

Area-Based Policy Options

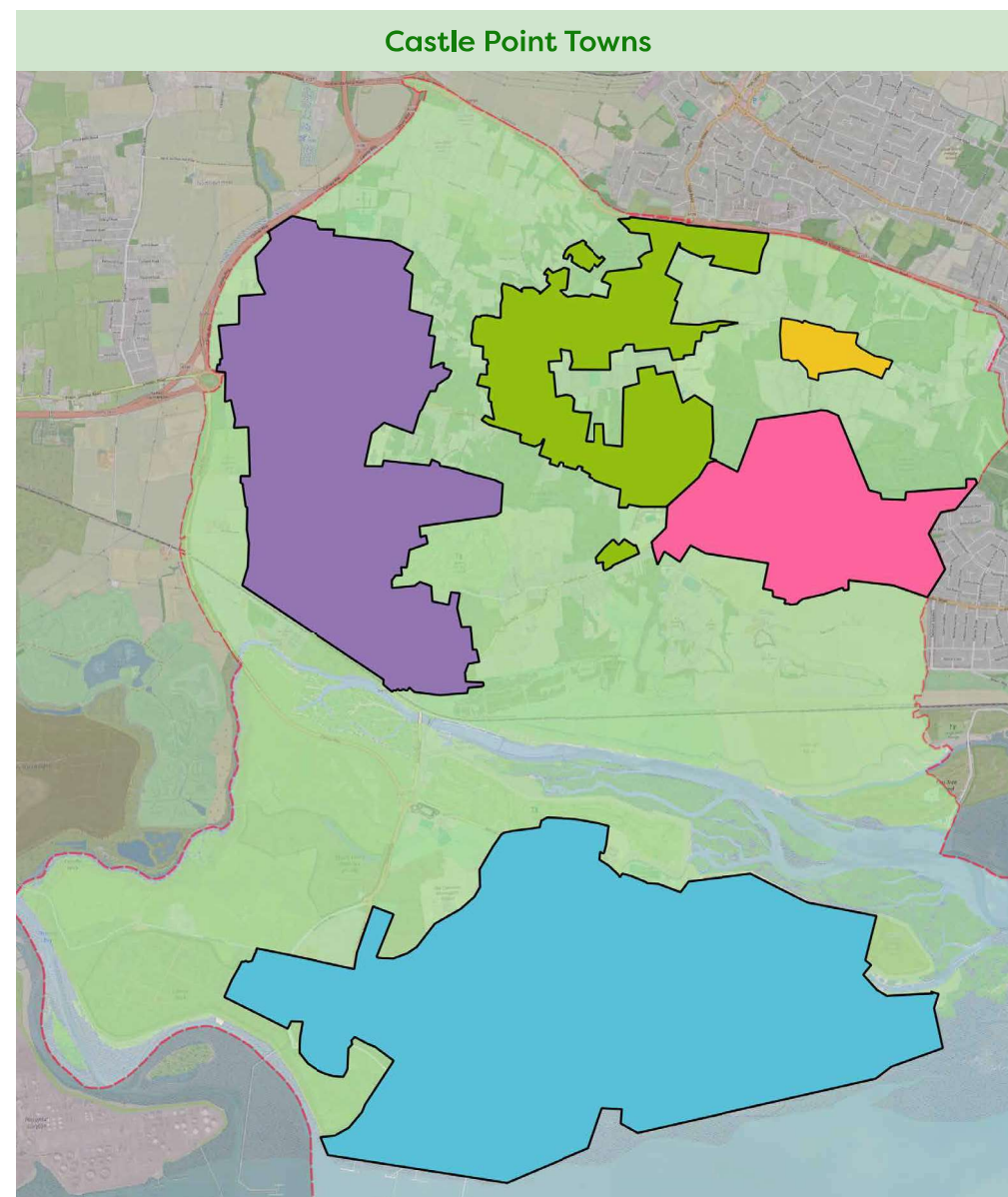
Castle Point is formed of four towns: **Canvey**, **Benfleet**, **Hadleigh** and **Thundersley**, as well as the village of **Daws Heath**. Each of these areas are distinct from each other, and generally surrounded by Green Belt. The exception to this is Hadleigh, which is contiguous with Thundersley and the Southend conurbation to the east.

The Council is seeking to produce a plan which delivers the vision for the borough but is rooted in the unique characteristics of the individual towns and village that make up the borough. This means that the approach to development and change in the Castle Point Plan will be one of place-making and may well vary by area as it responds to each area's unique characteristics, challenges and opportunities.



The Council is pursuing an urban-first approach to allocating possible development sites in the Castle Point Plan. This means prioritising the development of brownfield sites to protect, so far as possible, the borough's green spaces for their rich biodiversity, habitat, and leisure value for future generations to enjoy.

This means directing development into the borough's urban areas. The benefits of regenerating land in urban areas extends far beyond simply providing new homes for local residents. Urban developments offer opportunities to produce new and improved spaces for local businesses, and service providers, improve the co-location of important facilities to make it easier to complete multiple jobs on a single visit to a local town centre, and fund improvements to the town centre's streets and spaces.

This chapter introduces the issues relevant to each area, and discusses how they may be addressed through the Castle Point Plan. It is these area-based sections that will form the basis of the draft Castle Point Plan, and will form the basis of the overall Development Strategy for the borough.



Map Key:

	Castle Point Borough Boundary		Thundersley		Hadleigh		Green Belt
	Benfleet		Daws Heath		Canvey Island		

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Potential Development Sites within the Area-Based Approaches

The following sections include potential development sites that may have capacity to accommodate growth in the plan period (2023 – 2043). These sites are set out by town (and village), with most being within “clusters” which may have the opportunity to act together to produce shared local benefits.

The sites identified are at present generally low-density brownfield sites, which could be extended or redeveloped to bring investment into the borough, creating new homes alongside improved services and employment opportunities.

The sites listed below have been identified through the Call for Sites process, and in a Draft Urban Capacity Study.

- **The Call for Sites invited landowners to submit sites for consideration in the preparation of the Castle Point Plan.**
- **The Urban Capacity Study sought to identify any additional under-utilised sites that may be suitable for development within the urban area.**

Together these processes establish what land may be available for future development in the borough. The Council has sought to ensure that “no stone is left unturned”, in exploring opportunities to accommodate as much of the borough’s development need as possible within the existing urban area.

It is important to understand that at this time these sites are identified as potential sources of urban development only. They are not allocations for development at this stage. They are identified to clearly set out the types of choices that need to be made, and so that these choices can be considered alongside options for growth outside of the urban area. Put simply, the more development opportunities that are identified on urban sites, the lower the risk is to our borough’s precious Green Belt areas.

All the sites identified are considered to have the potential to be more intensively used, but the Council has not at this point determined which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan. These choices will be

taken once consultation feedback has been received and analysed. **It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.** This means sites will very likely be added to or excluded from the draft Castle Point Plan following consultation.

As a part of this consultation, the Council is re-opening the Call for Sites process so that additional land can be promoted for development, with the aim of understanding as fully as possible what land is available, and appropriate for inclusion in the draft Castle Point Plan.

It is important that we establish as fully as possible what land is available for development, in order to demonstrate to the Government that we have considered all reasonable choices available to us in arriving at a draft Castle Point Plan in January 2025.



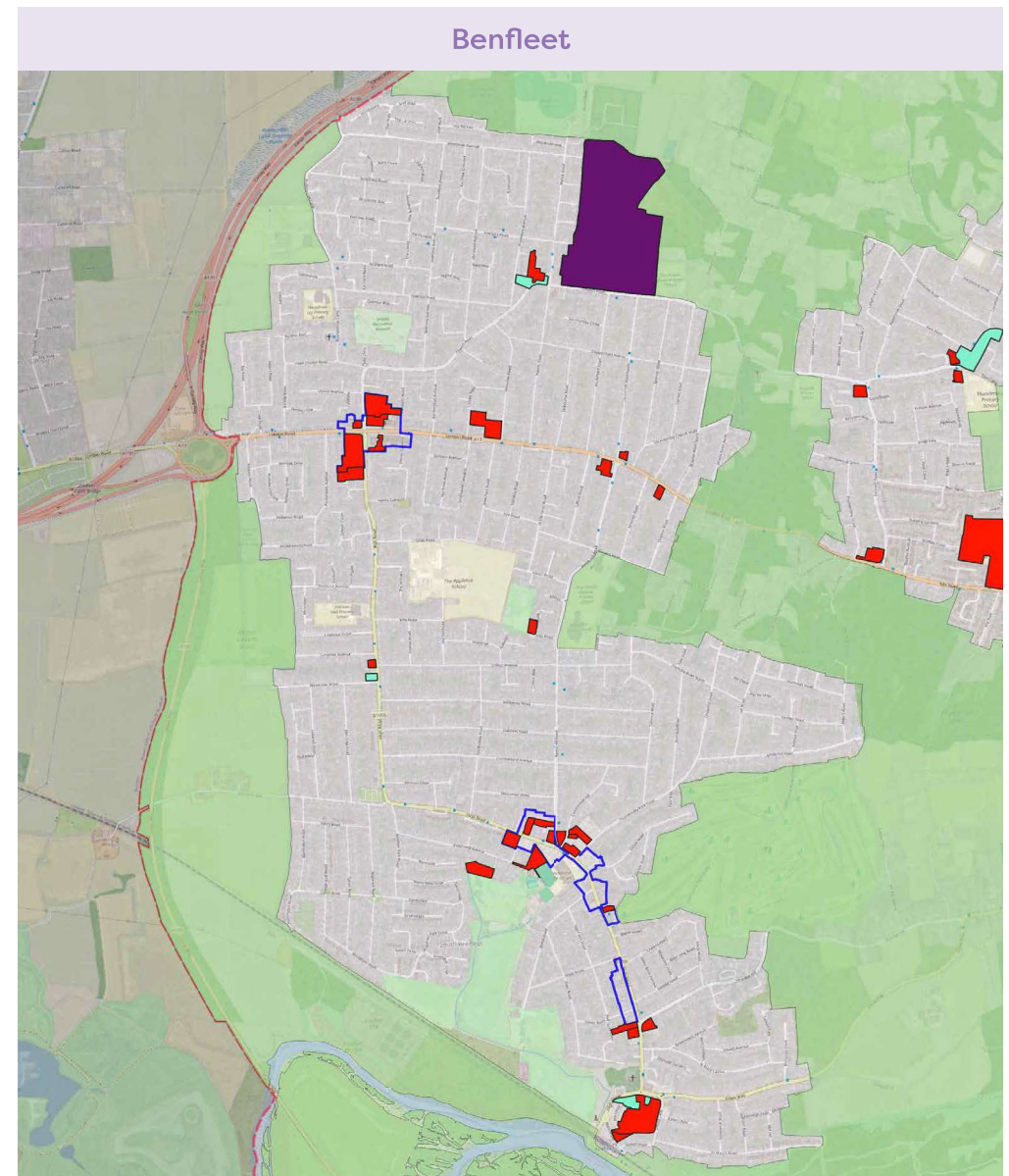
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Benfleet







Benfleet is located in the west of the borough on the mainland, and extends almost all of the way from the East Haven Creek to the Rayleigh Spur roundabout. The original village was located in the south, with gradual northern expansion throughout the 20th Century. It is well connected, with access via road via the Sadlers Farm roundabout, and rail to Southend and London.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- Many respondents in the area stated that the green spaces needed to be protected as they are an important local facility and a haven for wildlife.
- There is a lack of activities to do within local parks, and increased funding is required to provide upgraded facilities for young people.
- Managing road infrastructure was a key theme, including managing congestion on the A13, supporting pedestrians around the Tarpots area, improving bus services, and reducing rat running.
- Local town centres need improvement, with increased convenience retail uses in preference to non-core retail. The look and feel of local centres should be improved.
- A number of respondents raised concerns around heavy vehicle traffic accessing Manor Trading Estates. There were suggestions that this estate may be better relocated.



Map Key:

	Designated Employment Sites		Retail Parks		Urban Sites
	Shopping Parades		Town Centre		Green Belt

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Challenges & Opportunities in Benfleet

Benfleet has the borough's only train station, but there are opportunities to enhance its functionality and the role it plays in connecting the borough, and supporting the local economy. The station sits within Benfleet Conservation Area which has a collection of popular pubs and restaurants. There is scope to enhance the conservation area as a leisure destination alongside its key role in the local transport network.

Benfleet is located in a valley, and consequentially there is flood risk in the south Benfleet area which needs to be carefully managed. This topography also creates a barrier to active travel to/from Benfleet station for areas to the east.

To the very south of Benfleet is Richmond Park and South Benfleet Playing Fields. These provide a key opportunity for recreation in an area that also fulfils a flood management function as a designated reservoir. There are opportunities to improve recreation provision in this area, and also enhance its role in providing active travel access to Benfleet Station.

Both South Benfleet and Tarpots local centres are well occupied with shops and services. However, both are in need of localised improvements.

South Benfleet local centre is spread along the High Road and does not have a distinct core, although the area to the west of the Kents Hill Road junction is the main area. This dispersed shopping provision means there are issues with on-street parking across the centre which impact on nearby residential streets and general traffic flows through Benfleet.

Tarpots local centre is a small centre located at the cross junction of the A13 with High Road and Rushbottom Lane. It is dominated by the road junction, and it is difficult for pedestrians to cross between the four parts of the centre.

Due to the importance of the junction there is limited scope to improve pedestrian accessibility, although there is potentially scope to improve the quality of pedestrian areas to the south of the junction.

These challenges and opportunities provide the basis for the following strategic policy areas in Benfleet.

There are potential development clusters at:

- South Benfleet Town Centre
- Tarpots Local Centre
- South Benfleet Station
- A13 Corridor
- Manor Trading Estate

Transport improvements in Benfleet could include:

- Improved pedestrian crossings along Essex Way
- Smoothing and widening footpaths of residential roads in the Tarpots area and to the north
- Introduce a further cycle route running east-west along Church Road
- Improved cycle link along Vicarage Hill & Benfleet Road
- Improved cycle facilities at Benfleet station
- Improved north-south cycle route along Kents Hill Road
- Improvements to the shared use cycle route along London Road
- Improved bus frequency (10-15 minute service) of the 22 bus route
- Re-route 28 bus along Church Road and Kenneth Road
- Potential for interventions to improve bus reliability along the A13, this could include selective detection on the bus fleet so that buses get priority at junctions
- Junction improvements in the Essex Way/High Road/ School Lane area
- Potential junction improvement at the London Road/ Rushbottom Lane junction

Q14. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed in Benfleet within the Castle Point Plan?

South Benfleet Town Centre

Located along Benfleet High Rd, there are a good range of local services, but there is a need for improvement. It is on the key north-south bus route linking Benfleet and Canvey.

There are a number of underutilised land parcels within and around the centre which offer potential to increase the immediate population, and to provide updated premises for businesses to operate in.

The focus of redevelopment here should be on creating a more pleasant environment, with a range of uses that extend into the evening to create a safer and more welcoming place for residents to visit and spend time.



Q15. What changes or improvements would you like to see in South Benfleet Local Centre?

Q16. What type of development would you support within the South Benfleet development cluster?

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
203	Benfleet Methodist Church, High Road	Redevelopment of existing community building for 19 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
204	Benfleet Tavern Public House, High Road	Potential for 25 new homes and improved town centre services.
205	Richmond Avenue Car Park 2	Potential for 38 new homes, and retention of local parking space.
206	61 High Road (T Cribb funeral directors)	Potential for 13 new homes, and improved local services.
207	Shell garage, Kents Hill Road	Potential for 12 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
208	Benfleet Baptist Church, Kents Hill Road and Constitution Hill	Potential for 13 new homes, and improved town centre services.
209	Land between Constitution Hill and Thundersley Park Rd (South Benfleet Library and Dental Care Group)	Potential for 16 new homes, and improved town centre services.
210	Telephone Exchange, Thundersley Park Road	Potential for 21 new homes, and improved town centre services.
211	Benfleet Surgery, Constitution Hill	Potential for 5 new homes, and improved town centre services.
212	188-190 High Road	Potential for 7 new homes, and improved town centre services.
213	Sainsburys, High Road	Potential for 15 new homes, and improved town centre services.
214	Stellisons, High Road	Potential for 15 new homes, and improved town centre services.
215	South Benfleet Social Club, 6 Vicarage Hill	Potential for 16 new homes, and improved town centre services.

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South Benfleet Station & Conservation Area

Benfleet is the borough's only station on the rail network and represents a key route into and out of the borough to Southend and on routes into London. As such it represents the key gateway into the borough for visitation, both for tourism and employment.

The environment around the station is currently functional, but there are significant opportunities for improvement. Improvements could focus on enhancing onward movements by all modes of transport, by offering seamless sustainable travel modes. This could include improvement of cycling facilities, including a rental offer.

The environment around the station could also be improved to offer a more welcoming setting when entering/exiting the station, and facilities within the station could be improved to enhance the customer experience. There are underutilised sites across the High Street which offer the opportunity to provide complementary development, including development that could help to fund improvements.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
201	School Lane Car Park and 1-5 High Street	Potential redevelopment of existing shopping parade for 144 new homes and local services.
202	87-97 High Street	Potential for 13 new homes, improved commuter parking, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q17. What type of development would you support within the Benfleet Station development cluster?



South Benfleet Conservation Area

Benfleet station is located within the South Benfleet Conservation Area. Key listed buildings include the Church of St Mary the Virgin, and the Hoy & Helmet, Anchor, and Half Crown pubs, but there are also a number of locally designated heritage assets.

The recorded history of the area dates back to the 890s and the battles between the Saxons and the Danes, and this is shaped by South Benfleet's defensible location at the intersection of the Benfleet and East Haven Creeks. There may be significant archaeological heritage in this area relating to the battle of Benfleet.

It will be important when seeking to maximise the utility of Benfleet station area that this local heritage is respected, and opportunities to celebrate and enhance the local character should be identified.

The old centre of South Benfleet comprises several pubs and retail units around the High Street area, close to the railway station. The three pubs in this area have been successful in adapting to a changing market. The retail units within this area have over time been adapted with a significant proportion of them now operating as restaurants and a bar.

A South Benfleet Conservation Area Design Code is being prepared to help guide development in the area.

Q18. What approach should be taken to development in and around the South Benfleet Conservation Area?

Tarpots Local Centre

Tarpots is a local centre focused on the intersection of the A13 and Benfleet High Rd/ Rushbottom Lane. It has good connectivity, being in close proximity to the Sadlers Farm roundabout, and has regular buses both east-west and north-south. As well as providing good connectivity, the junction is also a key congestion hotspot.

The centre provides an important range of local services, but there are significant areas of land which have potential to be used more intensively. Doing this has the potential to add value to the local centre by increasing the working and residential population, as well as create opportunities for new services, and replace uses which rely on large vehicle movements.

The Shafer centre at Great Tarpots is a small, facilitated retail centre with a diverse offering of mixed retail units and popular with new start-ups in the retail sector.



Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
216	Land on the north east corner of London Road and Rushbottom Lane	Potential for 17 new homes, and improved town centre services.
217	Land on the south east corner of London Road and High Road	Redevelopment of existing car park for 10 new homes the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
218	Land in the south west corner of London Road and High Road (Tarpots town centre)	Potential for 61 new homes, and and improved town centre services.
219	Holy Family Church, High Road	Potential for 26 new homes, and improved town centre services.
220	Land on the north west corner of London Road and Rushbottom Lane (Tarpots town centre)	Potential for 6 new homes, and improved town centre services.
221	Aldi, off Rushbottom Lane	Potential for 49 new homes and improved town centre services.

Despite being a well-occupied industrial estate, it is in a very poor condition, particularly its roads which has affected trade for many of the businesses on the estate. There is an issue with there being separate ownership of the roads in this estate and lack of maintenance. As such the estate is in need of investment if it is to be retained and grow as an employment location into the future.

Q21. What types of development could be considered as appropriate within the Manor Trading Estate?

A13 Corridor

There are a number of sites in Benfleet that are situated on the A13, which has particularly good public transport access. Development sites along this corridor may be able to deliver knowledge-based employment or infrastructural uses alongside new residential uses.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
227	312-320 London Road (Queen Bee's Nursery)	Potential for 19 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
228	Canvey Supply, 223 London Road and Linden Road	Potential for 55 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
229	Land on the northeast corner of London Road/ Kents Hill Road junction, 323-329 London Road	Potential for 8 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
230	Maharaja Restaurant, 358 London Road	Potential for 10 new homes, and and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.

Q19. What changes or improvements would you like to see in Tarpots Local Centre?

Q20. What type of development would you support within the Tarpots development cluster?

Manor Trading Estate Regeneration

Manor Trading Estate is one of the largest employment sites in the Borough, and as such is one of the largest sources of employment locally. It is located close to, and accessed via, residential areas, which creates conflict with local traffic, and residential amenity.

Q22. What opportunities for improvements and development within the A13 corridor in Benfleet are there?

South Benfleet Playing Fields

The open spaces in this area provide a dual purpose, providing important local sports and leisure facilities, but also flood water storage. These uses should be enhanced where possible, particularly by improving the range of facilities associated with leisure use.

Q23. What improvements should be made to the South Benfleet Playing Fields area?

Unclustered Sites in Benfleet

In addition to the sites within the development clusters of Benfleet, the following sites may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
222	Richmond Car Park 1 off Richmond Avenue	Potential for 27 new homes, and the retention of local parking capacity.
223	159-169 Church Road and land to the rear	Potential for 32 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
224	Benfleet Clinic, High Road	Potential for 7 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
225	Rear of 179-181 Church Road	Potential for 28 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
226	Land adjacent to Villa Park, Tarmarisk	Potential for 13 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.

Q24. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Benfleet?



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