of the Local Plan to 2041, but beyond that into subsequent plan-periods.</li> <li>• The Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green option offers the opportunity to improve north/south connectivity in the District, both through the creation of a multi-directional A120/A133 interchange, and by extending the Colchester rapid transit service to Frating and beyond, improving access, by bus, for surrounding communities and nearby rail services.</li> <li>• Maximum opportunities for young people to obtain housing in the community they've grown up in, including in the rural areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Garden Village at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green and Weeley would affect a lot of residents and totally transform the existing villages – this approach would require very strong justification and overriding public benefits for existing residents.</li> <li>• Practical limits to the amount of development the Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross area and Brightlingsea could accommodate without significantly impacting on their sensitive landscapes and local character.</li> <li>• A Garden Village in the west of the District would be very close to the TCB Garden Community and risks competing with it for house sales, potentially saturating the market and slowing the rate of development – risking housing delivery targets.</li> <li>• Many areas of the District will be under construction for a long period of time, with associated issues with construction traffic, noise, and dust.</li> <li>• Still involves a degree of smaller-scale development across other parts of the District with smaller developments providing less scope to deliver new infrastructure on site, whilst still placing pressure on existing infrastructure, services, and facilities - including emergency services.</li> <li>• Many developments will be in locations that are a long distance from jobs, shops, services, and facilities – resulting in the likelihood of more car journeys, carbon emissions and traffic.</li> <li>• There would be a greater reliance on the need to secure financial contributions from multiple new development and greater pressure on the Council and other public sector partners to spend those contributions in the right way and at the right time.</li> <li>• Garden Villages will only be successful if significant new infrastructure, services, and facilities are delivered ahead of new homes.</li> </ul>

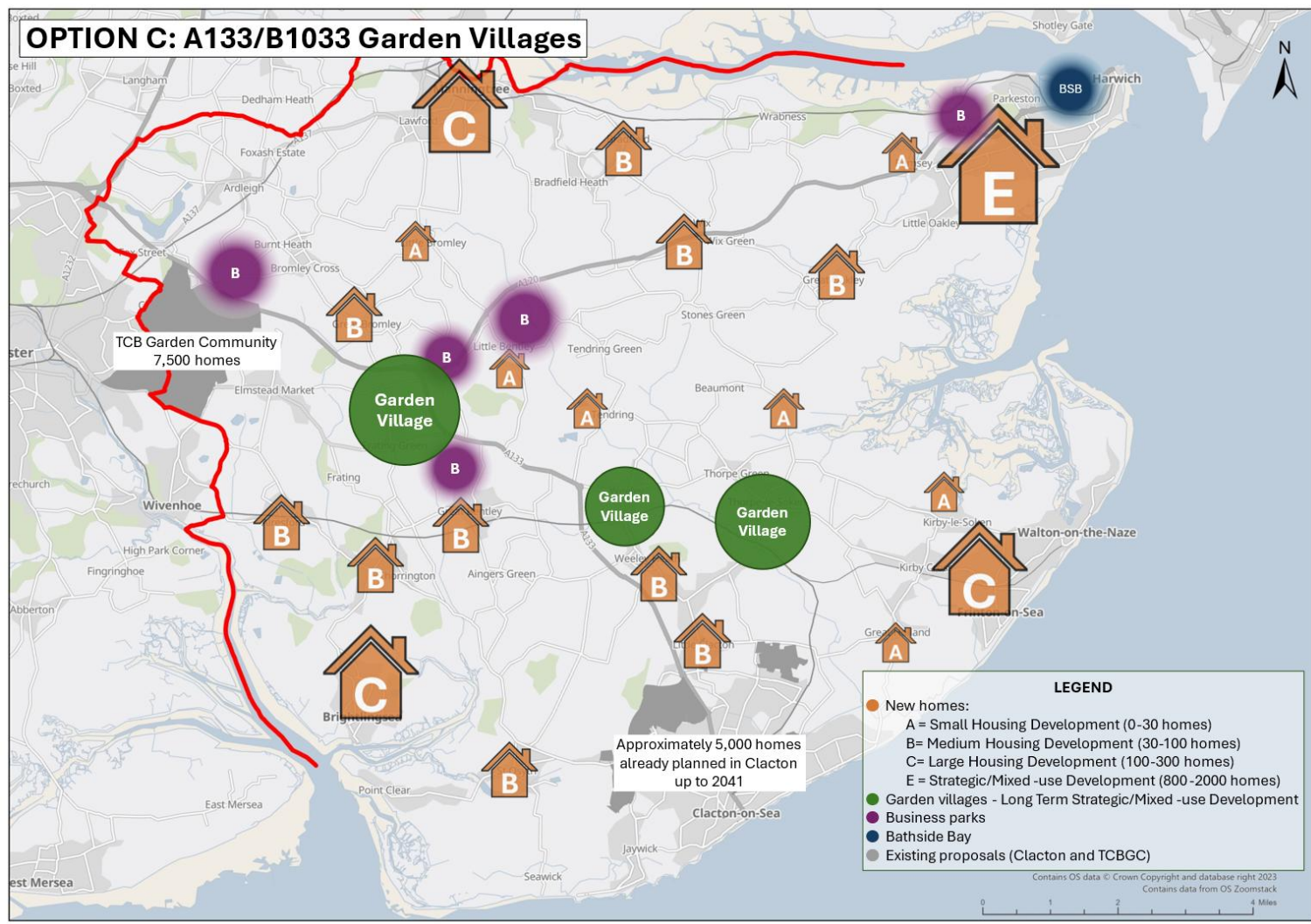
## QUESTIONS

**24)** Do you think there are any other **advantages** to Option B (Central Triangle of Garden Villages)?

**25)** Do you think there are any other **disadvantages** to Option B (Central Triangle of Garden Villages)?

## Option C – A133/B1033 Garden Villages

**4.28** In addition to significant growth around Harwich, and smaller scale development around villages across the District, this option proposes three new garden villages – one at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green (as per Options A and B), one at Weeley, and one at Thorpe-le-Soken, as part of an A133/B1033 focussed strategy, delivering improvements to the capacity of the A133 and a possible bypass around Thorpe. Other large villages with railway stations would experience a level of growth proportionate to their existing size, while medium levels of growth are also proposed at Frinton and Walton; Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley; and Brightlingsea.



### Headlines

- Harwich & Dovercourt Area to accommodate around 2,000 new homes in the period up to 2041.
- The establishment of three garden villages, at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green, Weeley, and Thorpe-le-Soken, delivering significant levels of housing alongside key improvements to the transport network.
- Medium-sized towns (Frinton/Walton, Manningtree/Lawford/Mistley, and Brightlingsea) to accommodate (between them) around 1,000 new homes.
- Proportionate levels of growth at medium-sized and smaller villages across the District.

- 500 new homes to be delivered through smaller developments in and around other villages in the District.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't rely on a new garden village at Horsley Cross, which is currently not served by suitable levels of public transport.</li> <li>• Growth in the Harwich area will reflect and support the economic growth and job opportunities at Bathside Bay and Freeport sites.</li> <li>• Brings the scale of housing growth at Harwich more in line with the strategic growth already planned at Clacton and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.</li> <li>• Development at scale enables a more efficient, more coordinated, and less complicated approach to the delivery and ongoing maintenance of new infrastructure – particularly schools, health facilities, transport provision and open spaces.</li> <li>• Multiple opportunities for small and medium-sized building firms, local builders as tradesman to find work.</li> <li>• New garden villages would be larger developments of between 2,000 and 5,000 homes that provide not only for development during the extended timeframe of the Local Plan to 2041, but beyond that into subsequent plan-periods.</li> <li>• The Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green option offers the opportunity to improve north/south connectivity in the District, both through the creation of a multi-directional A120/A133 interchange, and by extending the Colchester rapid transit service to Frating and beyond, improving access, by bus, for surrounding communities and nearby rail services.</li> <li>• Maximum opportunities for young people to obtain housing in the community they've grown up in, including in the rural areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant highway improvements would be needed at Thorpe-le-Soken, which could affect the deliverability of the Plan.</li> <li>• A Garden Village at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green, Weeley and Thorpe would affect a lot of residents and totally transform the existing villages – this approach would require very strong justification and overriding public benefits for existing residents.</li> <li>• Practical limits to the amount of development the Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross area and Brightlingsea could accommodate without significantly impacting on their sensitive landscapes and local character.</li> <li>• Relying on a smaller number of much larger sites risks compromising the delivery of the overall plan if one of the proposals stalls.</li> <li>• A Garden Village in the west of the District would be very close to the TCB Garden Community and risks competing with it for house sales, potentially saturating the market and slowing the rate of development – risking housing delivery targets.</li> <li>• Many areas of the District will be under construction for a long period of time, with associated issues with construction traffic, noise, and dust.</li> <li>• Still involves a degree of smaller-scale development across other parts of the District with smaller developments providing less scope to deliver new infrastructure on site, whilst still placing pressure on existing infrastructure, services, and facilities - including emergency services.</li> <li>• Many developments will be in locations that are a long distance from jobs, shops, services, and facilities – resulting in the likelihood of more car journeys, carbon emissions and traffic.</li> <li>• There would be a greater reliance on the need to secure financial contributions from multiple new development and greater pressure on the Council and other public sector partners to spend those contributions in the right way and at the right time.</li> <li>• Garden Villages will only be successful if significant new infrastructure, services, and facilities are delivered ahead of new homes.</li> </ul>

## QUESTIONS

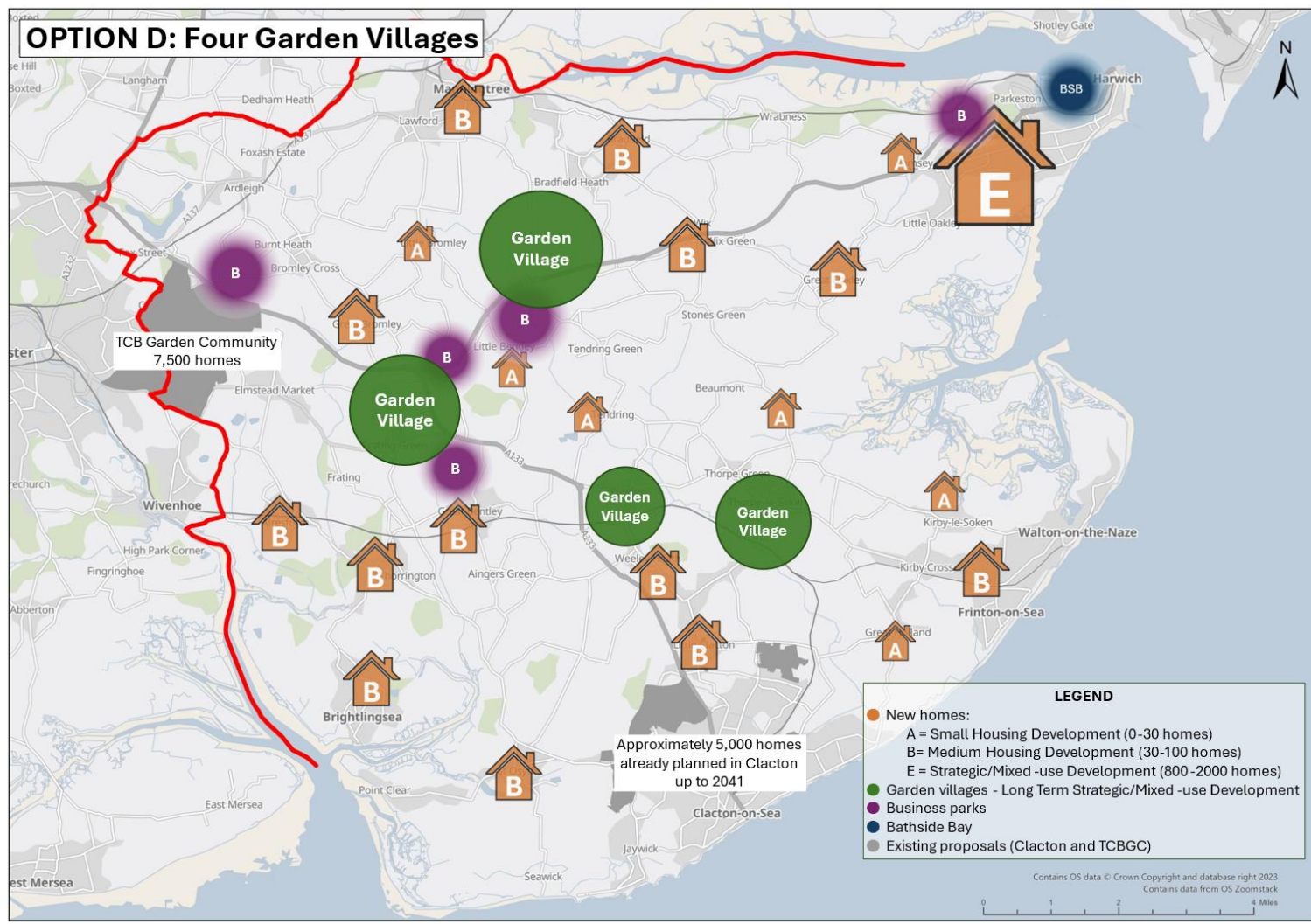
**26)** Do you think there are any other **advantages** to Option C (A133/B1033 Garden Villages)?



**27)** Do you think there are any other **disadvantages** to Option C (A133/B1033 Garden Villages)?

## Option D – Four Garden Villages

4.29 In addition to significant growth around Harwich, and smaller scale development around villages across the District, this option proposes four new garden villages – one at Horsley Cross, one at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green, one at Weeley, and one at Thorpe-le-Soken. This option combines the strategy from the previous options, promoting growth on the A120 corridor towards Harwich, and the A133/B1033 corridor towards Clacton, Frinton and Walton. Other large villages with railway stations and the medium towns of Frinton and Walton; Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley; and Brightlingsea will experience moderate levels of growth.



### Headlines

- Harwich & Dovercourt Area to accommodate around 2,000 new homes in the period up to 2041.
- The establishment of four garden villages, at Horsley Cross, Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green, Weeley, and Thorpe-le-Soken, delivering significant levels of housing alongside key improvements to the transport network and maximising the growth potential along two key transport corridors.
- Lower levels of growth in medium-sized towns (Frinton/Walton, Manningtree/Lawford/Mistley, and Brightlingsea) compared to the other options.

- 500 new homes to be delivered through smaller developments in and around other villages in the District.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development in and around the District’s medium sized towns could be kept at a more modest scale that could be accommodated with a lower impact on their landscapes, character, and infrastructure than for some other options.</li> <li>• Growth in the Harwich area will reflect and support the economic growth and job opportunities at Bathside Bay and Freeport sites.</li> <li>• Brings the scale of housing growth at Harwich more in line with the strategic growth already planned at Clacton and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.</li> <li>• Development at scale enables a more efficient, more coordinated, and less complicated approach to the delivery and ongoing maintenance of new infrastructure – particularly schools, health facilities, transport provision and open spaces.</li> <li>• Multiple opportunities for small and medium-sized building firms, local builders as tradesman to find work.</li> <li>• New garden villages would be larger developments of between 2,000 and 5,000 homes that provide not only for development during the extended timeframe of the Local Plan to 2041, but beyond that into subsequent plan-periods.</li> <li>• The Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green option offers the opportunity to improve north/south connectivity in the District, both through the creation of a multi-directional A120/A133 interchange, and by extending the Colchester rapid transit service to Frating and beyond, improving access, by bus, for surrounding communities and nearby rail services.</li> <li>• Maximum opportunities for young people to obtain housing in the community they’ve grown up in, including in the rural areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant highway improvements would be needed at Thorpe-le-Soken, which could affect the deliverability of the Plan.</li> <li>• A Garden Village at Frating/Great Bromley/Hare Green, Weeley and Thorpe would affect a lot of residents and totally transform the existing villages – this approach would require very strong justification and overriding public benefits for existing residents.</li> <li>• Relying on a smaller number of much larger sites risks compromising the delivery of the overall plan if one of the proposals stalls.</li> <li>• A Garden Village in the west of the District would be very close to the TCB Garden Community and risks competing with it for house sales, potentially saturating the market and slowing the rate of development – risking housing delivery targets.</li> <li>• Many areas of the District will be under construction for a long period of time, with associated issues with construction traffic, noise, and dust.</li> <li>• Still involves a degree of smaller-scale development across other parts of the District with smaller developments providing less scope to deliver new infrastructure on site, whilst still placing pressure on existing infrastructure, services, and facilities - including emergency services.</li> <li>• Many developments will be in locations that are a long distance from jobs, shops, services, and facilities – resulting in the likelihood of more car journeys, carbon emissions and traffic.</li> <li>• There would be a greater reliance on the need to secure financial contributions from multiple new development and greater pressure on the Council and other public sector partners to spend those contributions in the right way and at the right time.</li> <li>• Garden Villages will only be successful if significant new infrastructure, services, and facilities are delivered ahead of new homes.</li> </ul>

### QUESTIONS

- 28)** Do you think there are any other **advantages** to Option D (Four Garden Villages)?
- 29)** Do you think there are any other **disadvantages** to Option D (Four Garden Villages)?

### ADDITIONAL QUESTION

**30)** Are there any alternative options or scenarios to Options A-D, above, that the Council should be considering as part of the Local Plan review?

## Settlement Development Boundaries

- 4.30** In order to ensure the location and scale of additional growth within the District accords with the Settlement Hierarchy described above, Policy SPL2 of the Local Plan establishes Settlement Development Boundaries (which are shown in red on the Local Plan maps). In general terms, development outside of defined Settlement Development Boundaries will be the subject of strict control to protect and enhance the character and openness of the countryside. However, there are certain forms of development that can and sometimes need to take place in these areas, some of which can bring about positive outcomes for the rural economy – for example to accommodate community-led affordable housing, self-build proposals, or dwellings for agricultural workers.
- 4.31** Since the adoption of the Local Plan, a number of appeal decisions suggest that the wording of Policy SPL2 can be interpreted as more permissive of developments outside the Settlement Development Boundaries than the Council intended. Consideration is therefore being given to strengthening the wording of this policy, to ensure that development outside of these Settlement Development Boundaries is not supported unless it meets the specific criteria set out in other relevant policies.

### QUESTIONS

- 31)** Do you support the Council's intention to strengthen the wording of Policy SPL2, to make it clear that development outside of Settlement Development Boundaries is not supported unless it satisfies the specific criteria set out in other relevant policies?

## Sustainable Design

- 4.32** The final part of the Sustainable Places chapter of the Local Plan deals with design criteria for new development. Policy SPL3 has three parts:
- **Part A** sets out the criteria for ensuring development is well designed and relates well to its surroundings, addressing areas such as scale and massing, materials, skylines and boundary treatments;
  - **Part B** ensures that practical requirements such as access, movement around the site, crime reduction, refuse management and overshadowing are adequately addressed; and
  - **Part C** ensures that any potential impacts on surrounding uses and/or the local environment are identified, and measures are put in place to ensure any adverse impacts are minimised.
- 4.33** While the policy remains broadly relevant and appropriate, consideration may be given to focussed amendments to reflect evolving national policy – such as the new focus in the NPPF on ensuring streets are tree-lined and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in new developments.

## QUESTIONS

- 32)** In respect of the design, practical requirements and compatibility of new development, is there anything the Council could do to improve its planning policies and secure better-quality development in the future?

## 5 Healthy Places

- 5.1** The Healthy Places chapter of our Local Plan includes policies that address health and wellbeing, community facilities, and open spaces for recreation and active lifestyles. Many of the issues addressed in this chapter are closely related to policies elsewhere in the Local Plan, particularly around designing high quality new communities, and creating multi-functional green spaces that provide tangible benefits to both people and nature.

### Improving Health and Wellbeing

- 5.2** Tendring's population is growing with an increasing percentage of residents of 65 years of age and above, well above the national average. Some of Tendring's communities are in the 20% 'most deprived' in the country with poor health being a particular concern. Although the Council is not directly responsible for providing GP, medical and other health services in our district, it works in close partnership with the NHS and other bodies so that measures are put in place to ensure that growth in the population and new developments in our communities are planned in a way that promotes healthy lifestyles, tackles deprivation and that are supported, as necessary, by a modern and efficient health service that meets the needs of both existing and future residents. This is not an easy task given the pressures facing health services across the country, but through rapid advancements in medical science and technology it is essential both for existing and future generations to collaborate with the NHS and others to promote innovation and embrace new ways of providing healthcare that aren't necessarily what people are used to now.

- 5.3** The way new communities and new developments are designed should have a significant positive impact on people's health – including the level of physical activity residents participate in. It is important that the Local Plan requires new development to be planned from the outset with health considerations in mind. New guidance and best practice are emerging all the time, which will assist developers in considering these factors and ensure their proposals maximise the opportunities for improving residents' health and wellbeing.

- 5.4** Policy HP1 in the Council's existing Local Plan, which seeks to improve health and wellbeing, remains broadly up to date, and has been successful in securing developer contributions towards key health infrastructure – including the expansion of doctors' surgeries. But this review gives an opportunity to strengthen the approach even further to improving the quality of life experienced across the District with participation in physical activity at any level and access to green spaces being two key elements of improving peoples physical and mental health.

### Multifunctional Open Green Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities

- 5.5** Access to multifunctional open green space, sports and recreational facilities is recognised as having far reaching positive impacts, and the Council works collaboratively

with our partners in health and sport to address the issues of poor physical and mental health.

- 5.6** Policies HP3, HP4 and HP5 from the Council's existing Local Plan are a group of policies which collectively address green infrastructure, safeguarded open spaces, and sports and recreation facilities. These policies are likely to require a full update as part of the Local Plan review process, to ensure they properly reflect the latest evidence of need and the Council's strategy for delivering and managing open spaces and sports and recreation facilities. The issues covered by these policies are very closely linked, particularly when it comes to delivering facilities as part of new developments, so it will be most effective to update them as a group rather than individually.

### **New developments**

- 5.7** The Local Plan aims to ensure new developments provide a variety of inclusive multifunctional green spaces that enable physical activity for all. These spaces can incorporate play equipment, open areas for informal games and sports, walking and cycling paths, outdoor gym equipment and many other facilities. These spaces should be sited in locations that are safely accessible to those wheeling, walking and cycling and, where practicable, should ensure connectivity along green infrastructure corridors.
- 5.8** For smaller developments, it is often appropriate for developers to incorporate areas of open space within the development and to make a financial contribution towards the enhancement or upgrading of nearby play equipment or sports facilities. For larger developments, however, the creation of high quality, flexible spaces that include a diversity of facilities such as games areas, play equipment, skate parks, gym equipment etc. are more likely to be appropriate. The Local Plan will need to make it clear to developers how much and what kinds of provision are likely to be required as part of their proposal, and these requirements will need to be supported by strong evidence.
- 5.9** A number of guidance documents have been produced nationally that explain how new developments can maximise the opportunities to promote healthy and active lifestyles. As part of the Local Plan review, the Council is considering how the Local Plan might best signpost developers to these documents to ensure new developments create active environments.

- **Active Design Guidance** (Sport England)
  - sets out a comprehensive approach to planning and development that prioritizes physical activity and well-being;
  - emphasises the creation of spaces and environments that encourage movement, providing opportunities for increased activity levels;
  - addresses disparities in activity levels among different demographic groups and aims to make physical activity enjoyable and easily incorporated into daily lives.
- **Building for a Healthy Life** (Homes England and NHS England)
  - serves as a Design Code to enhance the design of new and expanding neighbourhoods;
  - designed to be accessible to a diverse audience, including local communities, councillors, developers, and local authorities;



- enables focused discussions on crucial aspects of creating 'liveable places';
- supports local communities in establishing clear expectations for new developments by providing easily understandable considerations.

**5.10** Active environments are spaces designed to promote physical activity, extending beyond traditional sports and formal exercise. They aim to inspire a wide range of physical activities, including active travel, children's play, outdoor leisure, and various opportunities that foster an active lifestyle. The places where we live, work, travel, and engage in recreational activities can significantly influence people's choices regarding physical activity. New developments can be designed in such a way that short trips can easily be taken on foot or by bike, which increases activity levels, improves air quality, and limits traffic congestion. Active environments can enhance both physical and mental wellbeing.

**5.11** Green infrastructure (natural open spaces) and blue infrastructure (bodies of water) are closely linked with environmental policies, particularly around biodiversity and climate change – and these policies are discussed in the Protected Places chapter later in this document.

### **Safeguarded Spaces**

**5.12** The adopted Local Plan identifies a large number of open spaces within the District that it designates as 'safeguarded open space', and development in these areas will not generally be supported. However, a higher level of protection called 'Local Green Space' can also be designated for certain areas, where they meet certain criteria set out in national policy.

**5.13** National Planning Policy states that Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

**5.14** As part of the Local Plan Review, the Council may consider whether any specific open spaces within the District require this higher level of protection.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 33)** What measures do you think the Council should be prioritising through the Local Plan to enable residents to live healthier, more active lives?
- 34)** What practical measures could the Local Plan require developers to provide that would increase the use of active means of travel (such as walking and cycling)?

- 35)** In respect of promoting healthy and active lifestyles, is there anything else the Council could do to improve its planning policies and secure better-quality development in the future?
- 36)** Are there any specific areas of open space within the District that require an even higher level of protection than it is given by the current Local Plan?

### Community Facilities

- 5.15** Community facilities (sometimes referred to as community assets) provide for health and wellbeing, recreational and leisure and education and culture. They can include for example, local shops, meeting places, open space, community halls, libraries, museums, arts venues, post offices, public houses, places of worship, sports venues, health and fitness facilities, swimming pools and other facilities of community value. They are a key part of sustainable communities and contribute to their self-reliance.
- 5.16** The Local Plan includes a policy that seeks to prevent development that would result in the loss of a community facility, except in circumstances where replacement facilities are provided or where it is demonstrated there is no longer a need for that facility. The review of the Local Plan might provide an opportunity to add clarity around what evidence might be appropriate to justify such a loss.
- 5.17** The policy also requires new developments to support or enhance community facilities. In some cases, improving existing facilities can add more value to the local community than building new ones, whereas in other situations new community facilities are more appropriate. In either case, new or existing facilities should be located in the best place for those accessing them via walking, wheeling and cycling, or by using public transport.

### QUESTIONS

- 37)** What could the Council do to improve the protection given to community facilities through the Local Plan?
- 38)** Do you have any thoughts about the proposal to add clear guidance on what evidence would be required to justify the loss of a community facility?

### Cemeteries, Crematoriums and Burials

- 5.18** The Local Plan includes land for the expansion of Weeley Crematorium and a number of cemeteries within Policy HP4 – Safeguarded Open Space. As part of the Local Plan

review, it might be appropriate to include a new policy specifically to address the need for cemeteries, crematoriums and other kinds of burial. In addition, for allowing land to expand existing provision, the policy could support and encourage the provision of new burial places as the need arises and provide guidance or criteria that proposals would be required to meet.

### QUESTIONS

- 39)** Would you like to see provision of land for different types of burials (e.g. natural sites) as well as ongoing traditional provision via church yards and crematoriums? What provision is needed?

## 6 Living Places

### Housing Supply

- 6.1** To meet its objective of providing new dwellings with a variety of sites, size, types, tenure, the Living Places chapter of the Local Plan sets out policy requirements relating to the delivery of new housing.
- 6.2** In light of the new Government’s ambitious target to deliver 1.5 million new homes over the next five years, and the mandatory housebuilding target for Tendring published in December 2024, the need for new housing over the extended period of the Local Plan to 2041 is likely to be in the region of 7,000 – 8,000 additional homes on top of the nearly 10,000 that are either already planned for through the current Local Plan or are already under construction or with planning permission. Policy LP1 in the Local Plan and its supporting text will need to be updated as part of the Local Plan review to reflect the most up-to-date position with regards to the housing requirement along with the location and supply of land required to meet that requirement.

### Housing Choice

- 6.3** As well as planning to meet the future housing needs within the District and identifying enough land to meet the total number of homes required, the National Planning Policy Framework requires councils to plan for a mix of new housing within those numbers based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and different groups within the community. The Council’s current Local Plan seeks to achieve this through Policy LP2 which requires larger residential developments to include a mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.
- 6.4** The Council’s policy currently gives particular support for the development of bungalows, retirement complexes, extra care housing, independent living, starter homes and self-build housing – to ensure the future needs of older and disabled residents can be met and to enable people to design and build their own homes in appropriate locations.
- 6.5** An initial review of this policy suggests that its format and wording can be carried forward into the updated Local Plan broadly unchanged – but there may be scope to strengthen the wording, and to ensure that it is consistent with up-to-date evidence produced as part of the Local Plan review.

### QUESTIONS

- 40)** Should the Council be doing anything more to promote a mix and variety of new housing type, sizes and tenures as part of new residential and mixed-use developments?

## Housing Layout and Density

- 6.6** It is important that the density of housing development promotes a good quality of life for its residents, taking into account the context of the area and the needs of different people who might live there. Policy LP3 sets out the factors that must be considered when determining the density of new residential and mixed-use developments, as well as the requirements for adaptable and accessible dwellings to meet the needs of disabled people. These factors include:
- Accessibility to local services;
  - The Government's latest technical housing standards;
  - The required housing mix;
  - The context and character of development in the immediate area;
  - The need for appropriate transition between built development and the open countryside; and
  - On-site infrastructure requirements.
- 6.7** Across our district there is a pattern of low-density development, and many new developments in recent years have sought to reflect this characteristic. However, there are several advantages associated with well-designed higher-density development that can lead to high quality places to live. By focussing a larger number of dwellings towards one location it is possible to provide better access to services and facilities, and create vibrant, walkable neighbourhoods that provide a high quality of life to future residents. It is often possible to secure more significant improvements to infrastructure and community facilities from developers building a higher number of homes, as the number of people living in these communities justify the creation of new services such as schools. Additionally, higher densities could enable the Council to plan for the number of homes required over the coming years using less agricultural land and having a smaller impact on the countryside.
- 6.8** An important consideration when determining a Planning application for new residential development is the layout of the proposal. The Local Plan's approach to the layout of new housing development is set out in Policy LP4. The policy contains a number of criteria for new residential and mix-use developments, covering issues such as open space and green infrastructure; drainage; crime and anti-social behaviour; highways impact; and the needs of future occupants.
- 6.9** It may be necessary to update this policy as part of the Local Plan review, to ensure that it is consistent with the latest guidance provided nationally and in the Essex Design Guide. In particular, there are requirements in this policy that relate to biodiversity (such as maximising green infrastructure, and sustainable water management strategies), and this will need to be consistent with the legal requirements around biodiversity net-gain and any additional requirements the Local Plan might introduce in the Protected Places chapter (discussed later in this document).
- 6.10** The policy also requires a percentage of dwellings on large developments of 10 or more dwellings to meet specific standards of adaptability and accessibility, and a further percentage to meet wheelchair-user standards – to ensure new development meets the needs of disabled people. These standards are set out in building regulations.

- 6.11** It has been suggested that the scope of the policy could be broadened to include other standards that new housing must meet, such as carbon emissions and climate resilience, as well as aspirations around designing for healthy, inclusive and active lifestyles (referencing guidance from Sport England, the Essex Design Guide, and Homes England.) Alternatively, these requirements and those around accessible dwellings could be included elsewhere within the Plan, and this policy could be narrowed to refer specifically to housing density.

### QUESTIONS

- 41)** Should the Council consider promoting well designed, higher-density developments, in order to minimise the loss of agricultural land and to promote good access to services and facilities?
- 42)** Could the Council do anything more to achieve better layouts for new housing and mixed-use developments?
- 43)** Do you think the scope of these policies ought to be increased to include other standards that should apply to new residential developments, or should these be addressed elsewhere in the plan? What other standards could be included as part of this policy?
- 44)** Should the requirements around accessible and adaptable dwellings be incorporated within a different policy within the Local Plan? Which one?

### Affordable Housing

- 6.12** Affordable housing is often raised as one of the most important issues among residents when considering new housing developments within the District. The requirement set out in Policy LP5 to seek 30% affordable housing on new developments was supported by a viability assessment undertaken when the Local Plan was first prepared. It is understood that there is still an acute need for affordable housing within the District, and as part of the Local Plan review the Council will review the wording of this policy with the aim of maximising the delivery of affordable housing in order to meet the needs of lower-income households.
- 6.13** In addition to seeking affordable housing as part of the housing mix on large developments, the Local Plan also includes a policy to support the delivery of affordable housing in more rural locations, close to existing settlements. Proposals for predominantly affordable housing can be permitted if they are supported by evidence of need within the Parish, have the backing of the parish or town council, and satisfy additional criteria within the Policy.

## QUESTIONS

- 45) Do you support the Council's intention to seek to maximise the number of affordable homes secured through developer contributions?
- 46) What else could the Council do to increase delivery of affordable housing across the District?

### Self-Build and Custom-Built Homes

- 6.14 Self-build and custom housebuilding covers a wide spectrum, from projects where individuals are involved in building or managing the construction of their home from beginning to end, to projects where individuals commission their home, making key design and layout decisions, but the home is built ready for occupation. Supporting the delivery of self-build and custom housebuilding is a priority for the Government, and this type of development can make an important contribution to meeting the District's housing requirement. The existing self-build policy in the Local Plan, LP7, allows for these small-scale developments to take place outside Settlement Development Boundaries (where new housing would not normally be supported) if certain criteria are met. These proposals are allowed within 600m of the edge of areas defined as urban settlements, and within 400m of areas defined as rural service centres. In order to facilitate a greater number of self-build opportunities to come forward, this policy could be amended to allow this kind of development near smaller rural settlements as well, particularly in light of the fact that self-build proposals are usually for small scale and high-quality developments.
- 6.15 The Council may also consider amending the policy to require a specific percentage of homes on larger residential developments to be made available as self-build or custom-built housing, in a similar way that a percentage of affordable housing is required through Policy LP5.

### QUESTIONS

- 47) Do you agree that the policy should be extended to also allow self-build development near to smaller rural settlements?
- 48) Should the Council consider requiring developers to include plots of land for self-build homes as a percentage of major residential developments?
- 49) What else could the Council do to encourage and support self-build and custom housebuilding?

### Gypsy and Traveller Sites

- 6.16 The national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015 remains broadly unchanged since the adoption of the Local Plan, except for a modification to the definition of ‘gypsies and travellers’ in Annex 1 of the document. The Local Plan contains a policy relating to Gypsy and Traveller Sites which establishes a set of criteria against which proposals for new sites will be assessed. These requirements have been used successfully when determining Planning Applications, and the Council does not expect them to require updating.
- 6.17 The updated Local Plan will be informed by an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. This piece of evidence will look at the existing provision of gypsy and traveller pitches in the District, and the projected need for new pitches in the period up to 2041. If this piece of evidence identifies a need for additional pitches, the Local Plan might need to allocate land for this purpose – in which case the policy will need to be updated.

### QUESTIONS

- 50) Do you agree with the proposed approach to retain the existing criteria for determining Planning Applications, and only allocating additional land for gypsy and traveller sites if the evidence identifies a need within the District?
- 51) If not, what other approaches should be considered?



## Care and Assisted Living, HMOs and Bedsits

**6.18** The adopted Local Plan contains policies about special kinds of accommodation, such as care homes and independent assisted living, and HMOs and bedsits. These policies are broadly up to date, but focussed changes might be necessary, specifically:

- To make it clear that extensions to care homes are generally supported by the Local Plan, where suitable accessibility and access to services is demonstrated and subject to the requirements of other policies in the Local Plan;
- To reflect current best practice and latest practices in the care sector and with those responsible for specialist housing and supported accommodation; and
- To ensure that the parking requirements for HMOs and bedsits are consistent with the most up to date Essex Parking Standards (produced by the Essex Planning Officers Association and endorsed by TDC).

### QUESTIONS

- 52)** What more could the Council do to ensure the Local Plan meet the needs of people requiring specialist accommodation in the District?

## 7 Prosperous Places

- 7.1** The Prosperous Places chapter of the Local Plan sets out policies relating to the local economy – particularly retail and commercial development; tourism; improving education and skills; and regeneration. Tendring has a diverse economy, with employment across a range of sectors, and the Local Plan seeks to promote economic growth that serves the needs of existing residents and businesses as well as creating new opportunities.

### Retail and Town Centres

- 7.2** Town centres act as key locations for a diverse range of uses such as retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural activities, community facilities, and also provide an important, sustainable location for housing.
- 7.3** National policy requires councils to support the role that town centres play at the heart of their communities, and to pursue policies to promote their viability and vitality. This is reflected in the Local Plan's strategic objectives, and the policies at the beginning of this chapter seek to achieve this. New retail development will generally be encouraged and permitted within town centres, and these 'Primary Shopping Areas' are designated on the Local Plan's maps. Within these areas, the use of ground floor shop units will be restricted to uses within the nationally defined 'Use Class E' – which sets out appropriate town centre uses.
- 7.4** The Town Centre First Principle requires applications for main town centre uses to be in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and, only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. New retail developments in out of centre locations require an impact assessment if the proposed floorspace is over a certain threshold, which will look at the effect of the proposal on nearby town centres.
- 7.5** In addition to focussing new retail development towards existing town centres, the Local Plan also seeks to meet the needs of villages and local neighbourhoods, by supporting proposals for new retail development proportionate to their size and by limiting the loss of existing retail provision.

### QUESTIONS

- 53)** In addition to directing new retail development towards town centres, are there any other ways the Council's Local Plan could support the vitality of the District's towns?
- 54)** In addition to restricting development that would result in the loss of retail facilities, what else could the Local Plan do to support communities living in villages and neighbourhood centres to be able to meet their day to day needs locally?

## Employment Sites

- 7.6** The Local Plan designates two types of sites for employment and commercial uses:
- Existing **Employment Sites** – which Policy PP6 seeks to retain to continue to provide for the employment needs of the District; and
  - **Employment Allocations** – which Policy PP7 promotes as suitable locations for new employment uses.
- 7.7** In reviewing the Local Plan, the Council will commission a review of the District's Employment Land. The purpose of this study will be to quantify the current levels of existing and already planned employment floorspace within the District, and to determine the amount of additional land and more suitable employment sectors that may be required to extend the Local Plan to cover the period to 2041. It is anticipated that future growth in the District will be closely linked to the designation of Freeport East, and that future employment allocations will need to take full advantage of the opportunities this designation offers. As a result, any additional allocation of land for employment development is likely to be focussed around the A120 corridor between Harwich and Colchester.

### QUESTIONS

- 55)** In what ways should the Local Plan seek to maximise the opportunities presented by Freeport designation?

## Tourism

- 7.8** Tourism is worth almost £414 million to Tendring District's economy, with the industry responsible for around 9,000 jobs. A significant proportion of new jobs in our district could come from tourism if the right action is taken by providing an appropriate range of tourist attractions and holiday accommodation. The Local Plan contains policies which promote new tourism development proposals that would help to improve the tourism appeal of the District to visitors, as well as supporting the creation of additional accommodation such as hotels, guesthouses, camping and caravanning sites, and holiday parks.
- 7.9** Policy PP8 gives examples of the kind of new tourism development proposals that may be supported, with a particular focus on the District's pleasure piers, amusement parks and holiday parks; water-based leisure activities; farm diversification schemes; high quality restaurants and cafes; and outdoor recreation.
- 7.10** In addition to supporting new tourism-related development, the Local Plan also seeks to protect existing tourist accommodation. Specifically, Policy PP9 seeks to retain existing hotels and guesthouses within defined town centres and along the seafront of the District's coastal towns, and development proposals that would result in the loss of these facilities will not be supported. Similarly, Policy PP11 provides protection to holiday parks, preventing redevelopment of 'safeguarded sites' for alternative uses either in part or in

whole. On sites that aren't specifically designated as safeguarded on the Local Plan's map, redevelopment will only be allowed in certain circumstances – and importantly where the proposals will not materially harm the provision of tourist accommodation in the District.

### QUESTIONS

- 56) Do you think the Local Plan provides enough flexibility to support development that will boost the District's tourism economy?
- 57) Is it still appropriate to seek to protect all of the District's holiday parks from redevelopment or change of use towards residential?

### Rural Economy

7.11 The thrust of local and national Planning policy is to direct new jobs to existing built up areas and centres of employment. However, it is important to recognise that the District's rural areas make an important contribution to the overall economy, so the Local Plan makes provision for certain kinds of development to come forward in the countryside – subject to detailed consideration of the wider impacts. The following types of development are specified in Policy PP13:

- The conversion or re-use of rural buildings in the countryside to employment, leisure, or tourism uses;
- Business and domestic equine related activities;
- Agricultural and key workers' dwellings; and
- Buildings that are essential to support agriculture; aquaculture; horticulture and forestry; and farm diversification schemes.

### QUESTIONS

- 58) Are there any other forms of development that would be appropriate in the countryside to benefit the rural economy, which should be specifically supported by the Local Plan?

## 8 Protected Places

- 8.1** The Protected Places chapter of the Local Plan seeks to preserve and enhance the District's natural and historic environments, minimise the risks associated with flooding and coastal erosion, and address issues related to climate change – particularly through promoting low-carbon energy and water-efficiency, and mitigating the impacts of the changing climate. In addition, there are policies which seek to protect the character of individual settlements by designating 'strategic green gaps' (to avoid towns or villages coalescing into one larger settlement), and which address specific areas within the District that require bespoke policies to protect them.
- 8.2** Many of the policies in this chapter are performing well and will require little updating as part of the Local Plan review. However, in recent years significant changes have occurred in the way new developments can respond to and mitigate against climate change, and so additional policies are likely to be required in that area.

### Climate Change

- 8.3** In 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency – and the adopted Local Plan includes policies which seek to promote renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures.
- 8.4** Carbon emissions in the built environment fall into two broad categories - those that arise from the use or occupation of a building (known as *operational carbon*), and those associated with the processes and materials used in the construction and eventual disposal of buildings (known as *embodied carbon*). Together, both operational carbon emissions and embodied carbon emissions form the *Whole Life Carbon* impact of a development.
- 8.5** Carbon emissions from the use and occupation of buildings in the UK is estimated to account for 23% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions, and this is even higher when you include embodied carbon emissions. The UK has a statutory target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 (as set out in the Climate Change Act 2008). The Climate Change Act sets a further legal target of a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035. The Government's Climate Change Committee has warned that the UK is off target and rapid and deep cuts to emissions must be made in all sectors.
- 8.6** It is important that new development is built to be net zero carbon in operation from the beginning, and to minimise embodied carbon emissions through all stages of a building's life. For a building to be net zero carbon in its operation it must be an ultra-low energy building that meets high energy efficiency standards, does not use fossil fuel and maximises renewable energy generation. Retrofitting buildings to reduce their carbon emissions is much more disruptive, costly and time consuming than designing buildings to be net zero carbon in the first place.
- 8.7** In Essex, there is a target for all planning permissions for new buildings to be net zero carbon by 2025, which is included within Essex County Council's Climate Action Plan.

Practical design advice is provided in the Essex Design Guide, which focuses on how to design developments (of all types and sizes) to meet net zero carbon and energy standards, mitigate potential overheating risk and to address other related sustainability issues. The aim is to ensure new developments mitigate, adapt and are resilient to a changing climate.

- 8.8** The adopted Local Plan currently sets out the requirements for new renewable energy generation schemes and the energy efficiency measures required in other kinds of development. However, there is an opportunity (as part of the Local Plan review) to introduce new policies that promote net zero carbon in new development. These policies will need to both reflect current technologies and best practice and also be flexible enough to be able to accommodate the rapid speed at which technology is evolving and improving.

### QUESTIONS

- 59)** Could the Council do anything more, through the review of the Local Plan, to support the retrofit of existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency?
- 60)** What measures should the Council consider to ensure new developments mitigate, adapt, and are resilient to a changing climate?
- 61)** In what ways could the requirements of the Local Plan be strengthened in order to meet local and national targets around net zero development?

### Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 8.9** Planning law surrounding biodiversity has changed significantly since the Local Plan was adopted. Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats, making sure development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development. It is now a legal requirement for many types of developments to deliver at least 10% BNG, and the Council has put processes in place to properly assess and monitor this requirement.
- 8.10** As part of the Local Plan review, it will be necessary to consider whether the existing policy for biodiversity is still adequate or whether it requires updating to best reflect the new legislation and to meet the Council's objective to enhance the quality of the natural environment.
- 8.11** The Council may wish to set out local priorities and strategies that developers will be required to take into account when delivering BNG, such as locally important habitats and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This will help to ensure that BNG contributes to wider nature recovery plans as well as local objectives, and that the right habitats are provided

in the right places. The Local Plan may also be able to allocate specific sites that developers can use to deliver BNG, where it is not possible to fully meet the requirements on a particular development site.

- 8.12** A key priority for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and BNG is to connect existing areas of habitat. By creating networks of green infrastructure (on land) and blue infrastructure (rivers and waterways), the wildlife that occupy them and the habitats themselves can be supported to improve and thrive. This ambition is reflected in Objective 8 of the Local Plan, which seeks to provide a network of interconnected multi-functional natural green and blue spaces which secures a net gain in biodiversity.”
- 8.13** By developing the Local Plans policies around biodiversity and nature recovery, there will also be a greater opportunity to link BNG with other strategic objectives identified through the Plan, such as recreation and health, flood risk, active travel, and ensuring suitable adaptation and mitigation to effects of climate change.
- 8.14** The BNG legislation requires new developments to achieve *at least* 10% biodiversity net-gain, and some authorities have set requirements through their Local Plans to secure a greater increase of 20% or 25%. The Essex Local Nature Partnership has recommended that 20% BNG is a suitable policy target for authorities in Essex, and there is the possibility that, with appropriate evidence to justify the policy and demonstrate its viability, the updated Local Plan could also seek to secure greater environmental gains from new development that takes place in the District.
- 8.15** Policy PPL5 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to ensure that all new development makes adequate provision for drainage and sewerage and includes sustainable drainage systems. Some of the requirements of this policy overlap with the aims of biodiversity net-gain, and it may be appropriate to incorporate relevant areas into a new or updated biodiversity net gain policy.

## QUESTIONS

- 62)** In what ways could the Local Plan seek to improve the connectivity of the District’s blue and green infrastructure?
- 63)** Are there any sites within the District that the Council should consider allocating for the creation of new wildlife habitats?
- 64)** Rather than specifically allocating sites for nature recovery, are there other ways of increasing green and blue infrastructure connectivity?
- 65)** Do you support the ambition to seek greater than 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) from new developments?

- 66)** Are there any other ways in which the Council, through the Local Plan, can help to achieve and deliver biodiversity net gain?

### Flood Risk, Coastal Protection Belt and the Rural Landscape

- 8.16** The Local Plan includes policies that seek to protect the natural environment and ensure that new development is in suitable locations that do not make it vulnerable to flooding or other environmental risks.
- 8.17** Policy PPL1 in the adopted Local Plan sets out the requirements for development within a flood zone (which includes flood zones 2 and 3 as defined by the Environment Agency). The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the District will need to be updated as part of the Local Plan review, but the Policy requirements are performing well and should not require any significant changes.
- 8.18** Policy PPL2 in the adopted Local Plan designates certain areas of the District as Coastal Protection Belt and seeks to protect the open character of the undeveloped coastline by preventing new development in these locations. This policy has been effective at resisting inappropriate development and could be carried forward into the updated Local Plan relatively unchanged, but it may be necessary to review the boundary of the Coastal Protection Belt to ensure it remains appropriate and considers any new land allocations that may come forward as part of the Local Plan review process.
- 8.19** Policy PPL3 in the adopted Local Plan sets out how the Council will protect the rural landscape from any development that will cause overriding harm to its character or appearance. Since the adoption of the Local Plan, national planning guidance has been updated and now requires Local Plans to demonstrate how they will contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.
- 8.20** Whilst the Council's Landscape Character Assessment must be updated, it is considered that these Policies are working well and need little in the way of updating.

### QUESTIONS

- 67)** Is there any more the Council should do, through the review of the Local Plan, to ensure new development is resilient to flood risk?
- 68)** What more could the Local Plan do to protect the character of our coastal and rural landscapes?



## Strategic Green Gaps

- 8.21** Strategic Green Gaps are an important designation in the adopted Local Plan which seek to prevent specific settlements slowly growing and coalescing. They enable villages and towns to retain their separate identities and ensure the long-term separation of those settlements. The existing Strategic Green Gaps designated in the Local Plan are based on up-to-date evidence that was found to be sound when the adopted Local Plan was examined in 2021, and it is one of the ‘guiding principles’ of this review that the Strategic Green Gaps won’t be reduced. Strategic Green gaps exist around the edge of Clacton, between Kirby Cross and Kirby-le-Soken, between Dovercourt and Great Oakley, and on the edge of Manningtree.
- 8.22** Since the adoption of the Local Plan there have been key examples of development proposals being successfully resisted by the Council because they fall within areas protected by the Strategic Green Gap designation, and the wording of the policy has been found to be effective.
- 8.23** There may, however, be the need for additional or extended Strategic Green Gaps – for example to the east of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community to ensure the continued separation of this new development from Elmstead Market village.

### QUESTIONS

- 69)** Do you agree that the existing Strategic Green Gaps designated in the Local Plan provide sufficient protection to prevent the coalescence of settlements?
- 70)** Are there gaps between other settlements which could benefit from the protection of a Strategic Green Gap?

## The Historic Environment

- 8.24** Policies within the Historic Environment section of the Local Plan set out the requirement to protect and enhance heritage assets within our district. These policies cover the impact of new development on archaeological remains, designated Conservation Areas, as well as Listed Buildings and their setting.
- 8.25** The Council has, over the past few years, been undertaking a thorough review of our Conservation Area Appraisals. This has been an extensive process that has involved public consultation with those who live and work within Conservation Areas in Tendring. The work is nearly finished, with a number of updated appraisals due to be formally adopted by the Council. The new Conservation Area Appraisals will provide a valuable

tool for determining Planning Applications that might impact the historic environment and will give developers and homeowners greater clarity around the types of development that might be appropriate within these areas.

- 8.26** The policies in the adopted Local Plan have been effective in allowing the Council to ensure development meets the objective of protecting the District’s historic environment and it is considered that they could be carried forward unchanged into the updated Local Plan.
- 8.27** Two areas within the District have specific policies designed to protect their special and unique characters: The Avenues area in Frinton (PPL11), and The Gardens area in east Clacton (PPL12). These policies have been effective in preserving the character of these areas, and it is not expected that any updates will be required in this review.

### QUESTIONS

- 71)** Should the Council be doing anything more through the Local Plan to preserve and enhance the historic environment within Tendring?

## 9 Connected Places and Delivering Infrastructure

- 9.1** The adopted Local Plan contains two chapters that discuss connectivity (specifically sustainable travel, the transport network, and telecommunications) and delivering infrastructure. Many of the issues relevant to these policies have been discussed in previous chapters in the document.
- 9.2** The Council understands that the delivery of new homes and jobs needs to be supported by necessary infrastructure, including a wide range of transport options, utilities, and community facilities. As part of the Local Plan review, the Council will commission an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which will sit alongside the Local Plan and provide specific details on the main items of infrastructure required for larger development, when they are likely to be provided and who will pay for them.
- 9.3** The broad categories of necessary infrastructure that will be covered in the IDP include:
- Water and drainage - water supply, wastewater, flood risk management and resilience, and water quality.
  - Energy - electricity, gas and renewable energy.
  - Communications - broadband coverage and provision.
  - Leisure and green infrastructure - sport, open space and community facilities.
  - Education - early years and childcare, primary, secondary, further education, and higher education.
  - Health - hospitals, health centres, GP surgeries, dentists, public health and preventative health care.
  - Transport - highways, cycle and pedestrian facilities, rail, bus, park and ride, travel management and car parking.
- 9.4** Infrastructure and community facilities are mainly provided by partner agencies and service providers, such as water and energy provision by the utility companies; highways and social services by Essex County Council; education by a range of public and private sector providers; healthcare services and facilities by NHS bodies. The IDP will need to identify the different investment and development time scales for these providers, allowing us to work with them to help deliver a co-ordinated approach to new infrastructure delivery. Developers are expected to contribute towards providing appropriate infrastructure, including both on-site costs and strategic off-site infrastructure costs.
- 9.5** A resilient, reliable, efficient, and safe transport network that provides for the movement of people and goods is necessary to support development, improve productivity, enable economic growth and allow everyday activity. Essex County Council, which is the highway and transportation authority, is seeking to decarbonise the transport network and deliver a step change in sustainable travel across the county, by growing passenger transport and active travel; and by supporting the move towards net zero, climate resilient developments, including new garden communities, and by delivering well connected neighbourhoods for the future.

- 9.6** The planning system can help to actively manage patterns of growth by focussing on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through offering a genuine choice of transport modes and supporting good design. This will contribute to reducing congestion and emissions and improving air quality and public health. The location and design of developments and how well active travel and public transport services are integrated influences the opportunity for short journeys to be made on foot, cycle or by public transport, helping to reduce transport impacts.
- 9.7** Everyone needs to have access to transport infrastructure to participate in the economy. Transport investment is essential to:
- improve business efficiency, notably by travel time savings, improving journey time reliability and travel quality;
  - stimulate business investment and innovation by supporting economies of scale and new ways of working;
  - agglomerate economies bringing firms closer (in space or time) to other firms or workers in the same sector;
  - improve labour market efficiency, enabling firms to access a larger labour supply, and wider employment opportunities for workers and those seeking work;
  - create business confidence in the long-term capacity of the local area to accommodate their strategic ambitions;
  - increase competition by opening access to new markets, principally by integration of world markets; and
  - increase domestic and international trade by reducing trading costs.
- 9.8** To respond positively to new ways of working, contribute to addressing the impacts of climate change and to provide less car orientated places, transport planning is shifting towards a vision lead approach which helps to create places for people, built around a healthy, safe, prosperous and carbon neutral vision for our new communities. It will consider the relationship between travel patterns and behaviour, broader land use, digital and energy systems.
- 9.9** In recent years, major improvements in computer and mobile phone technology have radically changed the way business is carried out and how people shop, learn, and socialise. Many more people choose to work from home since the pandemic, and communications technology has become essential for businesses and a fundamental part of everyday life. Telecommunications and digital infrastructure technologies are evolving rapidly, and developers will need to ensure that new development is provided with access to up-to-date, high quality digital infrastructure including fibre and wireless services.
- 9.10** The Council will need to consider whether its policies are up to date and compliant with national planning policy, and it may be necessary to update policies in these chapters to ensure they reflect most recent guidance and best practice about infrastructure provision in new developments.

## QUESTIONS

- 72)** In what ways could the Local Plan seek to promote greater use of sustainable modes of transport i.e. walking, cycling and public transport?
- 73)** Could the Council do anything more, through the review of the Local Plan, to ensure the design and location of new developments support residents to be less reliant on private vehicles?
- 74)** What new infrastructure do you think is needed in Tendring to support existing communities and any future development?
- 75)** What other changes, if any, should the Council consider making to policies relating to travel, telecommunications, and other kinds of infrastructure delivery?

## 10 Other matters

- 10.1** This document has sought to cover the issues and options that the Council considers are most pertinent to the review of the Local Plan. If there is anything you feel hasn't been covered in this document or you would like to make any further comments, you are invited to do so.

### QUESTIONS

- 76)** Is there anything you feel hasn't been covered in this document that should be considered as part of the Local Plan Review?
- 77)** Do you have any other comments?