



# The Castle Point Plan 2026-2043

Regulation 19 Draft

July 2025

Your Community. Your Views



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# Foreword by the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council

## Welcome to the Castle Point Plan

When we set out in 2022 to produce this Plan, the Council agreed that we wanted a plan that was right for the Borough. We are fully aware of the challenges that the Borough faces, because residents, businesses and partners have told us what matters most to them and have helped to shape this Plan.

The Borough is a wonderful place to live, do business and visit. It has vibrant and successful communities and an environment that is as diverse as it is attractive in such a small area.

First and foremost, in preparing this Plan we wanted to protect and enhance what makes Castle Point such a great place. That is why the focus of this Plan is as much on the place and its green and blue spaces, as it is on its development and growth. Development at all costs is not acceptable.

But we recognise that we must ensure that we have enough homes, particularly for younger people living in their parental homes, but also the elderly who may be looking to downsize but still want their independence, and for those who need care. This plan ensures homes are available for them.

We also must allow our economy to grow and address the imbalance in earnings between people who live in the Borough, but work outside of it, and those who live and work in the Borough. That means providing prosperous town centres and good quality employment space with the right infrastructure. Behind all that lies our work with business support groups and training providers to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to work locally.

This Plan is not development shy. We set out to prepare a Plan that met genuine local need, but without destroying the quality of our towns and communities. We set out to make sure we delivered a Plan that involved the residents in its creation and addressed their concerns. We have done that.

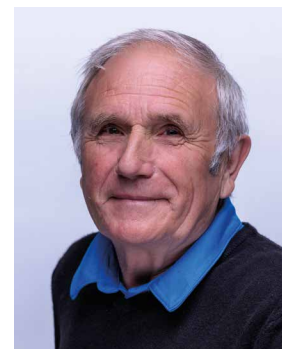
We set out to prepare a Plan that protects our precious Green Belt, makes more productive use of it where we can, protects our wonderful green spaces and improves our health and wellbeing. We have done that.

And we set out a Plan that has the infrastructure investment to support growth. We have done that.

Now it is your opportunity to make your comments on the Plan. After the consultation period we will submit the Plan for examination by an Independent Inspector alongside any comments you make. When the Plan has been examined and found sound, we will adopt the Plan as the blueprint for the Borough.

In adopting this Plan, we will help create the right conditions for the right growth, ensure greater protection for our rich tapestry of green spaces, and strengthen the Council's ability to defend against inappropriate speculative development.

Whilst some change is always inevitable, we need to make sure that we are in the best shape possible to deal with this change to help ensure that Castle Point Borough continues to be a great place in which to live and work.



**Councillor D. Blackwell**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Blackwell'.



**Councillor W. Gibson**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Gibson'.

In producing this Plan, the Council was required to accord with certain legal requirements and guidelines set at national level. However, the views of those who live and work in the Borough were also key in shaping the Plan to meet needs, while protecting and enhancing the local environment. We are grateful for all the views and comments expressed in the consultations and they have helped shape this Plan.

# 1. Introduction

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## What is the Castle Point Plan?

**1.1** The Castle Point Plan is a long-term plan which sets out a positive vision for the area and identifies where and how development should take place in the future. It will provide a degree of certainty for communities, businesses and investors, and a framework for guiding decisions on individual planning applications. The UK planning system is described as ‘Plan-led’. This means that, once it is adopted, decisions must be in accordance with this Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

**1.2** The Castle Point Plan - sets out planning allocations and policies for the delivery of development across Castle Point. It includes policies around what kind of development can go where to ensure the right number and types of homes, space for businesses and the infrastructure, such as schools and health facilities, are provided to support our growing population. It also contains policies to enable people to move around the Borough with a preference given to active and sustainable modes, to safeguard and enhance the environment, enable climate change mitigation, adaption, and secure high quality design.

**1.3** Good forward planning means that we can simultaneously address different priorities, endeavouring to help cater for growth, while supporting communities and protecting our precious environment. The Castle Point Plan will therefore ensure the long-term protection of internationally significant environmental sites, the Green Belt, and the landscape and townscape character of the area whilst aiming to provide the right amount and mix of new homes, affordable homes, jobs and facilities that our communities and businesses need.

**1.4** The Castle Point Plan covers the period from April 2026 to March 2043 and when it is adopted it will replace in its entirety the [Castle Point Adopted Local Plan](#) from 1998. A list of superseded policies is set out in [Appendix B](#).

**1.5** The strategic policies within the Castle Point Plan are policies SP1 to SP4, HOU6, E1, TC1, ENV1-3, TC1, SD1, SD4 and SD5.

## How is the Castle Point Plan being prepared?

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**1.6** This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the associated regulations for local planning. It has also been prepared in accordance with relevant legal requirements in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes, the Habitats Regulations, the Equality Act and requirements of the Environment Act in relation to biodiversity and the Planning and Infrastructure Bill in relation to climate change. The Plan has also been prepared in accordance with the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#), Planning Practice Guidance and national planning policies (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites).

**1.7** Critically, it has been prepared through effective engagement with our residents, businesses and our partners. We have sought to rebuild the local community trust in plan making in the Borough and understand and address concerns raised through this Plan, but also identify new opportunities to also improve the local area. The responses to the consultation are set out in the [Issues and Options](#) Consultation Report. There is overwhelming public support for restricting development to the urban area, the importance of ensuring sustainability and energy efficiency in terms of design, a focus on ecology, enhancing biodiversity and protecting open and green spaces together with investment in community infrastructure and the transport network.

**1.8** We have also worked with those partner organisations who provide services in Castle Point to identify how effective planning policies can help them deliver better services and achieve better outcomes for our residents and businesses.

**Some of the most commonly raised responses, priorities and concerns and how we have taken these on board are detailed below:**

**What you said:**

Concerns over insufficient infrastructure, especially for roads and healthcare.

**Our response:**

A focus has been taken on improving our evidence base to better understand the impacts of development on our transport network by producing a transport scoping report and transport impact assessment. Further work has also been undertaken to ensure that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan aligns with the Castle Point Plan to ensure that the correct infrastructure needed to accommodate the additional growth is provided for.

**What you said:**

Strong desire to protect our green spaces and for making best use of land in the urban area.

**Our response:**

The Castle Point Plan has taken an urban first approach to site allocation and has taken the decision to pursue a level of housing provision lower than the governments standard methodology requirement which enables us to produce a plan which is based on growth entirely constrained to the urban areas of Castle Point. With no provision for growth being made on sites within the Green Belt.

**What you said:**

Support for re-use of existing employment land for housing.

**Our response:**

We have focused on making best use of existing brownfield sites for development and allocated areas of existing employment land for housing.

**What you said:**

Concerns around flood risk.

**Our response:**

Extensive evidence base work has been prepared on the strategic flood risk assessment to identify how flood risk will change over time, the risk that this poses to existing communities within Castle Point and the critical need to provide open spaces that are multi-functional to ensure that there is space for water in the event of a flood.

**What you said:**

A focus on local need over national demands for housing numbers.

**Our response:**

The publication of the NPPF 2024 made clear the governments intentions to increase housing numbers. However, the council is making the case that it would be inappropriate to release Green Belt on the basis of the role the Green Belt in the Borough plays. The Transport Assessment has highlighted there will be pressure on our local road network and there are concerns regarding sustainability and sustainable access to a number of sites promoted for development in the Green Belt. The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy have identified the importance of our green spaces for nature recovery and biodiversity. This, alongside the Local Housing Needs Assessment has provided evidence for providing a Plan which has a lower housing requirement than that which is required by the “standard method”.



**What you said:**

Support for business and retail growth.

**Our response:**

Data and evidence has been collated from various sources on the need for economic floorspace. There is substantive data to show that renewal of the quality of economic floor space and demand for space for local business to grow. However, Experian data shows that based on growth predictions there is currently a surplus of around 9ha of employment growth land in Castle Point to 2043. The Plan has therefore had to provide a balance on employment space provision.

**What you said:**

Important to preserve historical and environmental conservation.

**Our response:**

Further work has been undertaken on heritage impact including specifically the land surrounding Hadleigh Castle. The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy has identified the Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity that need to be protected and improved and those strategic opportunity areas within the top 15% in the county that could deliver additional biodiversity creating a more connected and biodiverse natural environment. All this work has been incorporated into the Castle Point Plan.

**What you said:**

Support for good quality, sustainable development with a focus on net zero.

**Our response:**

A number of policies have been included focusing on ensuring that development is sustainable and to ensure that Net Zero Carbon Development is a priority within the Borough.



## 2. Policy Context

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**2.1** The Castle Point Plan has not been prepared in isolation of other policies. It has been prepared having regard to national and local policy considerations as highlighted below.

### National Policy

**2.2** Local Plans need to be prepared in accordance with national regulations and take account of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#). The NPPF is where the central government's expectations about what a local plan should contain are set with additional guidance set out in the [National Planning Practice Guidance \(NPPG\)](#). The government sets out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF that the planning system should achieve sustainable development by achieving three overarching objectives:

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'*

**2.3** Other national policies have been considered where relevant throughout this work, although the *NPPF* is the principal policy driver for local plans.

## Essex Wide Policies and Strategies

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**2.4** Whilst Castle Point is the council that has responsibility to produce a Local Plan, other tiers of local government are also relevant to the process, both as consultees to a Local Plan, and because they have responsibilities and/or produce Plans which a Local Plan needs to have regard to.

**2.5** Essex County Council (ECC) is the upper-tier local authority which provides County level services, such as minerals and waste planning, highways and transportation, education (including early years and childcare), local flood and surface water management, specialist and supported housing, lead advisor for public health, social services and waste disposal, to boroughs, cities and districts within the County, including CPBC.

**2.6** Several strategies and policies are prepared by ECC that have a bearing on planning policy in Castle Point. These include, but are not limited to, the Local Transport Plan, Minerals and Waste Local Plans (both of which form part of the Development Plan for Castle Point), the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and strategies and policies related to key infrastructure considerations such as early years and childcare, schools and social care.

**2.7** Separately, work is undertaken jointly across Essex on a range of policy matters including on climate change, health and wellbeing and economic development, and as appropriate has been used to inform this Plan.

### South Essex Strategies

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**2.8** Castle Point is part of South Essex Councils (SEC). This is a joint working relationship between the authorities of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Councils, and Essex County Council to look at strategic opportunities across South Essex. It has workstreams related to Economic Development, Infrastructure, Housing, Transport, Climate Change and the Environment.

**2.9** Work arising from SEC, most notably the South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, has informed this Plan.



## Castle Point Policies and Strategies

### The Castle Point Challenge and the Corporate Plan

**2.10** The Council has set out its commitment to residents in a document called the [Castle Point Challenge](#).

**2.11** A new Corporate Plan has been developed to deliver the commitments set out in that document. The work on the Castle Point Plan has informed the Corporate Plan, and the evidence gathering and work on the Corporate Plan has equally helped to inform the Castle Point Plan

**2.12** The current [Corporate Plan](#) runs from 2025 to 2028 and was adopted by the Council in March 2025.

### Other Borough wide Strategies and Policies

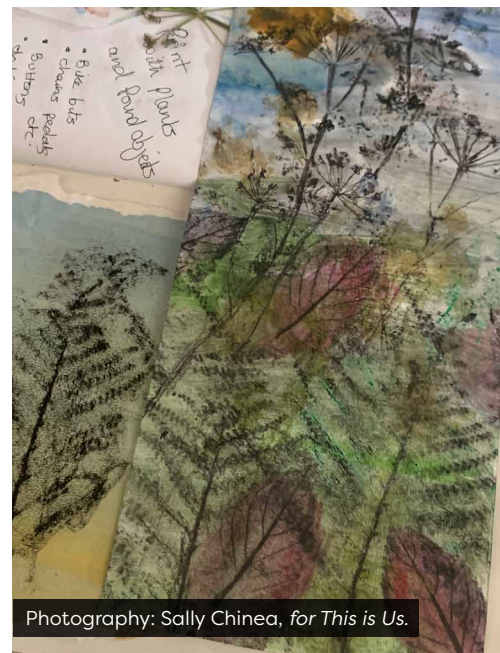
**2.13** The work of the Castle Point Plan has been undertaken alongside the development of policies across other functions of the Council, including the approach to the Council's land and built assets, the approach to our open spaces, the approach to our car parks and our work on economic development. There is therefore strong alignment between the policies in the Castle Point Plan and our operational delivery in those areas.

**2.14** During the preparation of the Castle Point Plan, Sport England announced an investment of circa £2m in Canvey Island for the development of a Place Based Partnership aimed at improving health and wellbeing outcomes for residents. This work has influenced the local plan's approach to health and wellbeing.

**2.15** Another area of development during the preparation of the Plan was investment by the Arts Council in Estuary Festival 2025 which is based in Castle Point. This has stimulated growth and development in the cultural and creative sectors and seen creatives actively involved in informing the Castle Point Plan through 'Engagement Through Art', and a broader drive to see culture embedded within the Plan.

**2.16** Canvey Island will receive up to £20 million of funding through the Plans for Neighbourhoods Fund and further funding is being sought for a wide range

of community and environmental initiatives and projects, including CCTV and community safety.



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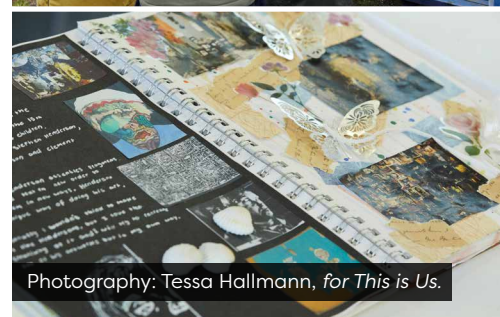
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## 3. Castle Point in 2023

**3.1** Castle Point is a relatively small Borough just **17.4** miles in size, with a population of **89,591** people. There is a population density of **4,976** people per square mile, which is the second highest in greater Essex.

**3.2** The Borough borders the city of Southend-on-Sea to the east, Rochford District to the north, Basildon Borough to the west, and Thurrock unitary authority to the south-west. The Borough sits on the northern bank of the Thames Estuary.

**3.3** The Borough was formed in **1974** from the former urban districts of Benfleet and Canvey Island. There are four main settlements – Canvey Island, Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley. A smaller settlement of Daws Heath sits in the north-east of the Borough.

**3.4** Heritage records indicate that settlements have existed in the area since Roman times. The extension of the railways in the later 1800s into South Essex from London resulted in growth. However, much of what can be seen today has occurred since the late 1940s.

**3.5** The population of Castle Point is older than the national and Essex averages, with around **18.4%** over the age of 65. The area remains popular with families. Whilst people in their 20's tend to leave the area for education and/or work, it is common for people to come to/return to the area later on. Consequently, the population of young people is expected to remain stable over the Plan period.

**3.6** There are around **39,000** homes in Castle Point. The Borough has one of the highest proportions of home ownership in the country at 80.4% (**45.3%**) owning their home outright and **35.1%** with a mortgage or loan). Social housing makes up just **5.5%** of local housing provision. The Council manages around **1,500** social homes and has a housing register to the order of **600** households.

**3.7** The affordability ratio in Castle Point is above **11 times** local wages, with the average house price of **£357,000** at October 2024. There is a below Essex and national average number of flats and a significantly higher than average

number of bungalows in the Borough. This mix impacts on the availability and affordability of first-time homes.

### Boundary and relationship with neighbouring areas



**3.8** Different parts of the Borough experience different qualities of life. Parts of Thundersley are amongst the 10% least deprived in the Country. Meanwhile parts of Canvey are amongst the 20% most deprived. This is reflected in both economic and health outcomes. Most notably, men in the most deprived areas are expected to live **10 years less** than men in the least deprived areas.

**3.9** Castle Point has a small economy with around **3,300** businesses operating in the borough. **98%** of these businesses are micro or small businesses. The value of the local economy is around **£1.1bn** and equates to a GVA of around £20,500 per working age person. This is significantly below the Essex and national averages.

**3.10** The low productivity of the economy is reflected in local wages, which at **£695** per week, are lower than the Essex average and significantly lower than the resident wages at **£769** per week.

**3.11** Therefore, whilst there is high participation in work at **87.9%**, many people commute out the Borough to secure higher wages. The commuter ratio is **54%** and the entire Borough is within the Southend and Brentwood Travel-to-Work Area.

**3.12** Both the local economy and local wages are also impacted by local education levels. At **23.9%** Castle Point has one of the highest proportions of people without qualifications in the Country. At **18.5%** it has the lowest proportion of people with a degree or higher in Essex.

**3.13** Castle Point is well connected within the wider Essex area and London by the strategic highway and railway network. The **A13**, **A127** and **A130** within Castle Point link the Borough with opportunities in South Essex, Mid-Essex, and London. However, congestion on the strategic road network is significant at peak times, and there is a lack of resilience on these routes in the event of an incident.

**3.14** There is only one train station in the Borough, at South Benfleet. The railway service provides fast, direct connections to London, Basildon, Southend and to employment growth locations in Thurrock. It is the eighth busiest station in Essex.

**3.15** Castle Point is relatively well served by bus services, although there are limited services to Daws Heath and hospitals from many parts of the Borough. The bus services utilise the strategic road network and are subject to the same delays as other road users. Consequently, bus usage is low at around **2%**. Car is the principal means by which people travel to work at **52.8%**. Car ownership in Castle Point is high with **46%** of households owning 2 or more cars. Around **6.2%** walk or cycle to work.

**3.16** The Borough is within London's Metropolitan Green Belt, and **53%** of the Borough is designated as Green Belt. Within this area sits the internationally protected Benfleet and Southend Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, **six** Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), numerous ancient woodlands and **41** local wildlife sites and **7** local geological sites.

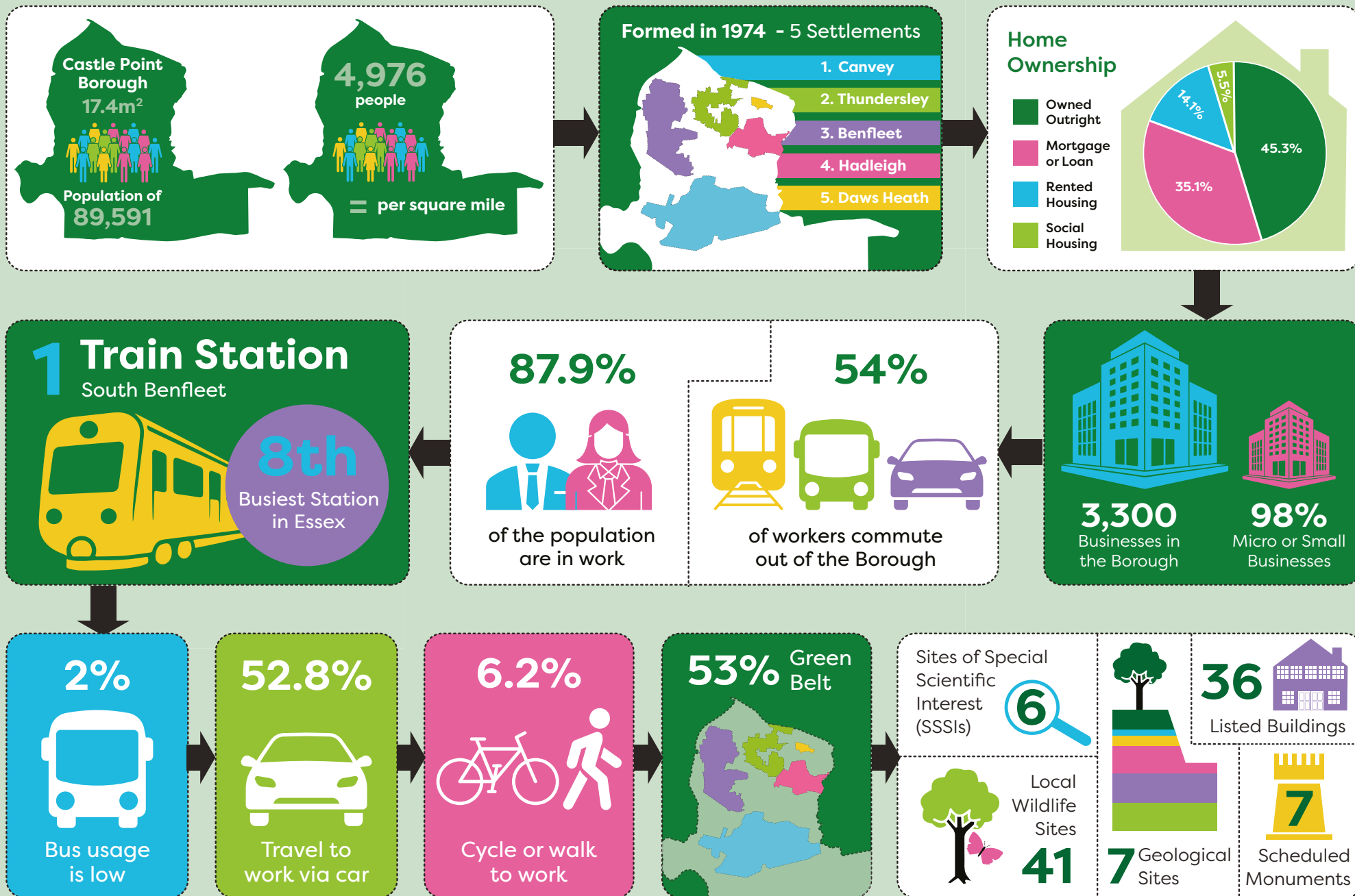
**3.17** The topography of the Borough is contrasting. Canvey Island is low lying, generally at or below sea level whilst the mainland is typified by an ancient cliff escarpment intersected in places, by deep valleys.

**3.18** Around **50%** of the Boroughs area falls within flood risk zone 3 (the zone of most serious risk) because of risk from the Thames Estuary. In 1953, coastal flooding tragically led to 58 deaths on Canvey Island. Due to the topography of the Borough substantial areas of the Borough are also at risk of surface water flooding during extreme rainfall events.

**3.19** Castle Point currently has seven scheduled monuments, including the castle and the Roman fort at Hadleigh. There are two historic Conservation Areas (at Florence Gardens and South Benfleet) and 36 listed buildings (including two grade 1 listed churches).

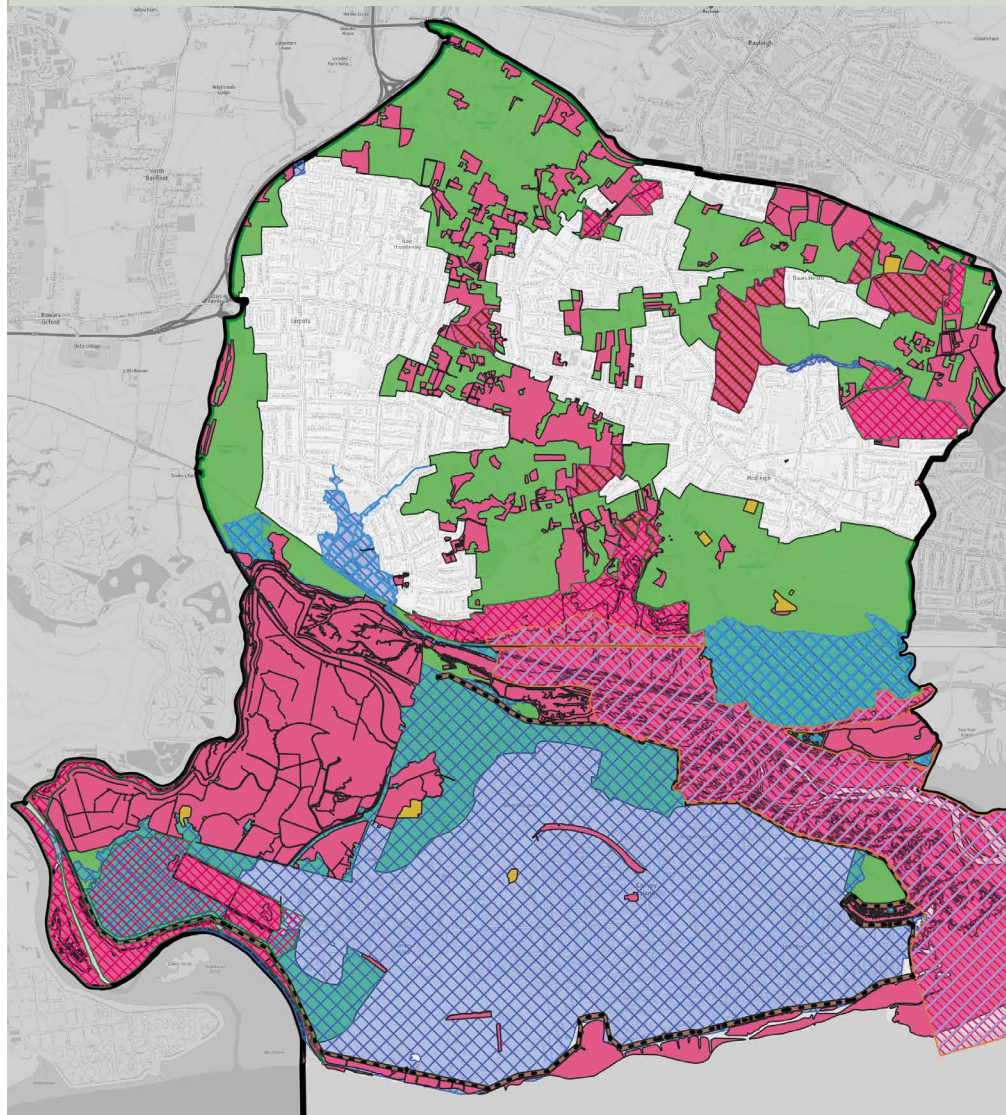
**3.20** Across the Borough there are **1,419 ha** of public open space, providing recreational opportunities for local people and space for wildlife. However, despite this provision alongside substantial provision of formal sports facilities and playing pitches, participation in physical activity is low at just **65%**. This is reflected in higher proportions of poor health outcomes in terms of heart and respiratory conditions.

**3.21** Whilst communities in Castle Point face many challenges, they are active and engaged in positively improving their local areas. There are over **100** organisations working in the voluntary sector in Castle Point to make the lives of local people better every day. There is strong support for local businesses, which means there are low vacancy rates in our town centres, and there is a growing interest in the culture of the place and in preserving our heritage and natural assets.





## Constraints



Map Key:

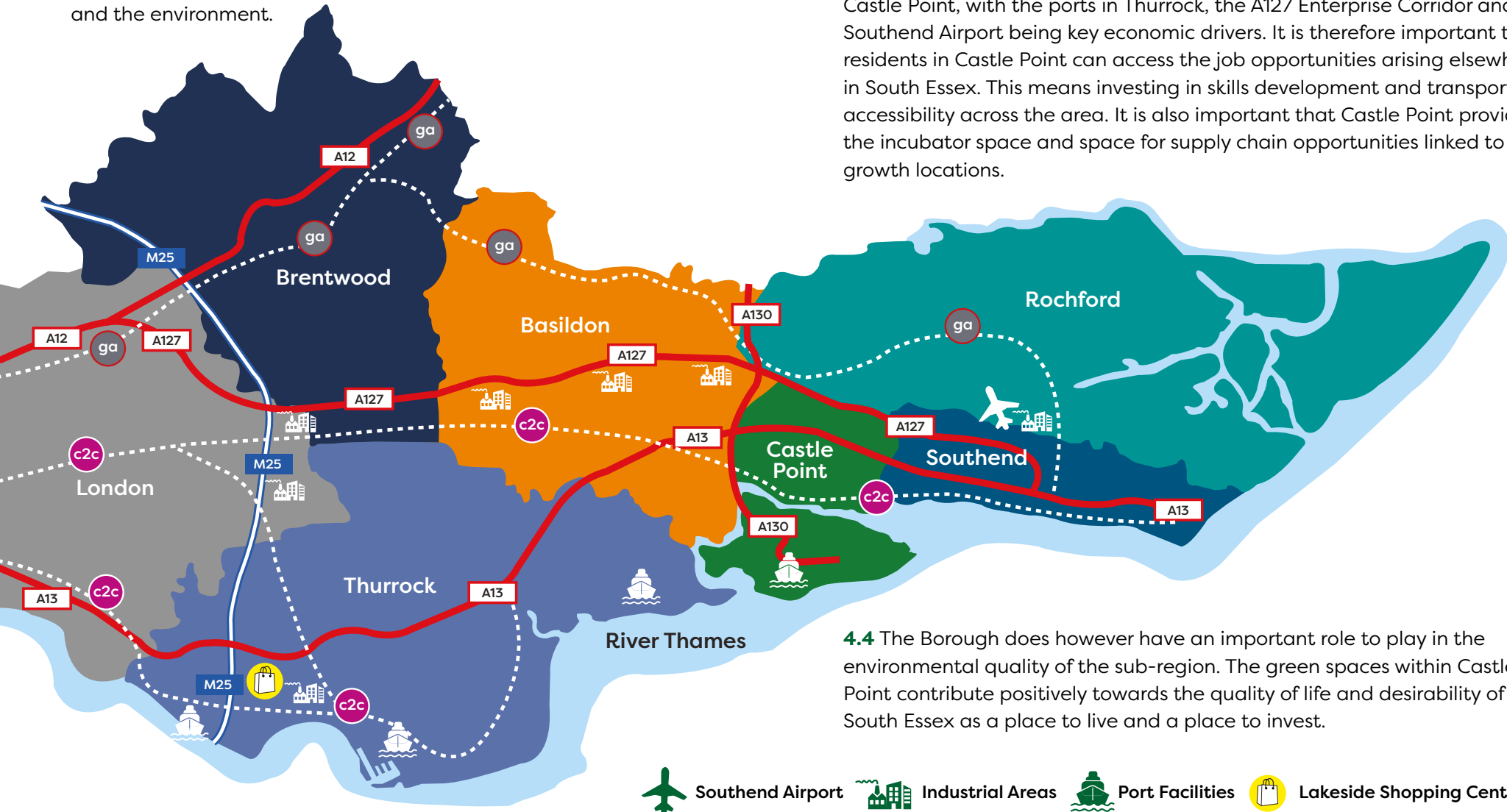
	SPA		SSSI		RAMSAR		Ancient Woodland
	Green Belt		Borough Boundary		Priority Habitats		Scheduled Ancient Monument
	Sea Wall		Flooding No Defence		Flooding Zone 3		Sea Wall Development Buffer





## 4. Strategic Position of Castle Point within South Essex

**4.1** Castle Point sits between Basildon and Southend-on-Sea as part of South Essex. [South Essex Councils – \(SEC\)](#), work on strategic matters that cross the administrative boundaries in the local area. These matters include economic development, transport, infrastructure, housing, climate change and the environment.



**4.2** The combined population of the authorities that make up South Essex is close to one million and there are over 33,000 businesses operating in the area. However, the economy of South Essex under performs compared to other areas in Essex and comparative areas elsewhere in the Country. This is despite being well located in proximity to London and home to major logistics opportunities presented by the Thames Freeport.

**4.3** Most of the strategic opportunities for growth in South Essex sit outside Castle Point, with the ports in Thurrock, the A127 Enterprise Corridor and Southend Airport being key economic drivers. It is therefore important that residents in Castle Point can access the job opportunities arising elsewhere in South Essex. This means investing in skills development and transport accessibility across the area. It is also important that Castle Point provides the incubator space and space for supply chain opportunities linked to these growth locations.

**4.4** The Borough does however have an important role to play in the environmental quality of the sub-region. The green spaces within Castle Point contribute positively towards the quality of life and desirability of South Essex as a place to live and a place to invest.



Southend Airport



Industrial Areas



Port Facilities

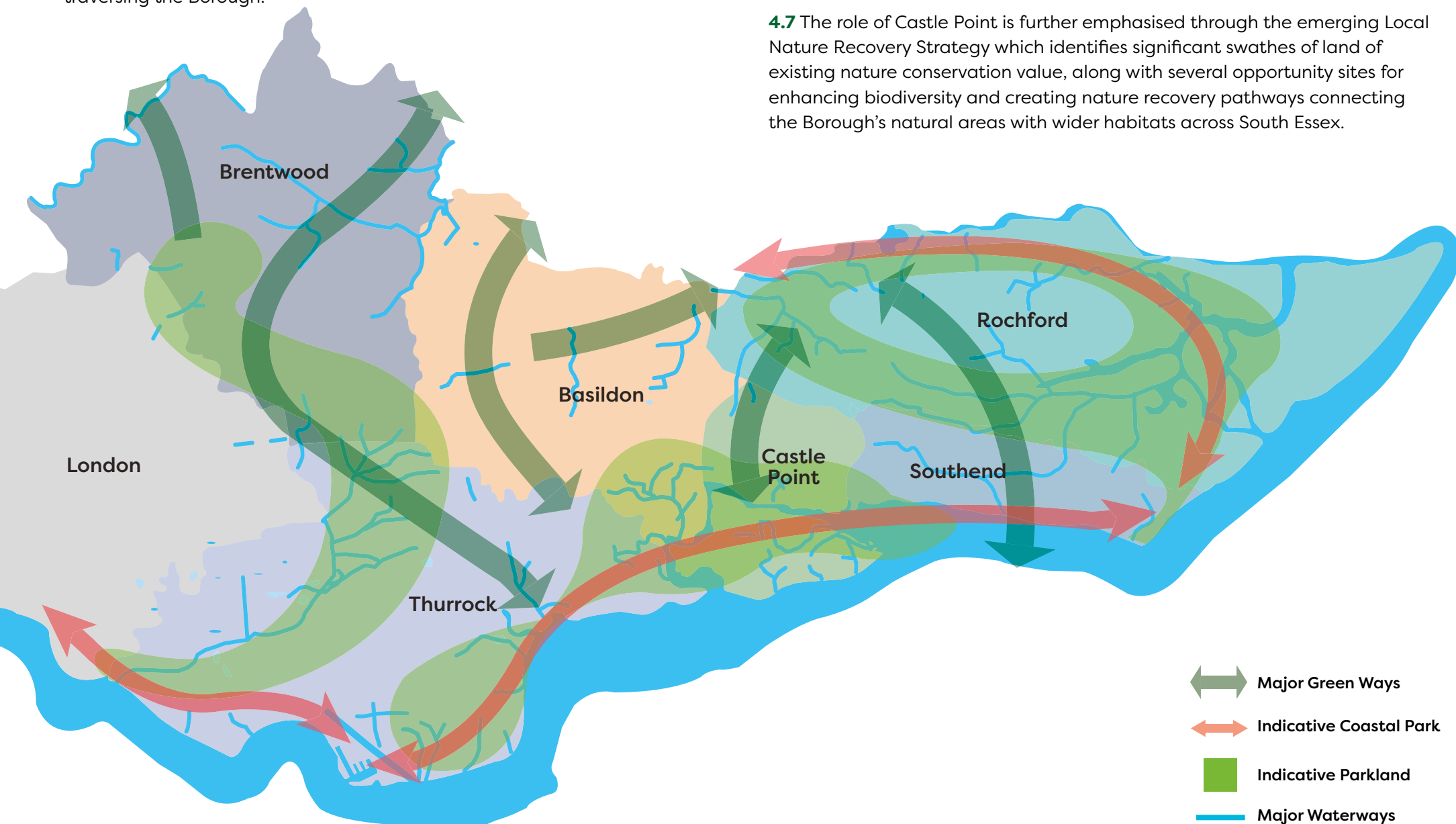


Lakeside Shopping Centre

**4.5** The South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy sets out proposals to create a parkland landscape across South Essex known as SEE Park. Castle Point sits at the heart of the proposals with key areas of parkland and key connections between different areas of green space sitting within and traversing the Borough.

**4.6** Work is underway to develop a sustainable investment model for securing the delivery of SEE Park, and landowners such as the RSPB and the Salvation Army are already investing and delivering nature-based projects that will contribute to the delivery of this green vision for South Essex.

**4.7** The role of Castle Point is further emphasised through the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy which identifies significant swathes of land of existing nature conservation value, along with several opportunity sites for enhancing biodiversity and creating nature recovery pathways connecting the Borough's natural areas with wider habitats across South Essex.

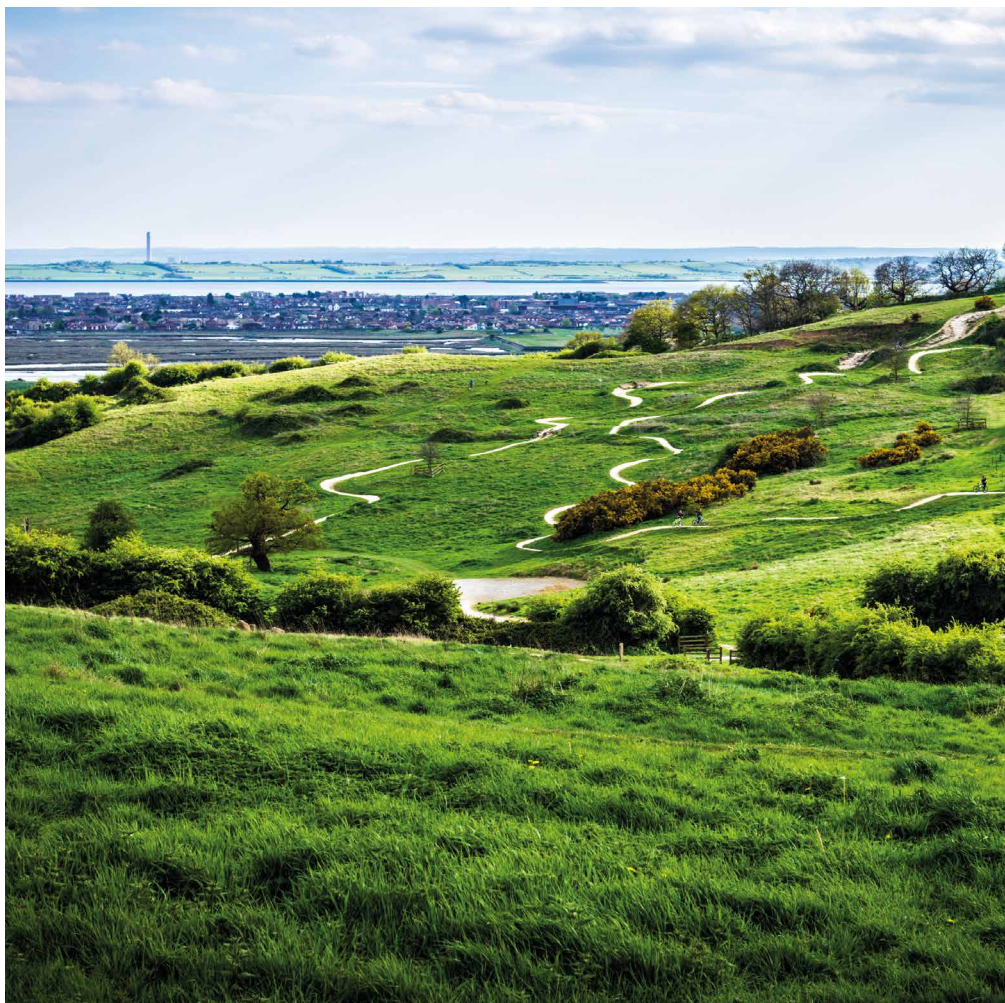




## 5. Vision & Objectives

### Vision

**5.1** The vision for the Castle Point Plan has been developed based on the outcomes of engagement on the Castle Point Plan in 2023 and the consultation on the [Issues and Options](#) document in 2024. It establishes the vision of residents and stakeholders in terms of what Castle Point should look and feel like by 2043.



**It is our ambition to make Castle Point the green heart of South Essex where:**

- *All residents have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and live happy, healthy, productive lives.*
- *Everyone will have a warm, safe home they can afford to live in, on a street that is safe and attractive to walk down, and has access to local services and amenities.*
- *Green spaces in local areas will be pleasant places to rest and play and will be connected into the wider network of multi-functional green infrastructure, providing opportunities to connect with nature.*
- *These green spaces alongside community buildings and other community spaces will be busy with communities, community groups and organisations engaged in social, physical and cultural activities, delivering health and wellbeing outcomes and creating a vibrant buzz about the place.*
- *Our high streets, seafront, shopping parades and business areas will provide good quality spaces, the right environment and the infrastructure needed by businesses to attract customers and investment. There will be strong links between local businesses and local education providers to enable local people to work locally in good quality jobs.*
- *To support the economy and ensure good access to training, jobs, services and amenities for local people, the transport network will be enhanced so that residents have more choice as to how and where they travel with priority given to active and sustainable modes in the first instance.*
- *The impacts of climate change will be managed and mitigated to reduce potential disruption to day-to-day life by introducing multi-functional green infrastructure and other natural processes. Other infrastructure will be adapted and enhanced to accommodate a changing climate, and homes, businesses and other buildings will be built or adapted to be energy efficient, reduce their impact on the climate and to be resilient to extreme weather and flooding.*

## Objectives

**5.2** Building on the vision and recognising what can be achieved through planning policy, the following objectives have been identified, which can be evaluated both in terms of the policies contained within the Plan, but also in terms of the outcomes of the Plan's delivery.

Environmental	
<b>Obj 1</b>	Protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
<b>Obj 2</b>	Increase the amount of good quality multi-functional green and blue infrastructure in the Borough.
<b>Obj 3</b>	Secure multi-functional green corridors between the different green spaces in and on the edge of our Borough that promote active travel.
<b>Obj 4</b>	Plan positively to protect and secure an uplift in biodiversity networks present in the Borough.
<b>Obj 5</b>	Locate development to avoid or manage flood risk from all sources.
<b>Obj 6</b>	Secure the delivery of net zero development and encourage the retrofit of existing properties.
<b>Obj 7</b>	Secure improved water efficiency in new buildings.
<b>Obj 8</b>	Secure improved water quality in our waterbodies.
<b>Obj 9</b>	Make the most effective use of vacant and underused brownfield land in our urban areas.

Economic	
<b>Obj 10</b>	Improve the quality of the public realm and private buildings in our town centres and employment areas.
<b>Obj 11</b>	Protect and enhance key heritage and cultural assets.
<b>Obj 12</b>	Improve the vitality of our town centres and seafront area.
<b>Obj 13</b>	Provide good quality local job opportunities.
<b>Obj 14</b>	Support the upskilling of our residents so they can access well paid jobs.
<b>Obj 15</b>	Make it easy to start or grow a business in the Borough.
Social	
<b>Obj 16</b>	Secure growth in well connected and sustainable locations.
<b>Obj 17</b>	Make it easier and more convenient to safely walk and cycle around the Borough.
<b>Obj 18</b>	Provide well designed homes that meet local needs in terms of quantity, affordability and any accessibility requirements.
<b>Obj 19</b>	Secure improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents enabling more active and healthier lifestyles, creating healthy Living environments and reducing health inequalities.
<b>Obj 20</b>	Secure the transport and community infrastructure needed to support growth.



## 6. Castle Point's Strategic Policies and Approach

**6.1** The overriding objective of this Plan is to protect and enhance the open spaces, habitats, historic and natural landscape and character of the Borough for the enjoyment of all its residents, visitors, workers and wildlife.

Protecting the very character of the Borough that make it so attractive, is enhanced by focussing development in areas that have the capacity to accommodate growth, with good access to facilities that a community needs and distributing that growth across the Borough to avoid over concentration in one area.



Photography: Sally Chinae, for *This is Us*.

## Supporting the Enhancement of the Borough's Green Spaces

### Policy SP1 – Supporting Enhancement of the Borough's Green Spaces

The Council will protect and enhance the Borough's green and blue infrastructure for the benefit of wildlife, biodiversity, landscape, amenity, climate resilience and to support the health, wellbeing and enjoyment of them by residents and visitors. This will be achieved by:

1. Supporting the delivery of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, providing protection and enhancement to the Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity as identified in the Strategy. Ensuring those areas identified as Strategic Combined Opportunity Areas are safeguarded to deliver the additional nature benefits identified to create more connections between habitat areas;
2. Identifying new opportunities within and adjacent to the existing urban areas to deliver multi-functional green infrastructure that provides nature-based enhancements, habitat resilience and climate resilience;
3. Minimising the impacts of pollution on the quality of green and blue infrastructure, including but not limited to ensuring that water quality in water bodies across the Borough is improved; and
4. Protecting the function of the Borough's Green Belt and coastal areas by supporting opportunities to enable improved access, health and wellbeing and leisure infrastructure, for the overall enjoyment of residents.

### Reasoned Justification

**6.2** The Castle Point Plan has been informed by extensive engagement and consultation, including the views of our residents. There is a strong local desire to protect our green and open spaces. This was reflected not just survey results, but also by those harder to reach members of the community that engaged through Engagement through Art.

**6.3** The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) expects Local Plans and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

**6.4** Castle Point is a small Borough covering 17 square miles. Over half of the Borough is urbanised and the remainder is within the Green Belt, much of which has additional nature conservation and/or landscape protections.

**6.5** The high quality of the natural environment contributes to the quality of life for people living and working in the Borough and provides opportunities for healthy lifestyles. It also has a key role to play in the overall quality of the environment in South Essex as evidenced by the South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy and Green Infrastructure Standards and the associated proposals for the SEE Park.

**6.6** Green and blue infrastructure also supports our economy by increasing tourism activity and has a critical role to play in managing climate change by providing space for water, providing shading and acting as a sink for carbon.

**6.7** Consequently, this rich landscape tapestry is highly valued and should be protected, and where possible enhanced.

**6.8** To provide the utmost protection to the landscape and natural assets within it, this Plan favours an urban-first approach to development in the Borough.

**6.9** This approach aligns with not just the NPPF but also meets legal requirements. This approach aligns with not just the NPPF but also meets legal requirements in terms of the General Biodiversity Duty set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, and in terms of the Habitats Regulations.

**6.10** In line with the NERC Act 2006, a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been prepared for the whole of Greater Essex. This identifies the most significant areas of priority habitat across Essex, and identifies those areas where enhancements are necessary to improve the network and deliver an overall gain in nature. The NERC Act 2006 identifies the LNRS as a significant consideration when meeting the General Biodiversity Duty. It has therefore been a significant consideration in the preparation of this Plan.

**6.11** The sites identified for protection and enhancement in the LNRS cover a significant extent of the Green Belt in Castle Point. Majority of the undeveloped areas of the Borough are identified as being a Strategic

Combined Opportunity Area, which identify the top locations and opportunities across all habitats. These areas have the greatest potential to deliver benefits for nature and the broader environment. These areas will also benefit from a 15% uplift on standard biodiversity units, as calculated in the biodiversity metric for biodiversity net gain. These areas are critical to the blue and green infrastructure network across the Borough.

**6.12** The Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy has also identified that the focus of future green and blue infrastructure planning should be to prioritise closing existing gaps in the existing network, restoring movement pathways and ensuring that fragmented green spaces are reconnected into a coherent functioning ecological system.

**6.13** The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) meanwhile provide for protection of Habitats Sites identified through international legislation. Benfleet and Southend Marshes are a Habitats Site. Others sit outside our Borough but are affected by our usage of water or the recreational activities of our residents.

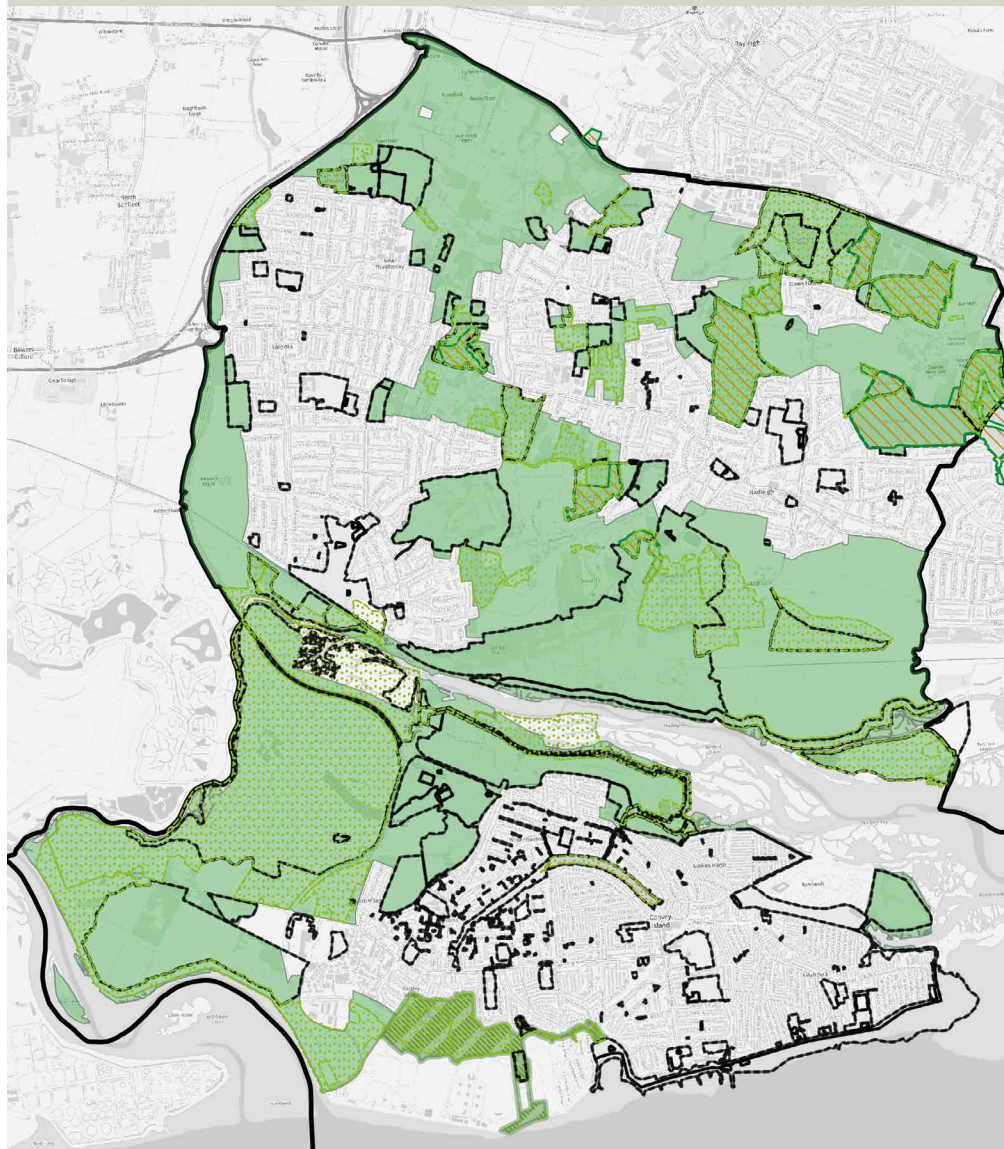
**6.14** The proposals in this Plan have been assessed to ensure that they do not have an adverse impact on the integrity of Habitats Sites. By concentrating development within the existing urban area this risk is largely managed, although there is a residual risk associated with recreation. The retention of accessible natural green spaces away from Habitats Sites on the Essex coast helps to manage this risk by providing alternative destinations for outdoor recreation. Therefore, green infrastructure in Castle Point has a critical role to play in terms of recreation provision also.

**6.15** Therefore, whilst the principal purpose of Green Belt is to contain urban development, promote urban renewal and keep towns separated from one another, the Green Belt in Castle Point is also critical to nature conservation, and green and blue infrastructure provision. It has helped to protect habitat sites from encroachment, preserve the countryside, and protect the landscape which is distinctive to the character of Castle Point and the towns within it.







**6.16** The Green Belt is a highly valued asset for local communities, and there is the potential as highlighted through the SEE Park proposals and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to further enhance its role as an asset for recreational and an ecological green infrastructure asset. This is consistent with the NPPF which encourages landscape scale planning for enhancing natural capital.

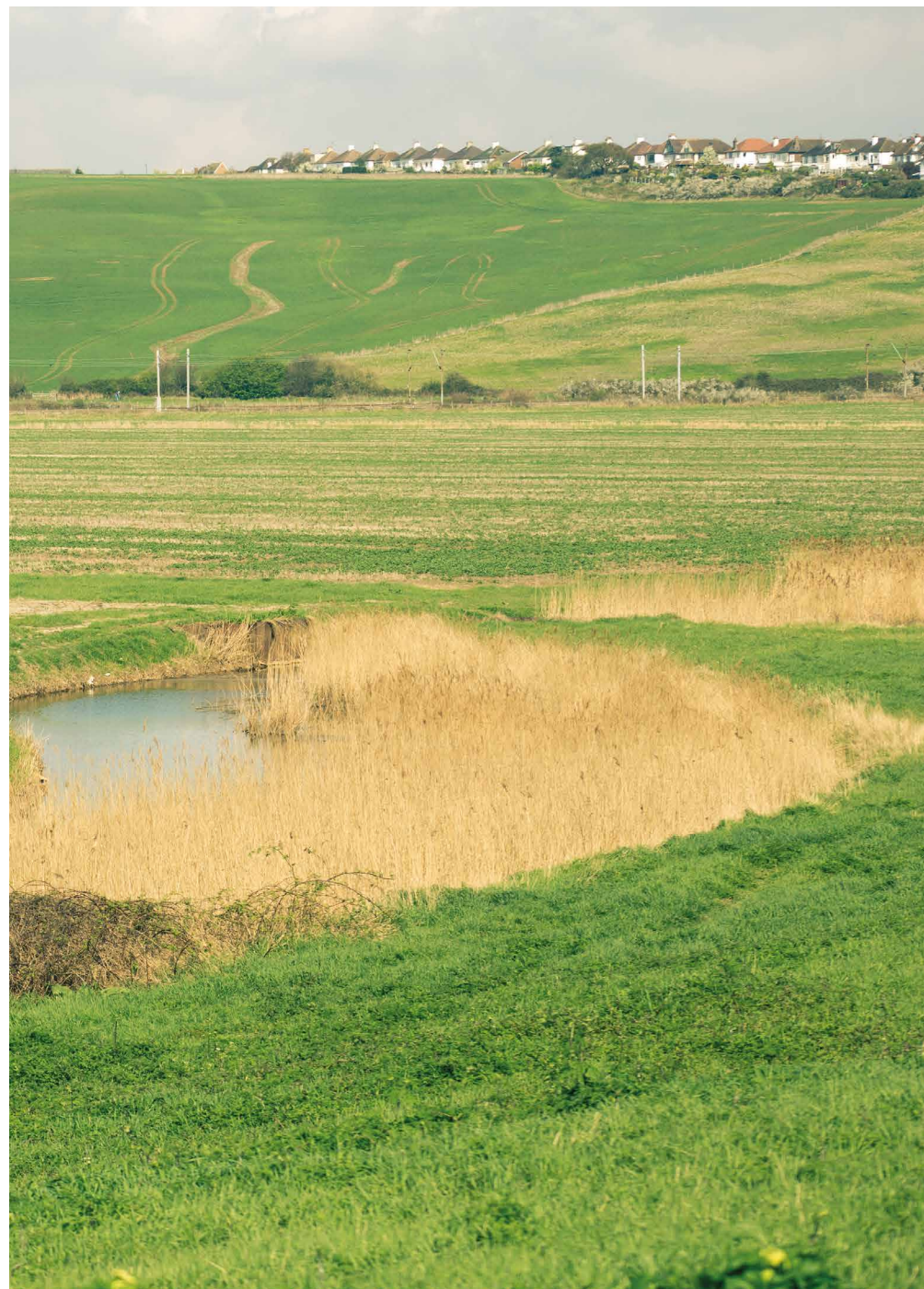


## Green Infrastructure



### Map Key:

	Ancient Woodland		Local Wildlife Sites		Green Belt
	Open Space		Green Lung		Borough Boundary





### Policy SP2 - Making Efficient Use of Urban Land and Creating Sustainable Places

1. This Plan supports the NPPF's objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development in Castle Point will support the regeneration of local town centres, with a clear focus on making the best use of urban land, to maximise the benefits of development for local communities.
2. The Council will seek to make the most effective use of brownfield land in the existing urban areas of the borough by:
  - a. Supporting a design-led approach to optimise site densities on developable land, that maximises the use of urban land while ensuring proposals are of a high quality and compatible with local character and amenity.
  - b. Recognising urban intensification and brownfield redevelopment as important sources of supply, proposals for redevelopment and intensification of existing residential areas where appropriate, will be supported.
  - c. Supporting mixed use developments in sustainable locations which offer the opportunities to co-locate homes, jobs, and services.
3. To ensure that new development contributes positively towards the quality of the Borough as a place to live and do business, enabling communities and businesses to be sustainable and thrive, all proposals will be required to:
  - a. Provide or make a proportionate financial contribution to the delivery of necessary infrastructure alongside growth;
  - b. Support the delivery of well-designed neighbourhoods, which enhance the local environment, create places where people want to live, work, and visit now and in the future;

- c. Deliver high standards of sustainability within the design and construction of new buildings so that residents and businesses can enjoy a low cost, healthy living environment;
- d. Support integrated access to public open space, and the enhancement of the multi-functional green infrastructure network to offer a range of health and environmental benefits;
- e. Provide high levels of accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable users via active modes of travel and public transport to travel to employment, education, services and recreation opportunities; and
- f. Ensure permeability of design, promoting ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists and the less mobile.



Photography: Sally Chineia, for *This is Us*.

# Reasoned Justification

**6.17** The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) expects Local Plans to promote the efficient use of land to meet identified needs and strategic policies and should describe a strategy for meeting those needs by making the most of previously developed land.

**6.18** At present Castle Point mainly serves other areas by supplying their economies with workers, and their services with visitors. This creates a high level of people and vehicle movements in and out of the Borough at peak times, and the wealth generated does not proportionally benefit local businesses.

**6.19** The Castle Point Plan provides opportunities for this pattern to change. By redeveloping the Borough’s town centres, and encouraging active and sustainable travel initiatives, new developments will create opportunities to internalise trips during the day, and at peak time.

**6.20** Castle Point has five settlements – Canvey Island, Benfleet, Hadleigh, Thundersley and Daws Heath. Development set out in this Plan seeks to grow the local economy, while meeting housing and service needs in the most accessible areas within the Borough. This will attract investment in our town centres, creating a virtuous circle of increasing local spend, and local opportunity.

**6.21** The settlement hierarchy is set out below. The hierarchy groups settlements based on their sustainability, size, function and the services provided in each locality.

Large Settlements	Medium Settlements	Small Settlements
Canvey Island	Hadleigh	Daws Heath
Benfleet	Thundersley	

**6.22** New urban development is expected to be of a high quality, whilst increasing current densities. The design of new development should recognise this, while being respectful of existing amenity, and also look to establish innovative and creative design benchmarks to inspire subsequent growth

and intensification. By doing this the Borough will see a gentle evolution and uplift in both density and design.

**6.23** Higher densities create financial value within development schemes which can be used to fund and deliver the necessary supporting infrastructure. Infrastructure to support new development will be required to be delivered in a timely way to minimise the impact of the development and to ensure that it is provided at the right time.

**6.24** Increasing residential density in sustainable locations is essential to supporting the Borough’s town centres and protecting the Borough’s green spaces. Higher density, including co-locating mixed uses on sites helps to create shorter trips by active and sustainable modes for residents to services, and thereby reducing the need to travel, particularly by car.

**6.25** To support the brownfield-first approach, developments will be required to make the optimal use of urban land. A Castle Point Density and Capacity Study has been undertaken to understand what density could be appropriate for the 6 different Design Code Identity Areas. This has informed the target densities set out below,

Area	Density (dwellings per hectare)
Neighbourhood Hub	150
Primary Corridor	125
Suburban Corridor	100
Estuary Edge	70
Natural Edge	70
Canvey Seafront	100

**6.26** All new development should complement its neighbourhood. This goes beyond “fitting in” with the character of an area; new sites should open up routes across and between neighbourhoods and contribute to making the Borough as a whole easier to get around.



**6.27** The Council will work with developers, landowners of sites and infrastructure providers to ensure that new development is appropriately designed having regard to the existing and neighbouring land uses development, as well as the need to make the optimal use of land.

**6.28** Where appropriate the Council will require master plans (and planning briefs for smaller sites) to help guide how policy requirements can be delivered from key sites, including optimising the use of land. Master plans should be prepared collaboratively with the local community and partners. They are a useful tool in ensuring that the value of land is maximised whilst balancing the need for development with creating high quality places and minimising the impact on existing communities. An approved Master Plan by the Council, must be in place prior to the submission of a planning application where required.

**6.29** To ensure high levels of sustainability, the policy requires new development be of exemplary environmental quality, having regards to the carbon used in construction, as well as future operation. It is important not only for the future of the planet, but also for the local health of residents that new and existing homes are well insulated and efficiently powered to ensure they are cost effective into the future.

**6.30** As the density of the urban areas increases within the Borough, the need to protect and enhance access to make the best use of local open spaces becomes more acute. By opening up access to a wide range of facilities, residents and visitors will have an increased choice about when and how often they use local green assets.

**6.31** As has been recognised, Castle Point experiences significant congestion on its key routes within and out of the Borough, particularly at peak times. New development will be encouraged within the urban areas in sustainable locations at densities that enable the opportunities for residents to make shorter journeys by more active and sustainable modes. By locating new homes, businesses, and services in areas with a wide range of transport options, this Plan seeks to move away from simply reinforcing current transport trends.



### Policy SP3 – Meeting Development Needs

1. The Castle Point Plan will deliver a minimum of 6,196 new homes over the period 2026-2043, and ensure that there is sufficient employment land and commercial floorspace to support the needs of the local economy.
2. Within the Plan area, the following supply will be brought forward by 2043 with a total capacity of 6,196 homes.

Housing Supply at April 2023	Min No. of Homes
Existing Commitments	480
Thorney Bay	173
Windfall Allowance (45 dwellings per annum)	675
Canvey Urban Sites Allocations and Broad Location (Policies C1, C4, C9 and C10)	3,143
Benfleet Urban Sites Allocations and Broad Location (Policies B3, B5, B6, B7 and B8)	428
Hadleigh Urban Sites Allocations and Broad Location (Policies Had1, Had3 and Had4)	516
Thundersley Urban Sites Allocations (Policies Thun2 and Thun3)	781
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,196</b>

3. To manage the delivery of homes from the sites identified in part 2 of this policy, and to deliver additional growth in the later parts of the Plan period, the Council will seek to:
  - a. Bring forward a Brownfield Register for sites in part 2 without consent, and for other urban capacity sites in suitable locations;
  - b. Develop master plans for Canvey and Hadleigh town centres for a mix of housing and commercial uses in accordance with Policies C1 and Had1; and
  - c. Develop master plans for the renewal of designated employment sites with a mix of housing, industrial and commercial uses in accordance with Policies C4 and B8.
4. The Council's Housing Supply over the Plan period will be:
  - At least 1,045 new homes 2026-2031 (years 1-5)
  - At least 1,268 new homes 2031-2036 (years 6-10)
  - At least 3,883 new homes 2036-2043 (years 11-17)

### Reasoned Justification

**6.32** The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) expects Local Plans to promote the effective use of land to meet identified needs, and strategic policies should describe a strategy for meeting those needs by making the most of previously developed or brownfield land.

**6.33** Given the critical role of the Green Belt in providing green infrastructure both locally and at the South Essex level as set out in policy SP1, and the important role that the Green Belt plays in preventing urban sprawl, preventing neighbouring towns from merging and protecting the countryside from encroachment, this Plan seeks to protect the Green Belt in line with the outcomes of the Green Belt Assessment.

**6.34** The approach to meeting development needs therefore focuses on urban renewal and regeneration, seeking to identify development sites in

sustainable locations which make the best use of brownfield land. However, this is not at the detriment of the character and quality of place of the existing towns and communities.

**6.35** The NPPF expects Local Plans to identify deliverable and developable sites to meet the needs of the Borough for at least ten years after the adoption of the Plan, and if possible, for the final five years of the Plan period.

## Employment Need and Employment Land

**6.36** In terms of employment need, data on employment growth indicates that there will be a small surplus of employment land arising over the Plan period of circa 2ha. This is additional to 7.5ha of land that has extant planning consent for employment uses at West Canvey. This means there is a potential surplus of 9.5ha of employment land over the Plan period.

**6.37** Whilst the Council does not wish to lose employment provision, it believes that this surplus combined with the poor quality of the existing employment areas provides an opportunity to secure mixed use renewal of employment land to provide both new homes and better-quality employment and commercial floor space.

**6.38** The Council will therefore require master plans for both West Canvey (Policy C4) and Manor Trading Estate (Policy B8) to bring about new development in the latter part of the Plan period. In the period whilst these master plans are prepared, the existing designations for land in these areas will be retained to allow for a planned approach to any significant change.

**6.39** It is anticipated that during the early part of the Plan period, industrial uses displaced through redevelopment of sites in residential and town centre locations may relocate to the employment areas, and this will need to be captured as part of the master planning process.

**6.40** It is also anticipated that during the Plan period, new commercial provision will occur in and around town centres through mixed use development as described in policy SP2. Town centres will also be contributing to employment growth in the Borough.

## Housing Supply

**6.41** In preparing this Plan a thorough, forensic review of potential urban capacity was undertaken, with the Council proactively identifying suitable sites with the potential to deliver 5 homes or more.

**6.42** In addition to this planned supply, consideration has been given to supply already in the pipeline. These are sites that have already been granted planning permission, known as existing commitments. This pipeline of supply forms the starting point for the housing growth that will happen over the Plan period. As of 1st April 2025, development totalling 480 new homes had the benefit of planning permission.

**6.43** In the 2023/24 monitoring year, there was an overall loss of 58 homes in the Borough due to the removal of old-style caravans from Thorney Bay Park. Currently, old style caravans are being removed from Thorney Bay Park and replaced with new style park homes. The replacement with new style park homes contribute to the housing pipeline supply. As the site is a caravan park, the siting of the park homes does not need planning consent but does contribute to housing supply. Over the Plan period it is expected that a total of 173 park homes will replace existing caravans at Thorney Bay Park.

**6.44** Development on small sites is an important component of housing supply in the Borough. This growth is not generally planned, but is a result of the subdivision of existing plots and small scale change of use of redundant or lower-value uses.

**6.45** In accordance with the NPPF, the Plan includes a windfall allowance for small sites coming forward across the Borough. Windfall development can be defined as a site which is not specifically allocated for development in a Local Plan, becomes available for development during the lifetime of that Plan.

**6.46** There is no one approach to a windfall allowance methodology, but it is reasonable to consider past windfall rates as a basis for windfall that will likely come forward in the future. The Council has monitored housing completions on sites of five or less new homes for the last 10 years which identifies an average of 45 new homes per annum. A windfall allowance of 675 homes for 15 years is considered to provides a robust and justified contribution to the Council's housing land supply to 2043.



**6.47** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required for windfall sites on Canvey Island at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.

**6.48** The work on urban supply has identified several other suitable sites, where the deliverability remains unknown. There are concentrations of such sites identified in Canvey and Hadleigh town centres. It is expected that additional capacity will come forward in these centres and a Master Plan will be prepared for each to bring forward additional residential development in the latter parts of the Plan period. This is in addition to any supply that may come forward through the master planning of employment sites.

**6.49** It is expected that outside the town centres, there will be other larger sites which are suitable for redevelopment, but their deliverability remains unknown. The Council will use the provisions of the Brownfield Land Register, part 2, to establish permission in principle for these sites as appropriate and encourage their development in the latter part of the Plan period. No contribution to the housing supply has been included for these sites, but once the Brownfield Land Register has been updated, this will bolster the overall housing supply over the Plan period.

## Housing Trajectory

**6.50** The housing requirement set out in Policy SP3 is stepped, at a minimum of 209 new homes per year for the years 2026-31 (years 1 to 5), increasing to 253 new homes per year for 2031-2036 (years 6-10) at least 554 homes per year from 2031-43 (years 11 to 17).

**6.51** A stepped housing trajectory reflects the availability of sites at the time this Plan was prepared, and the point sites are in the planning process. Where there is less certainty over availability, sites have been included only in the latter part of the Plan period.

## Overall Housing Provision

**6.52** The starting point for assessing housing need is the standard methodology set by the Government. The current target for Castle Point, as established using the standard methodology set out in the revised NPPF of December 2024, is 686 new dwellings per annum. This equates to 11,662 over the Plan period.

**6.53** In preparing this Plan, that was the target the Council aimed to achieve. However, the suite of evidence gathered in the preparation of the Plan has shown that achieving that target would significantly and irreversibly destroy large tracks of Green Belt, including land which strongly contributes to the Green Belt purposes, and undermine the approach to protecting and enhancing the natural environment set out in policy SP1, by impacting on protected areas and frustrating a landscape scale approach to green infrastructure and nature recovery. Green spaces and green gaps are also critical to the wellbeing of residents and to the character of the settlements within the Borough. Heritage Impact Assessments have highlighted the potential impact to heritage assets (both designated and non designated) as a result of development.

**6.54** Furthermore, transport modelling has shown that the road network in Castle Point operates at capacity already, and the impacts of growth would be severe. It has also been demonstrated that there are sustainable accessibility and accessibility issues with sites within the Green Belt that would act to worsen this situation without being able to provide the levels of mitigation necessary to reduce impacts on the strategic road network.

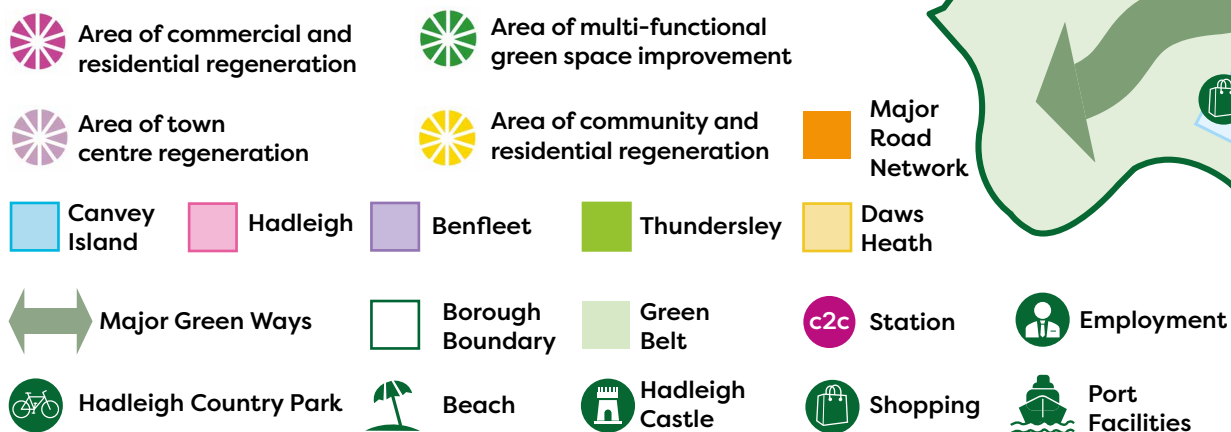
**6.55** There are also constraints related to health service provision. Demand on health services in South East Essex have grown but this has not been aligned with sufficient revenue funding to meet needs. Consequently, whilst this Plan could reasonably secure new health facilities, the local health services are unable to resource such facilities with staff. Growth will therefore worsen the deficit in health care provision, despite any measures this Plan may make to resolve this. This constraint is therefore a barrier to growth beyond that identified in this Plan.

**6.56** Finally, being such a small Borough at 17 square miles, there is not the physical or market capacity to meet the government's targets. Over the past 10 years, the Council has on average delivered 99 new homes a year. The Government target would seek a 700% increase in delivery, which presents unrealistic expectation in relation to the availability of skilled construction labour, access to materials and financial investment from developers and broader economic conditions.

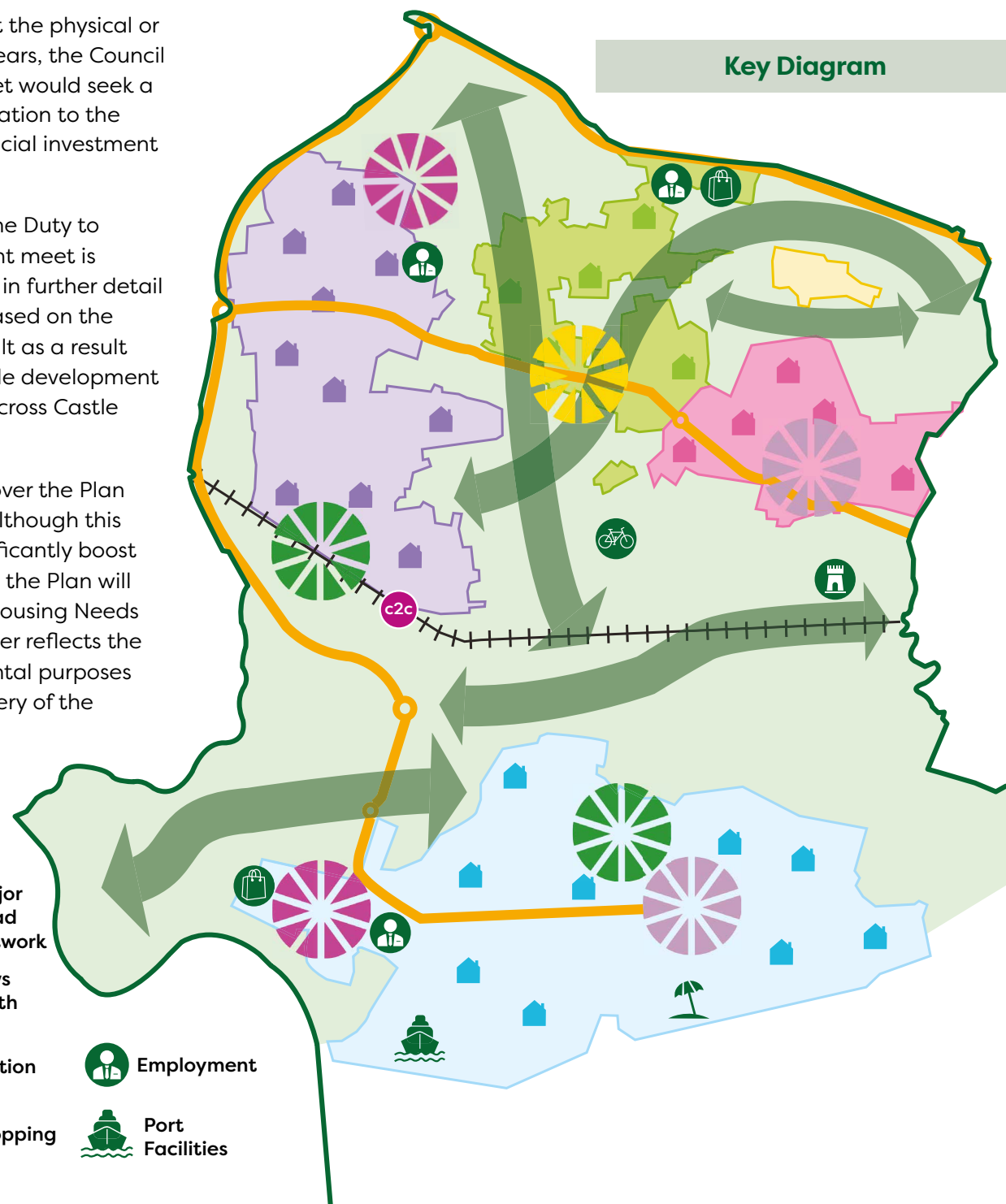
**6.57** The Council have engaged with neighbouring authorities under the Duty to Cooperate to explore whether there is the potential to help Castle Point meet its housing need, however it has not been possible to do so. This is set out in further detail in the Housing Topic Paper and Duty to Cooperate Report. It is clear based on the evidence, that the impact of the scale of development that would result as a result of the standard method housing target would not represent sustainable development and would fundamentally undermine the purposes of the Green Belt across Castle Point, the character of place and the quality of life in Castle Point.

**6.58** Overall, the Plan seeks to provide for a minimum of 6,196 homes over the Plan period to 2043 at an annual average of 364 new homes per annum. Although this does not meet the Government's target- the Council is looking to significantly boost supply in this Plan in order to meet local housing needs. At a minimum, the Plan will provide for the local need for housing as identified through the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023. The level of housing provision that this Plan will deliver reflects the size, character and capacity of the Borough, will protect the fundamental purposes and function of the Green Belt across the area, and facilitate the delivery of the green infrastructure as set out in Policy SP1.

#### Map Key:



#### Key Diagram



### Strategic Policy SP4 - Development Contributions

1. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies the infrastructure required to meet the demands of new development.
2. Where necessary, the Council will seek contributions towards the provision of infrastructure required to make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, in accordance with the tests set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) and the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations and having regard to the provisions of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Proposals for any development must demonstrate that the required infrastructure to support the development will be delivered in a timely, and where appropriate, phased manner.
3. Permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there is sufficient appropriate infrastructure capacity to support the development or that such capacity will be delivered by the proposal. It must further be demonstrated that such capacity as is required will prove sustainable over time both in physical and financial terms.
4. The mechanism for providing new infrastructure must be agreed with the Council and the appropriate infrastructure provider. Such measures, will be set out in Section 106 Agreements and may include:
  - The provision of on or off-site affordable housing;
  - The provision of on and off-site biodiversity net gain and other nature conservation measures;
  - Financial contributions towards new or expanded facilities or infrastructure;
  - On-site construction of facilities or infrastructure;
  - Off-site construction of facilities or infrastructure;
  - The provision of land for the delivery of facilities or infrastructure;
5. Financial contributions to the future maintenance and management of new infrastructure; and/or
  - The arrangements for maintaining and managing facilities and infrastructure within developments.
5. Developers and landowners are expected to work positively with the Council, neighbouring authorities, Essex County Council and infrastructure providers throughout the planning process to ensure that the cumulative impact of development is considered and then mitigated, at the appropriate time in line with their published policies and guidance.
6. Where the applicant is seeking an exception to this policy, it will only be considered by the Council whereby:
  - A fully transparent open book viability assessment has proven that full mitigation cannot be afforded, allowing only for the minimum level of developer profit and landowner receipt necessary for the development to proceed.
  - It is proven that the benefit of the development proceeding without full mitigation outweighs the collective harm.
  - Full and thorough investigation has been undertaken to find innovative solutions to issues and all possible steps have been taken to minimise the residual level of unmitigated impacts and obligations are entered into by the developer that provide for appropriate additional mitigation in the event that viability improves prior to completion of the development.

### Reasoned Justification

**6.59** The NPPF makes it clear that plans should set out the contributions expected from development for the infrastructure, including education, health, transport, flood and water management and green infrastructure.



**6.60** The Castle Point Borough Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) sets out the infrastructure required to support the delivery of growth within the Borough. The Whole Plan Viability Assessment shows that the site allocations are viable. However, there may need to be some flexibility for contributions sought for flatted developments on brownfield sites with commercial uses in Thundersley and Benfleet, which will be considered on a case by case basis.

**6.61** In negotiating planning obligations, the Council will take into account local and strategic infrastructure needs and financial viability set out in the IDP and Viability Assessment.

**6.62** The IDP lists the type of infrastructure needed in the Borough, potential costs and time frames for delivery. These include improvements and expansions of:

- Highways and Transportation (including active and sustainable travel)
- Flood Management
- Waste Management
- Education (primary, secondary, post 16 and SEND including school transport) and early years and childcare
- Healthcare
- Sports, indoor and built facilities including Leisure and Recreation Facilities, Community and Social Facilities, and Cultural Facilities
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Utilities including electricity, gas, communication, portal water and wastewater
- Adult Social Care
- Libraries
- Emergency Services

**6.63** The types of contributions that will be sought from qualifying development will vary according to the nature of the development, by area, and from site to site. Further guidance is set out in the Council's Developer Contributions SPD 2023 which will be updated during the Plan period to reflect the IDP. As part of the Authority Monitoring Report, the

Council will publish annually an Infrastructure Funding Statement outlining what contributions have been collected, how they have and/or will be spent.

**6.64** The Council will also have regard to Essex County Council's (ECC) Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. ECC play an important role as an infrastructure provider in Castle Point and the Guide sets out ECC's standards for the receipt of relevant infrastructure requirements for matters such as schools and highways and transportation.

**6.65** Contributions from development towards infrastructure will be secured using S106 Agreements for those requirements directly related to the development in line with the NPPF and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations. Additionally, CIL is charged in Castle Point, and this will be used to secure the wider range of infrastructure as identified through the IDP.

**6.66** The IDP sets out the infrastructure needs to meet the growth within the Borough. However, if through monitoring of this Plan it is found that there are unforeseen infrastructure deficits which even with the implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan cannot be met, the phasing of development may be adjusted to ensure that necessary provision is in place. It would be unreasonable for existing communities to be harmed by growth stretching infrastructure (health and education in particular) to an unsustainable level.



Photography: Charlie Stafford, for *This is Us*.

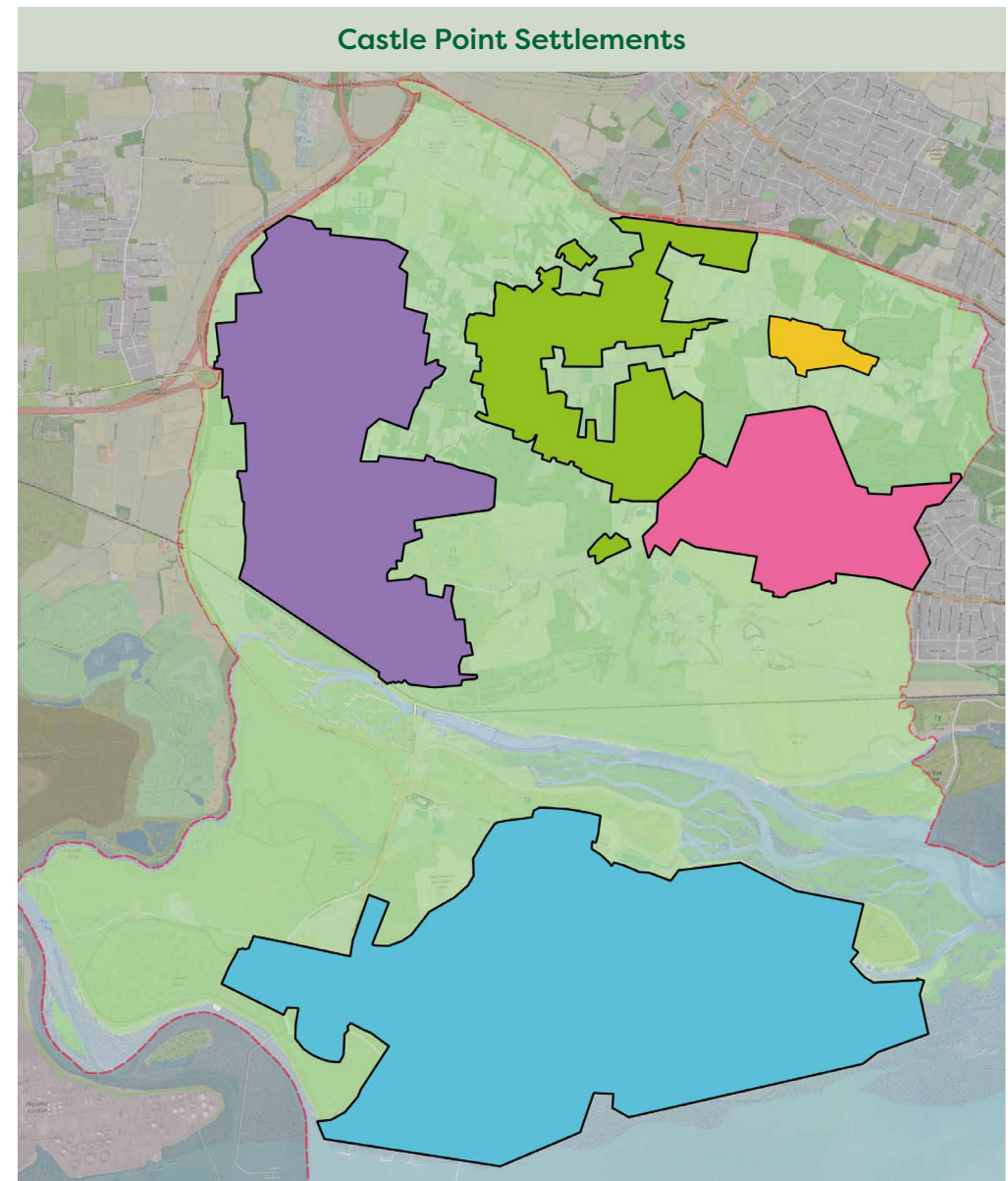
## 7. Place based approach

**7.1** Castle Point is formed of five settlements: **Canvey**, **Benfleet**, **Hadleigh** and **Thundersley**, and **Daws Heath**. Each of these settlements 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.








**7.2** The Council has taken a place-based approach to the development of this Plan.

**7.3** This means that each of the main townships have their own policies that seek to protect and enhance its character and support local regeneration, town centre vitality, the delivery of appropriate public facilities and business growth.

**7.4** For each of the larger settlements the policies on town centres, strategic development sites, smaller development, employment and infrastructure are included.



Map Key:

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



## 8. Canvey Island

**8.1** Canvey Island is to the south of the Borough and is the largest town in Castle Point with around 40,000 residents.

**8.2** The Island was initially settled by the Dutch in the 1500's and did not become more substantially developed until the late 1800's when the railways were extended into south Essex. Canvey was initially viewed as a holiday destination and benefited from the development of hotels, guest houses and a winter gardens area in the late 19th and early 20th Century.

**8.3** Following the provision of road access at Ferry Road in 1931 and the later provision of road access via Canvey Way in 1974 the Island became extensively developed in the post war years. As people began to holiday abroad more, the tourism sector on Canvey has declined. Canvey is now a largely residential settlement, although there is an extensive employment area to the west of the Island. Due to the coastal location, there are two port facilities on Canvey receiving fuel products.

**8.4** Following the Great Flood in 1953 which claimed the lives of 58 residents, Canvey has seen substantial upgrades to its sea defences and now benefits from some of the best protection in the country. The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan seeks to ensure that these defences are maintained and improved in line with climate change predictions. However, there remains a residual risk of flooding from the sea, and there also remains a risk of flooding from surface water due to the low-lying, flat nature of Canvey which means excessive rainwater cannot drain away quickly. Canvey Lake acts as a key water retention asset on the Island and needs maintaining to continue to serve that purpose.



## Policy C1 - Canvey Town Centre

Regeneration and investment into Canvey Town Centre will be delivered via a new Canvey Town Centre Master Plan within the area identified as a broad location on the [Policies Map](#), which will identify:

1. The vision for the town centre, through a collaborative approach with local residents, businesses, partners and visitors that defines the purpose of the town centre, and how it contributes to the overall place making and attraction of Canvey Island.
2. How those developable sites identified through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment will be incorporated into the town centre renewal to deliver a minimum of 620 new homes and high quality commercial floorspace at ground floor level.
3. Additional development sites on other suitable sites with the capacity to deliver a minimum of 200 new homes and new commercial floorspace in the period beyond 2037.
4. A new pattern of retail and other town centre uses appropriate to a town centre, including leisure, community facilities, residential, employment and cultural and how these uses and identified development sites contribute to creating a pleasant, vibrant and accessible environment both during the day and into the evening.
5. Opportunities to maintain, create, and enhance active ground floor frontages that include adaptable floor space, with new commercial and residential uses above and behind.
6. An active and sustainable transport hub with improved provision for bus, taxi/private hire and cycling/walking integration. This will consider adaptations to the existing highway network, how the public realm contributes to the connectivity to the town centre and improved pedestrian access.
7. A car parking strategy having regard to the EPOA Parking Guidance.

8. A servicing plan for improved access arrangements to deliveries to and from commercial premises and in a manner that minimises conflict with other users.
9. A public realm improvement plan that creates a coordinated approach to public realm, respecting that different areas of the town centre serve different purposes and within different ownerships.
10. Opportunities for greening the town centre and providing biodiversity of net gain at street level and above, and including the increased use renewable energy schemes (including community-led).
11. Opportunities for managing flood risk through greening, water capture schemes and the appropriate use of materials.
12. A delivery plan for the phasing of development, identifying risks, and demonstrating viability (taking account of infrastructure and affordable housing requirements).
13. An investment proposition for Canvey Town Centre that will appeal to investors and create a robust framework for future government funding opportunities, such as the Plans for Neighbourhoods.
14. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

## Reasoned Justification

**8.5** Canvey Town Centre is the largest town centre in Castle Point and is important to the population of Canvey Island. 93% of the spend within the town centre is by Canvey Island residents. The town is well occupied, with limited vacant units. The mix is predominantly of local retailers, along with some major national chains, service providers and charity shops. There are a small number of food retail units in the food sector (including a medium-sized Sainsbury's) and a range of public houses, bars and restaurants.

**8.6** The retail offer only attracts around 8% of the comparison spend of Canvey residents. Higher value spends occurs elsewhere or online. There is a need to develop a plan that considers how Canvey Town Centre can continue to grow and thrive, and thereby secure higher levels of local spending.

**8.7** The town centre needs to redefine its purpose. Whilst it is trading well, with low vacancies, it is not attracting any significant spend from residents on the island. Therefore, a Master Plan approach is needed to establish how the town centre can best achieve sustained economic growth, whilst meeting local needs. This will include:

- Providing new residential development
- Creating community clusters, particularly around The Paddocks
- Enhancing public services, such as health
- Public realm improvements including a new market square encompassing a revitalised market
- A car parking strategy and a movement strategy for the local road network
- Accessibility strategy for all, particularly for an ageing population and those without cars, and promoting sustainable movements to provide and enhance links to the seafront and nearby open space
- Making the best use of the key developments sites including – the Knightswick Centre and land at The Paddocks
- Providing a framework to help attract future funding opportunities for investment, including the Long-Term Plan for Towns Funding

**8.8** It is well established that where people live or work in or near a town centre, they are more likely to spend their money in that town centre. The Council will develop a Master Plan for the town centre which promotes mixed use developments that include retail, commercial and residential uses. There are several recently completed development schemes in and around Canvey Town Centre that indicate that this form of development can be accommodated and can be delivered within Canvey Town Centre.

**8.9** It is recognised that previous master planning work has not been effective in delivering change within Canvey Town Centre. However, there is a combination of private interest in specific sites, public ownership of key sites such as the Knightswick Centre and the introduction of the Plans for

Neighbourhoods funding which makes regeneration proposals for Canvey Town Centre more feasible than was the case 10 years ago. An updated Master Plan will therefore secure the change needed.

**8.10** As well as addressing opportunities to redevelop the town centre, the Master Plan will also set out proposals for securing the improvements needed to the public realm. There is currently a market located at the junction of Furtherwick Road that would benefit from investment and enhancement. In addition, the High Street would benefit from improvements and the creation of a town square which would act as a vibrant leisure hub for residents and visitors.

**8.11** Additionally, the town centre is dominated by a gyratory that runs around the Knightswick Centre, along High Street, Foksville Road, Furtherwick Road, Knightswick Road, and Elder Tree Road. Canvey Town Centre should be re-imagined as a destination rather than an accessibility challenge, with routes arriving at a central hub, with an attractive leisure and retail offer served by convenient parking.

**8.12** Safe, convenient parking and drop-off locations support successful town centres, and new arrival points need to be established for visitors from all directions. To this end there needs to be arrival points for visitors arriving from the east on the High Street, the south from Furtherwick Road, the west from Long Road, and the north from Central Wall Road.

**8.13** The Master Plan will seek to enable Canvey Town Centre to increasingly become a place to live and visit. The urban public realm will be designed to be flexible, providing space for residents and visitors. There will be a need for local access to open spaces as well as space for visitors. Where there are opportunities to provide flexible spaces that can be used by both communities, they will be supported.

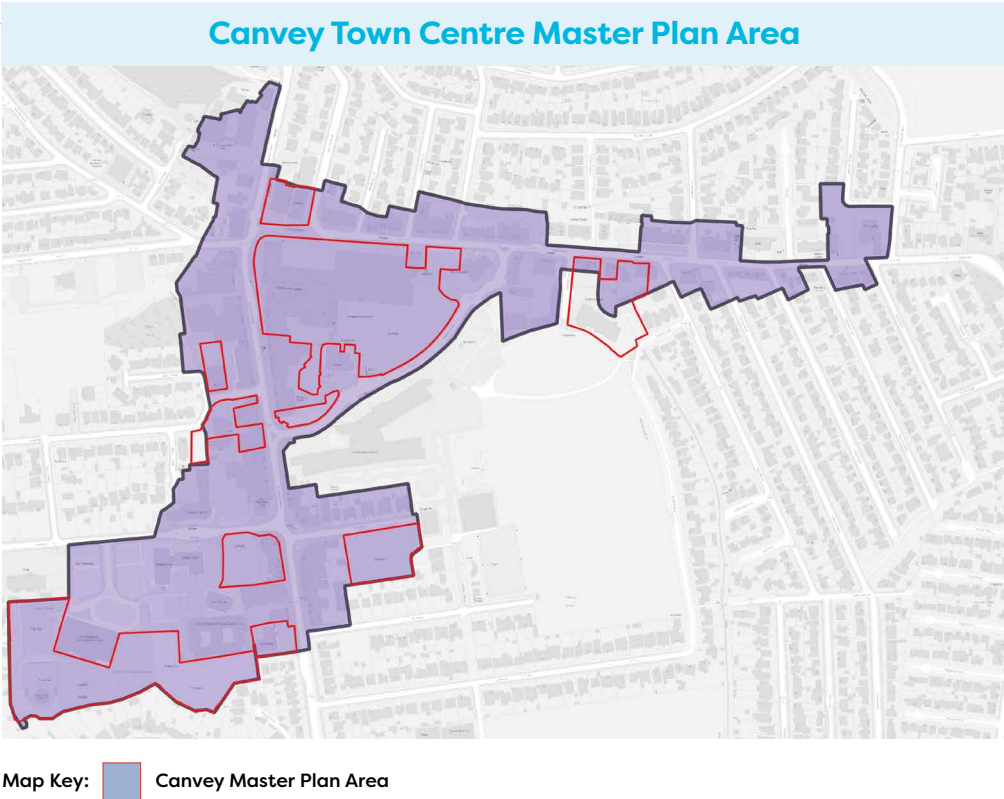
**8.14** Some open spaces outside of the town centre will be required to meet some residents' needs. High quality safe and convenient, walking and cycling networks will help to ensure access is provided for town centre residents to access the lake, coastal areas, and larger open spaces.

**8.15** The SLAA identifies 10 developable sites in Canvey Town Centre with a capacity for at least 620 new homes. It is anticipated that the Master Plan will identify an additional 200 homes for delivery beyond 2037. This assumption is



based on the known suitability of Canvey Town Centre as a development location, and the number of buildings and spaces within the centre where additional development could be delivered.

**8.16** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effect on site integrity.





## The Knightswick Centre

**8.17** The Council acquired the Knightswick Centre in 2019 as an investment, to enhance it as a shopping destination and for longer term regeneration. A successful and enhanced Knightswick Centre offers many opportunities for Canvey Town Centre. It is a large site, with significant potential for land to be optimised for mixed use development.

**8.18** It sits at the heart of the town centre and offers the opportunity to address key issues associated with the public realm including pedestrian permeability, creating new public realm including a new enhanced market in a public square and providing an entrance way to the town centre from the north and east.

**8.19** The site is however home to several key retailers including the town centre's main supermarket. There is also the main town centre car park and a health clinic on the site. These will need to be re-provided as part of any regeneration programme.

## The Paddocks

**8.20** The Paddocks community facility at Long Road sits to the south-west of the town centre and is an asset highly valued by the local community, and has a long history of providing cultural, leisure and social events. However, despite recent investments following years of neglect, the building has a finite lifespan and sits within an area of underutilised space. Through the town centre Master Plan. The Paddocks site will be re-imagined as a lively community hub as part of a high quality mixed use development better connected to the town centre.





### Policy C2 - Canvey Seafront Entertainment Area

1. Canvey Seafront Entertainment Area's role as a vibrant leisure destination will be retained and enhanced.
2. The Council will prepare a Master Plan for the Canvey Seafront Entertainment area. The Plan will set out a clear vision and objectives for the area, translating those into realistic investment plans to provide new entertainment facilities, improvements to the public realm and protection of key features such as the beach areas and historic assets and their setting.
3. Within the allocated seafront entertainment area, as shown on the [Policies Map](#), commercial and leisure development proposals that can be demonstrated to support the tourist industry will be permitted, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies in this Plan.

### Reasoned Justification

**8.21** The seafront entertainment area on Canvey sits about 1km south of Canvey Town Centre at the southern end of Furtherwick Road. The principal businesses are located on and around Eastern Esplanade and comprise a mix of leisure, food and drink, and retail. This area of the Island is highly popular attracting around 1m visitors annually. It is vibrant in the peak summer months and during big events, particularly among local families.

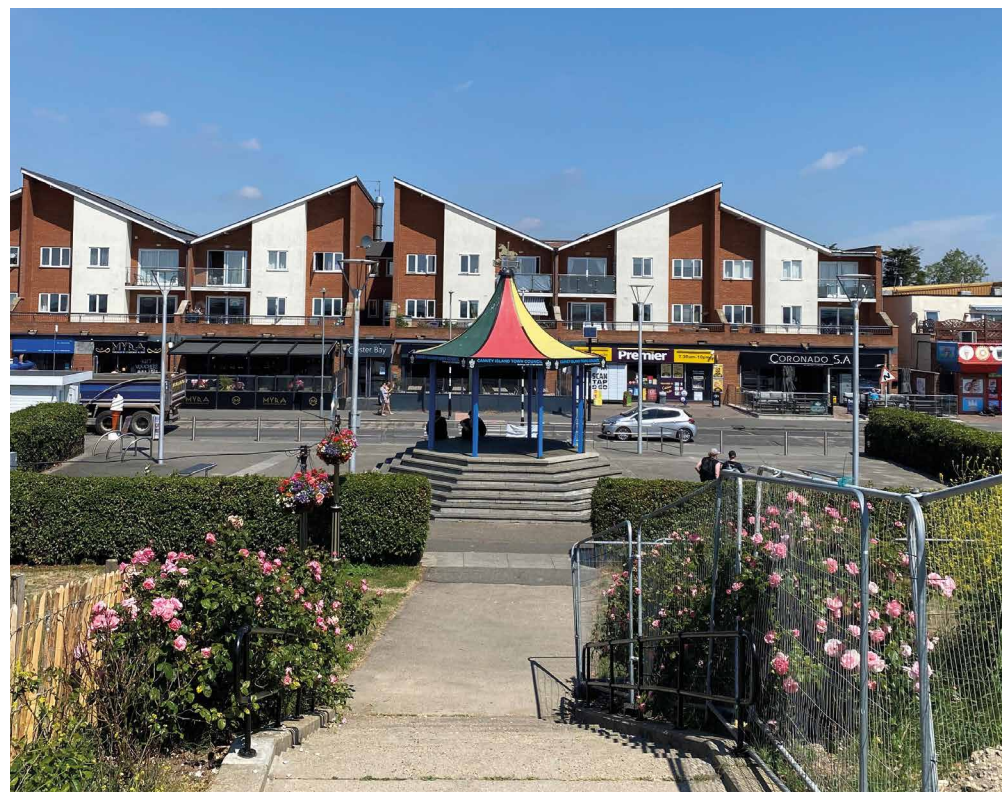
**8.22** There is scope within this area to increase tourism activities through some additional business growth in the leisure and food and drink offer, and through the utilisation of public spaces including the park, the bandstand, and the beach.

**8.23** The seafront entertainment area sits on the King Charles III England Coast Path which extends around the whole of Canvey Island. There are walking opportunities related to the seafront which an enhanced food and drink offer could cater for.

**8.24** Whilst there are bus services during the week, there is limited public transport access on Sundays, a key day for tourist activities. This limits accessibility and increases reliance on the car and may be a limitation to trade. However, the area benefits from substantial existing parking provision on land adjacent to the sea defences.

**8.25** The seafront sits behind the Canvey Island sea defences which are undergoing enhanced work to increase their protection and deal with the impact of rising sea levels. The Council will develop with the Environment Agency and other partners a Riverside Strategy which will set out how development and activity along the river can be achieved, whilst also protecting the sea defences. The Master Plan for the Seafront Entertainment Area will need to reflect this strategy.

**8.26** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.





### Policy C3 - Canvey Port Facilities

Within the allocated Port Related Facilities Area shown on the Policies Map, applications for development will normally be permitted, subject to the following criteria:

- a. The design of the proposed development must not cause significant harm to the landscape or environmental assets, having regard to the scale of existing development on the site;
- b. Where the proposal includes a change of materials handled, and those materials are classified as hazardous, it can be demonstrated that the proposal is in the national interest;
- c. There must be no unacceptable change in the level of hazard or risk posed by the facility as a consequence of the proposals. The Health and Safety Executive must be consulted and their satisfaction sought in relation to this matter;
- d. Public access to the coastal path adjacent to the site must be protected and opportunities to enhance access for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians will be sought;
- e. Compliance with policy ENV3 and SD4, especially where substantive redevelopment, a change of use or change of materials handled is proposed.

### Reasoned Justification

**8.27** There are two port facilities located adjacent to each other at south Canvey. These port facilities include the Calor Gas terminal located to the west of Thames Road for the importation and storage of liquefied petroleum gas and the Oikos terminal to the east of Haven Road, which receives and stores oil and a range of hydrocarbon products. Both terminals have jetties that are used to receive fuel imports by ship. These fuels are exported from the terminals by pipelines and by road tanker. The Calor Gas and Oikos terminals

are nationally significant and have a role to play in ensuring the security of energy supplies in the UK.



**8.28** Both port facilities are registered as Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites due to the hazardous nature of the goods that they receive and store. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Environment Agency are responsible for regulating activities at these sites, and also provide advice on the level of hazard the installations pose to nearby development. Both installations have HSE consultation zones identified around them, in which it is expected that other development is controlled to limit unnecessary harm to life and property. The extent of these zones is determined by the nature of the goods received and stored on site, and the technical measures employed to ensure safety at the sites. It is therefore possible that the level of hazard posed to other developments nearby can be reduced, both by limiting development nearby, and also by seeking improvements to the level of hazard posed by these sites, both during normal management and maintenance, and also at the point where new development is proposed.

**8.29** These sites sit in open landscape and are prominent in long distance views across the Island and within the estuary. The scale of the tanks already dwarfs residential development nearby, even though the tanks on these sites are by no means the largest in the industry. It is therefore important that any redevelopment of these sites recognises the impact of the scale of development both in terms of long distance views and also in relation to the townscape on Canvey Island.

**8.30** The port facilities occupy a substantial frontage of the waterfront at South Canvey. This limits access to a narrow strip of the waterfront in this location, creating an enclosing effect for users. This route, which is part of the English Coast Path, is not bicycle or equestrian friendly. In order to improve flood defences in the future it will be necessary for land adjacent to the waterfront to be maintained free from development, with access provided to carry out maintenance and improvements as set out in the Thames 2100 Plan. For this purpose, the safeguarded area is shown on the [Policies Map](#) adjacent to the ports. It is expected that any development at the port facilities retains the public access to the coast and explores opportunities to improve access for a wider range of users such as cyclists and horse-riders.

**8.31** Siting to the south of Canvey there is the potential for developments at these sites to impact on the natural environment and water quality. Ships access these facilities via the Thames Estuary. There are numerous Habitats

sites (SPA and SAC) in and around the Thames Estuary that may be affected by disturbance from shipping activity along the Thames Estuary. In accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), it will be necessary for any adverse effects on the integrity of these protected sites arising from new port activities, including shipping access, to be avoided or mitigated. Compliance with the relevant policies of this Plan in terms of nature conservation and pollution control are therefore critical.

**8.32** It should be noted that as these facilities are adjacent to the coast, the South East Inshore Marine Plan is also relevant in respect of any development which affects the seaward side of the defences. Consideration needs to be given to how any such changes impact on the marine environment or its use, including any conflicts arising with other users. Separate consents from the Marine Management Organisation will be required for certain types of activity.





## Policy C4 - West Canvey

Land at West Canvey, as identified on the [Policies Map](#) as a broad location, will provide around 2,700 new homes, employment, associated community facilities and open space provision, of which 2,000 will be delivered by 2043. A master planned approach to the regeneration and renewal of west Canvey will be taken to optimise urban land use and improve the quality of the urban environment and public realm. The Master Plan will provide:

1. A land use strategy that identifies how a mix of uses comprising residential, community, commercial and industrial can be accommodated across this area whilst ensuring residential amenity and avoiding harm to economic activity.
2. A design approach which supports the delivery of high quality, higher density, mixed use development across the area.
3. Improved public realm which prioritises pedestrian movements and creates spaces for community, civic and business activities. The public realm strategy should integrate urban greening and incorporate sustainable drainage into the approach to materials and landscaping.
4. Improved accessibility and permeability of the area by public transport and active travel modes, with high quality bus infrastructure and parking facilities.
5. A car parking strategy having regard to the EPOA Parking Guidance that seeks to consolidate parking across west Canvey and makes more effective use of land.
6. A programme of renewal of the industrial building stock at West Canvey and an overall increase in industrial floor space of 10%.
7. A programme of renewal of the commercial building stock at West Canvey and an overall increase in commercial floor space of 10%.

8. A new 56 place stand alone early years and childcare nursery on 0.13 hectares of suitable land allocated for education use and additional primary school provision as required.
9. Appropriate links into multi-functional green infrastructure to the west of the site whilst avoiding adverse harm to biodiversity through recreational impacts, or other impacts arising from urban development.
10. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

## Reasoned Justification

**8.33** Whilst the employment sites and the retail park at west Canvey are well occupied, the Employment Land Review highlighted that the building stock and public realm is generally poor, especially in Charfleets Industrial Estate, and land use and development density is poor across the area. There is also vacant land to the south of Northwick Road and in between Charfleets Industrial Estate and the retail park that could play a role in regenerating the area. The land to the south of Northwick Road has extant consent for employment development but this has been in place for many years due to a technical commencement but has not yet occurred.

**8.34** There is therefore a need to improve the quality of this area and as part of the urban first approach in this Plan an imperative to make more effective use of land in this location.

**8.35** There is a total of 62ha of land across this area including 38ha of employment land. The retail park is approximately 7ha in size but is predominantly car parking provision. Most of the development in the area is single storey and has surface car parking. There is therefore scope to change the design approach in the area and consolidate parking provision at points across the site to improve land use.



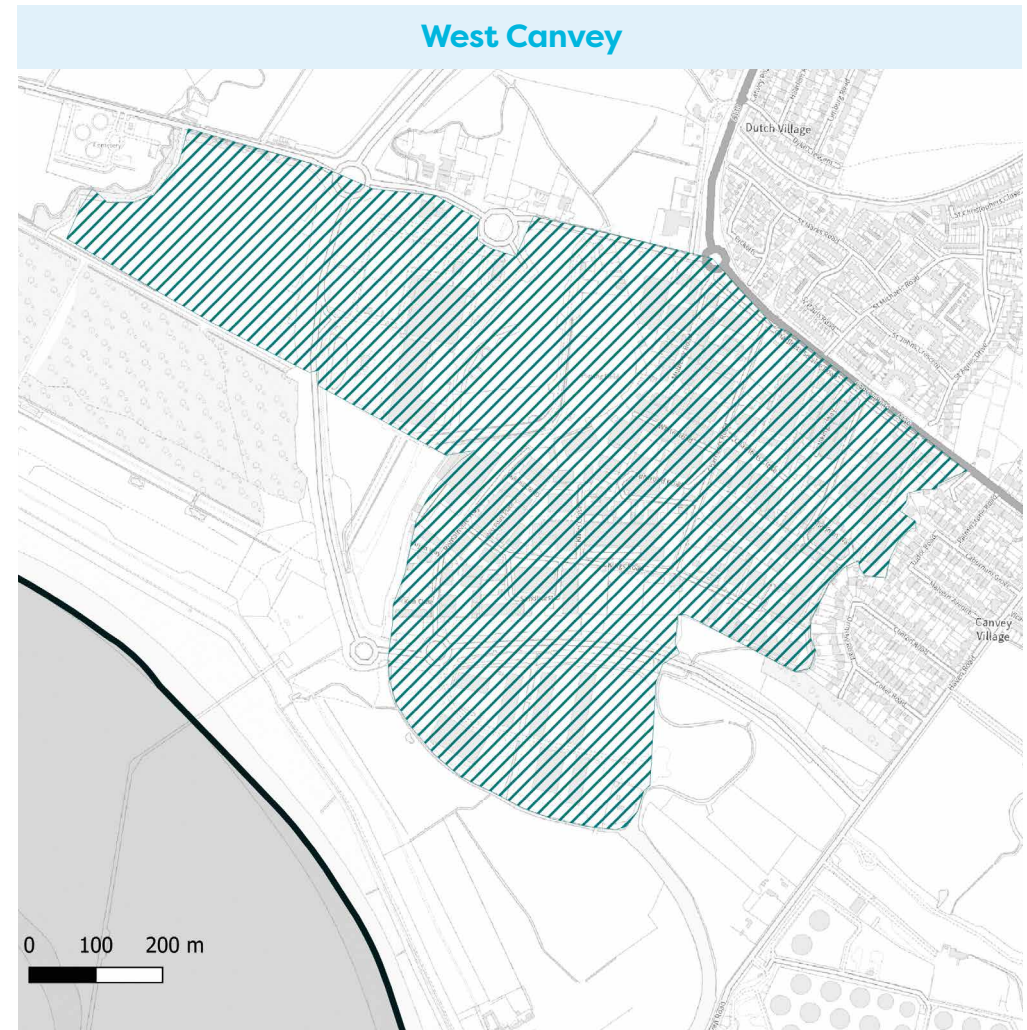
**8.36** There are a mix of uses within the industrial estate including offices, gyms, nurseries, car sales and also heavier industry such as steel manufacturing. It is therefore important that the Master Plan for the area sets out a land use strategy that encourages renewal and regeneration but avoids issues of residential amenity and addresses the agent of change principle for noisy businesses already in the area.

**8.37** It is not the intention of the Master Plan to result in a loss of employment on this site. Overall, the Master Plan should seek a modest increase in the floor space available for industrial and commercial uses to support economic growth. This will be secured through the revised approach to design and parking.

**8.38** This approach will also make space for new homes and community facilities to be delivered. It is expected that these new homes will be of a higher density of around 150 dph. Based on this density, the overall capacity of West Canvey is expected to be around 2,700 homes, although only 2,000 will be delivered during this Plan period. This level of growth will sit in good quality public realm that provides space for residents, businesses and the community to interact creating a very different feel to the area compared to presently. To achieve this there is a need for parking to be peripheral to these spaces rather than dominating them as it does presently.

**8.39** To ensure environmental quality it is expected that the regeneration of west Canvey will include urban greening and the introduction of sustainable drainage. SuDS should be the principal but may not be the only method. SuDs are often most viable when considered early in the design process, so developers are encouraged to engage in pre-application discussions with Essex County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority), and refer to ECC's SuDS Design Guide, and any future updates, when preparing applications incorporating SuDS schemes. These are critical to address the impacts of climate change in an urbanised environment and especially in a low-lying area such as Canvey. Furthermore, it is expected that the development will integrate with multi-functional green infrastructure in the area such as Canvey Wick SSSI and west Canvey Marshes to provide recreation and time in nature opportunities for residents.

**8.40** The nature conservation sites at west Canvey are however sensitive to recreational activities and urban development so it is important that the Master Plan deals with this in an appropriate manner. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of the Master Plan and associated development proposals to avoid any adverse impacts on the integrity of nearby habitats sites or functionally linked land.



Map Key:  West Canvey

### Policy C5 - Improved Access to and around Canvey Island

1. The Council will undertake a feasibility study to identify options for improving access to, from and within Canvey Island, including its wider strategic implications.
2. This will be prepared in collaboration with key partners including ECC, adjoining district and unitary councils, Transport East, Government departments such as the DfT, BEIS and MHCLG and relevant agencies as well as engagement with the local community.
3. The recommendations from the feasibility study will inform the first review of the Castle Point Plan.
4. Options in the feasibility study for improvements to access to Canvey Island will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment to ensure there is no adverse effect on integrity resulting harm to internationally protected sites.

## Reasoned Justification

**8.41** There is a need to improve access on and off Canvey Island to improve highway capacity for the community and for businesses, and to improve resilience on the road network.

**8.42** Since 1974 there has been no new provision of access to Canvey despite the population having increased 150% from 16,000 to 40,000. Congestion on access routes, especially during morning and evening peaks is high, and significant delays extend across the Island if there is an incident which blocks or slows one of these routes. Combined with having a limited choice of public transport options, this affects the ability of local people to access jobs, training, and other opportunities off the Island.

**8.43** The Council is committed to securing better access to Canvey Island for its 40,000 plus residents. In addition to its large resident population, the Island has two top tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites at ports of national importance to fuel supply; is at risk from tidal flooding although substantially defended in this regard; and at risk from localised flooding due to its topography. Improved access to Canvey Island would assist in relieving peak hour congestion at key access points and improve the resilience of the highway network for the Island's residents and businesses, particularly in the case of an emergency.

**8.44** Currently, access to and from the Island is via two routes. The principal access to and from the Island is via the A130 Canvey Way and the other via the B1014 from South Benfleet. However, both converge at the same place – the Waterside Farm Roundabout effectively resulting in all traffic on and off the island passing through one point. The junction experiences congestion and delay at peak hours.

**8.45** The northern extent of Canvey Way is the Sadlers Farm junction of the A13 with the A130, which also experiences severe congestion and delay at peak hours because of pinch points on various arms of the Sadlers Farm junction, including on Canvey Way.

**8.46** A second route is via the B1014 Canvey Road, which passes by Benfleet Railway station (the nearest station to Canvey Island) and through the historic core of South Benfleet. There are presently no plans to improve highway capacity on this route, which whilst being a Priority 1 route, also performs as a local and residential route in places.

**8.47** On the Island, traffic is distributed from the Waterside Farm junction, east-west via two main routes – Somnes Avenue and Canvey Road/Long Road. Both routes experience severe peak time congestion, with delays on Canvey Road/Long Road exacerbated due to the number of access and egress points along its route including residential side roads, schools and other developments. Congestion can impact on the efficiency of public transport services as well as private vehicles. There is the potential to promote modal shift through active travel measures by improving the attractiveness for cycling in the vicinity, and such locations will continue to be considered in the future for cycle corridor upgrades.

**8.48** Journey time delays are experienced on the A130 Canvey Way, at the Waterside Farm junction, along Somnes Avenue and Canvey Road/Long Road. There are also delays in the morning and evening peaks through South Benfleet, along the B1014, meaning this route does not provide an attractive alternative to traffic seeking to access or leave the Island. Improvements are necessary to address the delays presently experienced by the existing population and to provide improved highway network resilience. The Access to Canvey Study (2017) sought to identify potential options to improve highway and multi-modal access and egress to Canvey Island along with improvements to other traffic flows.

**8.49** There is a strong local aspiration to deliver a third route to Canvey, however currently a deliverable scheme cannot be identified. The Council is committed to working with key stakeholders in preparing an access to Canvey feasibility study that looks at the potential highway and sustainable mode options for improved access to and from the Island, as well as improved east-west movements to improve traffic flows and sustainable transport on Somnes Avenue and Canvey Road/Long Road. To improve capacity on these two routes, including capacity for sustainable modes, would provide resilience to the highway network.

**8.50** ECC as Highway and Transportation Authority will be required to be directly involved in the scoping and undertaking of any feasibility study.

**8.51** Due to the proximity of the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site and the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site any feasibility study will be subject to the Habitats Regulation Assessment to ensure no adverse effect on integrity to these internationally protected sites.

**8.52** New master plans for the Canvey town centre and seafront will set out how local access to and between these areas can be improved to reduce the need for the use of the private motor car and improve safe cycling and walking routes. The study will also need to consider improved access to Benfleet Station and the Island.





**8.53** Other potential transport improvements on Canvey Island, identified through the Transport Assessment include:

- Improve pedestrian crossings along the Central Wall Road and Dovervelt Rd- Mitchells Avenue area.
- Widen crossings of Canvey Dyke.
- Improved surface quality and footpath width to the west of Canvey Town Centre along Beverley Avenue, Maryland Avenue and Runnymede Road.
- Improve on street cycle routes in places such as Furtherwick Rd, Eastern Esplanade and High St/Point St and north-south cycle routes such as Marcos Rd/Lottem Rd, and/or east-west cycle routes such as Odessa Rd/Crescent Rd.
- Extend the segregated cycle routes through Smallgains Recreation Park to Canvey Heights Country Park.
- Improve on-road cycle infrastructure to enhance access to Labworth Recreation Ground and connecting to off-road routes along Foksville Rd.
- Implement cycle routes along Waarden Rd/Cedar Rd and Denham Rd north-south and increase size of the cycle path along Canvey Bridge towards Benfleet.
- Divert the 21C bus route northbound along Maurice Rd, eastbound along Crescent Rd and south to Eastern Esplanade.
- Divert the 22 bus along Denham Road and Warden Road to increase catchment.
- Increase the frequency of the 21 bus to every 15 minutes.
- Increase the frequency of service on the 22 and 27 to improve access to Benfleet Station.
- Delivering the proposals in the Cycle Action Plan to improve access to Benfleet Station.
- Pegasus crossing on Roscommon Way linking HO23 to West Canvey Marshes.

- Somnes Avenue/Link Road junction improvements.
- Potential junction improvements at Long Road/Furtherwick road
- Potential junction improvements at Dovervelt Road/Creek Road/ Mitchells Avenue/Rainbow Road/Morington Road
- Potential junction improvements at Denham Road/Waarden Road
- Potential junction improvements at Thorney Bay Road/Maryland Ave
- Potential junction improvements at Odessa Road/Crescent Road
- Potential junction improvements at Eastern Esplanade/Marurice Avenue



### Policy C6 - The South Canvey Green Lung

1. The south Canvey Green Lung will be protected and enhanced as a strategic green infrastructure asset on Canvey Island given its key role in connecting ecological networks.
2. Development within the Green Lung which would adversely affect its ecological value, and the ability of the area to provide a strategically important ecological corridor, will not be supported.
3. Exceptionally, renewable energy provision may be acceptable in the Green Lung where it can be demonstrated that a high level of biodiversity net gain can be secured and there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of nearby Habitats Sites. All ancillary buildings and infrastructure must be adequately screened and integrated into the landscape.
4. Proposals which support the creation of new habitats, through Biodiversity Net Gain, Countryside Stewardship or other long-term mechanisms will be supported.
5. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
6. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.

### Reasoned Justification

**8.54** There are 51ha of undeveloped land that sit between the port facilities at South Canvey and the residential areas to the north. Development within this area is restricted due to the consultation zones that sit around the port facilities. In the 1998 Local Plan, this land was allocated as a Green Lung. Development which would impact on the landscape, ecological or amenity

value of this land was not acceptable. Limited development has consequently occurred in this area.

**8.55** Consequently, the land in this area has developed a high ecological value. The area links two Local Wildlife Sites, and a potential Local Wildlife Site covers a swathe of the Green Lung itself. There is only 7 hectares of Green Lung which is not of significant nature conservation value.

**8.56** Whilst most forms of development cannot take place in this area due to the constraints around the port facilities, this is an area where further enhancement of ecology through biodiversity net gain or through long term schemes such as Countryside Stewardship would be encouraged by the Council. The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy identifies a long-term opportunity to establish a Country Park at the Green Lung.

**8.57** It is further considered that off-site renewables in the form of a solar array may be acceptable, as such installations are low lying and can be compatible with nature conservation ambitions. However, any renewables provided on the site would need to secure a high level of Biodiversity Net Gain, recognising the ecological value of the site in the first instance, and any associated buildings or storage would need to be adequately screened and integrated into the landscape.

**8.58** Furthermore, Habitats Regulations Assessment would be required of any such proposal to ensure that it did not harm the integrity of nearby Habitats Sites though an impact on functionally linked land.





## Policy C7 –Canvey Lake

Land at Canvey Lake, as identified on the [Policies Map](#), will be master planned as a multi-functional green space which will deliver the following:

1. Enhanced footpaths and cycleways for walking, cycling and wheeling (such as wheelchairs and pushchairs/buggies), in particular connections to Canvey Town Centre to the east.
2. Improved accessibility to the homes surrounding the Lake, including north/south accessibility across the Lake.
3. Increased capacity of the Lake for flood water storage, reducing flood risk to those living on the periphery of the Lake. This will also include a long-term management plan of the Lake to ensure the flood mitigation remains effective.
4. Improvements to water quality and a long-term management plan to maintain high quality water standards.
5. Enhancements to the habitat surrounding the Lake, this could include landscaping which may provide benefits for flood risk such as tree planting.
6. Enhanced biodiversity across the site complementing other uses.
7. Improvements to the built environment to create an attractive and functional area. This may include improved street lighting, benches and litter bins.
8. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.



Map Key:  Canvey Lake



## Reasoned Justification

**8.59** Canvey Lake provides an important multi-functional green space in the urban area of Canvey. One of the main features of Canvey Lake is its ability to act as flood storage (attenuation area) in times of high rainfall and provides important habitat for wildlife in central Canvey. In addition, it offers recreational opportunities for walking and cycling, as well as active travel off main carriageways.

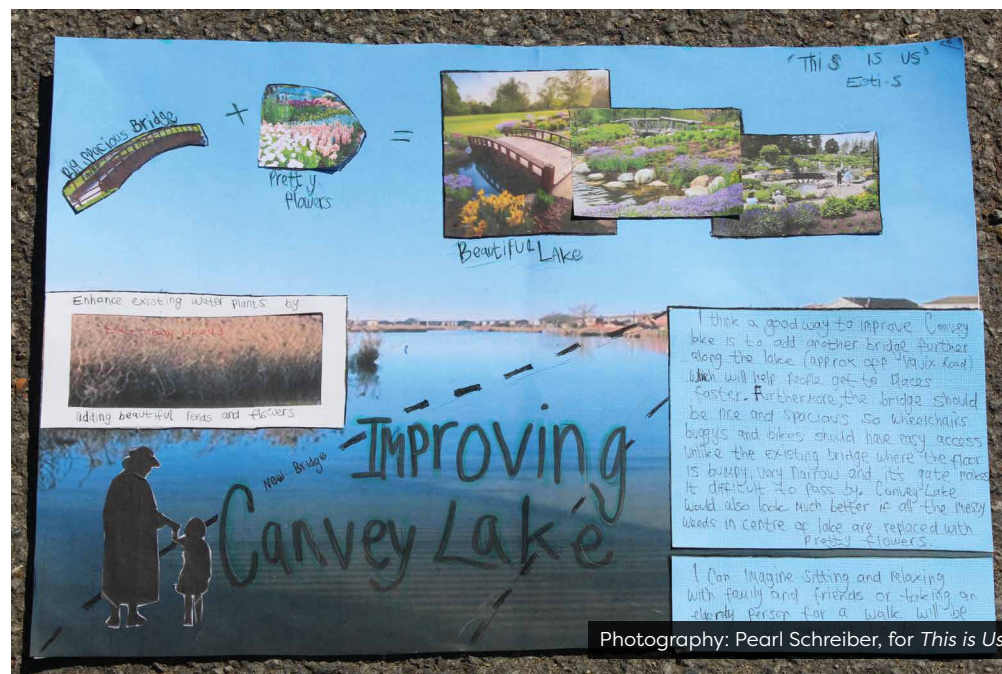
**8.60** There are many opportunities to enhance this area to create a well-used functional green space. This could be through improved footways and cycle paths as well as improvements to the water quality, habitat and flood mitigation opportunities. Canvey Lake is managed by Canvey Town Council, however there are multiple organisations that should work together to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the residents of Castle Point. This includes, but not limited to, Essex County Council and the Environment Agency.

**8.61** The Lake is one of the few areas on Canvey Island within the urban area that is a public right of way off of the main highways. In addition, the Lake is a short distance from Canvey Town Centre and is accessible to the large population surrounding it. This makes it an attractive offer for encouraging active travel for users bypassing roads. In order to take advantage of this, opportunities to improve the accessibility of the Lake for walking and cycling should be implemented. This could include improved footpaths and cycleways, as well as footbridges, improved lighting to create a safe environment into the evening and street furniture to create an appealing and functional environment such as benches and litter bins. This would also enable the area to be used for recreation.

**8.62** Canvey Island suffers from high levels of surface water flood risk, and during times of higher rainfall Canvey Lake becomes an important depository for excess rainwater (as intended). Surface water runoff can pick up contaminants through runoff and deposit them into the Lake. This has led to poor water quality in the Lake in the past which can become unsafe for users, animals and biodiversity to thrive. In order to improve the natural environment in this area and achieve the best outcomes for the natural environment, further work should be undertaken into the functionality of the Lake and how water quality should be managed and maintained in the future. Improved water quality will enable biodiversity to thrive in this area.

**8.63** The Canvey Island 6 Point Plan was undertaken in 2015, this identified Canvey Lake as an important asset in managing flood water on the Island, particularly during storm events. This report recommended that the capacity of the Lake should be investigated and addressed. This could be achieved through dredging and/or re-profiling the banks of the Lake to provide additional storage capacity. Any works to the Lake would need to be managed and monitored in the future to ensure it remains effective in the future. Opportunities to enhance the capacity of the Lake should be explored and implemented, with planned regular maintenance. This would provide huge benefits for the surrounding homes which are impacted by flooding in this area.

**8.64** Canvey Lake acts as a habitat to many different wildlife, including waterbirds and some aquatic life. In the past there have been risks to wildlife due to the water quality. However, there are huge opportunities to improve this through management of the water. In addition, there are opportunities to enhance wildlife through creation of new and improved habitats. These could also provide multi-functional benefits through flood alleviation by helping to reduce run-off rates of surface water flows into the Lake.



Photography: Pearl Schreiber, for *This is Us*.

### Policy C8 –Residential Park Home Sites, Canvey Island

1. Land at Sandy Bay Park is identified as a residential park home site as set out on the [Policies Map](#).
2. Land at Kings Park is identified as a residential park home site as set out on the [Policies Map](#).
3. The provision of facilities on residential park home sites that offer amenity to residents will normally be supported, subject to compliance with all relevant policies in this Plan.
4. Any redevelopment of these sites will be acceptable where:
  - a. The risk to occupants and property from flood risk and other hazards are minimised;
  - b. The overall quantum of residential development is retained or increased;
  - c. There are adequate contributions for infrastructure relevant to the likely occupants of the future development; and
  - d. There is compliance with all relevant policies in this Plan, including requirements related to the Habitats Regulations
  - e. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

### Reasoned Justification

**8.65** The 1998 Local Plan allocated Kings Park and Thorney Bay (now Sandy Bay) Caravan Parks as long-term housing sites. However, rather than these coming forward for redevelopment for traditional homes both have become residential park home sites. Combined they will provide over 1,600 homes once Sandy Bay is complete.

**8.66** These sites have come forward under existing planning consents for these sites which permit the siting of caravans. Park Homes are caravans under the provisions of the Caravans Act 1960. This means that planning policies and controls that may have been applied to these developments in normal circumstances could not be applied.

**8.67** As a result, park homes which are single storey dwellings have come forward where normally the Environmental Agency would advise against bungalows on flood risk grounds. Some of the park homes at Sandy Bay will be in the consultation zones for the Calor Gas terminal at South Canvey. Kings Park is adjacent to the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site.

**8.68** These sites are however well occupied and new communities of older people have developed at each site. Given the scale of these communities, on site amenities are provided and it is appropriate to continue to support the provision of such amenities to ensure the wellbeing of residents, who are typically over 65.

**8.69** Park homes do however have a limited lifespan relative to traditional homes. It is not therefore inconceivable that during the lifetime of this Plan that part or all of one of these sites may come forward for more traditional forms of development. Such applications would present the opportunity to secure development which is less prone to flood risk than the park homes currently on these sites.

**8.70** However, these sites are making an important contribution to local housing supply, so any redevelopment must re-provide any homes lost. It is important that any redevelopment captures any change in likely infrastructure demand. For example, as park home sites are typically for older people these sites currently place no demand on schools. A traditional housing development would, so that difference would need to be addressed.



## Policy C9 – Land at the Point, Canvey Island

Land at the Point will be redeveloped to provide for at least 185 homes in accordance with a Master Plan, approved by the Council. The Master Plan will be required to:

- a) Minimise any adverse environmental or other amenity impacts on neighbouring development;
- b) Consider the impact on the landscape and long distance landscape views;
- c) Secure a buffer to the sea defences in line with policy SD1;
- d) Make provision for open space on-site to minimise any impact on Habitats site;
- e) Maintain access to Smallgains Marina for water based recreation;
- f) Provide main vehicular access from Point Road;
- g) Secure improvements to bus waiting facilities and services along Point Road; and
- h) Secure the re-provision of any employment uses at West Canvey, as necessary.
- i) Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).



Photography: Pearl Schreiber, for *This is Us*.



## Reasoned Justification

**8.71** This site is approximately 2.5ha in size. The western part of the site is currently in use as a building materials supplier and the eastern part is occupied by several small commercial and industrial businesses. The site was promoted through the Call for Sites and has been assessed as developable through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment.

**8.72** The site is located at the easternmost extremity of Canvey Island with views over the creeks and marshes towards the Hadleigh escarpment which needs to be preserved. There are opportunities through the design and layout of the development on this site to enhance the relationship between the existing urban area and the coast. The Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site sits in this location, so it is important that recreational activities arising from this site are directed away from the coast. To this end, and also due to the deficit of play space in this part of the Borough, it is important that open space is integrated into the design for this site. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of development proposals to avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of nearby Habitats sites including from construction impacts as well as occupational impacts.

**8.73** Smallgains Marina is a small marina that sits to the north of this site. Access to this marina through the site must be retained as this is an important local recreational facility. Furthermore, given the proximity of this site to the sea defences, it is important that the 19m buffer required under policy SD1 is also provided to enable future flood defence improvements.

**8.74** Main vehicular access to the site should be taken from Point Road. Bus services are provided to the south-western part of this site. To support this development, improved bus waiting facilities and service provision is required.

**8.75** The site is currently occupied by employment uses which provide local jobs and contribute resources locally, but also necessitate a large number of heavy goods vehicle movements to the highway network. The Council has identified land at West Canvey in this Plan for employment provision which is better located for access, and where businesses will be supported in terms of relocation.



## Policy C10 - Other Housing Site Allocations on Canvey Island

Housing development on the following sites will be supported, subject to compliance with all relevant policies in this Plan:

C10A	Admiral Jellico	Redevelopment for at least 7 new homes
C10B	Land Rear of North Avenue	Development of at least 28 new homes
C10C	Essex Coach Works	Redevelopment for at least 12 new homes
C10D	Former Council Offices, Long Road	Redevelopment for at least 48 new homes
C10E	Corner of Little Gypps Road and Willow Close	Development of at least 7 new homes
C10F	Ozonia Gardens	Estate renewal including development of at least 17 new homes
C10G	Land between Station Road and Seaview Road	Development of at least 19 new homes

## Other Housing Site Allocations in Canvey



Map Key:



Other Housing Site allocations in Canvey



## Other Housing Site Allocations in Canvey



Map Key:



Other Housing Site allocations in Canvey

## Reasoned Justification

**8.76** The sites identified in policy C10 have been identified through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment as being suitable, available and deliverable for housing. They will contribute towards optimising urban land use by making effective use of vacant and underused land in the existing urban area.

**8.77** Sites C10B and C10D to C10G are owned by the Council and will be brought forward for development in the Plan period.

**8.78** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of development proposals at C10F: Ozonia Gardens and C10G: Land between Station Road and Seaview Road to avoid any adverse effect on the integrity of nearby Habitats sites or functionally linked land.

## 9. Benfleet

**9.1** Benfleet is located in the western part of the Borough to the north of Benfleet Creek. The original village was located in the south of the area adjacent to the creek, with gradual northern expansion throughout the 20th Century.

**9.2** It is well connected, with highway access via the Sadlers Farm roundabout, and a direct rail connection to Southend and London Fenchurch Street. Benfleet has the Borough's only train station and there are opportunities to enhance its role to improve connectivity within the Borough and supporting the local economy.

**9.3** The station is located within the Benfleet Conservation Area. There is scope to enhance the conservation area as a food and drink leisure destination alongside its key role in the local transport network.

**9.4** Benfleet is located on an escarpment and steep sided 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 north east such as Thundersley and Hadleigh.

**9.5** To the very south of Benfleet is Richmond Park and the South Benfleet Playing Fields. These provide a key opportunity for recreation. There are opportunities to improve recreation provision in this area, and also enhance its role in providing active travel access to Benfleet Station. It also has a role to play in local flood risk management.

**9.6** Both South Benfleet and Tarpots local centres are well occupied with shops and services. However, both would further benefit from localised improvements.

**9.7** South Benfleet local centre is spread along the High Road and does not have a distinct core. This dispersed shopping area means there are issues with on-street parking across the centre which impact on nearby residential streets and impact upon traffic flows through Benfleet.

**9.8** Tarpots local centre is a small centre located at the junction of the A13 with High Road and Rushbottom Lane. It is dominated by the road junction on the A13 resulting in high levels of congestion with most visitor trips by car. It serves primarily for local needs, but also some top up shopping for commuters. Due to the significance of the junction in the highways network, there is limited scope to improve pedestrian and cycling movements, although there is potential scope to improve the quality of pedestrian areas to the south of the junction.





**9.9** The transport modelling for this Plan indicates that the following transport improvements would secure improved travel outcomes for residents in Benfleet:

- Improved pedestrian crossings along Essex Way
- Smoothing and widening footpaths of residential roads in the Tarpots area and to the north such as Eversley Road, Woodside Avenue and Overton Road.
- Introduce a further cycle route running east-west along Church Road
- Improved cycle link along Vicarage Hill & Benfleet Road
- Widen and extend cycle path along Canvey Bridge
- 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 improvements at Church Road/Overton Road/Roseberry Avenue
- Potential junction improvements at Vicarage Hill/High Road
- Potential junction improvement at the London Road/Rushbottom Lane junction.



## Policy B1 – South Benfleet Town Centre

**Proposals for regeneration, redevelopment and renewal of premises and spaces in South Benfleet Town Centre will be supported where they would deliver:**

1. An appropriate mix of retail and town centre use provision that contributes to the vitality of the town centre and creates a pleasant, accessible environment both during the day and into the evening.
2. Active ground floor frontages with residential and commercial uses above and to the rear.
3. Provide pedestrian and cycle connections within the centre and to the wider area.
4. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

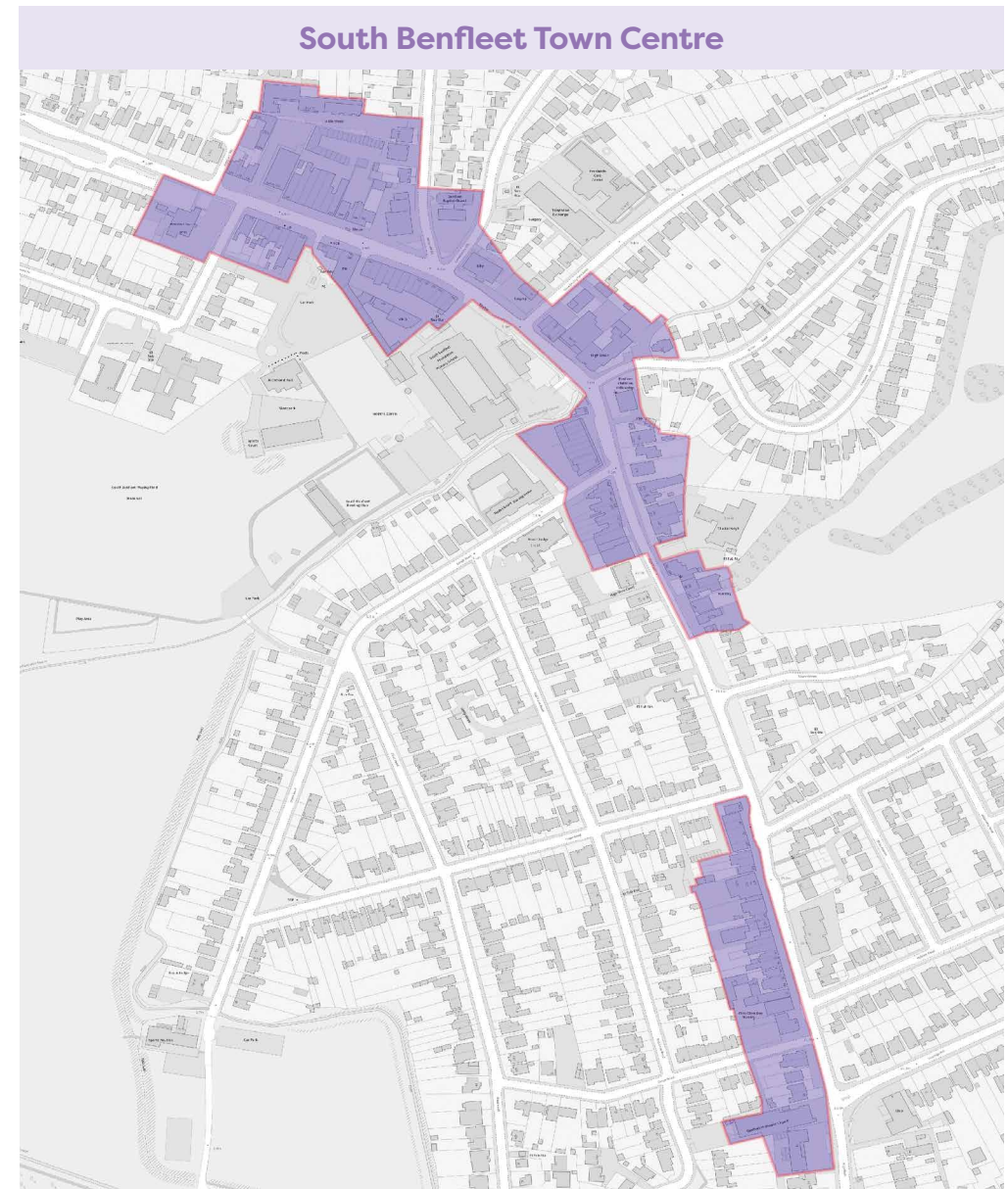
## Reasoned Justification

**9.10** Located along Benfleet High Road, South Benfleet Town Centre is a well occupied town centre with a mix of independent retailers with a small number of national retailers. There is a good range of local services, but there is scope for regeneration. The town centre is on the key north-south bus route linking Benfleet and Canvey.

**9.11** There are a number of under-utilised 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.

**9.12** The focus of redevelopment should be on creating a more pleasant environment, with a wider range of uses that extend into the evening to create a safer and more welcoming place for residents to visit and spend time. To ensure overall scheme viability, mixed use proposals in this area

must carefully consider the scale of commercial development so as to avoid undermining the delivery of housing.



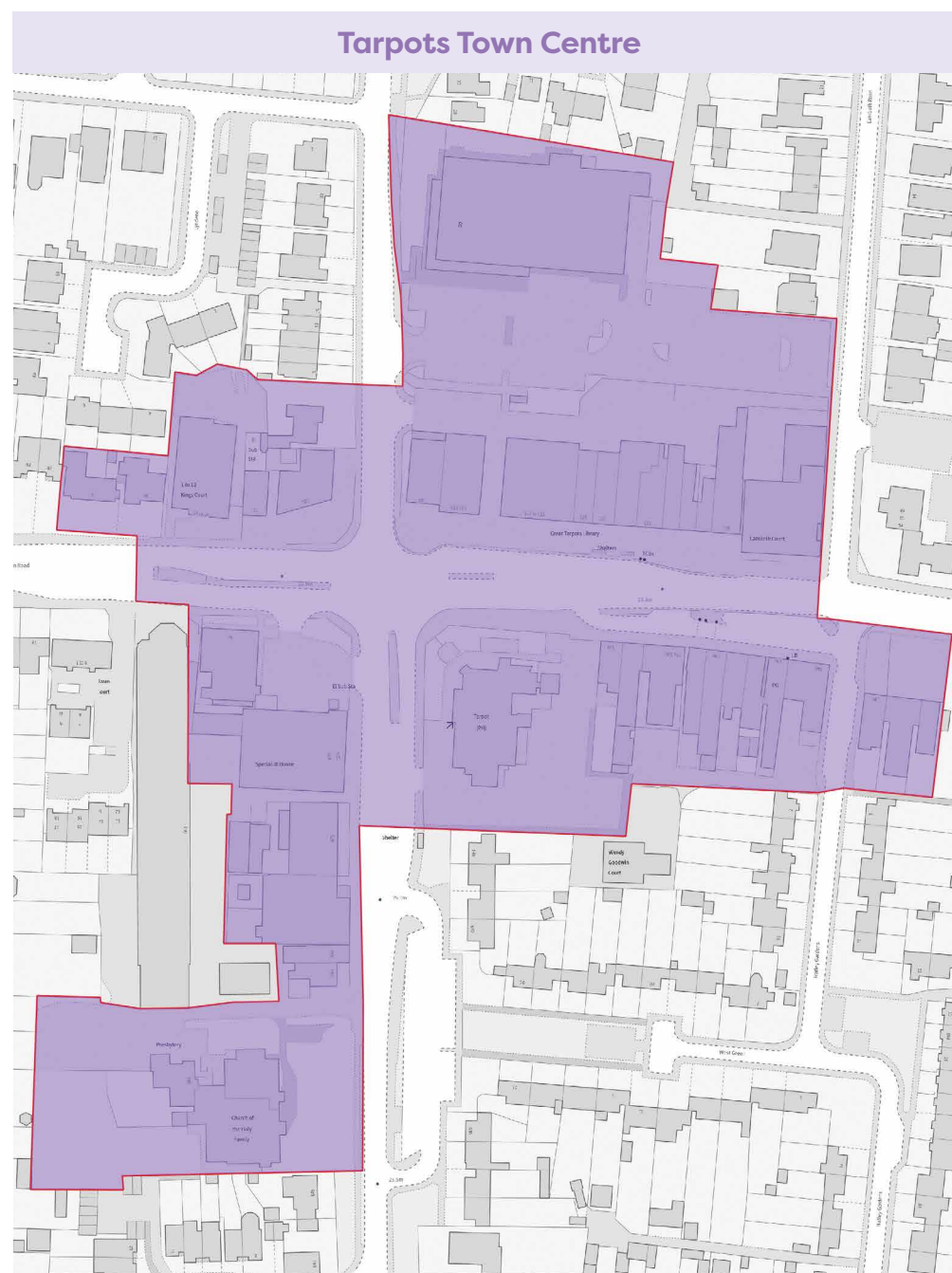
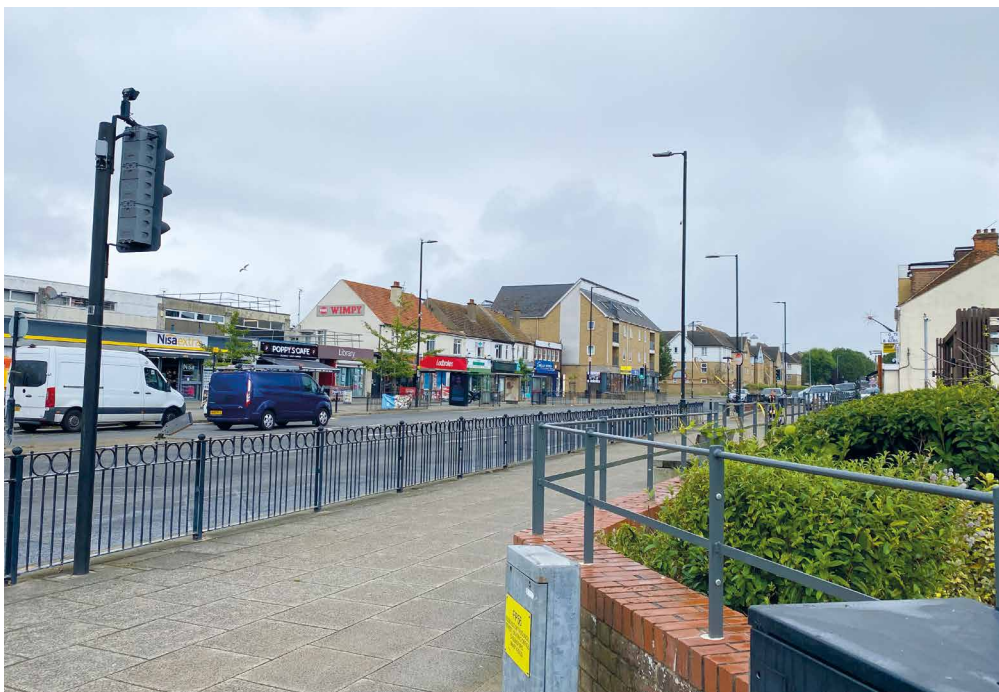
Map Key:  South Benfleet Town Centre



## Policy B2 – Tarpots Town Centre

Proposals for regeneration, redevelopment and renewal of premises and spaces in Tarpots Town Centre will be supported where they would deliver:

1. An appropriate mix of retail and town centre use provision that contributes to the vitality of the town centre and create a pleasant, accessible environment both during the day and into the evening.
2. Active ground floor frontages with residential and commercial uses above and to the rear.
3. Pedestrian and cycle connections within the centre and the wider area.
4. Improvements to the pedestrian public realm in the centre.



Map Key:  Tarpots Town Centre

## Policy B3 – Former Furniture Kingdom site

Housing development on the former Furniture Kingdom site will be supported for at least 48 homes, provided:

1. The application is sympathetic to the wider regeneration of the south-west corner of Tarpots Town Centre and this is not limited by the proposal;
2. Main vehicular access is secured from Benfleet High Road only; and
3. The proposal is in accordance with policy B2 and all other relevant policies of this Plan.

### Reasoned Justification

**9.13** Tarpots Town Centre sits at the intersection of the A13 and Benfleet High Road/Rushbottom Lane. It is well connected and has regular bus services operating to the east-west and north-south. However, the junction is also a key congestion hotspot and traffic dominates the town centre.

**9.14** The centre provides a range of local services and business space. There is however the potential to use buildings and space more intensively in this centre. Doing this has the potential to add value to the local centre by increasing the working and residential population.

**9.15** The former Furniture Kingdom site is to the south-west of the town centre and has sat vacant for several years. This site has been identified through the SLAA as developable and has the potential to be redeveloped, potentially acting as a catalyst for the wider regeneration of Tarpots Town Centre. It is therefore important that the proposals for this site have regard to the wider opportunities for regeneration. Access from Benfleet High Road to this site is critical to avoid creating a new access onto the A13 London Road near this very busy junction.

## B3 - Furniture Kingdom



Map Key:  Furniture Kingdom



### Policy B4 - South Benfleet Leisure Quarter

1. South Benfleet Leisure Quarter is identified on the [Policies Map](#) and comprises the following properties:
  - 1-7 (odd numbers) Essex Way
  - 8-10 (even numbers) Essex Way
  - 1-27 (odd numbers) High Street, South Benfleet
  - 24-42 (even numbers) High Street, South Benfleet
2. Development proposals for cafés, restaurants, bars and/or public houses will be supported, subject to other relevant policies in this Plan, including but not limited to those related to the historic environment and residential amenity.
3. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
4. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.

### Reasoned Justification

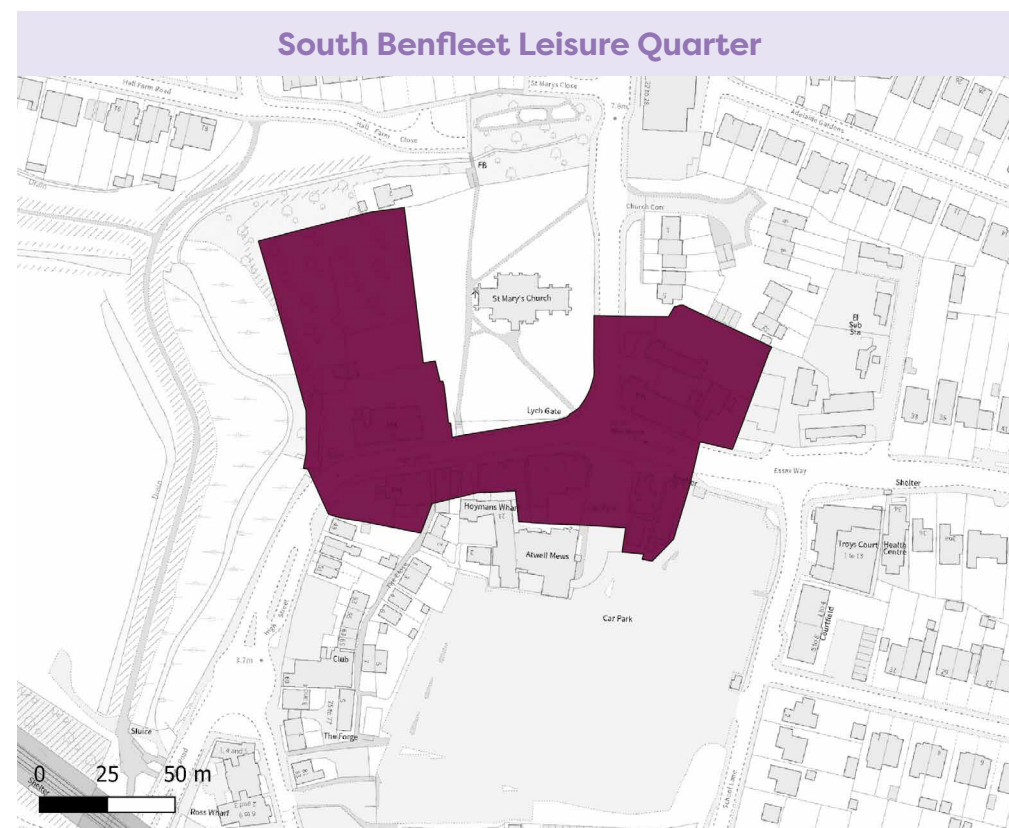
**9.16** The old centre of South Benfleet comprises several public houses and retail units around the High Street area, close to the railway station. The retail units and three public houses have over time adapted to a changing market with a proportion of them now operating as restaurants. Consequently, South Benfleet has grown as a place where people go to socialise and can now be classified as a “leisure quarter”.

**9.17** There are a small number of units that continue to operate as shops within this area. There is the potential that these may be brought forward as other leisure facilities, such as restaurants over time. It is important that any

new development complements the existing range of uses and the quality of provision.

**9.18** Any development will be required to reflect the historic character of the area, given its location within the South Benfleet conservation area. There are eleven listed buildings located in this area including the Grade I Church of St. Mary the Virgin and the Grade II\* Anchor Inn. Any development proposal will need to have regard to the South Benfleet Conservation Management Plan and Design Code.

**9.19** Additionally, there are several residential properties nearby, and any proposal will need to have regard to the amenity of residents in terms of opening hours and the provision of entertainment.



Map Key:  South Benfleet Leisure Quarter

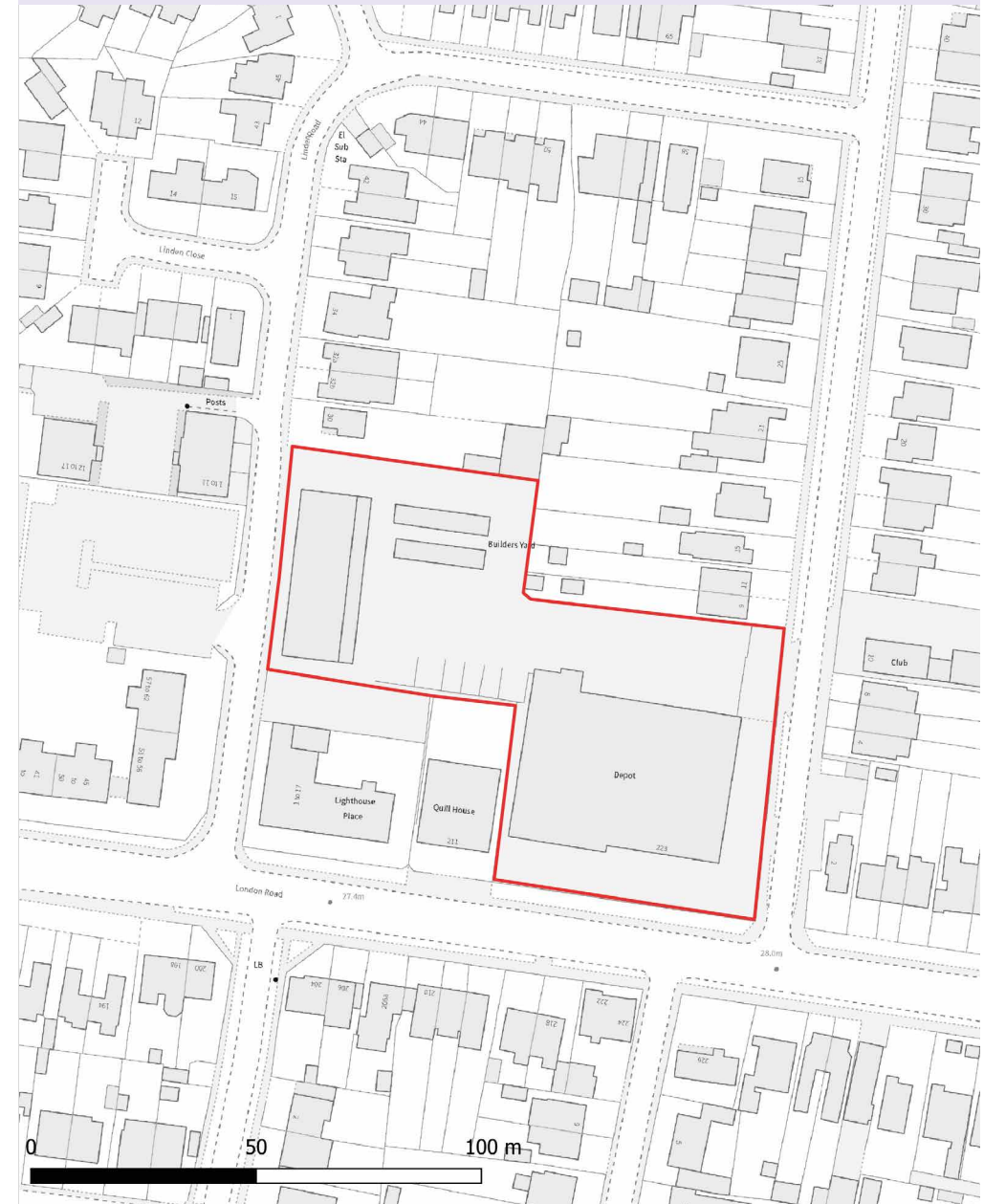
## Policy B5 – Canvey Supply, London Road, Benfleet

Housing development on the Canvey Supply site will be supported for at least 81 homes, provided:

1. Main vehicular access to the site is secured from Waverley Road and/or Linden Road only; and
2. The proposal is compliant with all other relevant policies of this Plan.



## B5 - Canvey Supply, London Road, Benfleet



Map Key:  B5, Canvey Supply, London Road, Benfleet



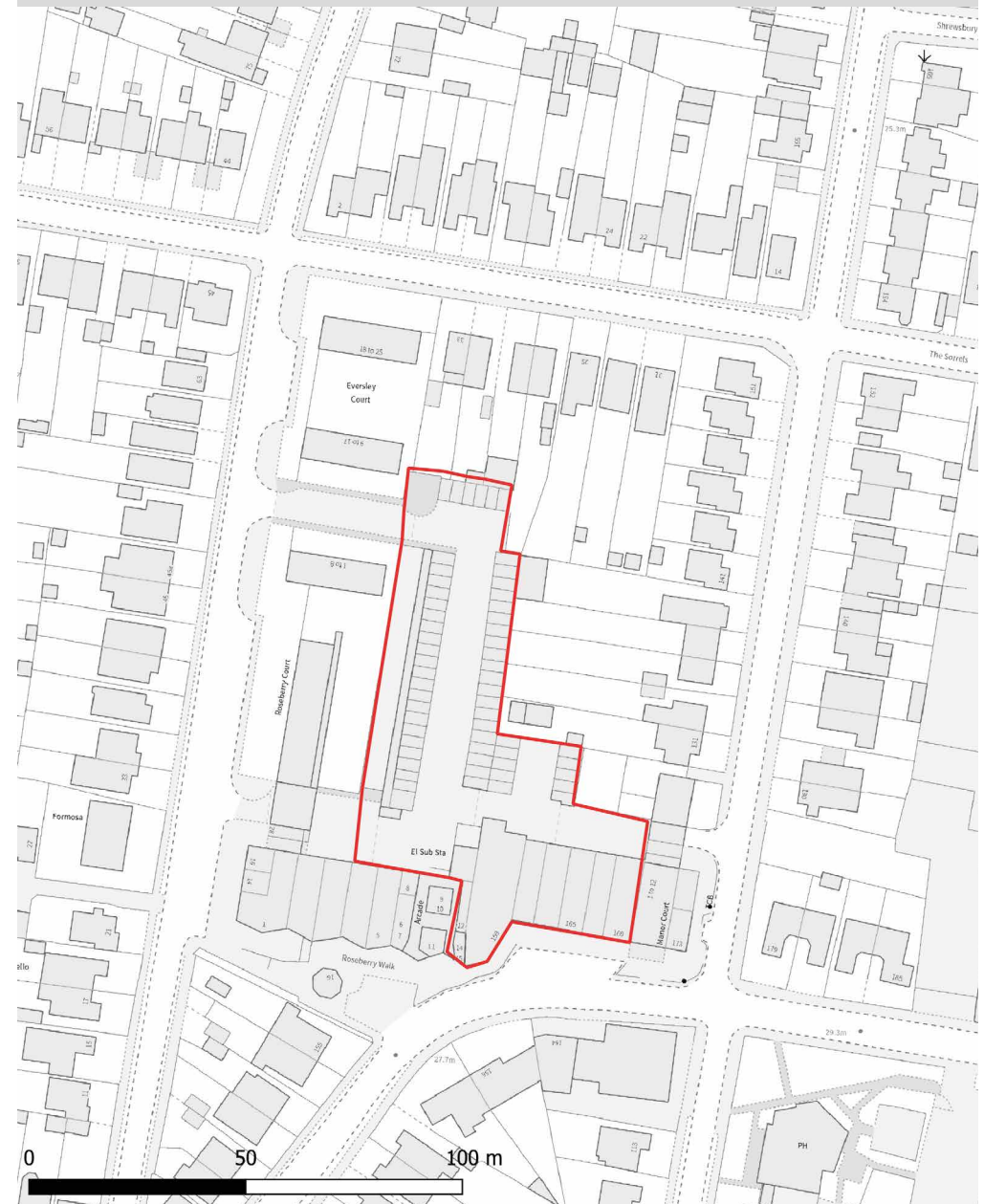
## Policy B6 – 159-169 Church Road, Benfleet

Housing development at 159-169 Church Road will be supported for at least 40 homes, provided:

1. The local shopping parade is retained or redelivered through the proposal so there is no net loss in local service provision;
2. The proposals set out how parking arrangements for the entire site will be addressed if garages/parking courts are to be lost having regard to EPOA Parking Guidance;
3. Main vehicular access to the site is secured from Roseberry Avenue only; and
4. The proposal is compliant with all other relevant policies of this Plan.



## B6 - 159-169, Church Road, Benfleet



Map Key:  B6, 159-169, Church Road, Benfleet

## Policy B7 – Other Housing Site Allocations in Benfleet

Housing development on the following sites, will be supported, subject to compliance with all relevant policies in this Plan:

B7A	Richmond Avenue Car Park	Redevelopment for at least 27 new homes
B7B	Land Adjacent Villa Park, Tarmarisk	Development of at least 10 new homes
B7C	312-320 London Rd (Queen Bee's)	Redevelopment for at least 22 new homes and 270m <sup>2</sup> commercial

Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

### Reasoned Justification

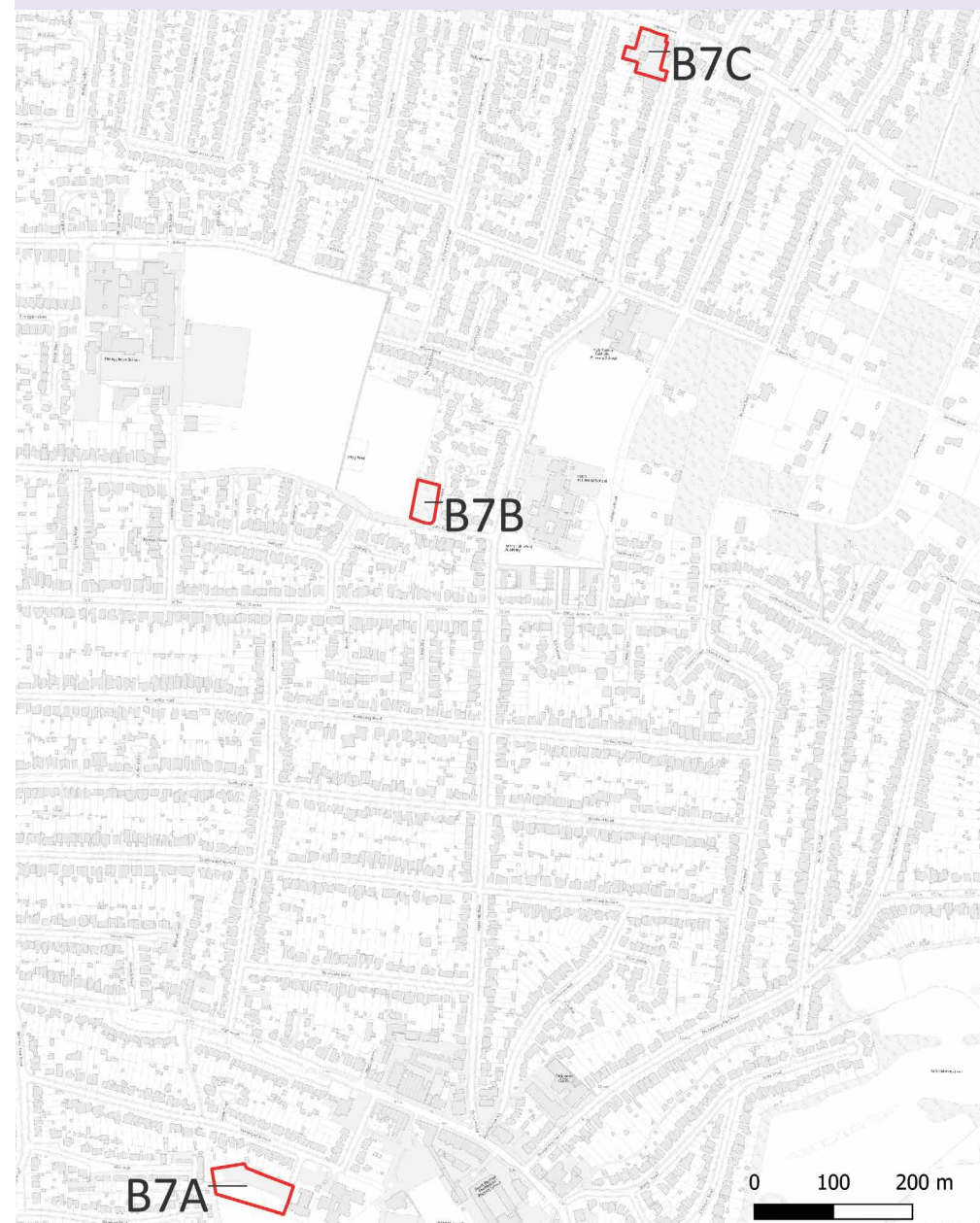
**9.20** The sites identified in policies B5 – B7 have been identified through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment as being suitable, available and deliverable for housing. They will contribute towards optimising urban land use by making effective use of vacant and underused land in the existing urban area.

**9.21** Site B6 will result in the loss of commercial floorspace in designated locations for this type of use. Therefore, ground floor commercial provision is required to address this potential loss.

**9.22** Sites B7A and B7B are owned by the Council and will be brought forward for development in the Plan period.

**9.23** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of development proposals at B7A: Richmond Avenue Car Park to avoid any adverse effect on the integrity of nearby Habitats sites or functionally linked land.

## B7 - Other Housing Site Allocations in Benfleet



Map Key:  B7, Other Housing Allocations in Benfleet



## Policy B8 – Manor Trading Estate

A master planned approach to the regeneration and renewal of Manor Trading Estate will be taken to optimise urban land use and improve the quality of the urban environment and public realm. The Master Plan for the area identified as a broad location on the [Policies Map](#) will deliver:

1. A land use strategy that identifies how a mix of uses comprising residential, commercial and industrial (including sui generis) can be accommodated across this area whilst ensuring residential amenity and avoiding harm to economic activity.
2. New development of around 200 homes.
3. A design approach which supports the delivery of high quality, higher density, mixed use development across the area that integrates well with the existing residential area to the west.
4. Improved public realm which creates space for pedestrians and cyclists to move around. The public realm strategy should integrate urban greening and incorporate sustainable drainage into the approach to materials and landscaping.
5. A car parking strategy that meets parking needs but seeks to consolidate parking across the estate and makes more effective use of land having regard to the EPOA Parking Guidance.
6. A programme of renewal of the industrial and commercial building stock within the estate with the overall aim of an increase in floor space of at least 10%.
7. Appropriate pedestrian and cycling links into open space provision to the north.
8. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).



## Reasoned Justification

**9.24** Whilst the Manor Trading Estate is well occupied, employment land review work indicates that the building stock and public realm is poor, and land use and development density is poor across the area.

**9.25** There is therefore a need to improve the quality of this area and as part of the urban first approach in this Plan an imperative to make more effective use of land in this location.

**9.26** Overall, there is approximately 14ha of employment land in this area. Most of the development in the area is single storey and has surface car parking. There is therefore scope to change the design approach in the area and consolidate parking provision at points across the site to improve land use.

**9.27** There are a mix of uses within the industrial estate including offices, gyms, nurseries, manufacturers and also heavier industry such as car breaking. It is therefore important that the Master Plan for the area sets out a land use strategy that encourages renewal and regeneration but avoids issues of residential amenity and addresses the agent of change principle for noisy businesses already in the area.

**9.28** It is not the intention of the Master Plan to result in a loss of employment on this site. Overall, the Master Plan should seek a modest increase in the floor space available for industrial and commercial uses to support economic growth. This will be secured through the revised approach to design and parking.

**9.29** This approach will also make space for new homes to be delivered, most likely to the west of the site. It is expected that these new homes will be of a higher density but will integrate with the existing residential areas to the west.

**9.30** To ensure environmental quality it is expected that the regeneration of Manor Trading Estate will include urban greening and the introduction of sustainable drainage. These are critical to address the impacts of climate change in an urbanised environment and especially in due to the topography of the land in this area which is sloping.

**9.31** Furthermore, to provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and sports for the new residents, it is expected that the proposals for this site will integrate access to the open space provision at Woodside Park to the north via active and sustainable modes.



Map Key:  Manor Trading Estate



### Policy B9 – South Benfleet Playing Fields

Land at South Benfleet Playing Fields, as identified on the [Policies Map](#), will be master planned as a multi-functional green space which will deliver the following:

1. An enhanced recreational role, with the pavilion redeveloped/renewed to support the use of the site for recreational and/or community purposes, and other ancillary buildings provided as appropriate for this purpose;
2. Improved walking and cycling connectivity between residential areas in South Benfleet and the railway station;
3. New areas for water storage that will enhance the role of the area as a reservoir, and reduce the flood risk to those living on the periphery of the open space; and
4. Enhanced biodiversity across the site, complementing the other uses, and creating new wildlife corridors between areas of nature conservation to the east and west.
5. Consideration of the existing playing pitches, with no overall loss of provision or prejudice to the use of the playing pitches.
6. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
7. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.



Map Key: South Benfleet Playing Fields

## Reasoned Justification

**9.32** South Benfleet Playing Fields is a large area of open space to the south of Benfleet sitting between the residential area to the north and the railway to the south. They are sometimes called ‘Richmond Park’.

**9.33** This area is designated as a reservoir under the Reservoirs Act 1975 and is intended to flood during periods of heavy rainfall, protecting residential areas nearby. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment highlights this important role and recommends that additional storage is created within the playing fields to address increased risks arising from climate change into the future.

**9.34** The playing fields are a popular recreational facility for those living in South Benfleet due to the limited amount of amenity green space within the urban area itself. There are a range of facilities including playgrounds, courts and pitches. However, there is no coherence across the provision and there are no on-site toilets or cafés. Furthermore, the changing pavilion has fallen into some disrepair. There is therefore a need to improve the quality of the recreation provision across the site.

**9.35** The playing fields sit between the residents living in South Benfleet and the railway station to the south-east. Many people cut across the fields to access the station. However, the current path is narrow in width and has become undulating with time. The Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plan identifies the opportunity to enhance the uptake of walking and cycling in this area by improving the quality of the infrastructure through South Benfleet Playing Fields.

**9.36** Given the extent of the playing fields and the boggy nature of areas around the streams, there are areas where recreational activities and walking and cycling do not occur. Within these areas there is the potential to improve biodiversity through tree planting and through the management of more diverse grassland. This will enhance the role of the playing fields as a biodiversity stepping stone between Benfleet and Southend Marshes to the east, and West Canvey and Fobbing Marshes to the west.

**9.37** The Castle Point Playing Pitch Strategy, Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Castle Point Open Space Assessment should be used to help inform the Master Plan taking into account the recommendations and actions, particularly those for playing pitches.





## 10. Hadleigh

**10.1** Hadleigh lies in the east of the Borough, with Thundersley to the west, Daws Heath to the north, and Leigh-on-Sea (within the Borough of Southend) to the east. Hadleigh is a historic settlement with St James the Less Church (Grade I listed) at its heart. In the late 19th Century the Salvation Army established a farm colony in Hadleigh to improve the lives of the working poor. Due to Hadleigh's location on the A13 between London and Southend, the town grew over the 20th Century to the place we see today.

**10.2** Hadleigh Castle sits to the south of the town centre and dates to Saxon times. Whilst it is in a ruined state, it is the centrepiece of the Hadleigh Castle Country Park, a major tourist attraction within the Borough which was home to the 2012 Olympic Mountain Biking events.

**10.3** The Town Centre environment is currently dominated by vehicle movements. Traffic flow on the A13, and the dominance of the road within the centre could be reduced to help reinforce Hadleigh's importance as a place to visit rather than pass through.

**10.4** High frequency bus connections provide potential for the expansion of growth in both town centre and employment uses. Employment uses could include office space (drop in space), working near home and/or creative enterprises/workspace.

**10.5** There are significant opportunities to make more effective use of land within and in close proximity to the town centre, through the potential redevelopment including on existing car parks, parcels of derelict land, and underutilised sites.

**10.6** Improved environmental conditions within the town centre could help to create an enhanced town centre offer, including an improved evening and leisure offer. A banking hub is also desired to enable residents and local businesses to have access to shared banking services.

**10.7** Hadleigh has a large catchment and is rich in facilities. Improving safe and convenient access to and between green spaces, the town centre, the high-quality landscapes to the south of the town centre, and other surrounding centres will increase the overall ability to access these facilities.

**10.8** Hadleigh has a population that is older than average, and services need to be provided that enable existing residents to remain active and self-sufficient.

**10.9** The Transport Assessment work for this Plan indicates that the following transport improvements would support better travel in Hadleigh:

- Additional pedestrian crossings of Rayleigh Road, Western Road and Daws Heath Road
- Add on-road cycle infrastructure along New Road/Daws Heath Road, and Scrub Lane and potential for cycle routes on Woodfield Rd and Church Rd
- Increased frequency of the number 3 bus from 120 minutes to 60 minutes
- Increase the frequency of the 21 bus to every 15 minutes.
- Possible junction improvements at in the Rectory Road/ A13 area
- Possible improvements to the A129 (Rayleigh Rd)/A13 junction
- Route improvements on the A129 transport corridor including public transport and active travel
- Victoria House Corner junction improvements
- Potential junction improvements at Woodfield Road/Church Road
- Potential junction improvements at Western Road/Daws Heath Road
- Potential junction improvements at London Road and Benfleet Road



### Policy Had1 – Hadleigh Town Centre

Regeneration and investment into Hadleigh Town Centre will be via a new Hadleigh Town Centre Master Plan within the area identified as a Broad Location on the [Policies Map](#) which will identify:

1. The vision for the town centre, through a collaborative approach with local residents, businesses, partners and visitors that better defines the purpose of the town centre, and how it contributes to the overall place making and attraction of Hadleigh.
  - How those developable sites identified through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment will be incorporated into town centre renewal to deliver a minimum of 188 new homes.
2. Additional development sites on other suitable sites with the capacity to deliver a minimum of 200 new homes in the period beyond 2037.
3. A new pattern of retail and uses appropriate to a town centre, including leisure, community facilities, residential, employment and cultural and how these uses and identified development sites contribute to create a pleasant, vibrant and accessible environment both during the day and into the evening.
4. Opportunities to maintain, create, and enhance active ground floor frontages that include adaptable floor space, with new commercial and residential uses above and to the rear.
5. Adaptations to the existing highway network that improve the quality of the public realm, and contribute to the connectivity to the town centre and improved pedestrian and cycling access.
6. A car parking strategy that provides the level of car parking required to meet foreseen demand and accessibility between commercial areas and car parking.
7. A public realm improvement plan that amongst other things creates a coordinated approach to public realm, respecting that different

areas of the town centre serve different purposes and within different ownerships, and creates a setting for heritage assets including St. James the Less Church.

8. Opportunities for greening the town centre and increasing biodiversity at street level and above, including the increased use of renewable energy.
9. A delivery plan for the phasing of development, identifying risks, and demonstrating viability (taking account of infrastructure and affordable housing requirements).
10. An investment proposition for Hadleigh Town Centre that will appeal to investors and create a robust framework for future government funding opportunities.
11. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).





## Reasoned Justification

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**10.10** Hadleigh is the Borough's second largest town centre, comprising a mixture of national and local retailers, cafes, restaurants and a growing cultural provision. However, the town centre is dominated by vehicles on the A13, which forms a gyratory in the centre. This makes safe and convenient pedestrian movements between the northern and southern parts of the town centre challenging.

**10.11** Hadleigh is undergoing a process of renewal. Since the early 2000's large footprint sites, including car sales sites have been redeveloped within Hadleigh. This has seen the overall height of development in Hadleigh gently increase from 2 storey to around 5 stories in height on some sites. There is therefore considerable potential and investment interest in Hadleigh.

**10.12** A Master Plan for Hadleigh was prepared in 2011, which drove some of the investment but was not implemented in full. There are therefore vacant sites and plenty of potential left in Hadleigh to exploit. An updated Master Plan is required to drive further change in Hadleigh. A visioning exercise has recently been completed as the first step in this update.

**10.13** As well as addressing opportunities for redevelopment in Hadleigh Town Centre the Master Plan will also set out proposals for securing the improvements needed to the public realm. This will consider the safe and convenient pedestrian connectivity challenges that exist, as well as respecting the setting of key heritage assets. There is a need to better integrate the arts community and facilities at Hadleigh Old Fire Station into the town centre, and to introduce more urban greening, which will help to off-set some of the impact of the high levels of vehicle movements.

**10.14** Due to the presence of three major convenience retailers within Hadleigh Town Centre, it is envisaged that traffic movements will remain high. However, the Master Plan will consider how vehicle movements through the town centre towards Southend can be better managed. It will also explore how car parking can be better provided to both meet need, make more effective use of land and contribute to environmental improvements. Improving access to the town centre by active and sustainable travel modes will also be important to ensure it is a place local people can access safely and contribute to their health and wellbeing.

**10.15** The SLAA identifies four developable sites in Hadleigh Town Centre with a capacity for at least 188 new homes. It is anticipated that the Master Plan will identify an additional 200 homes for delivery beyond 2037. This assumption is based on the known suitability of Hadleigh Town Centre as a development location, and the number of buildings and spaces within the centre where additional development could be delivered.

## Hadleigh Island

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**10.16** A key location within the town centre is the Hadleigh Island Site. This site is in the middle of the gyratory system on the A13. It comprises vacant land owned by the Council, along with under-utilised land owned by Essex County Council currently occupied by a single storey library and an arts community in Hadleigh Old Fire Station. Older two storey commercial development sits in the middle section of the Island, with St. James the Less Church to the eastern point. There is considerable scope to redevelop the entire area while retaining the Hadleigh Old Fire Station, to better provide the community uses, provide new opportunities for ground floor commercial activities, to provide new homes and to substantially improve the setting of the Church. Developable land with space for at least 74 homes exists and 908m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floorspace on this site, with significant additional capacity that could be released through master planning and investment.

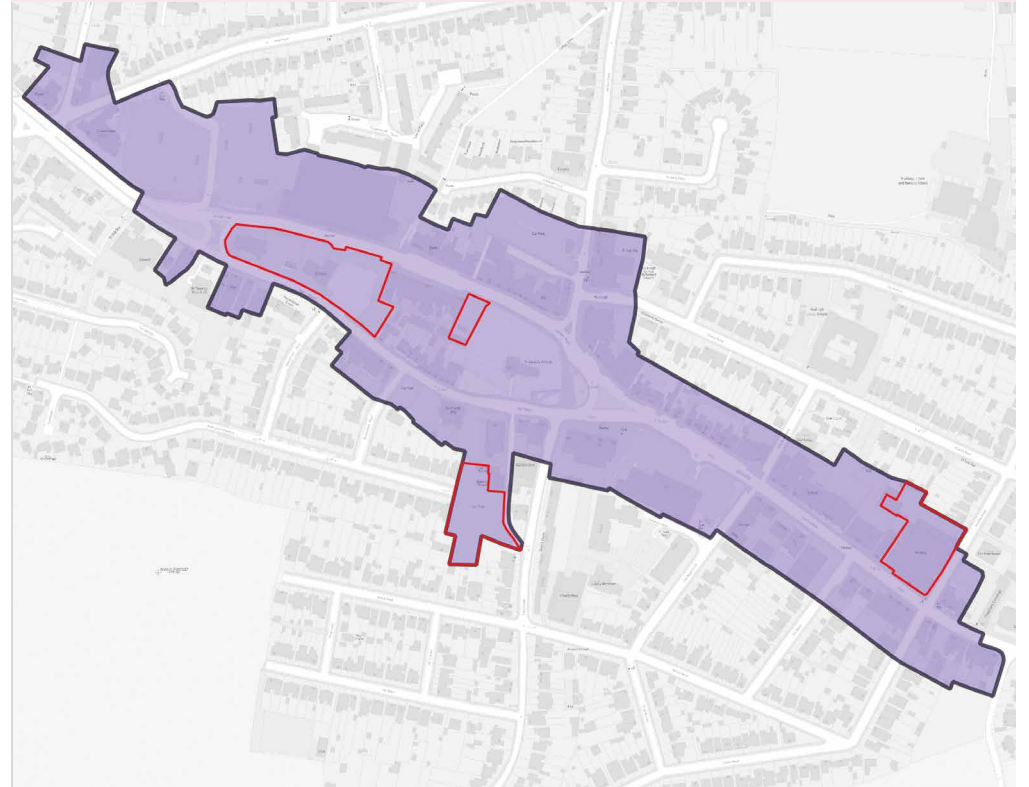
## Car Parks

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**10.17** Each of the supermarkets have their own car parks. In addition to this, there are three Council owned car parks in Hadleigh. Through the coordination of parking provision in the town centre, it is envisaged that a degree of consolidation can be achieved which will create space for new residential and commercial opportunities and providing environmental improvements.



## Hadleigh Town Centre



Map Key:  Hadleigh Town Centre



## Policy Had2 – Hadleigh Country Park, Hadleigh Farm and Benfleet and Southend Marshes

Within the area as identified on the [Policies Map](#), the Council will support the following land uses and proposals for development:

1. Proposals related to the improvement of recreational facilities within the Country Park and maintenance of the Country Park where they do not have a significant impact on the landscape or the Green Belt, and comply with the requirements of policy ENV4 and other relevant policies of this Plan;
2. Proposals related to the development and/or use of the farm for agricultural and/or training purposes in line with the charitable mission of the landowner, where they do not have a significant impact on the landscape the Green Belt, and comply with the requirements of policy ENV4 and other relevant policies of this Plan; or
3. Proposals for habitat creation and habitat management and mitigation which are complementary to the habitats which already exist on or near the site, with specific regard to the Southend and Benfleet Marshes SPA and Ramsar site.
4. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
5. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.

## Reasoned Justification

**10.18** The area to the south of Hadleigh Town Centre sits in the Green Belt. It is the site of the Salvation Army Farm which delivers training opportunities in line with the charitable mission of the Salvation Army. As farming practices change and develop, and the needs of the Salvation Army's clients also change, it will be necessary on occasions for the facilities at the farm to also change and adapt.

**10.19** Essex County Council also manages Hadleigh Country Park. This was extended in 2012 to include land leased from the Salvation Army to provide the venue for the 2012 Olympic Mountain Biking. There are some amenities and facilities on this site for recreation including footpaths, multi-user paths, play equipment, café, toilets, parking, etc. There is also some small-scale 'glamping' provision. To ensure the viability of this facility into the long term it will be necessary on occasions for the facilities in the Country Park to change and adapt.

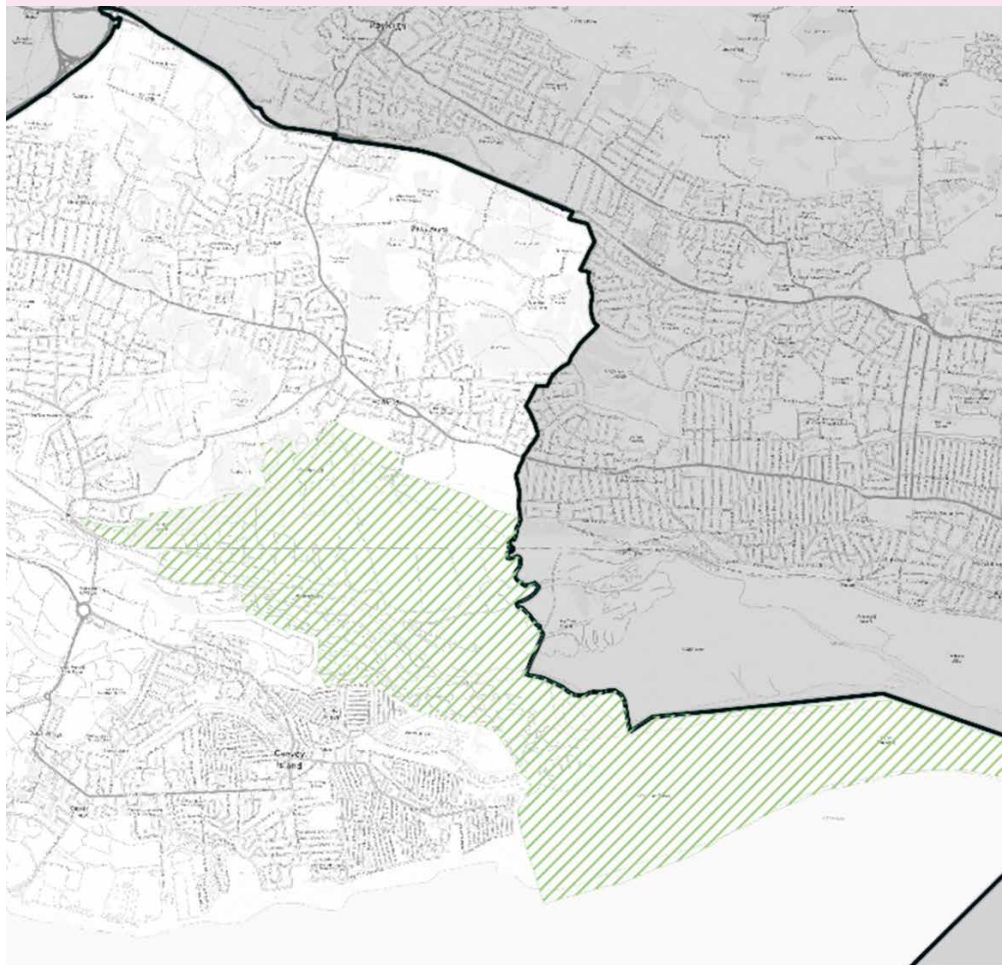
**10.20** The site is however visually prominent, and provides the setting for Hadleigh Castle, a Scheduled Monument. It is therefore critical that any development allowed does not impact on the landscape. Furthermore, it is important that any recreational or farming activities are compatible with the nature conservation status of the area.

**10.21** The southern part of the area is of significant nature conservation value. Benfleet and Southend Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) covers an extensive area of the marshland and Hadleigh Ray creek, with a smaller area of this designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) due to its importance as a habitat for birds. It is designated under international law as a Ramsar site due to the number of migratory birds present. Furthermore, the significance of the Hadleigh Castle and Marshes landscape is such that it has been identified as part of the nominated East Coast Flyway World Heritage site.

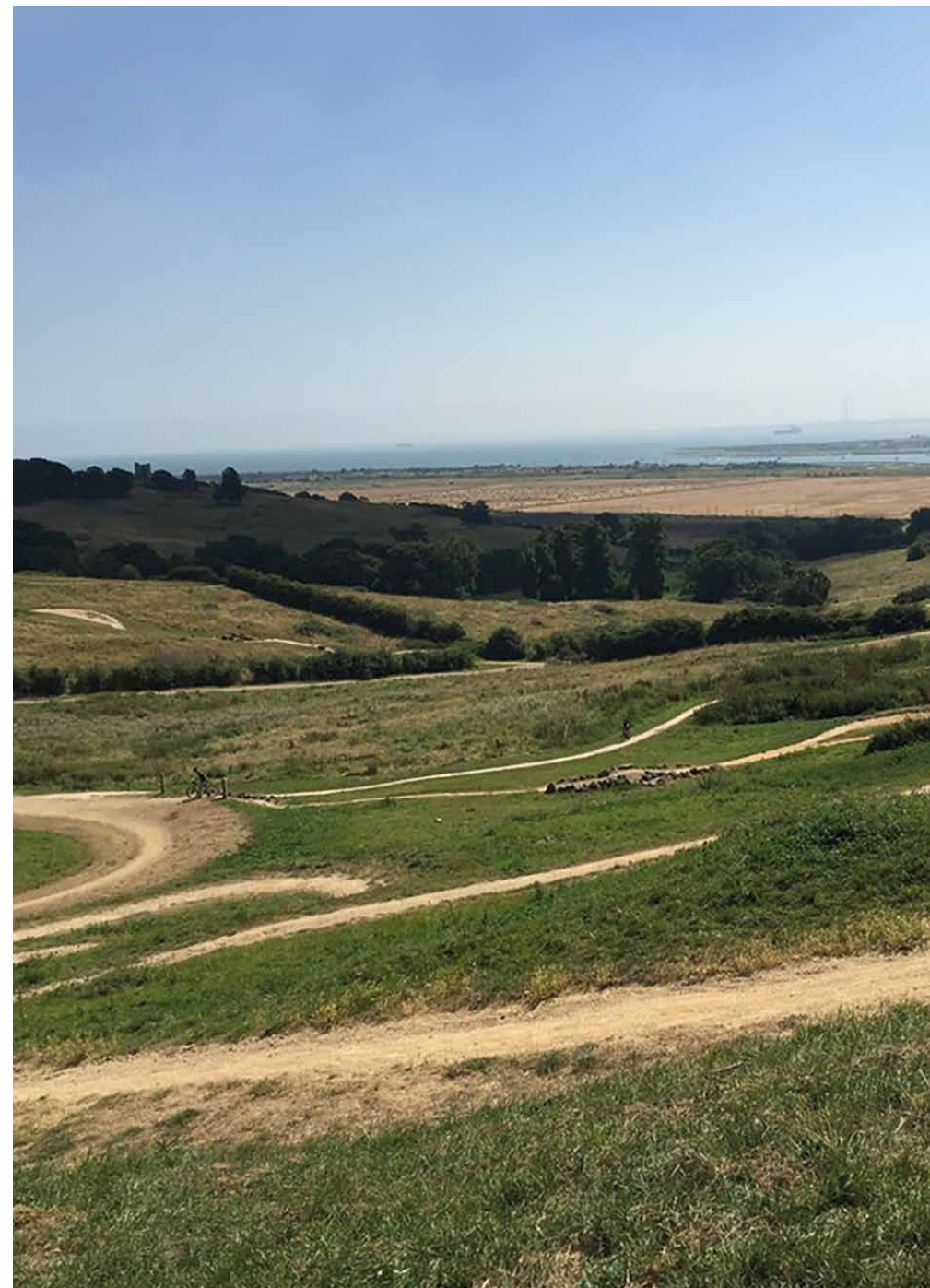
**10.22** The LNRS identifies this area as a Strategic Opportunity Area. The Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy recognises the opportunities for remediation and ecological restoration to improve biodiversity in the short term, while habitat creation and improved connectivity between Hadleigh Park and Benfleet Marshes are a longer term aspiration.

**10.23** There is significant scope for improving biodiversity in this area. The Salvation Army have secured approval from Natural England for around 600ha of rewilding on the farm under a Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Further rewilding, which complements the existing nature conservation make-up of the area is welcomed in line with policy SP1.

### Hadleigh Country Park, Hadleigh Farm and Benfleet and Southend Marshes



Map Key:  Hadleigh Country Park, Hadleigh Farm and Benfleet and Southend Marshes





### Policy Had3 – Hadleigh Clinic

Development at the Hadleigh Clinic, London Road, Hadleigh will be supported for at least 14 homes, provided:

1. The NHS provides assurance that the site is surplus to requirements and the services operating from this facility at the time of application can be provided elsewhere nearby;
2. New development comes forward in accordance with a Master Plan to be agreed by the Council, demonstrating its relationship to adjoining sites; and
3. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS); and
4. The proposal is compliant with all other relevant policies of this Plan.

### Reasoned Justification

**10.24** Hadleigh Clinic, in common with many infrastructure developments from the mid-20th century is built on a generous plot with substantial car parking on the site.

**10.25** In bringing this site forward, it is important that levels of health service provision are maintained or improved. The NHS will therefore need to confirm that this site is not required for health service provision before redevelopment can occur. This will include confirming how any services being provided at the site at time of application will be re-provided elsewhere in the Hadleigh area.

**10.26** There is potential for additional development on adjacent sites. Development proposals should demonstrate how this can be delivered without limiting development potential of adjacent sites.



## Policy Had4 - Land South of Scrub Lane

Development at Land South of Scrub Lane, Hadleigh will be supported for at least 114 homes (including around 6 supported living dwellings for people with complex needs), provided:

1. The frontage of the development is designed to reflect the character of Scrub Lane;
2. Main vehicular access is from Scrub Lane;
3. Main vehicular access to Hadleigh Infant School to the south is maintained along the sites eastern boundary;
4. Pedestrian, cycling and public transport measures connecting to the town centre, nearby facilities and services and Hadleigh Infants and Nursery School;
5. The loss of playing field land is mitigated by an appropriate financial contribution towards new or enhanced playing field facilities nearby;
6. The proposal is compliant with all other relevant policies of this Plan.

## Reasoned Justification

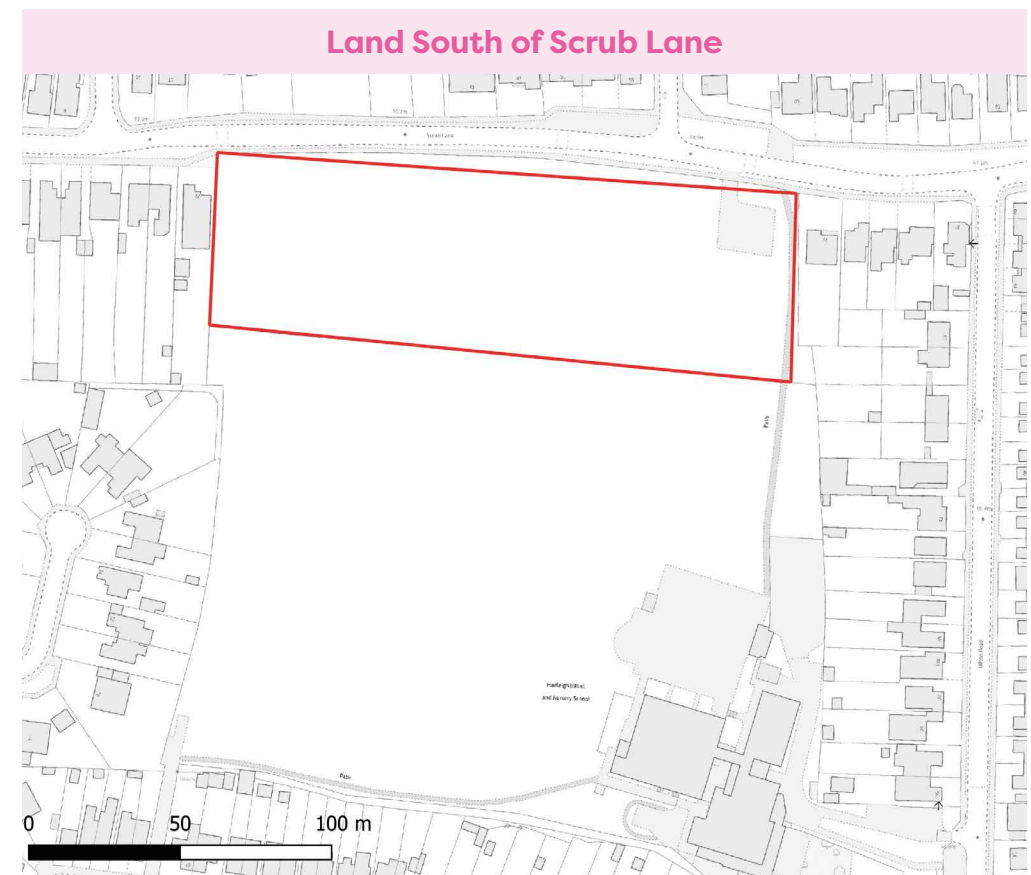
**10.27** This site is approximately 1.5ha in size and is adjacent to the Hadleigh Infant School and is vacant and surplus to education requirements. Access from Scrub Lane by way of a footpath should be maintained along the sites eastern boundary. The site is also located outside of the Green Belt.

**10.28** The front of the site sits within an existing residential street scene on Scrub Lane, with tree lined grass verges along its length and properties on wider plots. The design of the buildings within the development should be cognisant of this street scene whilst seeking to optimise land use.

**10.29** Pedestrian, cycling and public transport measures connecting to the town centre, nearby facilities and services and Hadleigh Infants and Nursery School will be required. Main vehicular access will be from Scrub Lane.

**10.30** The site is an undeveloped, unused piece of land fenced off from the school playing fields. It was fenced off from the school playing fields in the 1990's and has not been in use since that time. However, Sports England consider its last use as playing fields relevant for the determination of any applications on this site. The Castle Point Playing Pitch Strategy should be used to inform how a new or enhanced playing field facility will be identified as part of the development proposal.

**10.31** Due to the proximity of this site to Hadleigh Town Centre, and the urban first approach being applied through this Plan, the Castle Point Density and Capacity Study has assessed the capacity of this site to be of the order of 114 homes at 100 dwelling units per hectare.



Map Key:  Land South of Scrub Lane



## 11. Thundersley

**11.1** Thundersley is situated between Benfleet and Hadleigh. It is surrounded to the north, south, west and northeast by Green Belt, but the urban area converges with Hadleigh along the A13.

**11.2** Thundersley is blessed with significant areas of natural green space, including Thundersley Common to the north and Thundersley Glen and Shipwrights Wood to the south of the settled areas. These are connected into the network of green spaces to the south including Hadleigh Country Park.

**11.3** Thundersley Centre is located on Hart Road in the north of Thundersley. This is currently the main service centre within Thundersley, but the area has grown significantly over the 20th century, and the centre is now not of a scale that meets local needs.

**11.4** Whilst there are no designated local centres in Thundersley, meaning that residents have to travel for a full range of services, Thundersley Centre plays a strong role in local community life, and there may be scope to consider policies which support its growth and development as a local centre.

**11.5** There is a large area of publicly owned land around the Council offices on Kiln Road, which offers a unique opportunity for growth to optimise civic and education facilities locally, as well as spur economic growth and meet housing needs. There is scope to link this to Thundersley Centre generating additional footfall for that centre.

**11.6** The Transport Assessment for this Plan has identified the following Transport improvements required in Thundersley:

- Addition of demarcated pedestrian crossings along Hart Road.
- Delivering the proposals in the Cycle Action Plan
- Implement cycle routes east-west along Common Lane/Triton Approach/Hart Road.
- Add an on-road cycle route along Vicarage Road/Benfleet Road.
- Potential improvements to cycling access along Shipwrights Drive and The Chase.

- Increase the frequency of the number 27 bus to every 10 minutes
- Increase the frequency of the number 3 bus from 120 minutes to 60 minutes
- 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
- Possible improvements to the A13/Kenneth Road junction
- Possible improvements to the A127/A129 (Rayleigh Rd) junction
- Possible improvements to the Hart Rd/A129 (Rayleigh Rd) junction.
- Possible improvements to the Triton Way/Hart Road junction

**11.7** Due to the extensive green infrastructure network, there may be additional off-road opportunities to improve footpaths and byways for active and leisure travel in the Thundersley area.



## Policy Thun1 – Thundersley Centre

Proposals within Thundersley Centre will be supported where they recognise the role the centre plays in the community. Within Thundersley Centre:

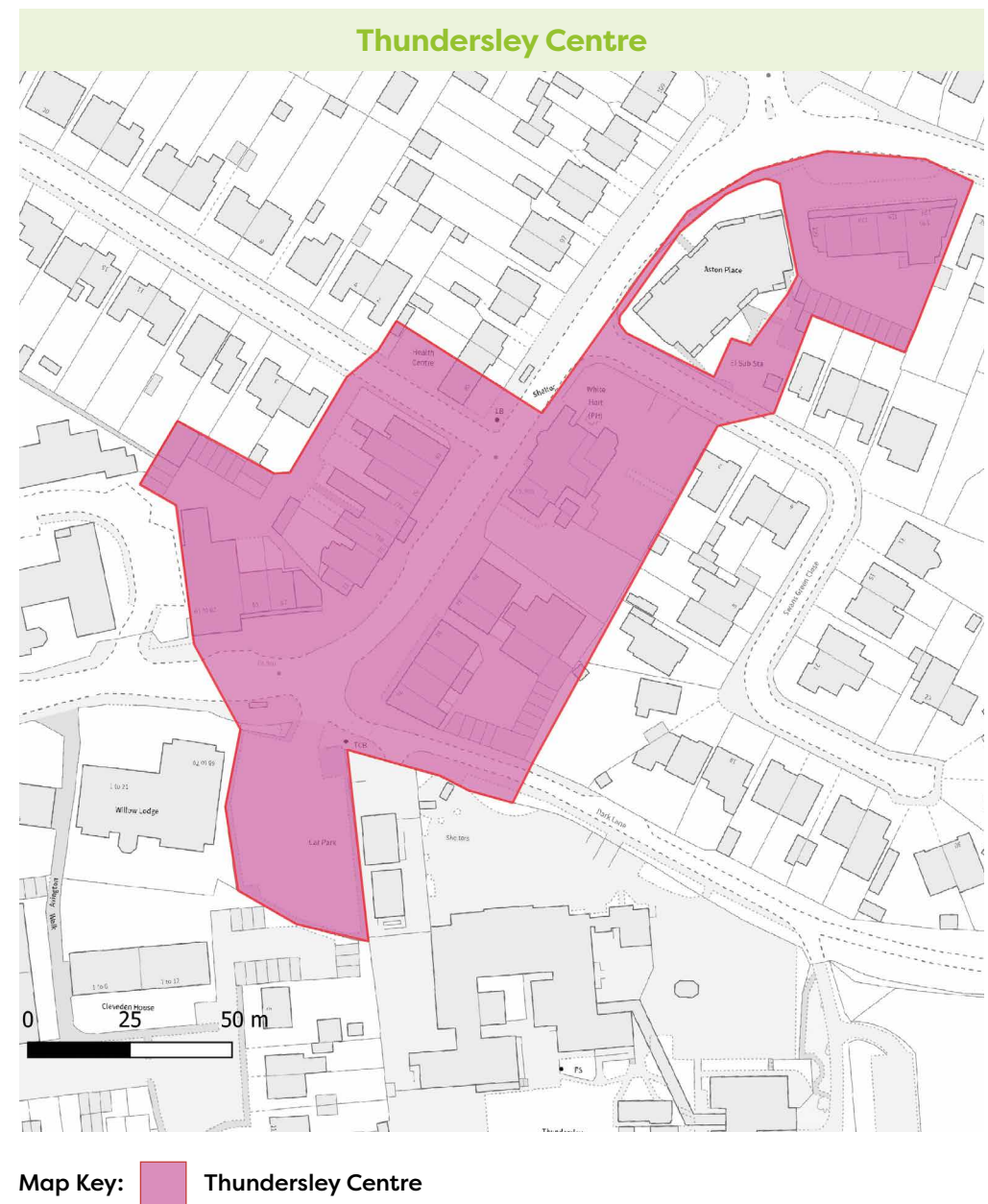
1. Retail and services use will be protected at ground floor level consistent with the requirements of policy TC2 for those properties identified in [Appendix E](#);
2. New retail and service provision within and adjacent to the area identified as Thundersley Centre will be supported at ground floor level; and
3. Proposals which seek to enhance the public realm and use of public spaces will be supported.

## Reasoned Justification

**11.8** Thundersley is the second smallest town within the Borough. Its village core is located to the north of the settlement and comprises two locally designated shopping parades. A school and public car park sit to the south of the centres core. Thundersley Centre provides vital services to residents within walking distance, and also is the focus for the community given the location of a pub and school.

**11.9** As Thursdays grows, it is important that this centre can grow with it, to provide services and community space for local residents.

**11.10** To ensure overall scheme viability, mixed use proposals in this area must carefully consider the scale of commercial development so as to avoid undermining the delivery of housing.





## Policy Thun2 – Kiln Road Campus

This site will be brought forward in accordance with a Master Plan. The redevelopment of the site will provide for new and enhanced community facilities, a new local shopping parade and at least 730 new homes. The Master Plan will be required to demonstrate:

1. How the community uses currently on the site will be re-provided with equivalent or better provision either on site or off site through a clear phasing plan that also addresses any new and interim requirements;
2. A new 56 place stand alone early years and childcare nursery on 0.13 hectares of suitable land allocated for education use
3. How connectivity to the site will be secured and managed including:
  - a. To and from the A13 for vehicular movements;
  - b. Maximising opportunities for the provision of active and sustainable travel and public transport;
  - c. Management of vehicular movements north-south through the site, including links into Thundersley Centre;
4. How car parking will be provided and consolidated within the site to optimise land use having regard to the EPOA Parking Guidance;
5. How a new campus environment will be created containing a mix of uses focused around pedestrian-orientated public realm. This environment will serve as a new civic and service space within Thundersley, and should be active during the day time to support employment, community, education, leisure and civic uses during the day and residents in the evening.
6. How the development will integrate with and optimise the benefits of adjacent public open space;
7. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

8. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced; and
9. The proposal is in accordance with all other relevant policies of this Plan.



Photography: Charlie Stafford, for *This is Us*.

## Reasoned Justification

**11.11** The Kiln Road Campus is home to a wide range of community buildings, occupying a significant amount of land at a relatively low density. The current Council offices, SEEVIC (USP) College, Runnymede Leisure Centre and Runnymede Hall all have the potential to operate on a more efficient building footprint, creating the opportunity to release land for new development.

**11.12** Due to the importance of the community facilities on this site, the need to secure the ongoing provision of existing services and provide new facilities where feasible, will need to be established before any redevelopment of their existing buildings will be acceptable. Due to the scale, complexity, and importance of the existing uses on the site, a Master Plan for development of the site will be produced and agreed by the Council, following engagement with the local community and key partners and providers of public and voluntary services. The site will also be required to provide a new 56 place standalone nursery.

**11.13** Due to the site's location on the A13, it has good accessibility by public transport as well as car, walking and cycling. There is however a need to improve access arrangements which are currently fragmented and improve bus waiting and stopping facilities. The site access and internal highway layout should discourage through movements to the residential areas around the Chase. Meanwhile, car parking across the site needs to be consolidated so it makes more effective land use and provide environmental improvements.

**11.14** The current mix of uses combined with the introduction of a local shopping parade and homes offers the potential to create an exciting new campus type of development in Castle Point focused around a pedestrian friendly public realm. This will see a part of the Borough which is busy but disconnected during the day and quiet at night become a hub of activity and connectivity that will benefit public services, education outcomes and the local economy.

**11.15** The site area specifically excludes existing areas of public open space to the north. It is important that these are not forgotten through the planning process, as the occupants of the new homes will need access to open space. These spaces should be integrated via safe and convenient walking and

cycling routes into the design of the development and enhanced to reflect the additional usage they will receive.

**11.16** This site sits adjacent existing residential areas and there are parts of the site that experience surface water challenges. It is therefore important that the Master Plan considers all other relevant components of this Plan to ensure any proposals are fully in compliance with this Plan when read as a whole before it can be progressed.

**11.17** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on sites integrity.






**Policy Thun 3 - Other Housing Site Allocations in Thundersley**

Housing development on the following sites will be supported, subject to compliance with all relevant policies in this Plan.

Thun3A	Thundersley Clinic	Redevelopment for at least 24 new homes  The NHS provides assurance that the site is surplus to requirements and the services operating from this facility at the time of application can be provided elsewhere nearby.
Thun3B	Thames Loose Leaf	Development of at least 27 new homes

**Other Housing Site Allocations in Thundersley**



Map Key:  Other Housing Site Allocations in Thundersley

**Reasoned Justification**

**11.17** The sites identified in policy Thun3 have been identified through the Strategic Land Availability Assessment as being suitable, available and deliverable for housing. They will contribute towards optimising urban land use by making effective use of vacant and underused land in the existing urban area.

**11.18** Site Thun3A may impact on local health service provision. The NHS will therefore need to confirm that this site is not required for health service provision before redevelopment can occur. This will include confirming how any services being provided at the site at time of application will be re-provided elsewhere in Thundersley. It is expected that this will occur on the Kiln Road Campus.

### Policy Thun 4 – Green Space Connectivity in Thundersley

The green spaces around Thundersley, will be protected and enhanced as a Borough-level multi-functional green infrastructure resource of landscape, ecological and heritage value. Their role in forming green corridors connecting wider habitats and preventing settlement coalescence will continue to be recognised as key to the Plan strategy and pattern of spatial development.

1. The Council will continue to support opportunities for restoration, enhancement and creation of woodland, grassland and lowland meadow management habitats.
2. Improvements will also focus on network connectivity to benefit ecosystem resilience, including connectivity opportunities between statutory designations, local wildlife sites and priority habitats. This will include favourable consideration of biodiversity net gain offset opportunities and projects to promote the continued improvement of the local wildlife sites and Thundersley Great Common SSSI and recovery of its currently unfavourable condition.
3. The area's recreational role will be protected and enhanced with opportunities for managed passive recreation, focussing on heath, wellbeing and educational value. Projects improving walking and cycling connections across the wider area will be supported, acknowledging the contribution that sustainable travel patterns have on wider plan goals to reduce congestion.
4. Existing public open spaces will be protected. Opportunities to address the lack of access to, and quantity of, different types of open space as outlined in supporting evidence) will be supported in the area.





## Reasoned Justification

**11.19** Thundersley is a settlement separated from other urban areas by relatively narrow bands of countryside. In this context, the Green Belt that surrounds Thundersley generally meets the purposes of the designation very strongly.

**11.20** The Green Belt parcels intervening with South Benfleet form a key 'Central Corridor' which both prevents the merging of South Benfleet with Thundersley as well as also creating a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the Borough to those in the south. Thus, this area has a key landscape function as well as a key ecological corridor connecting habitats, including international designations and SSSI, in the wider area.

**11.21** To the south of the Thundersley lies a large swathe of open Green Belt countryside with unbroken views, which forms a large system preserving the sensitive landscape and ecological character of the area. This area includes Hadleigh Country Park, an important recreational and ecological resource, as well as heritage assets including Hadleigh Castle and a fortlet. These Green Belt areas generally make very strong contributions to the Green Belt purposes.

**11.22** The topography and landscape of the land in and around Thundersley comprises an attractive mix of commons, high-quality grassland and woodland. The land is generally of reasonable agricultural quality (grade 3) in the area.

**11.23** In Thundersley and in the northwest of the Borough are habitats largely unaffected by modern agricultural intensification, including unimproved grassland and secondary woodland. The high concentration of woodland around Thundersley includes some ancient woodland and comprises small and large blocks of interlocking deciduous woodland and some secondary woodland associated with previous plotland areas.

**11.24** Surrounding grasslands are also of high nature conservation value, either on the more loamy, acidic soils of the higher land, including Thundersley Glen and Thundersley Great Common SSSI, and Chase Paddocks; or are on the steep slopes of the Thames valley, which create free-draining conditions.

**11.25** Lowland Meadows are also a priority habitat present in the area. There are few remaining unimproved neutral grasslands in the Borough and many of those that do remain are small, with less than favourable management regimes, including The Chase Paddocks. Other areas, including in Thundersley Glen and Thundersley Plotlands, where they form parts of mosaics, are under threat from an absence of management resulting in encroaching scrub outcompeting the grassland community.

**11.26** There are concentrations of Local Wildlife Sites around Thundersley. Key sites in the vicinity include Thundersley Common (a Site of Special Scientific Interest), Shipwrights Wood (An ancient woodland, 12 hectares) and Thundersley Glen all owned and managed by the council; West Wood (22½ hectares acres) owned by the council and managed by Castle Point Wildlife Group; Tile Wood (6½ hectares) and Pound Wood (22¼ hectares) are owned by the Essex Wildlife Trust; Starvelarks Wood and Wyburns Wood are both part of Little Haven Nature Reserve (37¼ hectares) which is owned by Havens Hospice Trust and leased to Essex Wildlife Trust; Coombe Wood ancient woodland is under mixed ownership and much of it has Village Green status. Local Wildlife sites would benefit from habitat restoration and enhancement, including biodiversity enhancement, woodland and grassland management and removal of invasive non-native species.

**11.27** The whole of Thundersley falls within SSSI impact zones, highlighting the need for sensitive consideration of the local environment.

**11.28** The Castle Point Strategic Biodiversity Assessment highlighted opportunities for grassland habitat creation and connectivity opportunities around Thundersley. The Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy also highlights the need to improve green space connectivity to create a more multi-functional green and blue network in Thundersley.

**11.29** When assessed against public open space standards, parts of Thundersley exhibit quantitative shortfalls; including of allotments, equipped play space for children, equipped play space for youths; parks and recreation grounds (North ward only) and amenity open space (South ward only). In addition, some areas, particularly the northwest lack access to children's play space within the standard 10 minute walking distance.

**11.30** Parts of central and south Thundersley lack access to parks and recreation grounds within the standard 15 minutes walking time. Some parts, particularly to the north-east lack access to allotments within the standard 15 minute walking time. Parts of Thundersley towards the north also fail Natural England’s accessible natural green space (ANGST) local standards.

**11.31** The Council’s open space assessment and Green and Blue Infrastructure Study identifies scope to address some of these deficits, noting that there is potential for accessible natural green space (e.g. Thundersley Common) to accommodate low impact uses such as a community food growing (to reduce the shortfalls in allotments and gap in access in the east) and natural play (to reduce the shortfalls in children’s play space).

**11.32** It also notes potential for parks and recreation grounds (e.g. Thundersley Common Recreation Ground) to accommodate youth play space. Consideration could also be given to community access at facilities within schools/education land. Due to the shortfalls in supply across all typologies except parks and recreation grounds and accessible natural green space (ANGS), and the potential of ANGS and parks to reduce existing shortfalls, (and the value of these spaces in terms of green infrastructure and biodiversity), it is recommended that no open spaces are considered as surplus to requirement.



## Coalescence of Thundersley and Benfleet

### Policy Thun5 – Coalescence of Thundersley and Benfleet

**Development of undeveloped land and intensification of developed land between Benfleet and Thundersley will only be supported where it does not result in the coalescence of settlements through a reduction in openness and space or the creation of urbanising effects between settlements.**

### Reasoned justification

**11.33** Thundersley is a larger settlement surrounded by open spaces and woodland, which are important assets locally. Residents consider the area has a distinct identity and feel, given its history, Benfleet also originated as a village with its green spaces now identified as a local facility.

**11.34** There are small gaps of undeveloped land between Thundersley and Benfleet which help maintain the existing identities of the settlements. Although there is Green Belt encircling both Benfleet and Thundersley it is considered necessary to provide additional protections to prevent urban sprawl and coalescence and maintain the openness of this area.

**11.35** Ensuring the gaps between Benfleet and Thundersley are maintained will protect their separate identities.



## 12. Daws Heath

**12.1** The Green Belt is tightly defined around Daws Heath and there are very limited opportunities for development and change within the settlement. Community participation and activity is however strong within the settlement.

**12.2** The quality of the Green Belt in this location is high, comprising meadows, woodlands and some ancient woodland. Some elements of this landscape are managed for wildlife purposes and there is a good level of public access in parts. The area also has a long history of equine activity, including horse riding, stables, and a riding school. There is the potential to extend opportunities for wildlife habitat and recreational access around Daws Heath to improve connectivity between West Wood, the Haven Complex to the north, and Great Wood, Dodds Grove and Belfairs Wood to the east.

**12.3** The Transport Assessment for this Plan identified the following requirements for improvements in Daws Heath:

- Additional pedestrian crossings of Rayleigh Road and Western Road;
- Introduce further cycle routes east/north along New Road/Daws Heath Road to provide additional access to Belfairs Nature Reserve and West Wood;
- Increased frequency of the number 3 bus from 120 minutes to 60 minutes.



## Green Space Connectivity in Daws Heath

### Policy DH1 – Green Space Connectivity in Daws Heath

1. The green space around Daws Heath with its historic pattern of irregular small fields and ancient woodland, will be protected and enhanced as District-level natural greenspace and green infrastructure resource.
2. The Council will continue to support opportunities for restoration, enhancement and creation of habitats in the area, particularly priority habitats and habitats benefiting protected/priority species including fritillary butterflies, badgers and southern wood ants.
3. Improvements will also focus on network connectivity to benefit ecosystem resilience, including connecting statutory designations, local nature reserves, local wildlife sites and priority habitats. This will include favourable consideration of biodiversity net gain offset opportunities, and projects to promote the continued improvement of the local wildlife sites and SSSIs (Garrold's Meadow and Great Wood and Dodd's Grove) and recovery of sections that are in an unfavourable condition.
4. The area's recreational role will be protected and enhanced with opportunities for managed passive recreation, focussing on heath, wellbeing and educational value. Projects improving managed walking and cycling connections across the wider area will be supported.
5. Opportunities to address the lack of access to equipped play space for children and young people will be supported.
6. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
7. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.

## Reasoned justification

**12.4** The topography and landscape of the land in and around Dawes Heath comprises a network of grassland and woodland sites, many of them ancient. The Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation described the area as representing a remarkable survival of a historic pattern of irregular small fields and ancient woodland. It further noted substantial evidence of Roman settlement including a Scheduled Roman villa site and a range of archaeological finds.

**12.5** The area has a high recreational value for the residents of local towns and settlements to walk, cycle or drive out of Castle Point and it provides invaluable green infrastructure for the Borough.

**12.6** There are also concentrations of local wildlife sites around Dawes Heath and these feature a small number of habitats that form the ecological character of the Borough.

**12.7** The woodland around Dawes Heath areas includes small and large blocks of interlocking lowland deciduous woodland habitat and some secondary woodland associated with previous plotland areas. Notable local woods include: Pound Wood (which was purchased by Essex Wildlife Trust in 1993, and includes a Romano-British ancient monument site to the north), Rag Wood, Starvelarks Wood (which is in part of the Essex Wildlife Trust's Little Havens Nature Reserve), Tile Wood, Wyburns Wood, Valerie Wells Wood (owned by the Essex Wildlife Trust) and West Wood (which is managed by Castle Point Wildlife Group). The 5.5 mile (8.9 km) Seven Woods Walk includes the woods of Dawes Heath plus Hadleigh Great Wood and Belfairs Wood, which is a SSSI and Local Nature Reserve.

**12.8** The Castle Point Strategic Biodiversity Assessment highlighted opportunities for both grassland and woodland habitat creation, as well as connectivity opportunities around Thundersley. Similarly, the Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy identifies the opportunities to reconnect woodland habitats.

**12.9** Protected species in the area include Dormouse, with the complex of larger woodlands around Dawes Heath likely to be a core area for this species, but it is also likely that they are present in hedgerows, scrub and smaller

woodlands that are connected to these, and in other areas where these habitats are present. The complex of larger woodlands around Dawes Heath is also likely to be of significance for bat populations in at least a local context.

**12.10** While local access to open spaces is generally good; St Michael's ward has discrete deficits of certain types of provision. It lacks access to children's play space, youth play space or amenity open space against local standards.



Photography: Sally Chinea, for *This is Us*.



### Policy DH2 – Coalescence of Settlements – Daws Heath

Development of undeveloped land and intensification of developed land between Daws Heath, and neighbouring settlements will only be supported where it does not result in the coalescence of settlements through a reduction in openness and space or the creation of urbanising effects between settlements.

### Reasoned justification

**12.11** Daws Heath is a small semi-rural settlement. There is a strong sense of leaving this area and entering another, particularly for local residents. Engagement through the preparation of the Castle Point Plan has highlighted that residents feel it is vitally important that the unique character of Daws Heath is protected.

**12.12** There are small gaps of undeveloped land between Daws Heath and its neighbouring larger settlements of Thundersley, Hadleigh, Leigh-on-Sea in Southend-on-Sea, Rayleigh and Eastwood.

**12.13** Although there is Green Belt encircling Daws Heath, it is considered necessary to provide additional protections to prevent urban sprawl and coalescence and maintain the openness of this area.

**12.14** Ensuring the gaps between Daws Heath, and other settlements are maintained will protect its unique identity and semi rural character.



Photography: Sally Chinae, for *This is Us*.

## 13. Providing the Right Types of new Homes

### Castle Point Housing Context

**13.1** Castle Point Borough is generally modern in character with development taking place mainly between and since the two world wars within the four towns: Benfleet, Canvey Island, Hadleigh and Thundersley.

**13.2** The Borough continues to have a range of housing needs, and these have been identified through a Local Housing Needs Assessment. The approach to meeting development needs is set out in Policy SP3, a minimum of 6,196 homes will be delivered across the plan area to 2043.

**13.3** The affordability of housing is a significant concern for people living in the Borough. This includes younger people looking to move into their first home, and those who cannot currently afford to buy a home. It is important that the Council tries to meet the needs of all its communities and to ensure that younger generations can continue to live in the Borough.

**13.4** By understanding the needs of local residents, the Castle Point Plan will be well positioned to deliver a mix of homes that will increase residents opportunities to own or rent an appropriately sized home.

### Housing Supply

#### Policy Context

**13.5** The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) requires Local Planning Authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing. It expects the number of homes needed to be informed by the Standard Methodology, and specific forms of housing, including affordable housing and housing for different groups, to be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

### Preventing the Loss of Housing

#### Policy Hou1 - Preventing the Loss of Housing

Existing residential uses should be retained and the loss or amalgamation of existing residential units restricted. Redevelopment

of residential properties alternative as non-residential uses, will only be permitted if the proposal does not harm neighbouring residential amenity; and furthers other sustainable development objectives promoted in this Plan such as:

1. **Employment proposals, where it can be demonstrated that the loss of residential accommodation in the location is outweighed by, and is critical to, the success of a significant business case and promotion/ protection of local jobs which cannot be located elsewhere;**
2. **Health and social care proposals, where it can be demonstrated that the loss of residential accommodation in the location is outweighed by, and critical to, the provision of a significant health or social care facility, including children's nurseries, which cannot be located elsewhere; or**
3. **Provision of a key service such as a local shop, in a location which meets a local need and does not impact upon the viability of a retail centre of local parade.**

### Reasoned Justification

**13.6** There is a high degree of housing pressure on urban land in Castle Point. Additional pressure can be avoided by keeping residential properties in residential use. Changing the use of a building from residential to other non-residential uses is therefore not generally acceptable.

**13.7** An empty home is defined as a residential property that has been unoccupied for at least six months and which is unoccupied on a regular basis. This does not include caravans/mobile homes or second homes.

**13.8** At the end of July 2024, there were 462 empty homes within the Borough. The Council have recently adopted an Empty Homes Policy, to bring empty homes within the Borough to productive residential use in the most appropriate way and in the shortest possible timescale.



### Policy Hou2 - Securing More Affordable Housing

1. All proposals for new residential development resulting in 10 or more net additional homes (or 0.5 hectares or more) will be required to deliver new affordable housing, as a proportion of the total gross housing:
  - a. 10% of homes on all applicable sites will be affordable home ownership, rounded up to the next whole number; and
  - b. On urban brownfield sites which do not have commercial development at ground floor level, a further 10% of homes will be for social rent. Where it is not possible to secure freehold provision of social rented units on these sites without compromising the optimal use of land, then payment in lieu of on-site provision is acceptable; or
  - c. A further 20% of homes on urban greenfield sites will be for social rent.
2. All proposals for new residential development resulting in 10 or more net additional homes (or 0.5 hectares or more) exceptionally permitted on grey belt land or otherwise within the extent of the Green Belt will provide 50% affordable housing, of which 50% will be for social rent, and 50% will be for affordable home ownership.
3. Except for those circumstances set out in point 1b above, it is expected that affordable housing provision will occur on-site. Payment in lieu will not be accepted in other circumstances. The Council will however consider proposals for off-site provision made under private arrangements.
4. Affordable housing units should be designed to integrate with the wider development. Development proposals should be tenure blind in their design.
5. The Council will seek to ensure affordable housing provision meets local needs by setting out local access requirements for affordable home ownership and securing nomination rights for social housing in the Section 106 Agreement.

**13.9** The Local Housing Needs Assessment 2025 identified a total constrained housing requirement of 5,950 dwellings (350 per annum) for 2026-2043, of which 1,458 new homes need to be affordable. This equates to 86 affordable homes p.a. across the Plan period, or 24% of the total supply. The Council's target is to deliver this quantum of affordable housing.

**13.10** Developments of below 10 new homes in size are not expected to deliver any affordable housing, as per Government guidance.

**13.11** The Local Housing Needs Assessment 2025, continues to show an overwhelming need for social-rent homes alongside a smaller but important need for homes to buy. The updated figures in Table 37 of the Local Housing Needs Assessment, show a need for 1,009 as social rent, 69 for affordable rent and 380 need for affordable home ownership. First Homes and shared ownership products remain acceptable for meeting the 10 % affordable ownership floor. First homes are an affordable product whereby first-time buyers can purchase property for 80% market value capped at £250,000. This discount is passed onto subsequent buyers, retaining the benefit in perpetuity. As the transaction for such properties is between the developer and the buyer and does not involve the Council or a registered provider as a third party, First Homes can be used alongside shared ownership to ensure that all applicable developments deliver at least 10% affordable home ownership. This will deliver against the likely demand for such properties over the Plan period, as assessed in the Local Housing Needs Assessment. First Homes are sold at a minimum 30% discount from open-market value, with the discount locked in for future sales.

**13.12** First Homes are no longer a mandatory component of affordable-housing delivery under the December 2024 NPPF, but they remain an optional form of affordable home ownership that the Council may accept where they clearly meet local need alongside shared-ownership and other discounted-sale products.

**13.13** Social rented homes are more difficult to deliver, as the discount is greater than for other forms of affordable housing, with transactions typically taking place at around 55% market value. Furthermore, these properties are managed and therefore the Council or a registered provider needs to be able to acquire

the freehold. The viability impact of providing social housing is therefore more significant than for other affordable homes.

**13.14** A viability assessment has been undertaken and that has determined that flatted schemes in urban areas cannot deliver high levels of affordable housing, especially where there is commercial development at ground floor level. To this end, urban brownfield sites are required to deliver just 10% social housing on-site or via a contribution if it is not possible to optimise the development potential of the site through on site delivery. This applies to residential only schemes. Those sites with commercial development at ground floor level are exempt.

**13.15** Greenfield sites are often more viable, and consequently higher levels of social housing can be secured as part of the housing mix. In line with the golden rule set out in the NPPF, 50% affordable housing will be secured on sites where they are exceptionally permitted in the Grey Belt or Green Belt. However, greenfield sites make a relatively smaller component of the housing land supply than brownfield sites.

**13.16** This means that securing the overall level of social housing needed is more challenging. However, around 1,290 homes across 9 allocated sites within this Plan are proposed on either wholly or partly Council owned land. Whilst the Council will need to consider the viability of these schemes so they are not a draw on the public purse, profits can be reinvested alongside developer contributions to secure higher levels of provision on these sites. Overall, it is expected that the required level of social housing provision will be secured.

**13.17** It is anticipated that some of the urban redevelopment sites will not be able to provide social housing as the required units cannot be offered to the Council or a registered provider on a freehold basis. This will give rise to in lieu developer contributions that can be invested in affordable housing provision on Council owned sites. In all other cases, due to the limited supply of land in Castle Point, on-site provision of affordable housing is expected.

**13.18** It is expected that where provision is made for affordable housing on development sites, the affordable homes have the same look and feel as the market housing. This will ensure that communities are more coherent than if distinctions in tenures are highlighted.

**13.19** The assessment of affordable housing need is based on the needs of the local population. It is therefore important that affordable homes are directed to these people in the first instances. The Council's Developer Contributions Guidance on affordable housing sets out local criteria for accessing First Homes. The Council will meanwhile secure nomination rights to social rented housing through S106 legal agreements.





### Policy Hou3 - Housing Mix

The Council has identified the following benchmark mix of different sizes and types of homes to be secured through development that would best respond to currently identified housing needs and wider plan objectives.

Unit Size	Premium Sustainability Areas		All Other Areas	
	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable
1 bed	15%	40%	0%	10%
2 bed	60%	40%	35%	35%
3 bed	25%	20%	45%	40%
4+beds	0%	0%	20%	15%

To ensure mixed and balanced communities, development will be required to reflect a mix in line with the table above, as far as possible and as an initial benchmark.

## Reasoned Justification

**13.20** The NPPF states the aim should be to have a an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

**13.21** Castle Point's housing stock has a high proportion of larger homes. The Census shows that almost 8 out of 10 homes are either detached or semi-detached in the Borough (compared to just over half across England as a whole). Castle Point also has a very low proportion of flats and conversions, just 9.4% (compared to 22.2% nationally).

**13.22** However, whilst homes are comparatively large, households are not. 1 and 2 person households make up almost 2/3 of the total in Castle Point,

which is broadly comparable to county and national figures. The current largest household type in the Borough is couples with no children, followed by single people. This is projected to remain the case by the end of the Plan period in 2043, with these two household groups also projected to rise by the highest numbers to 2043.

**13.23** The Council's 2023 Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA modelled growth based on a delivery rate of 255 dwellings per annum. While the Council now proposes a slightly higher rate of a minimum of 364 dwellings per annum, this earlier projection remains a proportionate and reasonable basis for understanding housing mix needs. Analysis from the 2023 LHNA indicates a projected overall increase of 4,800 households in Castle Point over the 20-year period 2023-2043. Single person households are over a third of the overall household growth (1,300) with the majority (820) being single people aged over 85 years. Couples without dependent children are projected to increase (1,400) and are primarily over 75.

**13.24** Families with dependent children make up over 20% of the overall household growth (1,100). A quirk of this data is that much of the growth is for households with a head aged 55-84 years. This is not necessarily the head of the household being a parent, but instead the impact of multi generation living with older persons living in a household with a younger family.

**13.25** Therefore, Castle Point has relatively large average house sizes for the number of occupants. Households of one or two people form most of the growth over the Plan period. This combines with evidence of concealed households in multi generation living arrangements.

**13.26** The household survey conducted for the LHNS showed that, overall, the main demand is for 2 or 3- bedroom homes (40% and 36% respectively). The key driver for a house move is the size of a property, with almost as many wanting a smaller property as wanting a larger property. One in three (35%) want a bigger property and this can be coupled with a need for additional features such as a garden or off-road parking. Three in ten (30%) residents wanted to downsize and 12% say health problems were affecting their housing needs. There is some overlap within this group with people keen to have single level living often driven by age and mobility problems. Their needs will also be addressed via Plan policy Hou4 on specialist housing requirements.

**13.27** Facilitating the desired moves of the estimated 30% who wish to downsize would also free up existing under-occupied larger homes. Therefore, building smaller homes, particularly focussing on 2 bedrooms would help solve the aspirations of both groups – both those who wish to upsize as well as those who wish to downsize. In contrast, building larger homes only solves one half of the equation, serving no benefit for those who wish to downsize.

**13.28** The LHNS also considered the relationship between economic development and housing. Local businesses report that public transport is an issue for them, particularly the infrequent bus services. For example, on Canvey Island a car is essential for workers who wish to work in the Freeport. This underlines the value of the wider plan strategy of focussing residential development on areas of premium sustainability, including near bus stops. Populations more focussed on these areas should make local bus services more viable and increase patronage, as well as the commercial viability of local service businesses. Town centre regeneration schemes, inevitably dominated by apartments, justify a higher proportion of smaller unit sizes, on a case-by-case basis. However, developments characterised by housing and outside areas of premium sustainability justify a mix proportionally leaning more to houses, on a case-by-case basis. Premium sustainability areas are defined in Policy D2.

**13.29** By prioritising smaller home sizes in affordable housing, more young residents will be able to find a home that meets their need. In terms of the types and size of affordable housing that should be provided the LHNA indicates that over 50% of new affordable housing properties should be 1-2 bedroom units.

**13.30** In addition, the housing mix should also reflect the local context of the site, as it is recognised that it will not be possible to secure a full mix of house sizes and types on all sites. Very small sites will be constrained by site capacity and the existing street scene. However, larger sites will be able to make an increasingly more significant contribution to the mix within the local housing market. In taking the local context into account it is recognised that some sites may provide mainly flatted developments, whilst others will potentially provide more houses and bungalows. Consideration will be made on an individual site basis.



Photography: Laura Whiting, for *This is Us*.



### Policy Hou4 – Specialist Housing Requirements

1. All new homes will be delivered in accordance with accessibility standards as follows:
  - a. 100% of all new homes will be built to standard M4(2);
  - b. 10% of all new homes will be built to standard M4(3).
2. Subject to compliance with all other relevant policies of this Plan, the Council will support:
  - a. Proposals that contribute towards the delivery of 1,056 retirement/ sheltered homes and 594 extra care units for older people over the Plan period in locations with good access to shops and services.
  - b. Proposals that contribute towards the delivery of 138 residential care beds and 139 extra care beds over the Plan period.
  - c. Proposals for the provision of specialist accommodation for vulnerable adults in locations with good access to shops and services. A condition will be attached to the grant of permissions giving placement preference to Essex residents.
  - d. Proposals for the provision of residential care homes for children within the existing urban areas or as part of new developments. A condition will be attached to the grant of permission giving placement preference to Essex residents.
  - e. Proposals for self and custom build housing, where there is an identified need as set out by the Council's Self and Custom Build Register. A condition will be attached to the grant of permission to secure the dwelling for this specific housing type.

## Reasoned Justification

**13.31** It is important that new homes in the Borough are built to standards that enable residents to live long, self-sufficient lifestyles. As our population continues to age, more homes will need to be more accessible to enable people to continue living in them for as long as possible. Building Regulations require that all new homes meet the (M4(1)) standard of being VISIBLE, but there are optional standards of Accessible and adaptable (M4(2)), similar to Lifetime Home standard, and Wheelchair user dwelling (M4(3)).

**13.32** The Housing Needs Assessment 2023, identifies that at present 8% of existing households have one or more person living in them that require some sort of adaptation. This is forecast to increase over the Plan period to 29% of housing, and to match the increase, up to 4,018 new Accessible and adaptable (M4(2) category 2 and M4(3) Category 3) homes would need to be provided.

**13.33** In reality, demand for accessible new homes will not be provided only in new built homes; people will adapt their existing homes in most cases, and some homes will also already be adapted. In order to provide choice within the market, and ensure that new homes are ready to be lived in for a lifetime, a target of 100% M4(2) standard homes is considered to be appropriate.

**13.34** The Essex Supported and Specialist Housing Needs Assessment (Housing LIN ECC, May 2025) shows that in Castle Point there is an unmet need for about 130 fully wheelchair-accessible dwellings (M4(3)) at 2024, rising to some 158 households by 2044 (figures are not cumulative). In order to provide both choice and resilience in the housing stock, and recognising that some need will also be met through adaptations, the Plan's requirement that 10% of all new dwellings meet M4(3) standard remains justified and deliverable.

**13.35** As our residents continue to live longer, there is a need to increase housing for older people's accommodation in the Borough. The Local Housing Needs Assessment forecasts an increase of 3,500 people aged 75+ in the Borough between 2023-2043.

**13.36** Castle Point currently has a very low proportion of sheltered housing for older people (46 units per 1,000 people) compared to the national average (120 per 1,000).

**13.37** The Essex Supported and Specialist Housing Needs Assessment 2025 identifies a significant increase in need for retirement/sheltered housing and extra care housing units across Essex. For Castle Point, it is estimated that there will be a total need for 1,056 retirement/sheltered housing units and 594 extra care units by 2044.

**13.38** It is expected that older persons housing will predominantly be 1-2 bedroom units, which reflects older people's housing needs, and will help to release larger existing houses to meet the needs of growing families.

**13.39** The Essex Supported and Specialist Housing Needs Assessment which identified a need for 138 residential care beds and 139 nursing care home beds by 2044.

**13.40** Essex County Council is the Children and Adult Social Care provider in Castle Point. They have undertaken work to understand the demand for supported housing for working aged, vulnerable adults, and for accommodation for children in care. These schemes are typically smaller and accommodated within larger developments or through the redevelopment of larger homes. Essex County Council report that there is a strong demand for such accommodation. However, due to market factors spaces in Essex are often taken up by those from outside the area. To avoid children in care and vulnerable adults being placed far from family, an Essex first approach is therefore set out to ensure access to local spaces for local people.

**13.41** As required by national guidance, the Council maintains a register of persons interested in purchasing self build and custom build plots. This register requires applicants to disclose their financial capacity and the Local Planning Authority will use this information to ensure that stated demand is realistic before using it to assess demand for this housing type. The Council will work with applicants to bring forward self-build allocations to meet identified need in appropriate locations.

**13.42** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on sites integrity.





### Policy Hou5 - Park Homes

1. New park homes will only be supported on existing Park Home sites as defined on the [Policies Map](#).
2. Where applications for new park homes are made, consideration will be given as to whether a condition should be used to restrict the winter use of caravans. Winter use will be restricted where:
  - a. The site has been exceptionally permitted following the application of the sequential and exception tests and is not suitable for permanent residential use due to its location in flood risk zone 3; or
  - b. The quality of the proposed caravans is not suitable for year-round occupation without risk to the health and wellbeing of potential occupiers.

### Reasoned Justification

**13.43** Across the three sites on Canvey (Kings Park, Sandy Bay and Holehaven Caravan park) and one site in Benfleet (Kingsleigh Park), there are close to 2,000 park homes in Castle Point, predominantly providing accommodation to older people.

**13.44** While these homes and sites are popular, they have created large concentrations of older people which has implications for the provision of services in the local area, with increased pressure on health services and a lack of demand for school places. Furthermore, the construction of these homes, whilst somewhat more robust than in the past is nonetheless more vulnerable to cold weather and flooding than more traditional buildings.

**13.45** To this end, the Council will seek to limit the further provision of park homes to the existing caravan sites, and where possible and necessary will restrict new park homes providing residential accommodation where the

occupants are likely to be at risk from flooding or the effects of cold weather. It should be noted that the siting of most park homes on the existing sites will not require new planning consent as their provision is permitted under the existing consents for the use of the site as a caravan park.

**13.46** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on sites integrity.



### Policy Hou6 - Gypsy and Traveller Provision

1. The Council will meet the need for 18 Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the Plan period through the intensification of pitch provision at Orchard Place and Janda Fields, as identified on the [Policies Map](#).
2. In order to protect the limited supply of lawful Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough, proposals that would lead to the loss, or partial loss, of sites will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there is no longer an identified need for the provision, or that replacement provision on a site in a suitable location that is equal or of better quantity and quality is provided.

### Reasoned Justification

**13.47** National policy for the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites is set out in the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). It expects that the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites is identified through a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA). It is further expected that policies in Local Plans are prepared which meet this need.

**13.48** A GTAA has been prepared for Castle Point. This has identified that there is a need for 15 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers which meet the definition set out in the PPTS. This definition reads as follows:

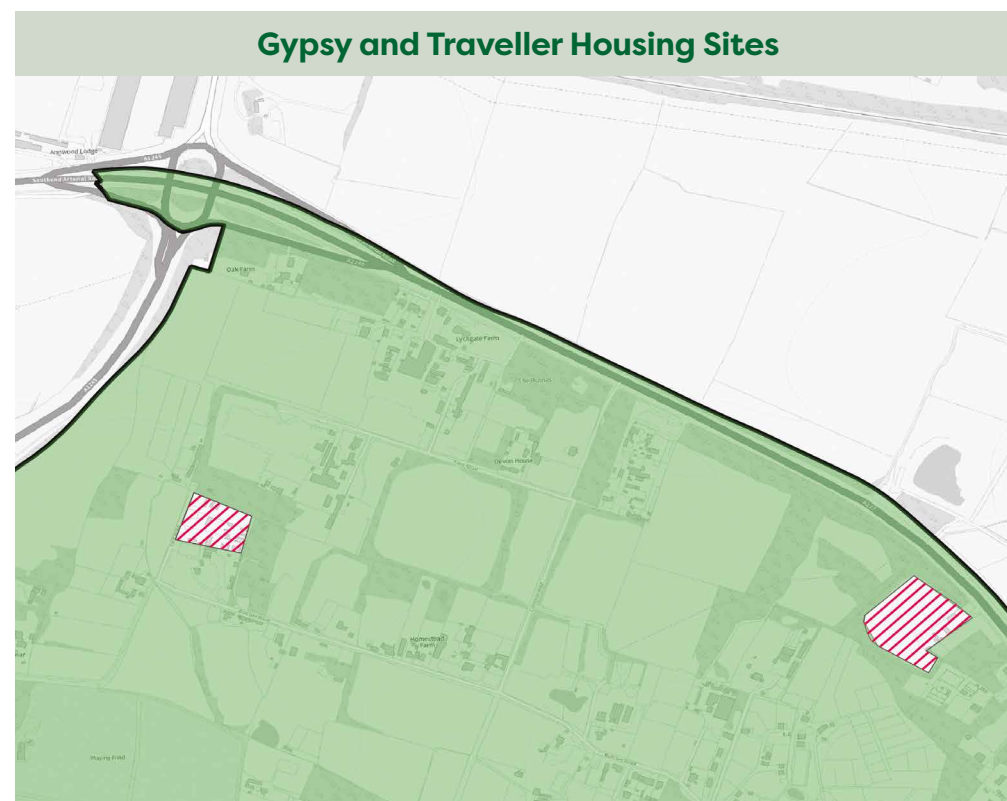
*'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.'*

**13.49** This need was determined by interviewing local Gypsy and Traveller families, and consequently is based on the very specific needs and family make up of those currently living in Castle Point. Unfortunately, a small number of the Gypsies and Travellers living in Castle Point were not

available for interview. There is a potential need of 3 pitches arising from this group based on normal growth rates in the Gypsy and Traveller population. There is no identified need for Travelling Showpeople in Castle Point.

**13.50** There are three authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in Castle Point. It is expected that this need can be met by intensifying pitch provision on two of these existing sites, specifically Orchard Place and Janda Fields. These sites are therefore allocated for this purpose on the [Policies Map](#) and inset from the Green Belt. There is no further scope for expansion or intensification at the third existing site at Watlington Road, Benfleet.

**13.51** To ensure the ongoing provision of sufficient pitches, these sites will be protected for this use, as alternative sites would most likely place additional pressure on the Green Belt, which this Plan seeks to avoid.



Map Key:  Orchard Place and Janda Fields, Gypsy and Traveller Housing Sites



## 14. Developing Castle Point's Economy

### Economic Development Context

**14.1** Castle Point lies within a significant radial economic corridor centred on London, defined by the Thames Estuary to the south, and the A127 to the North. The A127, A13/A130, and a regular rail link, connect the Borough with the regional employment locations of the Docklands, the City of London, the Thames Gateway, and Southend. There are also road links to important local employment locations in Basildon and Chelmsford.

**14.2** Castle Point exhibits low levels of unemployment but also has below average skills and workplaces wages. It has a relatively aging population and high rates of out-commuting. There is a limited higher education offer in the Borough, and no Adult Education provision on Canvey Island. This contributes to a “knowledge drain”, with young people often leaving the Borough to pursue careers after completing their education (something seen across South Essex).

**14.3** Presently, fewer people work in Castle Point than commute out of the Borough for employment. Principally, they commute to the larger economies of Thurrock, Basildon, London, and Southend.

**14.4** In terms of business make-up, Castle Point is heavily represented by Micro (less than 10 employees) and small businesses (10-49 employees). The Plan will need to help nurture these businesses and provide the conditions and space for them to grow.

**14.5** Experian local market forecasts for 2023 show that there are 19,200 FTE jobs in Castle Point, alongside around 3,800 self-employed people. Overall, the workforce in Castle Point is around 28,300 people, as some people work part time hours. The Borough's largest employment sites are at West Canvey, at Manor Trading Estate in Benfleet, and at Stadium Way on the boundary with Rochford.

**14.6** Canvey is also a port location, with gas and oil storage facilities. These are nationally significant facilities and are part of the Port of London operation which is a growing source of employment along the north bank of the Thames and especially in Thurrock.

**14.7** The Essex Sector Development Strategy identifies key growth sectors across Essex over the next 30 years. Within Castle Point the key growth sector is construction, covering the wide range of trades people who live in the Borough. A key challenge and opportunity for this sector is climate change and net zero. Trades people who adapt to new, green technologies in the construction sector are expected to thrive and grow through both new build and retrofit opportunities.

**14.8** Other growth sectors where there are opportunities for growth in Castle Point are the digital sector and the creative sectors. Whilst these sectors are currently small in the Borough, they are growing often in the form of micro and small businesses. There is a real opportunity to nurture these businesses and grow these sectors.

**14.9** There is also scope, due to the presence of the gas and oil storage facilities to see a growth in the energy sector in Castle Point.



### Policy E1- Development on Strategic Employment Land

1. Within the Strategic Employment Areas, as shown on the policies map, the Council will seek to provide and retain Class E(g), B2 and B8 use classes or other 'sui generis' uses of a similar employment nature unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect for the site to be used for these purposes at:
  - SEL1 - Manor Trading Estate, Benfleet
  - SEL2 - Stadium Way, Rayleigh Weir
  - SEL3 - Charfleets Industrial Estate & Roscommon Way, Canvey
  - SEL4 - South Canvey Port Facilities
2. Within Strategic Employment Areas, and until such time as a Master Plan is agreed, Class B development or other 'sui generis' uses will be supported which:
  - a. Increases employment floorspace;
  - b. Increases the number of jobs, particularly within high-value, skilled sectors;
  - c. Diversifies the range of sizes of employment spaces within the allocation;
  - d. Provide environmental improvements such as to the quality of open spaces, landscaping, roads, drains, and communication infrastructure;
  - e. Provide measures to improve site access and wider accessibility by active and sustainable modes and public transport to and within the designated employment area and
  - f. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

- g. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced; and
  - f. Complies with all other relevant policies of this Plan.
3. In addition to those criteria in part 2 of this policy, Class E development will be supported within Strategic Employment Areas subject to the appropriate application of the sequential test, where it can demonstrate that:
    - a. It will make a positive benefit to the operation of the strategic employment allocation as a whole; and
    - b. Will not compete with the role of neighbouring town and local centres.

### Reasoned Justification

**14.10** Employment forecasting for the Borough is drawn from the Experian Economic Land Demand forecast for Castle Point September 2024. This identifies that there is a net demand for 4,000m<sup>2</sup> of additional office floorspace in the Borough, but a small shrinkage in the demand for new land for industrial uses and warehousing growth is negligible.

Type	Jobs 2023	Jobs 2043	Diff	Floorspace (m <sup>2</sup> )	Land (Ha)
<b>Office (B1a/b)</b>	2,641	2,982	341	4,090	N/A
<b>B1c</b>	1,830	1,679	-151	-7,094	-0.71
<b>B2</b>	1,633	1,256	-377	-13,577	-1.36
<b>B8</b>	2,044	2,052	8	537	0.05
<b>Non-B</b>	10,862	11,051	190	3,780	N/A



**14.11** Overall, there is a current oversupply of 2ha in provision. This stands against an extant permission for 7.5ha at West Canvey on land south of Northwick Road. There is therefore a potential oversupply of 9.5ha, based on the Experian projections.

**14.12** However, this Plan takes an urban first approach to development which encourages the regeneration of low density industrial sites in and around town centres. Some of these uses will need to be relocated and it is expected that the Strategic Employment Area Sites will be the most appropriate locations for this. There will therefore be demand for some of this surplus land for alternative land use as the delivery of the Plan progresses.

**14.13** Accordingly, this Plan seeks to ensure that the Borough's existing industrial areas are safeguarded in the first instance for industrial uses.

**14.14** A review of the Borough's stock of employment land was undertaken in the Economic Sites Review 2024 to identify what opportunities exist to increase economic productivity. It identified that there are three principal sites that constitute the current and potential future strategic employment land supply:

- Charfleets Trading Estate is a large set of industrial estates in the west of Canvey Island. This area is currently growing, and there is further potential for investment in the site which could drive intensification, increasing floorspace and jobs across the area.
- Manor Trading Estate is a large industrial site in north Benfleet. There is high occupancy on the site, despite relatively poor infrastructure, notably the access to and around the site.
- Stadium Way, Rayleigh Weir, is a smaller industrial estate with excellent occupation rates and limited opportunity for intensification.

**14.15** At present the Borough's Strategic Employment Areas are well occupied, but of generally poor quality in terms of environment. The building stock is generally poor, except for new development to the south of Roscommon Way, and the public realm across these sites is poor, dominated by parking and not pedestrian friendly.

**14.16** It is therefore necessary to attract investment into these areas, as this will drive higher growth sectors which typically develop better environmental

quality. To this end, the Council will continue to encourage the regeneration of these areas and will prepare master plans for Manor Trading Estate and West Canvey to promote this investment, both in industrial and commercial floorspace, but also in public realm and residential development that will drive up the investment proposition.

**14.17** In providing new premises in these areas, they need to be designed to maintain a flexible employment land supply generally falling within the Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g) of the Use Classes Order. These units need to provide the ability to be used flexibly. This is important because the needs of businesses change, both as technology changes, and businesses grow. Providing flexibility in the supply of business premises acts to attract investment into the Borough, and encourages indigenous businesses to stay in the Borough as they grow. Other 'sui generis' uses of a similar employment nature for waste uses will also be considered due to not fitting under a specific use class in accordance with Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

**14.18** Different types of employment use have different types of job densities. Strategic Employment Area generally provides a location for lower density, more capital-intensive employment uses such as industrial and warehousing to be carried out. There are obvious benefits to increasing the density of operation on these assets; higher job numbers on these sites supports the local economy directly by increasing local jobs, as well as indirectly supporting nearby town centres. It also makes the best use of land and improves the investment proposition.

**14.19** Density improvements are therefore supported at Strategic Employment Areas. These should not however be pursued at the expense of the operation of existing industrial and warehousing uses. It is imperative that the continued use of the land for viable industrial and warehousing uses is protected, but development that can achieve increases in job density while ensuring ongoing industrial occupancy, such as upwards expansion of units, is supported.

**14.20** Smaller units have the potential to support indigenous business growth in the Borough. Businesses need space throughout their life cycle, a space to start, a space to grow, and a space to thrive. The delivery of specific start-up facilities to support indigenous business growth is appropriate in these locations.

**14.21** Improving the environment of Strategic Employment Areas will make Castle Point a more attractive location for businesses to invest, and a more pleasant place for people to work. Improvements to the local environment will in time help drive greater investment, economic intensity, and productivity within the Borough.

**14.22** Improvements can include both the premises, and the land around them. The land around employment buildings can be improved by working with partners to deliver improvements to the quality of public space within employment areas in Castle Point. Some improvements have already been made. New gateways and signage has already been delivered at Charfleets Industrial Estate and Manor Trading Estate. However, there remains an issue with the quality of the private realm in these areas.

**14.23** Businesses require high quality connections to secure the movement of goods and resources to and from their premises. Access between these sites and the Strategic Road Network is particularly important, as is managing the impacts of “last mile” connection from major roads to the sites themselves. Development that supports these movements, both on, and off-site are welcomed, and will where appropriate be included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**14.24** Employment sites are significant destinations for peak-time journeys. Improvement of access for those travelling by well-connected active and sustainable travel modes benefits both capital and labour by increasing travel choice and providing opportunities for workers to choose to engage in active travel.

**14.25** Employment sites have a range of users, with a range of needs. It is appropriate that some complementary services are provided within them. These will help to build a thriving local ecosystem and reduce unnecessary trips away from them during the day. Uses falling outside Use Classes B2, B8 or E(g) of the Use Classes Order can be supported where it can be demonstrated that the ongoing operation of existing businesses nearby will not be adversely affected, and any amenity impacts on the proposals from those existing businesses can be suitably mitigated.

**14.26** It must be demonstrated that the location of the use within an employment area will not undermine the vitality or viability of local town centres or local shopping parades. An Impact Assessment will be required

for any proposal that takes the overall town centre floorspace (excluding offices) over 1,500m<sup>2</sup> within a site.

**14.27** In addition to the main Strategic Employment Area sites, the gas and oil receptor storage facilities at South Canvey are key industrial assets in the Borough.

**14.28** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of any new development at SEL4 (South Canvey Port Facilities), West Canvey and Canvey Town Centre to avoid any adverse effects on integrity of nearby Habitats sites or functionally linked land.

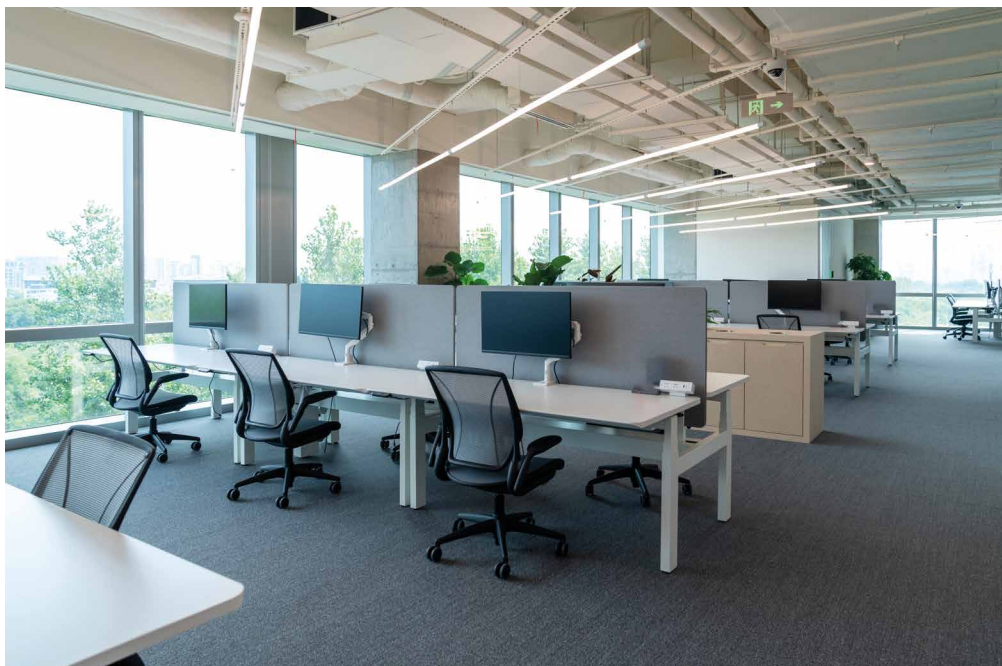




### Policy E2- Development of New Employment Floorspace in and around Town Centres

Development that provides new employment floorspace within use Class E or F within and around the Borough's town and local centres will be supported. This will be achieved by:

1. Allocating mixed-use development sites, as set out in this Plan;
2. Proposals for major developments within a 400m walking catchment of town centres, as defined on the [Policies Map](#), will be expected to deliver new employment floorspace; and
3. Development that results in the potential net loss of employment floorspace or jobs within town centres will not be supported.



## Reasoned Justification

**14.29** Office floorspace in Castle Point is around 6% of total employment floorspace, compared to 11% across Essex, and 15% England-wide. The office market in Castle Point is under-developed and is unlikely to feature as a preferred destination for non-indigenous businesses. There is a need to develop this market over time to provide the range of accommodation required to support a diverse local economy.

**14.30** The Council will seek to deliver new, flexible floorspaces that can be used by a wide range of knowledge-based businesses and organisations. This will include small business units and specific start-up facilities which will support indigenous business growth. Over time this growth may mean that the economic profile of the Borough changes, and larger office developments become viable. Many sites within town centres contain existing employment floorspace, and this policy seeks to retain employment levels on sites to ensure employment levels within the centre are not reduced.

**14.31** Priority may be given to securing high quality new ground floor town centre uses (including workspace and offices) before retaining employment floorspace levels on individual sites. Consideration will be given to the layout of town centre workspace, its flexibility to accommodate a range of types of employment, including accommodating creative industries that will help to support town centre vibrancy.

**14.32** Within town centres, the most appropriate location for employment space may be above active ground floor uses. This offers the opportunity to shelter new homes from noise disturbance from uses which may open into the evening.

**14.33** By delivering new knowledge-based floorspace in and around town centres, this policy ensures that local business needs are catered for, and active and sustainable access to jobs is attractive to workers. It provides a flexible and affordable supply of commercial floorspace to respond to emerging demand from new sectors and businesses, ensuring that Castle Point provides opportunities for economic investment.

**14.34** The increasing trend to work from and/or near home also offers opportunities to secure investment into the Borough's town centres and

help to establish more active and sustainable travel patterns. New floorspace that supports residents being able to make the choice to work near their homes will be supported.

**14.35** Sites located in edge-of-centre locations offer opportunities to provide new employment floorspace. These premises will serve to gently increase job density in and around the Borough's town centres. The Castle Point Plan Viability Assessment 2024 has identified that purpose-built new office developments in town centres are not generally viable, but that a portion of office within a residential-led scheme can be. All new major development sites within a 400m walking distance of town centres should provide employment floorspace on the ground floor of the new development.

**14.36** This new floorspace should be designed to provide a separate access to the residential uses. Live/work is not generally supported as there are wide ranging precedents of the workspace within these uses becoming residential over time.

## Development of Local Skills

### Policy E3 - Development of Local Skills

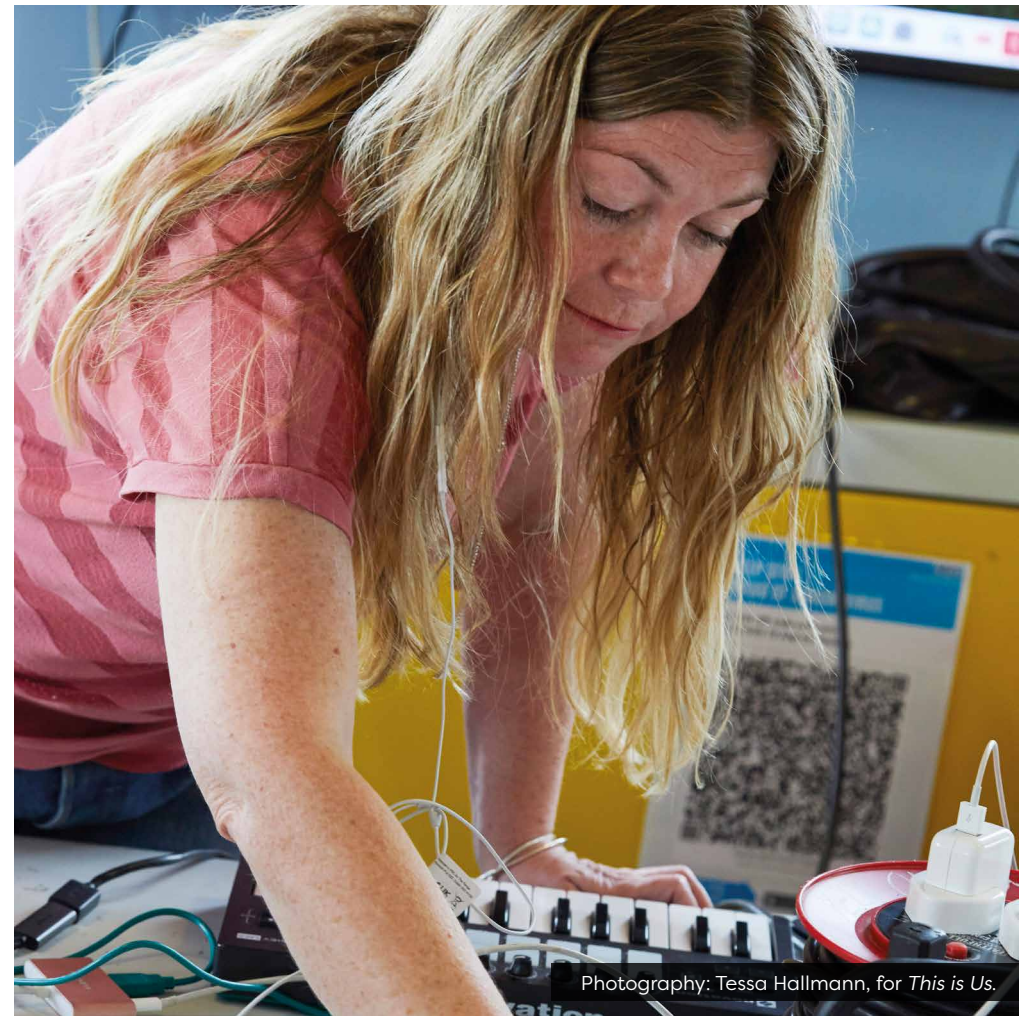
To ensure that this Plan contributes towards improvements in economic productivity over the Plan period, it will:

1. Require major developments to be supported by education and skills plans that demonstrate how local training and employment opportunities will be delivered by the development during the construction phase. These will be secured as part of the S106 Agreement.
2. Secure as part of the S106 Agreement for any major development contributions towards education, skills and economic development programmes that ensure that end users (businesses and residents) have access to initiatives that support productivity.
3. Support the development of post 16 education and skills training infrastructure, especially where it aligns to the needs of local businesses and key growth sectors.

## Reasoned Justification

**14.37** Castle Point sits within an area of significant economic opportunity, but local workers are not earning either the regional or national average wage. The consequence of this is poor productivity. The gross value added (GVA) in Castle Point is low, sitting at around half that achieved in Basildon.

**14.38** Due to low local wages, many of Castle Point's residents commute out of the Borough for work. 19% commute to London, whilst 12.7% and 14.7% commute to the local centres of Basildon and Southend-on-Sea respectively.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.



**14.39** At 23.9% Castle Point has one of the highest proportions of people without qualifications in the Country. At 18.5% it has the lowest proportion of people with a degree or higher in Essex. This relative lack of skills combined with low local wages means that the most skilled people are most likely to commute out the Borough for work, further exacerbating the productivity issue.

**14.40** To break this cycle and improve productivity in Castle Point it is appropriate through this Plan to put in place measures that support the ability of residents to access good quality, higher paying jobs across South Essex, and create the conditions in Castle Point where those people can work or set up businesses locally.

**14.41** Employment and Skills plans and financial contributions towards employment and skills training is set out in the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. This should include maximising apprenticeship and training opportunities (such as school/college engagement, and work experience) arising from new developments, and the direct delivery of skills and employability programmes. The Council and ECC can support in both identifying the skills and employment needs in an area and in calculating the appropriate contributions. The plans will be secured through S106 agreements with a requirement to cover the Council's costs associated with the monitoring of the plans.

**14.42** On top of this, the ambition of partners working across Castle Point and across South Essex is to develop interventions related to education and skills provision that will ensure that there is greater alignment between the needs of local businesses and the training on offer.

**14.43** This includes new investment in training for advanced engineering, healthcare, logistics and digital media within the sub-region with specialist advanced engineering opportunities at USP (SEEVIC) college in Thundersley.

**14.44** Meanwhile the XTEND Campus on Canvey has developed into a digital hub with scope to broaden its range of activities. Work is underway to secure a permanent 4-classroom Adult Education facility on Canvey Island within the Plan period. To ensure those previously left behind can participate in and benefit from local economic growth.

## Culture and Tourism

### Policy E4 - Culture and Tourism

- 1. To attract visitors to Castle Point and support economic growth in tourism, development that can be demonstrated to support sustainable growth in the cultural and tourism sectors within the Borough will be supported, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies in this Plan.**
- 2. The loss of, or harm to, facilities and uses that make a strong contribution to the cultural or tourist sectors will not be supported.**

### Reasoned Justification

**14.45** Tourism is an important part of the Borough's economy, contributing over £100m annually. Tourism consists of day trips as well as overnight stays, and ensuring the sector is as strong as possible not only contributes to the local economy, but also helps residents to make shorter journeys to access leisure facilities, but also helps them to express pride in their local area.

**14.46** The Borough has several tourist attractions including Canvey Seafront and Hadleigh Castle and Country Park, including the 2012 Olympics Cycling track. Tourism is an excellent way of securing investment into the local economy to support local jobs and ensure that local assets remain viable into the future. In 2022 tourism accounted for a direct visitor spend in the Borough of approximately £80m, supporting an estimated 1,568 jobs.

**14.47** Specific assets that could be improved include the Canvey tidal sea pools, entertainment area on the Esplanade, Canvey market, Hadleigh Town Centre and Hadleigh Castle & Country Park. There are also opportunities to link the food and beverage opportunities in South Benfleet to walking/hiking opportunities through and to Hadleigh and Thundersley.

**14.48** Cultural assets are a key component of the tourism offer in Castle Point and are also the foundation of the creative sector. The creative sector is in its early stages of growth in the Borough, but has been stimulated by the Estuary

Festival 2025, which is using Castle Point as a base. It is anticipated that the creative sectors in Castle Point will continue to grow in Castle Point over the Plan period, and therefore it is critical that cultural assets that it relies on are protected and enhanced.

**14.49** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of any project aimed at attracting large visitor numbers to avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of nearby Habitats sites or functionally linked land.





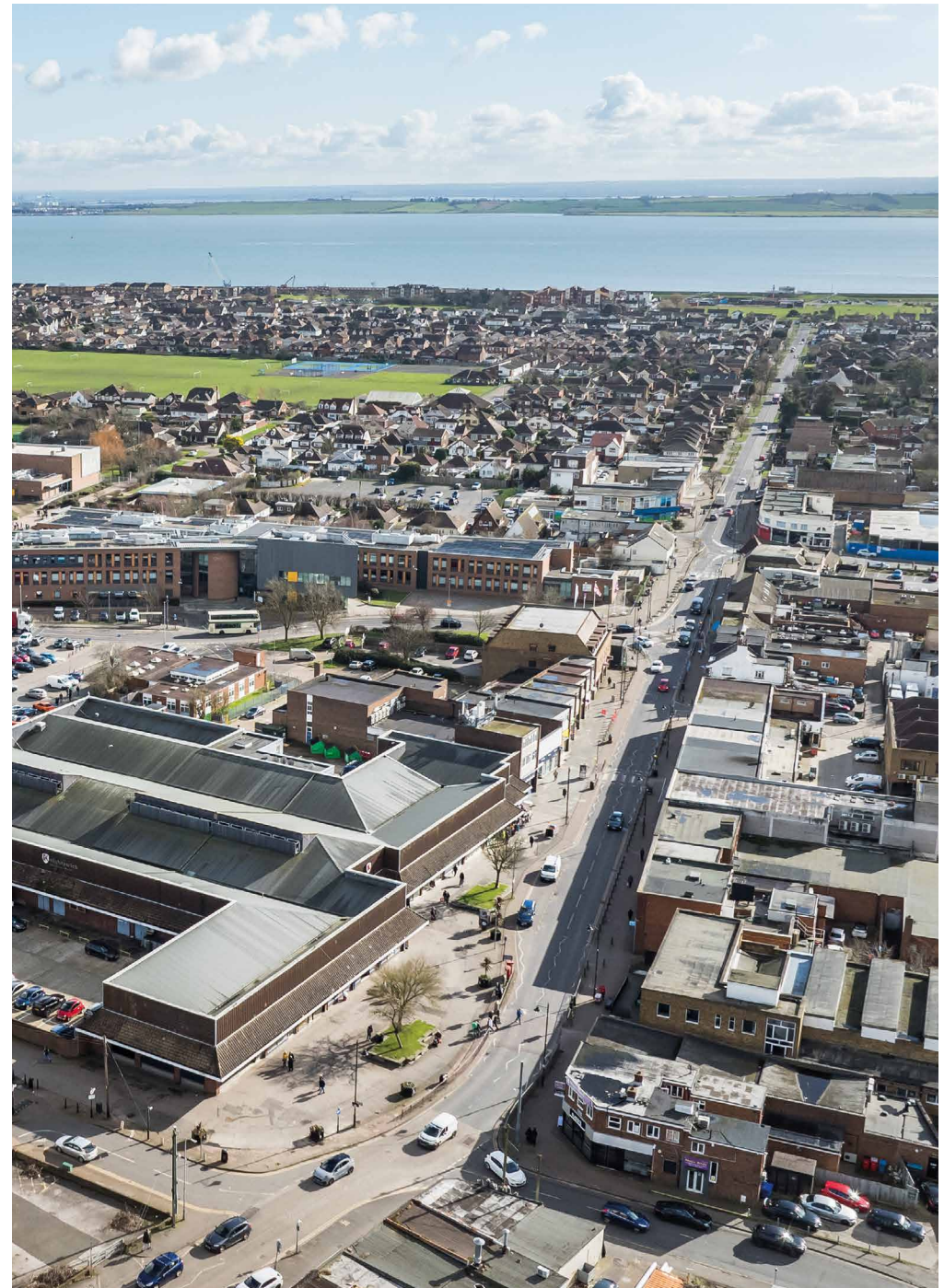
## 15. Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres and Supporting Local Retail Services

### Castle Point Retail and Town Centres Context

**15.1** Castle Point's retail centres are generally reasonably buoyant and well placed to serve our local population. Vacancy rates are low compared to national averages. Nonetheless, there are challenges. Nationally, retail sales have been declining over the last few years with a steady growth in on-line shopping at the expense of 'High Street' shops.

**15.2** Castle Point's retail provision is focused in four main settlements of Canvey Island, Hadleigh, South Benfleet and Tarpots alongside a network of smaller centres and out-of-centre retail parks.

- Canvey Island is the largest town in Castle Point and contains the largest amount of retail floorspace, has over 120 stores and is anchored by the Knightswick Centre.
- Hadleigh has a high proportion of convenience floorspace due to the presence of three large national food stores.
- South Benfleet contains a relatively large proportion of comparison floorspace and relatively strong food and drink offer. It has wide range of more independent stores and a lower proportion of national multiple retailers.
- Tarpots is the smallest of the centres in Castle Point and contains a large proportion of convenience floorspace. It has a lower proportion of national multiple retailers.
- There are currently two out-of-centre retail parks (Canvey and Rayleigh Weir) in Castle Point providing a mix of convenience and comparison goods, e.g. clothing and footwear, small household items, DIY, furniture, and large household appliances.



### Policy TC1 - Town Centres and Primary Shopping Areas

1. The Council will promote through its planning policies and proposals, the continued strengthening of the following centres in their varied role and functions to positively contribute towards the viability, vitality, character and structure:
  - a. Canvey Island
  - b. Hadleigh
  - c. South Benfleet
  - d. Tarpots
2. A town centre boundary and a primary shopping area is defined for each town centre on the [Policies Map](#), and in [Appendix F](#).
3. The Primary Shopping Area is the focus for retail and other main town centre uses falling within Use Class E. Loss of such uses on the ground floor active frontages will be resisted.
4. Within the town centre but outside the primary shopping area, development that creates a wide range of town centre uses, increases activity within the centre, and supports the evening economy will be supported.
5. Mixed use development, including residential on upper floors, will be supported within the town centres. These should have a ground floor town centre use (retail, commercial, service, community or employment), with an active frontage onto the street. A separate access from the ground floor should be maintained or created, a separate recycling and waste store provided, and the residential use should not prejudice the viability of the ground floor use.
6. Development that enhances town centres for visitors will be supported, including food and drink uses which extend the operational time of the centre into the evening.

7. Outside of designated town centres, new development falling within Use Class E will be permitted if the following criteria can be met:
  - a. A sequential test has been applied, and it has been robustly demonstrated that the proposed development cannot reasonably be accommodated within a town centre or local shopping parade, or within an existing out of centre shopping area, and;
  - b. The proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town centres in Castle Point. An impact assessment will be required for proposals of 1,500m<sup>2</sup> in size or greater, as set out in policy TC3.





## Reasoned Justification

**15.3** Town centres play a key role at the heart of local communities and consistent with the NPPF this Plan takes a positive approach to their growth and change.

**15.4** There are four town centres in Castle Point supported by several local parades. These town centres fulfill a district centre role mainly focused on convenience shopping, leisure and public and community services.

**15.5** Town centres across the United Kingdom are going through a period of significant change. Driven by competition from on-line sales and large number of store closures, the function of town centres, based on their retail offer, is being tested. Increasingly, town centres are having to be redefined and adapted to support a greater diversification of uses to boost visitor numbers and footfall, dwell time and spend. This has led to a shift from a retail focus of planning policies to a more adaptable approach which promotes town centres as places to live, and increasingly, for work.

**15.6** Whilst retaining their retail function it is vital to maintain town centres as a place to visit and provide identity to an area, policies in this Plan aim to focus retail development to the core of town centres but diversify elsewhere if new development contributes to the overall vitality and diversity of the town centre. This provides the scope for the Borough's town centres to adapt whilst maintaining a clearly defined core retail function.

**15.7** The South Essex Retail Study 2017 considered the need for retail provision in Castle Point, as well as other types of leisure and commercial needs. The study indicates that demand for additional convenience goods expenditure will come from population increase and does not indicate a requirement for additional retail provision beyond existing town centres, and the out of centre shopping areas already identified.

**15.8** It found that town centres in Castle Point perform a local function, with larger centres in Basildon and Southend acting as key hubs for retail and leisure provision in South Essex. Additionally, Lakeside Shopping Centre and Retail Park, as well as retail parks in Basildon, are within reasonable commutable distance of Castle Point and are key retail investment priorities for many of the major retail chains. Consequently, there is significant leakage

of comparison (non-food) retail spend from Castle Point. Only 14% of comparison retail spend is retained within the Borough.



**15.9** Due to the increase of online shopping and a change in consumer habits, town centres now have a reduced demand for traditional retail space. Commercial leisure such as cafes, bars, restaurants, health and fitness, children's play areas, personal services and cinemas will constitute a growing share of town centre floorspace. Many retailers have reduced their numbers of smaller less profitable stores, generally found in small-medium sized towns such as Hadleigh and Canvey town centres and focus on larger centres like Southend and Basildon. Nonetheless, there are limited vacant premises in Castle Point's town centres due to a vibrant independent scene.

**15.10** Castle Point is well provided for in terms of supermarkets. Consequently, 74% of convenience (food shopping) spending is retained within the Borough. There is also an inflow of convenience expenditure into Castle Point from neighbouring authorities to out-of-centre food stores located in the northern part of the Borough.

**15.11** Within the South Essex area, Castle Point experiences the highest amount of expenditure leakage at 60% for the food and drink sector. This highlights the lack of provision within the Borough compared to surrounding areas. Due to this level of leakage there is an opportunity for Castle Point to increase their food and drink offer to retain expenditure. In the recreation sector, Castle Point also experiences a high level of expenditure leakage at 64%. The Castle Point Plan supports this by encouraging more premises to remain open into the evening.

**15.12** South Benfleet Leisure Quarter and Canvey Seafront also offer opportunities to strengthen leisure uses in the Borough, and policies covering these areas can be found in the relevant area chapters.

**15.13** To support town centres, the NPPF is clear that retail and other forms of town centre commercial developments should be located according to a sequential test and out of centre locations should only be considered if suitable sites in the town centre are not available, or not expected to become available, within a reasonable period. If a proposal cannot be located within a town centre, the impact of locating a proposal outside of a town centre must be assessed against and must not have an adverse impact on town centre vitality and viability.

**15.14** The NPPF establishes a threshold for the requirement of impact assessments at 2,500m<sup>2</sup>. When considered against the size of the town centres in Castle Point, this is not appropriate. Canvey Island has the greatest amount of floorspace with approximately 12,000m<sup>2</sup>, Hadleigh has approximately 7,000m<sup>2</sup>, Tarpots 2,500m<sup>2</sup> and South Benfleet has 1,500m<sup>2</sup>.

**15.15** An impact assessment threshold of 2,500m<sup>2</sup> is not appropriate, as it is greater than the total floorspace for one of the Borough's town centres, equivalent to the total floorspace in a second centre, and is equivalent to 35% of a third centre.

**15.16** Out of centre retail, leisure and office developments smaller than 2,500m<sup>2</sup> are therefore likely to have a significant impact on the vitality and viability of local town centres due to their relative size. A more appropriate threshold for Castle Point would therefore be 1,500m<sup>2</sup>, which is no greater than any of the local town centres total floorspace but is nonetheless of a sufficient size to ensure that small business development is not unnecessarily affected by the requirement for an impact assessment.



### Policy TC2 - Local Shopping Parades

1. There are 21 Local Shopping Parades located in the Borough, as set out on the [Policies Map](#), and in [Appendix G](#).
2. Proposals for uses falling within Use Class E of the Use Classes Order will normally be permitted at ground floor level within local shopping parades. Active frontages onto the street will be required.
3. Loss of existing Class E uses at ground floor level will generally be resisted, unless demonstrably unviable, or to be suitably replaced as part of a wider development scheme.
4. The change of use to residential or employment uses on the upper floors will normally be permitted subject to residential amenity, access and car parking and this does not prejudice the viability of the ground floor use.
5. New Local Shopping Parades will be developed as part of larger developments, including the developments at Kiln Road Campus (Policy Thun2).
6. Each local shopping parade will contain a convenience retail unit. The loss of a solitary convenience retail use on a shopping parade will be resisted.

### Reasoned Justification

**15.17** To achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, it is important to provide local shops and services where people live. This also reduce the need to travel. This is consistent with the aims of national planning policy.

**15.18** Local shopping parades perform a vital role in providing local services. They are generally within walking distance of residential areas which they serve and are well used.

**15.19** This policy seeks to ensure their continued availability to meet local needs, while encouraging development that supports growth above and behind shopping frontages to create floorspace for new homes and employment on upper floors, which will increase the vitality of businesses on the parades.

**15.20** Some individual parades may be subject to master planning as part of wider redevelopment intensification schemes. This exercise will seek to retain viable retail businesses.

**15.21** To support local access to everyday shopping needs, all local shopping parades will be expected to contain a convenience retail unit. This will be required to be designed into any new shopping parades on mixed use allocations. Any development proposing change of use or demolition resulting in the removal of the only convenience retail unit on a shopping parade will be refused. An Article 4 Direction may be used to protect the last convenience shop in a parade.

**15.22** To ensure that residents living in new developments have access to local shops and services, new parades will be created at the Kiln Road Campus site, as specified in Policy Thun2.



### Policy TC3 – Retail Parks and Out of Centre Locations

1. The following Out of Centre Retail Parks are defined on the Policies Map at:
  - a. Rayleigh Weir, Thundersley
  - b. West Canvey
2. On Retail Parks and out of centre locations, applications for town centre uses should be subject to the sequential test demonstrating that there are no suitable sites in town centres or edge of centre locations, demonstrating flexibility on format and scale.
3. On Retail Parks, as defined on the [Policies Map](#), development that enhances the stock of uses within Use Classes E and F, and compatible sui generis uses and have limited impact on amenity and neighbouring uses will be permitted.
4. Regeneration of Retail Parks will be supported where it makes more intensive use of the site, subject to part 2 of the policy.
5. An impact assessment will be required for proposals of 1,500m<sup>2</sup> or greater, consistent with the requirements of policy TC1.

### Reasoned Justification

**15.23** There are two out of centre shopping areas in Castle Point at Rayleigh Weir, and Canvey Retail Park, West Canvey. Both sites provide a high proportion of convenience retail spend in the Borough.

**15.24** A significant number of the comparison retail units in the area comprise bulky goods such as furniture and DIY, which are not always suited to town centre sites. However, policy requires application of the sequential test, in accordance with the NPPF, to ensure that out of town developments do not harm and undermine the important community service role of town centres.

**15.25** Rayleigh Weir, located on the Borough's northern boundary attracts residents from outside of the Borough, particularly from Rayleigh which is proximate to the north.

**15.26** Canvey Retail Park serves an important role in ensuring Canvey Island residents have access to a wide range of retailers on Canvey, although it serves a more car-borne customer base, relative to town centre shopping locations.

**15.27** As set out in Policy TC1 and TC3, new retail development should be focused in town centres. The Council acknowledges that both the Rayleigh Weir and Canvey Retail Parks play a role in meeting the retail needs of the Borough. They provide employment and support a supply chain network.

**15.28** Retail trends are continuing to change, as on-line ordering and delivery become more prevalent. Retail Parks will need to change to adapt to this. At present the sites contain significant surface parking levels, and if shopping trends change, they may become suitable sites for regeneration. A specific policy in this regard is set out for West Canvey.

### Protecting Local Shops

#### Policy TC4 – Protecting Local Shops

1. Individual convenience retail shops more than 800m from a town centre or local shopping parade will be protected.

### Reasoned Justification

**15.29** Individual shops located away from town centres and local parades provide an important day-to-day service for local residents. They provide an ultra-local service, providing quick and convenient everyday essentials without needing to travel long distances unnecessarily.

**15.30** As such, these shops are complementary to the higher-order uses found in town centres. Where these uses are not within a ten-minute walk (approximately 800m) of a town centre or local shopping parade they are considered to be essential and will be protected. An Article 4 Direction may be used to protect such essential shops.



### Policy TC5 – Hot Food Takeaways and Fast Food Outlets

1. New hot food takeaways or fast food outlets will only be permitted in town centres, local shopping parades or in out of centre retail parks, and only where the following conditions are met:
  - a. The location is over 400m away from the nearest school entrance; and
  - b. A Health Impact Assessment of the proposal has been undertaken (in accordance with policy Infra3), and measures identified to limit the impact of the proposal on obesity levels within the local community and create a healthy food environment have been incorporated within the proposal; and
  - c. It is within a town centre and no more than 10% of the existing units are hot food takeaways or fast food outlets; or
  - d. It is within a local shopping parade and no more than 15% of the existing units (or more than one unit in a parade) are hot food takeaways or fast food outlets, or It is within an out of centre retail park and no more than 25% of the existing units are hot food takeaways or fast food outlets.
2. Development that will create trips associated with deliveries of hot food should set out how issues associated with delivery activity will be appropriately mitigated.
3. The Council will work in collaboration with partners, including Public Health, to avoid a concentration of fast food takeaways, where the number of outlets would be likely to harm public health objectives, particularly in deprived communities, local areas of poor health and near schools.



## Reasoned Justification

**15.31** In seeking to encourage a broader food and drink offer, it is important that we create a healthy food environment in our town centres and local communities. The national Obesity Strategy highlights that eating out can contribute towards obesity through the consumption of more calories. Takeaways and promotions in food stores can also add to the number of calories consumed.

**15.32** This is significant in Castle Point where obesity levels are higher than the national average. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the mix of uses, and the way in which buildings and spaces in town centres are designed promote active lifestyles and a healthy food environment. Health Impact Assessments are a useful tool in ensuring that the wellbeing of the community is considered as part of the design process, and will be required to ensure that proposals for development selling foodstuffs contribute to the creation of a healthy food environment.

**15.33** Hot food takeaways are now a common feature of town centres, high streets, and local centres because they fulfil an increasing demand for instant food access and convenience. Traditionally, hot food takeaways (sui generis use class) differ in purpose from restaurants or cafés (use class E(b)), however, some businesses classified as restaurants also offer takeaway services. This is the case for many fast food restaurants, and for many restaurants serving Indian or Chinese style cuisine. This increased proliferation of hot food takeaways over recent decades is reducing the diversity of retail offer, as well as having significant influence over food consumption patterns.

**15.34** Whilst local shopping parades are a sustainable location for hot food takeaways because they are close to where people live, there are, in some instances where the number of takeaways in such parades dominates use class E(a) shopping provision, reducing the diversity of local retail available. Mapping shows that there is a proliferation of such uses across many of the local parades in Castle Point, as well as in town centre locations.

**15.35** The delivery of hot food has become more popular through the introduction of services such as Uber Eats and Deliveroo. Although these can sometimes be delivered via cyclists, there are a number of deliveries being

made via motorised vehicles. This has the potential to create parking issues surrounding the hot food takeaway or restaurant. Developments that will include the delivery of hot food, will need to demonstrate how this and any other issues associated with the trips generated from delivering hot food, will be mitigated as part of the proposal.

**15.36** The Essex Healthy Weight Strategy prioritises addressing factors that influence the food environment, ensuring that the environment in Essex supports and enables people to maintain a healthy weight and minimises the risks of excess weight. Some focus areas include healthy food and drink advertising policies and how new developments can support healthier food provision. Promoting access to healthy and locally sourced food, providing communal and individual food growing opportunities, ensuring provision and access to local food shops, limiting access to hot food takeaways (e.g. limits on distances from schools or limits on the proportion within town and city centres) are recognised as planning measures that can enable residents to live healthier lives.

**15.37** Therefore, the proliferation of hot food takeaway provision in Castle Point is not only affecting the diversity of retail offer in Castle Point, but also contributing towards poor health amongst the resident population. There is therefore a clear basis for seeking to limit further increases in the provision of hot food takeaways in Castle Point. In particular, policies restricting children's access to takeaway shops can, amongst other measures, act to discourage unhealthy eating and seek to stop the rising levels of obesity in the Borough.

**15.38** The NPPF supports the restriction of hot food takeaways and fast food outlets around schools. Children are increasingly more vulnerable to obesity than adults. Whilst there is a range of reasons – poor diet at home, lack of exercise or sedentary lifestyles – the access to fast food takeaways is of concern. Restricting access close to schools will assist to discourage children from unhealthy eating and assist in controlling obesity.



## 16. Achieving Well Designed Places

### Castle Point Design Context

**16.1** Although Castle Point has seen much growth in relatively recent history, the Borough is also rich in heritage assets. Valuable historic buildings and landscapes are protected by local policies. Whilst heritage assets are distributed throughout the Borough, there is a large concentration of listed buildings in the High Street in South Benfleet. This area was designated as the South Benfleet Conservation Area in 1988, and benefits from a Conservation Area Management Plan. Florence Gardens has also been designated as a Conservation Area, taking into account the design, layout, and uniformity of cottages in the area.

**16.2** Essex County Council's Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) database holds records for other significant archaeological finds in Castle Point. The records indicate finds dating back to the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic eras, as well as from Anglo Saxons, Romans, and Vikings. More recent finds relate to Medieval times and World War Two structures.

**16.3** The challenge for the Borough will be sustainably accommodating growth in high quality designs that does not compromise the existing character and heritage.

**16.4** This Plan takes an urban-first approach to meeting development needs. Urban land is a limited, and therefore valuable commodity in Castle Point and great care needs to be taken to make the best use of it. To this end, all brownfield development will be expected to optimise, and not underutilise development densities whilst responding to the existing character and heritage.

**16.5** Castle Point is made up of four main towns, each with opportunities for development and renewal. The types, number, and sizes of site vary significantly between each settlement, and the most appropriate way to manage new development in each area is set out in the specific area chapters of this Plan.





**16.6** By setting out development opportunities in a place-based fashion, it is expected that new development will come forward respecting its local environment, complementary uses and building typologies. This will avoid a “one size fits all” approach to urban regeneration in the Borough.

**16.7** Some parts of the Borough are more sustainable than other parts. The town centres provide generally better access to services, jobs and public transport than in suburban areas. It is these areas where development and change will be focused through this Plan, and these locations will be looked upon more favourably for higher density development. [Appendix D](#) sets out areas in which there may be a “sustainability premium”, and more ambitious developments will be expected in these areas.

**16.8** Away from areas with a sustainability premium and large allocations, there will continue to be change as small sites are redeveloped to better serve the needs of residents, businesses, and service providers. It is not possible to allocate all development over a 20-year plan, so a policy basis has been provided to enable a design code to be developed that provides clear guidance on how these sites can come forward to successfully contribute to the quality of Castle Point.

**16.9** The Castle Point Design Code has informed how the following policies in this Chapter will be implemented. Further guidance on a broad range of design matters can also be found in the Essex Design Guide, which supports the delivery of high-quality development that meets the needs of existing and future communities in Essex. Development proposals should also have regard to the Essex Design Guide and supplementary guidance.





### Policy D1 – Design Objectives

All new development should be designed to a high standard, having regard to the most up to date design guidance or design code for the site or its location, contributing to meeting the following design objectives:

- a. Ensure scale, massing and appearance of the development provides a high quality, sustainable design and layout that enhance the local character.
- b. Consideration of existing size and rhythm of plots.
- c. Consideration of existing pattern of spaces around dwellings.
- d. Maintain where possible existing building lines, including existing roof patterns.
- e. Maximise active frontages particularly for corner buildings, to provide an adequate level of passive surveillance.
- f. Protect neighbouring occupants' amenity.
- g. Provide usable on site amenity space for new occupants including, safe play spaces for children.
- h. Provide and enhance existing and new safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes within the site and connecting to the wider area where possible.
- i. Ensure materials and detailing are informed by surrounding character.
- j. Provide clearly define public and private areas.
- k. Integrate sustainable design requirements.
- l. Provide adequate and appropriately designed waste management facilities.

- m. Ensure all new homes are delivered to nationally described space standards.
- n. Ensure opportunities to design out crime are taken.
- o. Ensure opportunities for accessible and inclusive design are taken, taking into account the needs of different cultures and genders.



## Reasoned Justification

**16.10** The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) explains that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

**16.11** In commencing work on a design code for Castle Point, a context appraisal has been undertaken. This has identified the urban areas as being dominated by residential development, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, chalets and bungalows, interspersed with two, three and four storey blocks of flats, creating a mixed character across the Borough.

**16.12** Other built development within the Borough consists of commercial development in shopping areas, including town centres, and local shopping parades and employment areas.

**16.13** There are also community and leisure facilities within the Borough, together with development located along the seafront. The buildings contained within these areas are typically characteristic of such areas and form an eclectic mix of old and new structures, ranging in height, size and materials. Some of these areas exhibit good design principles and create high quality environments, however many are inappropriately designed and have poor quality environments.

**16.14** There is also residential and non-residential development located outside of the built-up area, which varies considerably in terms of its design and quality.

**16.15** Overall, the Borough's public realm is of an acceptable quality for the most part, however, there are clear opportunities to improve it and ensure that it is of a high quality. Town centre and employment area redevelopment is likely to occur in phases and over several years as funding becomes available, and it is important to ensure that a coordinated approach to the public realm is taken at that time.

**16.16** Whilst there is no discernible character or identity to the Borough, there are a number of groupings of dwellings which exhibit the same design and/or

pattern of layout, such as roofscapes, fenestration, front projections, detailing and materials, and open plan estates. These form small distinct and attractive character areas.

**16.17** Most of these dwellings are constructed of traditional materials. The properties of more modern design and materials stand out against the extensive backdrop of traditional dwellings.

**16.18** Many of the dwellings have been extended, adding interest in some places and discord in others. Whilst many are sympathetic to the original dwelling and its surroundings, there are equally many which create unattractive features which detract from the street scene.

**16.19** Both larger and smaller developments have the potential to enhance the character of their local areas, but it is expected that larger developments will have more significant impacts, and as such will need to be especially carefully designed.

**16.20** Plot sizes vary across the Borough, but generally have more rhythm on individual streets. New development is encouraged to maintain local rhythm. Larger sites may involve the merging of two or more plots into a single new plot or be located at the end of a street. On these sites the absolute rhythm and pattern of plot sizes cannot be enforced, but through sensitive design, larger sites can respond to local context.

**16.21** Space around individual dwellings, as well as around buildings containing residential development, such as flats, and sheltered and care accommodation, serves to provide a setting and ensures that they do not dominate their neighbours or create obtrusive or unattractive features in the street scene. Such space can also provide a buffer from the activities of neighbouring public areas, such as the street or parking or servicing areas, as well as from neighbouring developments.

**16.22** Different areas may have varied densities and layouts of development, which is often reflected in the amount of space provided around dwellings. As a result, flexibility is required to ensure all types of development are provided with appropriate space around them, informed by their context. Town centre or Conservation Area locations often have a far tighter urban grain than a suburban area, and those areas outside the urban area are often characterised by much more spacious forms of development.



**16.23** Within existing built up areas it is important that the building line of a development is satisfactory and reflects the general characteristics of the street or area in which it is situated. Development which follows a continuous building line provides a level of continuity to the streetscape, and in certain instances creates distinct patterns of development. For larger development sites there is the opportunity to create a townscape character which will itself set the acceptable building lines for that form of development.

**16.24** Sites on the corner of two roads have particular prominence as they are visible from two different perspectives. As such, particular attention should be taken to the design of development on corner plots. Within the existing built up area development on corner plots should be informed by the prevailing character of the area and surrounding forms of development, however it must not repeat poor forms of development. For new large scale developments a different character can be created, marking the corner, however this must be accompanied by a robust design rationale.

**16.25** Adjoining developments can impact on one another by impacting on each other's amenity. This could, for example be due to loss of privacy, or noise disturbance. Minimum thresholds will act as a starting point to seek to ensure that developments do not make a significant impact on each other.

**16.26** It is important that amenity space is created in all new residential development to cater for some of the outdoor needs of residents. This can take the form of public amenity space, communal private amenity space, or private amenity space such as gardens or balconies depending on the size of the development.

**16.27** Apartment buildings should generally offer at least one secure, communal outside green space, as a ground-level courtyard, a raised podium or a roof terrace in addition to a balcony space. These spaces should be overlooked by residents; and be available and accessible to all occupants, including wheelchair users, regardless of tenure, and accessed via the cores. In exceptional circumstances, a reduction in ground-level amenity may be accepted.

**16.28** Developments have the potential to improve accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through. Promoting legibility through development helps to provide

recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around; and make faster journeys.

**16.29** Roof patterns play an important role in establishing the character of an area. Inappropriate roof development, or development of roof types that are not in keeping with the local area can be highly detrimental to the feel of an area. Where new development is higher density than surrounding sites, there may be elements of those which can inform the design of the new site.

**16.30** Castle Point has a range of existing material and detailing typologies at present. While these vary significantly over the Borough, individual streets are more consistent. New development should seek to be complementary. Where a site is large enough to create a new character, this should be complementary to the surrounding character.



**Policy D2 – Design on Larger Sites and within Premium Sustainability Areas**

- Higher densities and a range of uses will be sought in areas with premium sustainability.
- Premium sustainability areas are defined as:
  - Sites within 800m of a town centre or railway station; and
  - Sites within 400m of a bus stop.
- Sites of 10 or more dwellings (larger sites) located outside of premium sustainability locations, will also be required to demonstrate that they have sought to implement the Enhanced Design Objectives below.
- The following ‘Enhanced Design Objectives’ are expected on sites in areas with premium sustainability and on all larger sites (10 dwellings or more):
  - Optimise density whilst having regard to local character and appearances;
  - Provide communal and public amenity multi-functional spaces;
  - Enhance permeability and improve access to services in the local area by well connected active and sustainable modes;
  - Be of exemplary design, contributing to the evolution of local character.

Reasoned Justification

**16.31** Previously developed land and brownfield development sites in the Borough are limited, so it is important to make the best use of them to maximise their contribution to meeting local housing needs. However,

development of higher density will be required to respect the local appearance and character of the Borough, in accordance with Policy D1.

**16.32** As part of the SLAA, a review of recent planning permissions by area has been undertaken to understand average densities of existing developments. This has informed the target densities below which should be considered at an early stage in the design and master planning of sites. Not all schemes will be able to incorporate the target density. Densities will be design-led, but where they differ significantly from the target density, a clear justification will be required to accompany the application.

Area	Target Density (dph)
Neighbourhood Hub	150
Primary Corridor	125
Suburban Corridor	100
Estuary Edge	70
Natural Edge	70
Canvey Seafront	100

**16.33** Large sites have the potential to contribute to improving the character and appearance of the local area. This could be through creating a publicly accessible local open space or piece of public realm, or by contributing to the sustainability of the area by enhancing permeability or accessibility through well connected active and sustainable modes.

**16.34** The definition of premium sustainability areas has been informed by the accessibility mapping provided in [Appendix D](#). Sports England have also developed ‘[ten principles to inform active design](#)’ which identifies that to encourage more active modes of travel, residents should be able to access a number of facilities including shops, schools, community facilities, open spaces and sports facilities within 800m from their homes. These facilities are largely located within town centres.



### Policy D3 - Master Planning

1. Where this Plan requires the use of Master Plans for allocated sites, these will be approved by the Council in advance of the determination of any planning application. Where sites are in multiple ownership this will ensure that any individual parcels will not prejudice the future development of other parts of the site, adjoining land, or frustrate the delivery of the site allocation or wider area.
2. In preparing the Master Plan, the Council requires the applicant to demonstrate how they have engaged with and sought the views of relevant landowner(s), key stakeholders and the local community.

### Reasoned Justification

**16.35** National planning policy encourages the development of area based plans in order to improve the efficiency of land use, create beautiful sustainable places and to ensure effective early engagement in the plan making process.

**16.36** Master Plans set out the strategy for new development including the general scale, allowing for different options to be tested.

**16.37** Therefore, where proposals are supported by Master Plans in Castle Point there will be better outcomes in terms of land use efficiency, the quality of place and engagement and support for proposals.

**16.38** The Council will work with those promoting development, the local communities and infrastructure providers to ensure that Master Plans accurately reflect the policy requirements in this Plan but also local aspirations and preferences concerning layout, style, character and relationship to adjoining land uses.

**16.39** Where a site is too small for a Master Plan, a development or planning brief may be required to provide the framework for development including

clear guidance for design requirements and how the local community and key stakeholders should be engaged.

**16.40** The urban design objectives set out in Policies D1 and D2 should be considered in all developments to ensure attractive, functional, and quality places are developed. The most up to date design guidance for the location should also be considered.

**16.41** The Council will expect the promoters of those sites requiring master planning, to enter into voluntary Planning Performance Agreements (PPA), to cover matters such as master planning, the pre-application process and a timetable for key events and the nature of engagement with the Council and the community.

**16.42** An approved Master Plan must be in place for the relevant site allocation prior to the submission of any planning application and should set out the development principles and supporting evidence. The approved Master Plan will accord significant weight in the determination of any subsequent planning applications by the Council.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.

### Policy D4 - Landscaping

1. Where appropriate, development must provide hard and/or soft landscaping appropriate to and suitable for the location and type of development provided.
2. Pre-existing natural features, including hedgerows, ponds, streams, ditches should be retained and incorporated within the design scheme layout as far as possible.
3. Trees should form a key element of the landscaping of development, with existing trees retained wherever possible and new streets should be tree lined. The most appropriate tree should be planted within the development, compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.
4. Landscaping schemes will be expected to include:
  - a. Planting plans, identifying plant species, type, sizes, numbers, densities, planting regime and aftercare;
  - b. Native species, suitable to the location/surrounding habitat networks, climatic conditions, promoting biodiversity (including integrated habitats for a range of species), and be appropriate in respect of growth habits;
  - c. SuDS if required, to form an integral and multi-functional part of an attractive landscaping scheme, providing opportunities for a variety of habitats, biodiversity and public amenity. and
  - d. Measures that contribute towards reducing noise/air pollution and tackling climate change.
5. The maintenance and management of new landscaping areas will be secured through the use of appropriate planning conditions or planning obligations.
6. The Council will seek a co-ordinated comprehensive approach to public realm enhancements for the Borough, particularly within its town centres and employment areas. Development will need to demonstrate how it will contribute to the quality of the public realm.



Photography: Sally China, for *This is Us*.



## Reasoned Justification

**16.43** Good landscaping can complement and enhance a development, whilst if the quality of landscaping is poor, it can detract from a development, as well as the existing and surrounding area. Both examples can be found in the Borough. The Essex Design Guide emphasises the additional benefits landscaping can provide to an area; this includes creating an attractive place to live, encourages active lifestyles, enhances biodiversity; creates multi-functional area uses, and secures ecological benefits.

**16.44** Consideration of the location of any landscaping is important. Soft landscaping is often provided in narrow strips, evident in this Borough close to highway boundaries and within commercial car parking areas, and/or in areas with limited daylight/sunlight, such as between buildings. Such areas are not suitable environments for vegetation to thrive and survive. Furthermore, the appropriateness of the growth habits of vegetation in certain locations, both immediate and long term, is also an important consideration. A combination of hard and soft landscaping can aid in adding visual interest and providing versatility of use.

**16.45** Examples include the provision of fast-growing shrubs, although these would not be suitable in areas where visibility plays or natural surveillance is required; and evergreen trees are not normally suitable in more confined areas, where light may be limited or restricted. On the positive side, defensible planting, such as spiny or thorny species, can be both unusual and attractive features, as well as an aid in the security of a development.

**16.46** The selection of species is also of importance. Suitable native species should be the primary choice, particularly having regard to the potential ecological and biodiversity benefits. Consideration should also be given to climatic conditions, appropriate to relevant species. In Castle Point such considerations are particularly relevant for developments in proximity to the main roads and the coastline, and within areas at risk of flooding.

**16.47** There are sustainability benefits from the provision of soft landscaping. It can form an integral part of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) including multi-functional measures including green roofs on buildings and water features at individual buildings or running through larger sites. Development proposals should have regard to the guidance on the design and adoption

of SuDS in the published ECC Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex.

**16.48** In respect of hard landscaping, this succeeds when it is integrated into the public realm and complements the soft landscaping. If treated as an afterthought such features can be seen as obtrusive or alien. Hard landscaping is also more successful if it is maintained and safeguarded against anti-social behaviour, such as graffiti and vandalism.



Photography: Sally Chinae, for *This is Us*.

### Policy D5 - Advertisements

Where advertisement consent is required, such consent will be permitted if the proposal respects the interests of public safety and amenity, by meeting the following criteria:

- a. The size, design, materials and location of the advertisement respects the scale and character of the building, site or area on which it is displayed;
- b. The proposal would not result in proliferation of advertisements;
- c. Any illumination respects the impact on visual amenity, potential light pollution, character of the area and buildings and functional need; and
- d. The proposal does not have an adverse effect on highway safety.

### Reasoned Justification

**16.49** The NPPF highlights that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. Control over advertisements should be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. Most outdoor advertisements are within the control regime specified in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007. Some advertisements benefit from deemed consent, where certain criteria are met. Others require express consent because of their potential to impact on amenity and public safety.

**16.50** Guidance on whether express consent for advertisement is required can be found in the DCLG publication Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers (2007).

**16.51** There are many of the commercial properties within the Borough that are clearly identifiable by the advertisements attached to buildings and land; however, the quality of these is variable and some are poor and/or

inappropriate to their location. Furthermore, there is an issue with proliferation of advertisements in some locations, particularly around town centres and employment areas, which results in a cluttering of these streetscapes. There is therefore a need to consider applications for advertisements in terms of their individual design in relation to the local area, and in respect of any proliferation that might arise to manage the cumulative impact of advertisements across an area on amenity.

**16.52** Where the advertisements are illuminated this extends to impacts on amenity arising from light pollution. Illumination of signs may also dazzle drivers and will therefore be considered from a highway safety perspective also.





### Policy D6 - Residential Annexes

1. In the determination of any application for the provision of a residential annexe within the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse, either through extension, conversion or new build, the weight will be given to the following considerations:
  - a. Ancillary to the host dwellinghouse: The applicant will be required to demonstrate a clear functional connection with, and degree of dependency on, the host dwellinghouse.
  - b. Size: The proposed Annexe shall be subordinate in size and scale to the host dwellinghouse and shall demonstrate a level and scale of accommodation that can be justified for its intended users.
  - c. Design and Layout: The design of the Annexe shall be sympathetic to the locality and the Annexe shall not be sited in a manner likely to result in an unacceptable loss of parking or amenity space for the residents of the host dwellinghouse, or the privacy and amenity of adjoining residents. There shall be no demarcation or subdivision of the garden areas between the Annexe and the host dwellinghouse and access to the Annexe shall be shared access with the host dwelling.
2. Where consistent with the statutory tests for planning obligations, applicants will be required to enter into a S106 Agreement to secure the retention of the Annexe for purposes ancillary to the host dwelling.

### Reasoned Justification

**16.53** Limited housing supply, increasing house prices and an increase in the number of people in the community reliant on care at home has resulted in extended families, all having to reside in a single residential property. Residential annexes for family members, particularly elderly relatives, can help to meet social needs whilst reducing pressure on other types of

accommodation (including care). However, such accommodation can have implications with regards the availability of on-site vehicle parking, lack of public amenity space and impact on local amenity.

**16.54** Residential annexes may comprise of an extension to the host dwellings, conversion of an outbuilding or the provision of new buildings within the curtilage of the host dwelling. In order to maintain a long-term ancillary link most effectively, and to consolidate the built form where possible, the Council will encourage the provision of annexes through the extension of the host dwelling subject to the requirements in Policy D6.

**16.55** Where residential annexes are no longer required for their original purpose, some homeowners may seek their disposal as self-contained independent accommodation. Such disposal may result in a new dwelling that is out of character with the local environment and place pressure on local amenities, on street vehicle parking and wider infrastructure provision.

**16.56** Where consistent with the statutory tests for planning obligations, applicants will be required to enter into a S106 Agreement to ensure that the permitted residential annexe is retained for that purpose.



### Policy D7 -The Appearance of Town Centre Business Premises

1. **Proposals for new or alterations to existing business premises must contribute towards improving the quality of the built environment and be appropriate to the site and its surroundings having regard to the following considerations:**
  - a. Key elements, such as fascias, stallrisers and glazing bars;
  - b. Scale;
  - c. Rhythm;
  - d. Symmetry;
  - e. Massing;
  - f. Grain;
  - g. Permeability;
  - h. Proportions;
  - i. Architecture;
  - j. Detailing;
  - k. Materials;
  - l. Colour.
2. **New or alterations to existing business premises must contribute positively to the character and appearance of the following:**
  - a. The business frontage;
  - b. The building as a whole;
  - c. The parade or block of buildings in which the premises is located; and
  - d. The surrounding area.
3. **The provision of security measures for business premises should form an integral part of the design approach to the business frontage and should have regard to the criteria set out in parts 1 and 2 of this policy. External roller shutters will only be acceptable if it can be demonstrated that there is no other suitable alternative. In such instances the roller shutters should be weaved or open grille.**

## Reasoned Justification

**16.57** The Borough's town centres, local shopping parades, and employment areas, comprise a mix of old and new structures. Various elements are usually evident on the frontage of commercial properties in the Borough. These include the fascias, cornices, pilasters, consoles, mullions, glazing bars and stallrisers, all of which have their own visual and practical function.

**16.58** The fascia is usually the most prominent feature on a non-residential frontage as it normally carries the name of the company and is located above the windows and doors. Furthermore, where external shutters have been used in the Borough, the shutter box is often not located behind the existing fascia but instead protrudes out from the frontage, creating a bulky unattractive appearance.

**16.59** The composition of these elements is important in order that the frontages of these buildings contribute positively to the character and appearance of the building, the neighbouring frontages and the surrounding area. The provision of such development must therefore consider the scale, rhythm, symmetry, proportions, architecture and detailing of these elements, as well as the proposed choice of materials and colour.

**16.60** Within many of the town centres, local shopping parades and employment areas, properties have roller shutters and other forms of security to their frontages. It is acknowledged that there is a need for security to be provided for such properties, however a balance must be struck between ensuring that these properties are safe and secure while considering their impact on the appearance of the street. Such security measures are therefore most successful when they form an integral part of the property's frontage. This is best achieved at the design stage and not 'added on' as an afterthought.

**16.61** Some commercial properties in the Borough are provided with alternative forms of security measures, such as screens or grilles fixed to the outside or inside of the frontage during closing hours only. These are often decorative in nature, and whilst providing the security required, give an open appearance, with views through them.



### Policy D8 - Public Art

1. The Council will support the provision of high quality, sustainable public art within development, where it is:
  - a. Integrated into the public realm; and
  - b. Is publicly accessible.
2. The provision of public art and interpretation / information infrastructure must contribute positively to the locality having regard to the following considerations:
  - a. Size;
  - b. Materials;
  - c. Siting;
  - d. Crime prevention;
  - e. Local context/Historical and/or local important information;
  - f. The scale and type of development proposed;
  - g. Maintenance.
3. Proposals for public art should be accompanied by long term management and maintenance arrangements and/or plans.

### Reasoned Justification

**16.62** Planning for culture and the creative industries is an integral part of supporting and creating great places. The National Cultural Planning Toolkit sets out the importance of Local Plan policies and good governance structures that will better enable the creation and support of thriving places.

**16.63** The Essex Design Guide defines public art as art projects created by professional artists, creative practitioners and crafts people, that can be enjoyed in public spaces by residents of and visitors to a community, rather than in an art gallery or institution. Public art can come in many forms including functional (seating, lighting, etc), decorative, cultural experiences or artist residencies.

**16.64** Public art has the ability to enhance the aesthetics, character and interest of the public realm and inspire community pride and ownership, contribute to creating local distinctiveness, and increase the use of public open space. It can be incorporated into development in a number of ways, through the introduction of physical elements such as sculptures and monuments, to elements of detailing in paving, elevational treatment, as well as temporary art exhibitions or installations.

**16.65** Developing and delivering public art is most successful when considered at the concept stage of a development or scheme. This is best achieved as a collaboration between artists and developers from the concept stage.

**16.66** It is important to consider what the public art is seeking to achieve and how appropriate it is to its surrounding. The size and complexity of each project will vary depending on the site, as well as the size and type of development proposed, and it is important to ensure that its design, palette of materials, and location are sensitive to its surroundings, but at the same time not losing the 'statement' to be made by the public art.

**16.67** Examples of public art provision in Castle Point can currently be found in Hadleigh Town Centre and in South Benfleet.

**16.68** Additionally, there are areas of land which may have local or historical significance, which are not appropriately recognised. Where some form of interpretation is provided, its quality and design vary considerably.

**16.69** The provision of interpretation/information is most successfully delivered where it is designed and located in a manner which reflects not only the 'item' that it is describing, but also the surrounding built form and natural environment. Developers are encouraged to engage local residents in the development of public art projects, and artists from the local area in the creation of public art works. Examples of local interpretation within Castle Point can currently be found in South Benfleet and at Canvey Island.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.



Photography: Pearl Schreiber, for *This is Us*.



### Policy D9 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

1. Heritage assets (designated and non-designated) are listed at [Appendix H](#), and shown on the [Policies Map](#). Development proposals affecting a heritage asset (either designated or non-designated) will be required to conserve, and where appropriate enhance, the heritage assets and its setting, in accordance with the requirements set out in the NPPF.
2. Reference should be made to the South Benfleet Conservation Area Management Plan and the Florence Gardens Conservation Area Management Plan, as relevant, when determining planning applications in these areas. The South Benfleet Conservation Area Design Code should be applied when preparing and assessing proposals within the South Benfleet Conservation Area.
3. Regard should be had to the Historic Environment Record in determining if archaeological remains are present within a proposed development site. Where remains are present, the Council will have regard to the archaeological importance of those remains, the need for the development, the likely extent of any harm, and the likelihood of the proposal successfully preserving the archaeological interest of the site when considering proposals effects on archaeology.

### Reasoned Justification

**16.70** A heritage asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include archaeological, designated and non-designated heritage features. Heritage assets within the Borough are collectively referred to as our historic environment.

**16.71** The NPPF states that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, with greatest weight to those of most significance. Grade I and Grade II listed buildings should be given the highest level of protection with any substantial harm or loss of such buildings being considered exceptional. Non-designated historic assets are afforded less weight in decision making. In determining applications, Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

**16.72** There are several designated and non-designated historic assets in the Borough. Whilst heritage assets are distributed throughout the Borough, there is a large concentration of listed buildings in the High Street in South Benfleet. This area was designated as the South Benfleet Conservation Area in 1988, and benefits from a Conservation Area Management Plan. This was recently updated to reflect the change that has occurred in this area. A design code has been developed to ensure future developments contribute to the quality of this heritage asset.

**16.73** Florence Gardens in Hadleigh has also been designated as a conservation area, taking into account the design, layout, and uniformity cottages in the area, and benefits from a Conservation Area Management Plan.

**16.74** Hadleigh contains a variety of heritage assets, including the Grade I listed St. James the Less Church and the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Hadleigh Castle. Canvey Island also has a number of listed buildings dating back to the Dutch occupation of the Island. This includes the Grade II listed Dutch Cottage on Canvey Road, and a collection of Grade II listed Dutch Cottages on Haven Road.

**16.75** Essex County Council's Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) database holds records for other significant archaeological finds in Castle Point. The records indicate finds dating back to the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic eras, as well as from Anglo Saxon, Romans and Vikings. More recent finds relate to Medieval times and World War Two structures. Applicants should have reviewed the Historic Environment Record and taken account of the archaeological importance of any remains that affect their site, the likely extent of any harm, and the likelihood of the proposal successfully preserving the archaeological interest of the site by record, when preparing development proposals. The Council will balance this harm against the need for development.

**16.76** There are also significant areas of Castle Point that are undeveloped, and the information on the Essex Historic Environment Record shows the potential for large parts of this undeveloped area of Castle Point to contain previously unidentified heritage assets.

**16.77** All designated heritage assets within the Borough are listed in [Appendix H](#).

**16.78** Separately, work has been undertaken to develop a local list of heritage assets, which are non-designated but nonetheless considered important from a local history perspective. A schedule of non-designated locally significant heritage assets can also be found in [Appendix H](#).



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for This is Us.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for This is Us.



## 17. Protecting our Green Belt

### Castle Point Context

**17.1** The London Metropolitan Green Belt extends into and through Castle Point. It was most recently defined in 1998 and covers 2,750ha of the Borough's area. Parts of this are beyond the sea defences, and around 2,500ha of the Borough's land area is Green Belt.

**17.2** The Green Belt covers 55.9% of the Borough's area and tightly bounds the existing urban areas. There is limited greenfield land that sits outside the Green Belt.

**17.3** The Green Belt plays a strong role in addressing the legacy of predominantly post-war urban sprawl, ensuring green spaces between settlements, ensuring individual towns have a sense of identity and creating valuable green infrastructure.

**17.4** There is a significant overlap between the Green Belt in Castle Point and other constraints on development associated with the natural environment. Around 32% of the Green Belt in Castle Point is covered by national wildlife designations, ancient woodland or flood risk limitations. There are also significant areas of the Green Belt that provide the setting for nationally designated heritage assets or are identified as priority habitat. Over 500ha of land in the Green Belt is managed under countryside stewardship schemes for nature conservation and the Council and County Council own and operate substantial public open space facilities in the Green Belt. In addition, local level designations such as Local Wildlife Sites and locally listed buildings are also located within the Green Belt.



### Policy GB1 – Development affecting the Green Belt

1. Development within the Green Belt, as defined on the [Policies Map](#), will not be supported in line with the NPPF.
2. Applications for housing on previously developed land in the Green Belt will be assessed with regard to policy GB2. All other applications for development affecting the Green Belt will be determined in accordance with this policy.
3. In determining the harm to the Green Belt arising from development, the Council will consider:
  - a. The impact of the proposal on the ability of the Green Belt to fulfill its purpose(s);
  - b. The ability of the proposal to preserve or improve the openness of the Green Belt;
  - c. The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Green Belt;
  - d. The design of the proposal, which will be expected to be an exemplar of high-quality;
  - e. Whether the land is previously developed; and
  - f. Whether the proposal will result in an unacceptable impact on highways capacity, safety, noise or other forms of disturbance.
4. Where there is a clear justification and the tests for conditions/ obligations would be passed, the Council may seek to restrict permitted development rights where a proposal would not otherwise be acceptable in the Green Belt.

5. The Council will support opportunities to positively preserve and enhance the Green Belt for use by residents as a natural and leisure resource. Where development is proposed within the Green Belt, it will be expected to:
  - a. improve access for leisure uses;
  - b. improve connectivity particularly via active and sustainable modes;
  - c. improve outdoor sport and recreation provision;
  - d. enhance the appearance of the landscape;
  - e. improve visual amenity;
  - f. enhance biodiversity;
  - g. facilitate sustainable flood risk management; or
  - h. improve damaged and derelict land.

### Reasoned Justification

**17.5** The NPPF attaches great importance to Green Belt land. The NPPF identifies the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, with the essential characteristics of Green Belts being their openness and permanence.

**17.6** The five purposes of the Green Belt are:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other land.

**17.7** The NPPF sets out the criteria to be applied when defining Green Belt boundaries. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered



where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of Local Plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to the Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the Plan period.

**17.8** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of any substantial new development within 2km of a Habitats site or Holehaven Creek SSSI (as functionally linked land) to avoid any adverse effect on the integrity of nearby Habitats sites.

## General Boundary Issues

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**17.9** The Green Belt boundaries in Castle Point were last established through the 1998 Local Plan. An 11ha area of the Canvey Wick Nature Reserve SSSI which was previously excluded from the Green Belt is proposed to be included within the Green Belt to create a more robust edge along the existing footpath and Roscommon Way. There are also two existing Gypsy and Traveller Sites to the north of the Borough which are proposed to be excluded from the Green Belt given the specific housing need that is being met. The boundaries in those locations have been amended. These amendments are shown at [Appendix C](#).

## Grey Belt

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**17.10** In December 2024, the NPPF was amended to introduce Grey Belt. This is defined as:

*“Land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”*

**17.11** This definition in effect changes how Green Belt is defined. [Appendix K](#) sets out the Council’s interpretation of key terms within the definition of previously developed land.

**17.12** Development of Grey Belt land is permissible where development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan, where there is a need for the development proposed, where the site is sustainably located with good access to services and transport choices, and where high levels of affordable housing, infrastructure and open space provision are secured.

## Overall extent of the Green Belt

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**17.13** Taking the above amendments into account, the overall extent of the Green Belt identified through this Plan is 2,368ha.

## Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt

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**17.14** The NPPF makes it clear that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development subject to certain exceptions. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt, and very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of the inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

**17.15** The policy establishes those matters it will consider when determining harm to the Green Belt. The matters cover both the visual impacts of development, and also consider its character as a more rural area. Development can introduce noise into the Green Belt which will affect its character as much as the visual appearance of the development.

## Positive Uses in the Green Belt

**17.16** The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

**17.17** The NPPF makes it clear that buildings in the Green Belt are inappropriate, except for certain types of development. The provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries are not considered inappropriate, if the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of it.

**17.18** The policy identifies those types of development that may be considered appropriate in the Green Belt in terms of its positive use for recreation and nature conservation purposes.



## Previously Developed Land in the Green Belt

### Policy GB2 – Previously Developed Land in the Green Belt

1. The redevelopment of previously developed land in the Green Belt will not constitute inappropriate development where the following conditions apply:
  - a. The site is in a high or moderately accessible location as identified on the map at [Appendix D](#), and has safe footway access, conforming to established highway regulations;
  - b. The site is in an area identified as Grey Belt in the Green Belt Review, or else the harm arising from the development will not undermine the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, especially in relation to preventing unrestricted urban sprawl, or causing neighbouring settlements to merge;
  - c. The proposal is for new homes, or for another use where there is a need demonstrated through the application, and makes effective use of the land, considering any constraints;
  - d. The proposal complies with the golden rules set out in the NPPF, and any relevant policies to that effect in this Plan; and
  - e. The proposal complies with all other relevant policies within this Plan.
2. The redevelopment of previously developed land where it is not possible to demonstrate that parts 1a and 1b apply, will be acceptable where:
  - a. The proposal is for housing;
  - b. The proposal only makes use of the footprint of the existing authorised buildings on the site, with an allowance of 25% addition for moderate expansion;
  - c. The proposal is limited to 2.5 stories in height;
  - d. The boundary treatment of the site is formed using soft landscaping; and
  - e. The proposal complies with all other relevant policies within this Plan.



## Reasoned Justification

**17.19** Changes made to the NPPF in December 2024 mean that previously developed land in the Green Belt may be grey belt and does not immediately constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

**17.20** However, it is recognised that there are other small sites comprising previously developed land within the Green Belt, and applications may be received for development proposals on such sites. The NPPF indicates that development would not be inappropriate if the housing target in the NPPF is not being achieved, the site is sustainably located, and the development would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the Plan. Furthermore, any major development would need to deliver the benefits set out in the NPPF in relation to affordable housing, open space and infrastructure.

**17.21** This Plan does not seek to meet the housing target in the NPPF, for the reasons clearly articulated earlier in this Plan. It is therefore expected that some applications for the redevelopment of previously developed land in the Green Belt may be appropriate development. However, they will need to be sustainably located.

**17.22** [Appendix D](#) identifies areas of accessibility across the Borough. As a starting point, for a site to be sustainably located, it should be within a high to moderate accessibility area.. Furthermore, the site must be accessible by a pedestrian footway, or else it must be possible to upgrade the local highway network, so it is safe to walk to the site in accordance with highway safety regulations.

**17.23** To avoid development which would fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the Plan, the site must not sit in an area of Green Belt that fulfils a strong purpose in terms of preventing urban sprawl or preventing neighbouring towns from merging. These are shown on the map at [Appendix C](#).

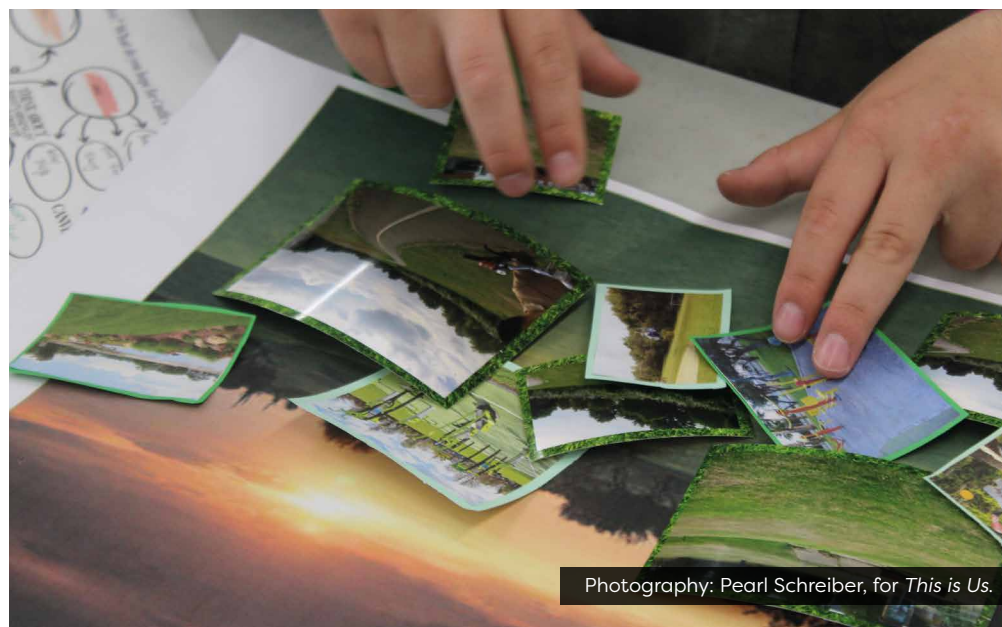
**17.24** Given the scale of the existing previously developed sites which are typically small in scale, it is expected that most of the developments will be minor in scale i.e. less than 10 homes. To achieve the outcomes sought through the NPPF in terms of housing provision. It is expected that where

applications are approved under this policy, it is for new homes only, and not for significant extensions to existing homes.

**17.25** If developments are major in scale i.e. 10 or more homes, it is expected that the requirements of the NPPF in terms of benefits are achieved. Affordable housing provision, infrastructure provision and open space provision should align with the relevant policies in this Plan and the requirements of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**17.26** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required of any substantial new development within 2km of a Habitats site or Holehaven Creek SSSI (as functionally linked land) at application stage, to avoid any adverse effect on the integrity of nearby Habitats sites.

**17.27** It is recognised that some previously developed land in the Green Belt may not be able to meet the grey belt definition due to the impact on the Green Belt or matters to do with sustainability. Decaying buildings on the Green Belt may however act to undermine environmental quality, and therefore it is appropriate to support the re-use/redevelopment of such buildings to provide homes. However, locational issues mean that such buildings should be limited and modest in scale to minimise harm,



Photography: Pearl Schreiber, for *This is Us*.

# 18. Protecting our Biodiversity and Landscape

## Castle Point Context

**18.1** The high quality of the natural environment contributes to the quality of life for people living and working in the Borough. It also helps to attract tourists and visitors who help to support the local economy. The varied landscapes, includes the Thames Estuary and associated marshland and grasslands, and ancient woodland and associated secondary woodland and meadows. This landscape is significant in terms of its nature conservation value.

**18.2** The landscape to the south of the Borough is flat and integrates with marshland and grassland habitats along the estuary. There are long distance views across this landscape due to its flat topography which means that development can easily disrupt views, the sense of openness and the sense of place.

**18.3** The landscape rises to the north of the Borough, and there are significant long-distance views from Hadleigh across the Thames Estuary to Kent, to the North Sea and into London. Ancient woodlands and associated habitats extend into Southend and Rochford districts in this part of the Borough.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.

## Policy ENV1 - Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape and Landscape Features

1. All development proposals should contribute positively towards creating a visually attractive environment.
2. Development proposals should seek to protect and enhance key natural/ semi-natural and historical features including:
  - a. Established field boundaries, hedgerows and tree lines;
  - b. Established trees with a high visual amenity value;
  - c. Established areas of woodland; and
  - d. Topographical features including ridge lines, watercourses, ditch systems and bunds.
3. Development proposals should be designed to have regard to the defined character and distinctiveness of the landscape, and seek to avoid harm to the landscape as a result of adverse impacts on:
  - a. The key characteristics and the physical and cultural components
  - b. The degree of openness;
  - c. The degree of visual exposure;
  - d. The degree of tranquillity;
  - e. The scale and nature of existing development; and
  - f. The amount and density of existing vegetative screening.

## Reasoned Justification

**18.4** The NPPF states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

**18.5** The Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation Study 2007 considered the openness of land beyond the urban area, where areas towards the north of the Borough that are formed of plots separated by vegetation. In



these areas there is low density development that co-exists with the landscape creating an active rural environment.

**18.6** The topography of the Borough contributes significantly to the landscape. Canvey Island is very flat and covered by a series of watercourses and flood defence bunds. This increases the prominence of taller buildings. Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley are located on an escarpment which has several locally prominent ridge lines. Development on these ridge lines will impact the visual amenity of the landscape.

**18.7** To the west and centre of the Borough, where the land beyond the urban area is largely open and undeveloped, new development proposals would be likely to have a more significant visual impact on the character of the landscape.

**18.8** Landscape Assessments undertaken in 2024, to understand the impact of development on sites beyond the urban area, highlight these issues.

**18.9** In addition to commenting on the overall sensitivity of the landscape, the Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation Study 2007 report identifies the natural and semi-natural environment that contributes towards historic landscape character in the Borough. These include hedgerows, trees, tree lines and areas of woodland. The nature of how these features interact to form field boundaries is significant in some parts of the landscape, and need to be taken into account when preparing development proposals and when determining the appropriateness of those proposals through the development management process.



## Policy ENV2 – Coastal & Riverside Strategy

1. Working with the Environment Agency, ECC Lead Local Flood Authority, neighbouring authorities, the community and other relevant stakeholders the Council will prepare a Riverside Strategy. The Riverside Strategy will:
  - a. Looking across administrative boundaries, covering the Bowers Marshes, Canvey Island and Hadleigh Marshes Policy Unit areas as set out in the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan;
  - b. Allow for and plan for improvements to and management of the flood defences;
  - c. Improve access to and enjoyment of the coast, creating cross boundary links where possible;
  - d. Enhance the cultural and social value of the coastal areas; and
  - e. Enhance the ecological networks along the coast and coastal habitats.
2. Proposals will not be supported where they conflict with the aims of the Riverside Strategy.
3. Proposals which deliver the multi-functional green and blue infrastructure recommendations of the South Essex Estuary Park (SEE Park) will be supported.
4. Be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.
5. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
6. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.

## Reasoned Justification

**18.10** The NPPF states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, with regard to taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk and coastal change.

**18.11** The Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan sets out a vision for the future of the estuary to adapt to climate change and prepare for sea level change. This Plan looks at ways to make sea defences more robust and requires local authorities to adopt a riverside strategy approach by 2030. This is to ensure that flood defence improvements and flood management are made locally, with involvement from the local community and stakeholders creating multiple benefits.

**18.12** It is expected that riverside strategies will seek to achieve environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits alongside flood risk mitigation. Examples of this could include improved access to the coast, including active travel routes, landscaping along sea wall defences and public art. This means that the flood defences of the future will not be barren, solid walls of concrete but places for people and wildlife.

**18.13** The TE2100 Plan sets out specific actions required for different areas along the estuary to ensure ongoing flood protection. Three policy areas fall within Castle Point, the Bowers Marshes policy unit, the Canvey Island policy unit and the Hadleigh Marshes policy unit. These areas have different requirements that may impact what additional benefits could be achieved there. For example, where flood defences are sought to be increased on Canvey Island there may be opportunities for improvements to footpaths, or in the Hadleigh Marshes where flood risk is expected to increase habitat improvements that are compatible with increased flood risk could be suitable. The Riverside Strategy will address these differences.

**18.14** The Council is one of a number of partners preparing the Riverside Strategy, alongside the Environment Agency and neighbouring local authorities. The area to be covered by the Riverside Strategy overlaps significantly with the Central Marshlands component of the South Essex Estuary Park initiative. There is therefore scope to integrate these pieces of work to maximise benefits to residents and to the natural environment.



**18.15** It is important for future generations that new development does not hamper the delivery of the Riverside Strategy, and to this end, it will be a material planning consideration when determining applications within the vicinity of the coast.

**18.16** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity. The Riverside Strategy must be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity. This will need to take into account the Castle Point Plan when considering in combination effects.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.



### Policy ENV3 – Securing Nature Recovery and Biodiversity Net Gain

1. In determining applications for planning consent the Council will seek to secure nature recovery and biodiversity net gain by:
  - a. Applying the principles related to the biodiversity hierarchy, Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSI) and irreplaceable habitats set out in national planning policy. In Castle Point, ancient woodlands are considered to constitute irreplaceable habitats.
  - b. Satisfying the requirements of the Habitats Regulations for any proposals which are likely to cause an adverse effect on the integrity, either individually or in combination with other developments, on Habitats Sites by avoiding or mitigating any site-specific impacts. Where appropriate, contributions from qualifying residential developments within the Zones of Influence as defined in the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) will be secured towards mitigation measures identified in the RAMS. Where appropriate, large scale residential developments within the Zones of Influence will be required to provide sustainable accessible natural greenspace (SANG) or SANG-like provision.
  - c. Conserving and enhancing the network of protected species, priority species or priority habitats in accordance with their status and give appropriate weight to their importance. Where full avoidance, mitigation and compensation cannot be achieved, applications affecting such sites will be refused.
  - d. Securing enhancements to biodiversity by requiring:
    - i. 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in line with the nationally established standards and methods for calculation and delivery, on all applicable brownfield sites;
    - ii. 20% Biodiversity Net Gain in line with the nationally established standards and methods for calculation and delivery, on all applicable greenfield sites;

- iii. An urban greening factor score of 0.3 for all major commercial development proposals and 0.4 for all major residential development proposals, in line with the model Urban Greening Factor for England; and
    - iv. The integration of specific design features intended to encourage biodiversity and support wildlife populations in all residential development, as set out in policy ENV5.
  - e. Supporting proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies of this Plan.
  - f. Require that proposals affecting biodiversity are accompanied by an ecological assessment which conforms to guidance set out by the Government, by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) or an equivalent. Where insufficient information is provided, the Council will take a precautionary approach to the protection of biodiversity.
2. Working with relevant organisations and groups to maximise opportunities for preservation, restoration, enhancements and connection of natural habitat as set out in Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
3. The sites listed below and identified on the [Policies Map](#) are the Council's preferred sites for offsite Biodiversity Net Gain:
  - i. Canvey Heights Country Park
  - ii. Hadleigh Castle County Park, Creekside, Benfleet

### Reasoned Justification

**18.17** The NPPF requires local policies to identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks and corridors, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity.



**18.18** It also establishes the principles that apply when determining applications for development that may affect biodiversity. These principles are as follows:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

**18.19** The above principles will be applied in Castle Point in respect of all applications, including those affecting the six Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the ancient woodlands in Thundersley and Daws Heath.

**18.20** In addition to nationally designated sites, there are internationally important sites, such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites in Castle Point. These are known as Habitats Sites. The Habitats Regulations requires that there are no adverse effects upon the conservation and protection of these sites.

**18.21** The Habitats Regulations Assessment that accompanies this Plan concludes that there is the potential for development in Castle Point to

cause harm to Habitats Sites, either alone or in combination with other development. Where a site has a specific potential impact, or where general compliance with a policy is required to ensure no impact, this is highlighted in respect of that allocation or policy. Compliance will be required to ensure that development is not refused on the grounds of potential adverse impact on a Habitats Site or sites.

**18.22** Overall, the Habitats Regulations Assessment concludes that there is a potential in-combination impact on the integrity of those Habitats Sites on the Essex Coast because of recreational disturbance. Whilst, local and on-site open space provision provides some mitigation, there is a residual risk due to proximity and attractiveness of the coast as a recreation destination.

**18.23** A Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) has been prepared for the Essex Coast Habitats Sites to address this cooperatively across Essex. This sets out a series of actions to be taken to avoid adverse effects to these habitats. The Strategy identifies a Zone of Influence (ZOI) around each Habitats sites in Essex where recreational disturbance is likely to result from residential development.

**18.24** Those bringing forward residential developments in Castle Point, and other affected Boroughs can make a financial contribution to this strategy to mitigate for their impact. Applicants who do not contribute to the Essex Coast RAMS will be required to undertake their own visitor surveys to inform the Council's HRA and implement the necessary measures in perpetuity to avoid adverse effect on the integrity of the relevant Habitats sites from recreational uses. Failure to provide mitigation would mean that proposals are not compliant with the Habitats Regulations and would need to be refused for that purpose.

**18.25** In addition to being rich in internationally and nationally designated habitats, Castle Point is also home to a wider assemblage of habitats and species significant at a more local level. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on all local authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the same Act provides for the Government to identify priority species and priority habitats which should be subject to specific application of the duty in section 40, due to the rarity of such species or such habitats. There is an abundance of priority habitat in Castle Point.

**18.26** Separately, there are legal duties to protect specific species of animal set out in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, including the Great Crested Newt which is particularly abundant in Castle Point. Schedule 5 of the Act sets out all the species protected.

**18.27** Essex County Council as the Responsible Authority has prepared a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Greater Essex. This strategy provides actions for groups and organisations such as local authorities, local nature groups, community groups, developers, businesses, residents and more to complete to aid nature recovery. The LNRS seeks to create bigger, better and more connected habitats in the county and identifies areas to provide the best opportunities for this. The LNRS feeds into the creation of a National Recovery Network (NRN).

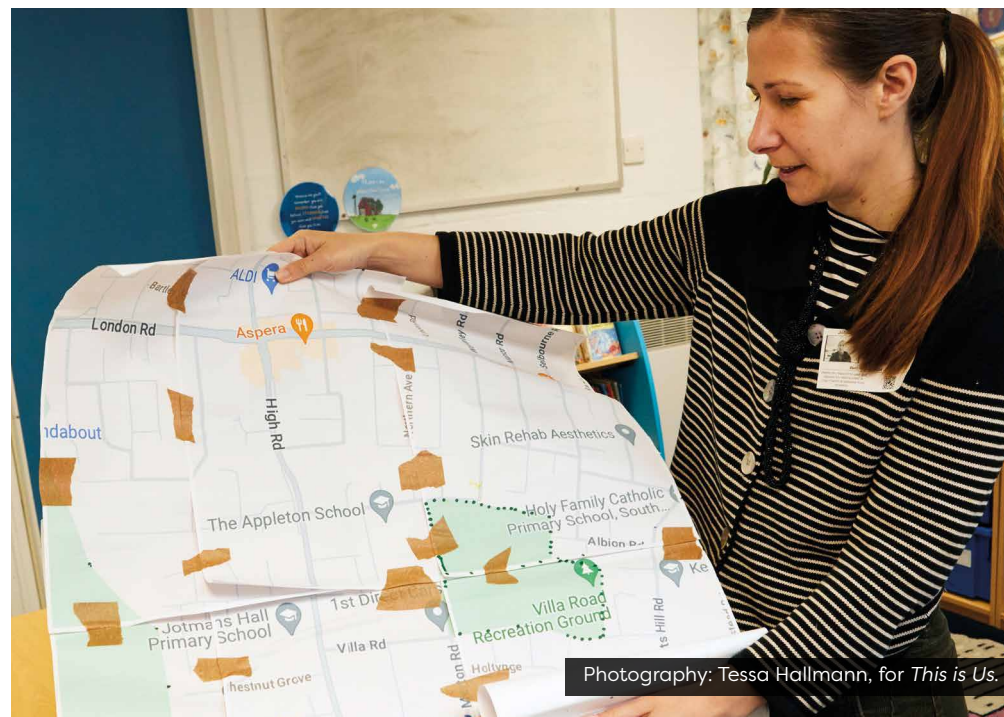
**18.28** Implementation of the LNRS has consequences for any development within the areas identified in the strategy, as well as encouraging biodiversity into the LNRS areas through the strategic significance multiplier. This supports habitat enhancement and creation in areas that will have more positive influence to biodiversity.

**18.29** The Environment Act 2021 introduced Biodiversity Net Gain. This mandates that most developments should deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain, using a specific metric developed by the Government. Local areas can set a higher requirement through their plans where it can be demonstrated it would be deliverable. Viability testing has indicated it is possible to secure 20% biodiversity net gain on greenfield sites, and this requirement has been set for those sites to improve local contribution to the local Nature Recovery network identified through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Essex.

**18.30** ECC have also commissioned two studies to explore the overall [need](#) and a [viability assessment](#) of seeking a 20% biodiversity net gain across Essex. This has identified that for biodiversity net gain to be an effective mechanism for achieving the recovery of nature at a landscape level, it is recommended that a minimum level of 20% be established across Essex as a responsible measure to increase confidence of meeting national and local targets for nature recovery. The Essex Viability Assessment has found that increasing from 10 to 20% biodiversity net gain will not materially affect viability in the majority of instances when delivering on or offsite.

**18.31** The Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Open Space Assessment have both considered a number of sites across Castle Point for their potential suitability for off-site biodiversity net gain. Of those sites that have been assessed as having significant potential biodiversity enhancement and are either owned by the Council or have been promoted for inclusion in the Plan for biodiversity, are identified as the first tranche of preferred offsite biodiversity net gain sites.

**18.32** There is also scope to improve the biodiversity value of urban areas by improving the level of greening. Natural England have developed an Urban Greening Factor that will be applied to all new developments. This will ensure that the urban areas are greener and provide new habitats for wildlife and wildlife corridors, as well as contributing better to shading, surface water management and air quality. Urban greening can be delivered through the provision of green roofs, areas of sustainable drainage and areas of planting and landscaping within development sites. Details on how to calculate the urban greening factor of a development are set out in the [Urban Greening Factor for England User Guide](#).



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for This is Us.



### Policy ENV4 - Local Wildlife and Geological Sites

1. The Council seeks the conservation and enhancement of Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS), Local Geological Sites (LoGS), and Potential Local Wildlife Sites (PLoWS) as identified on the [Policies Map](#), and listed at [Appendix I](#).
2. The Council will support proposals which ensure the active conservation and enhancement of biodiversity interest of Local Wildlife Sites and Potential Local Wildlife Sites.
3. The Council will support proposals which ensure active conservation and enhancement of geodiversity interest of Local Geological Sites.
4. Development proposals which would result in harm to either a Local Wildlife Site, Local Geological Site or a Potential Local Wildlife Site will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that every reasonable effort has been taken to minimise the harm arising through avoidance, and any residual harm arising is fully mitigated.
5. Development proposals must be designed to enable and support the habitat priority measures identified within the Strategic Opportunities set out in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
6. Development proposals must ensure areas that are identified as an Area of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIBs) within the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are protected and where possible enhanced.

## Reasoned Justification

**18.33** The NPPF states that to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks.

Plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks, geological conservation interest and soils, and the protection of priority species.

**18.34** Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) are locally designated sites recognised as comprising priority habitats or being home to priority species. A LoWS Review was undertaken between 2023-2024, this review identified 41 LoWS in the Borough.

**18.35** Additionally, 2 Potential Local Wildlife Sites (PLoWS) have been identified through that review. These are sites that are identified as having the potential to meet the LoWS selection criteria in the future through improvement to the quality of the habitats on site. The 41 LoWS and 2 PLoWS in the Borough can be found on the Policies Map and are listed in [Appendix I](#).

**18.36** Local Geological Sites (LoGS) are locally designated sites for their scientific, educational, historical, and recreational benefits for geodiversity. LoGS may have previously been referred to as Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS). LoGS have also been reviewed as part of the LoWS. This review identified 7 LoGS in the Borough. These are shown on the Policies Map and are listed in [Appendix I](#).

**18.37** The Essex Local Nature Partnership was established in 2022 and brings together local organisations, conservationists, local authorities, businesses, NGOs and other organisations seeking to improve the natural environment in Essex. This group is made up of 40+ organisations and act as the body to formally endorse local wildlife sites across the county. In October 2024 the sites identified in the LoWS Register 2023 were ratified by the Essex Local Nature Partnership and were formally endorsed as LoWS and PLoWS.

**18.38** These Local Wildlife Sites are considered strategically significant in terms of calculating biodiversity net gain requirements, or indeed provision.

**18.39** The Local Wildlife Sites are captured as part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and play a role in nature recovery across Essex.

### Policy ENV5 – Design Features that Encourage Biodiversity

All new development should incorporate features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs and ensure opportunities to integrate nest sites for protected species into the urban fabric are utilised:

1. For any grant of planning permission for new build developments greater than 5 metres in height, that there must be a minimum average of one swift brick or box per dwelling or unit. Where feasible, swift bricks integrated into walls must be installed in preference to external swift nest boxes, following best practice guidance (British Standard BS 42021:2022)
2. New boundary fencing or walls in all new development located outside of town centres, should be designed to allow permeable access for hedgehogs (Hedgehog gates)
3. Developers must comply with the legal protection of bats as set out in Natural England standing advice. A survey is required for any development likely to negatively affect bats or their roost, foraging or commuting habitats. Where bats are likely to be present in the area (as a minimum: all locations within 50m of woodland, mature trees, hedgerows, standing water or the open countryside) the use of external lighting (during construction and post construction) should be appropriate to avoid adverse impacts on bat populations by following the appropriate luminaire specifications set out in the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance.

<sup>1</sup>[Bats: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/bats-advice-for-making-planning-decisions)





## Reasoned Justification

**18.40** The recommendation that features supporting priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs should be applied was included in the December 2024 NPPF. Paragraph 187 notes that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. The Council has incorporated the above aspirations into a policy covering the species in question.

**18.41** The Council has incorporated the above aspirations into a policy covering the species in question, all three of which are cited as key protected species in the Castle Point Green and Blue Infrastructure Study Update (2025). The Essex LNRS also identifies a Priorities Species Shortlist and the specific habitat intervention required. This also covers the swifts and hedgehogs.

**18.42** A motion to make Swift bricks compulsory in new builds secured cross-party support in both the House of Commons and the Lords in 2023. Recommended by the UK Green Building Council, the NHBC Foundation, and the British Standards Institute, swift bricks are a proven solution for increasing and connecting urban biodiversity. Equally crucial is that without them, there is no opportunity for red-listed, cavity-nesting, urban birds to nest and breed in any new development. The Government recommends that Local Planning Authorities create their own policies to make Swift bricks compulsory. In view of the environmental assets within Castle Point Borough and the Council's commitment to nature conservation, local policy has addressed this issue.

**18.43** The hedgehog is now officially classed as 'vulnerable to extinction' and on the red list for British mammals. One reason for their decline is because fences and walls are becoming more and more secure, thereby reducing the amount of land available to them to forage, hibernate and breed. Planning policies that facilitate hedgehog movement and ensuring all new developments are permeable are both goals of Britain's National Hedgehog Conservation Strategy, published in October 2024.

**18.44** All bat species are designated and protected as European protected species (EPS) and protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Natural England's standing advice<sup>1</sup> should be followed when making planning decisions. [The Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance for bats and artificial lighting](#) sets out the appropriate luminaire specifications.



### Policy ENV6 – Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

1. **Proposals should protect the best and most versatile agricultural land, to support opportunities for food production, the agricultural economy, preserve food security and mitigate against the impacts of climate change.**
2. **In line with the precautionary principle, there will be an assumption that areas classified as grade 3 on national mapping fall into the category of best and most versatile agricultural land, unless local site-specific surveys demonstrate otherwise. Surveys must be carried out by professional soil scientists in accordance with Natural England/ DEFRA guidance.**
3. **Applicants should demonstrate that development proposals cannot reasonably and satisfactorily be accommodated on urban or non-agricultural land, subject to other plan policies. Where development of agricultural land is deemed to be necessary, developers and applicants should demonstrate that areas of poorer quality have been sequentially considered ahead of those of higher quality and are demonstrably not available.**

### Reasoned Justification

**18.45** The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) was developed in the twentieth century for the purpose of preserving long-term food security, originally motivated by both the threat and reality of war in the mid-twentieth century. In more recent times the purpose of protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land has been given further weight by the threat of climate change.

**18.46** The government's [25 Year Environment Plan](#) sets out the plan to improve the health of the environment by using nature resources more sustainably and

efficiently including protecting the best agricultural land.

**18.47** Local planning authorities are required to give consideration to the best and most versatile agricultural land in plan preparations and in determining planning applications. The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should recognise the benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

**18.48** The national ALC system grades quality from one to five, with grade 3 being subdivided into two further subgrades 3a and 3b. It is based on the land's potential for agricultural use and applies regardless of whether it's actively farmed at the moment.

**18.49** The best and most versatile agricultural land is identified as land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification. The NPPF is clear that areas of poorer quality land should be used instead of higher quality areas.

**18.50** Outside of the urban areas in Castle Point, there are large areas of land that are identified within the Agricultural Land Classification mapping as Grade 3. These include North-West Thundersley, Land around Daws Heath, West Canvey, Land east of Benfleet, Benfleet Downs and central corridor to Thundersley.

**18.51** Grade 3 Agricultural land should be afforded policy protection within the Plan area even if not currently in agricultural use, provided that it is in a state that could still be converted to agricultural use in the future (i.e. it has not been developed). In the absence of more detailed surveys, and in line with the precautionary principle, there will be an assumption that grade 3 areas should be protected from development.

**18.52** New surveys must be undertaken in accordance with [Natural England's Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land - GOV.UK](#).

**18.53** The supporting background evidence paper 'Agricultural Land in Castle Point' should be referred to for further detailed evidence to this policy. agricultural quality.



# 19. Providing the Infrastructure Required to Support Growth

## Castle Point Context

**19.1** Castle Point, and its communities, have good access to a range of local services including good quality schools, nurseries and other childcare facilities, local GP provision, community and commercial leisure facilities and many community halls including those in the numerous churches across the Borough.

**19.2** However, some of this community infrastructure is under strain, dated and the community is changing with the population typically getting older, with around 25% over retirement age.

**19.3** Recently, a community of Haredi Jews have settled in the area. They have a distinctly different demographic to the rest of the community, with around 70% of their population being under the age of 20. As this population continues to grow they will need facilities which meet their needs.

## Community Facilities

### Policy Infra1 - Community Facilities

1. In order to allow communities to meet their day-to-day needs, infrastructure projects identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 'will be supported.
2. The redevelopment of existing community uses will only be supported if:
  - a. The utility and function of the community use is improved;
  - b. The community use is located in the same, or a more sustainable location;
  - c. The site makes the best use of urban land in the Borough.
3. Proposals for new, or extensions or alterations of existing community facilities should:
  - a. Respond to the needs of the local community;

- b. Provide flexible space that can respond to the changing and specific needs of the local community, and where appropriate be capable of offering safe refuge in the event of a natural or man-made incident occurring;
    - c. Be accessible to all members of the community;
    - d. Be located in a sustainable location, and within walking distance of public transport provision;
    - e. Provide greater community benefits;
    - f. Bring about broader benefits to provide alternative community uses if there is an identified surplus of the existing community service.
4. Development that would result in the loss of a community facility will only be supported where:
  - a. An assessment has been undertaken which demonstrates that the existing facility is surplus to requirement; or
  - b. The existing use will be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality either on-site or locally.
5. In relation to the loss of a locally valued community facility that is commercial in nature, such as a public houses, private healthcare facility or a nursery, evidence will need to be submitted to demonstrate that the use is not economically viable and that it is no longer required to meet the needs of the local community This should include demonstrable evidence that the facility had been placed on the open market for a period of at least one year at the standard market rate, without success.

## Reasoned Justification

**19.4** The NPPF states that planning policies should plan positively for the provision of shared spaces and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open spaces, cultural buildings, public houses, places of worship and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

**19.5** The NPPF states that planning policies should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. The NPPF also states that Local Planning Authorities should allow established community facilities and services to be able to develop and modernise and to be retained for the benefit of the community.

**19.6** Castle Point is a growing Borough. The increasing population creates the need for increased provision of various infrastructures in order to ensure a good quality of life for local residents. The way services are provided continues to evolve alongside technological advancements, and as such the relationship between the need for services and the need for spaces are not always linear. It is however expected that the need for community facilities will grow over the Plan period, and the provision of additional community facilities and services can help communities to meet their day-to-day needs.

**19.7** Community facilities represent a considerable stock of brownfield land supply in the Borough. Many of the schools, community halls and GP surgery buildings within the Borough are ageing and have issues accommodating the services required. They are often single-use buildings with significant surface car parking. There is a need to retain sites for community uses, but also to enable improvements to facilities on these sites so that they can meet the needs of local people into the future.

**19.8** This Plan therefore supports investment into sites containing community facilities. By increasing the density on sites which contain community facilities, new, higher value uses can provide a cross-subsidy that helps to fund improvements to community facilities in the Borough. This could be provided as an upgraded facility on a redeveloped site, or as a new use on a nearby site.

**19.9** The Castle Point Infrastructure Delivery Plan has a regularly updated schedule of infrastructure improvements that are planned across the Borough, including cost estimates and progress updates.

**19.10** Accessibility of community facilities is a fundamental consideration. Community facilities should be capable of being used by everyone within the community regardless of disability, or the ability of an individual to drive or own a car. Therefore, community buildings should be designed to allow for

disabled access and should be located in order to provide the opportunity for as many people as possible to access the facility by foot and/or by public transport.

**19.11** Sites where many facilities are located together, are supported due to the benefits they offer in terms of accessibility to those without private means of transport. The development of community hubs can be an efficient way of delivering multiple uses on a single site, providing flexibility for different users at different times of the day or week.

**19.12** Flexibility is also essential to the design of new and improved community facilities. This will ensure that they meet the changing needs of the community into the future, assisting with enhancing community resilience by enabling the community to adapt spaces and places to meet their needs. For example, community facilities provide additional opportunities to provide community refuges and safe havens in the event of a natural or man-made incident. The Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan supports the use of community spaces in this way.

**19.13** For the purposes of this Policy, community facilities can be defined as including children's play and recreation facilities, services for young people, older people and disabled people, as well as health facilities, facilities for emergency services, including police facilities, education facilities, libraries, community halls, criminal justice facilities meeting rooms, places of worship, public toilets, pubs and post offices.

**19.14** In order to secure improvements to community facilities, Conditions and/or Section 106 Agreements will be used. These will need to be proportionate to the scale and value of development, and considered in line with other development priorities.

**19.15** The Council recognises the community value that pubs offer and restricts their change of use or demolition. The Localism Act significantly increased local communities' powers to resist the loss of pubs, by listing them as Assets of Community Value, and by encouraging community ownership.



### Policy Infra2 – Education, Skills and Learning

1. The change or use or redevelopment of educational establishments will only be permitted if it has been identified by ECC or other educational providers, they are surplus to educational requirements.
2. Where a development proposal, either individually or cumulatively, increases demand for education facilities beyond those available within the local area, development will be required to provide land for a new educational facility, expand or alter an existing facility and/or make a proportionate contribution to fund necessary improvements to education facilities.
3. The Council will work with ECC and other education providers to deliver improvements to schools and other educational facilities which :
  - a. Enhance the quality and choice of education and learning opportunities in the Borough;
  - b. Support a successful local economy;
  - c. Are in locations that are accessible by a wide range of transport modes and create safe direct walking and cycling routes to school; and
  - d. Provide opportunities for out of hours community activities and benefit through the wider use of school facilities, such as halls and sports facilities.

### Reasoned Justification

**19.16** The NPPF stresses the importance of local authorities ensuring that a sufficient choice of early years, school and post 16 places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.

**19.17** For the purpose of this policy, education facilities include, but are not limited to early years and childcare (full day care, pre-schools, child minders,

school run early years provision, and ‘wrap around care’ – breakfast, after school and holiday clubs), schools (primary, secondary and Post 16 Education), Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), colleges, libraries, youth facilities, employment and skills measures and other community learning spaces.

**19.18** There are many ways in which people can be engaged in education, skills and learning, including the provision of local employment and skills opportunities arising from new developments. The need for each type of provision varies depending on the age group served and the flexibility in the type of provision under consideration.

**19.19** ECC as the Education Authority has the responsibility for early years and school place planning. ECC identifies the need for school places and identifies surpluses or deficits through the Ten Year Plan Meeting Demand for School Places in Essex. Places for early years and childcare are assessed through a provider termly headcount and published. This informs the service on the need for additional sustainable, high quality early years and childcare provision that meets the needs of the community. Whether the change of use or redevelopment of independent schools would be considered surplus to educational requirements will be considered on a case by case basis.

**19.20** The Castle Point Infrastructure Delivery Plan establishes where new educational facilities are required based on the growth identified within this Plan. Developers will be expected to provide land and/or financial contributions for new or expanded additional school/early years places or to create new educational establishments arising from the need generated from the development.

**19.21** The Council does not anticipate a significant increase in demand for additional further education provision within Castle Point in the long-term and it is unlikely that additional facilities will be needed to address short term demand, as further education can be offered in a more flexible way than school-based education. The Council are aware of changing requirements of further education fields and the Council is working with its partners in order to ensure that there are appropriate facilities for post-16 education. The USP (SEEVIC) Campus on Kiln Road currently provides Further and Higher Education and the Council will work closely with the College to facilitate further investment in the campus.

**19.22** In relation to both planned and unplanned growth regard should be had to the “Essex County Council Developers’ Guide to Infrastructure Contributions” in order to determine the level of contributions likely to be sought. Where new schools and early years and childcare provision is required, the land provided by the developer must also meet the criteria set out in the Guidance including the design and layout of school sites and evidence in the form of a Land Compliance Report.

## Early Years and Childcare

**19.23** The *Castle Point Borough Infrastructure Delivery Plan* outlines existing and future available capacity within early years and childcare facilities in the Borough. The provision of early years and childcare can be provided from a range of private, voluntary, and independent facilities such as full day care nurseries, pre-schools, childminders, school run provision and wrap around care (which includes breakfast, after school and holiday clubs).

**19.24** It indicates that there is a lack of provision of Early Years spaces in the Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley area. The introduction of new early years entitlements from September 2025 means that there will be further demand from eligible working families, with a lack of sufficient spaces for 0–3-year olds in particular.

**19.25** There is therefore a need to secure additional spaces in Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley specifically. Policy Thun2 identifies the need for provision a 56 place early years childcare nursery. On Canvey it will be necessary to consider the need for spaces in line with changes to entitlement and to adjust for any demand arising from the Jewish community. Similarly Policy C4 requires the masterplan to consider provision of a 56 place early years childcare nursery. The expansion of existing facilities will also be supported.



Photography: Charlie Stafford, for *This is Us*.



## Schools

**19.26** Essex County Council has the statutory responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient school places across the County.

**19.27** The *Infrastructure Delivery Plan* Baseline indicates that in terms of primary school provision there are surplus places on Canvey Island, Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley. This means that as development is delivered in Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley it may be necessary to make additional provision for primary school places. The level of growth from this Plan can be accommodated within the current surplus of places in existing primary schools in the area. Minor amendments to existing schools such as bringing currently unused rooms, back into use may be required.

**19.28** Whilst there is currently surplus provision on Canvey, it may be the case that this is taken up over time by the growing Jewish community who have a different demographic to the wider community, with around 70% of their population comprising young people under the age of 20. Currently, these children travel for their schooling or are home educated.

**19.29** In terms of secondary school provision meanwhile, there is currently surplus provision in Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley, and Canvey Island. It is not likely that significant extra secondary school provision is required during the Plan period. However, again, it may be necessary to make provision for the Jewish community over the Plan period, as their population grows.

**19.30** There are two schools for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Castle Point - the Glenwood School and Cedar Hall School. These schools provide places for pupils from an extended catchment area and have an important role to play in responding to parent choice for those pupils with special educational needs. Any demand for SEND places for children aged 0-19 years will need to be accommodated for those pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in mainstream schools and a special school placement, in accordance with the Department for Education requirements.

**19.31** Whilst schools in Castle Point primarily meet local needs, there are cross-boundary flows of pupils. Principally, some children from within the Basildon Borough and Southend-on-Sea City areas attend secondary schools in Benfleet, whilst some children from Castle Point attend the grammar

schools in Southend. The two special educational needs schools meanwhile serve an area wider than Castle Point. These cross-boundary flows have been accounted for when determining additional need arising from the growth in this Plan.

**19.32** ECC has a duty to secure sufficient, suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an EHCP is maintained. To fulfil this, new developments will be required to provide commensurate contributions to support these measures to provide employment and skills opportunities within the area.



## Post 16 - Further and Higher Education

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**19.33** There are currently four locations providing post-16 education provision in Castle Point. USP (SEEVIC) college, located in Thundersley, with a smaller campus called Extend on Canvey Island, is the largest provider in the Borough offering a range of academic, high education and vocational courses. The King John School and Appleton School, in Thundersley and Benfleet, have sixth forms which also offer a range of academic and vocational courses for a smaller number of students. Some people meanwhile travel out of the Borough for further education, with South Essex College having locations in Basildon and Southend town centres.

**19.34** The JSNA A profile of people living in Castle Point found that aspirations in Castle Point are particularly low compared to the Essex average (54%), with just 35% of secondary school pupils wanting to go to university. It is possible to access higher education courses at USP (SEEVIC), and over the past decade, there have been increased opportunities to undertake higher education studies within commuting distance of Castle Point in Southend, Chelmsford, Colchester and East London in particular.

**19.35** The ECC preferred approach for securing contributions for post 16 is through Employment and Skills Plans, as these provide the necessary flexibility for a range of skills provision, which may include sixth form provision.

**19.36** Employment and Skills plans and financial contributions towards employment and skills training is set out in the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. This should include maximising apprenticeship and training opportunities (such as school/college engagement, and work experience) arising from new developments, and the direct delivery of skills and employability programmes. The LPA and ECC can support in both identifying the skills and employment need in an area and in calculating the appropriate contributions. The adult population in Castle Point has a relatively low qualification base. Only 18.5% of the residents in the Borough have level 4 qualifications or above. The proportion of people with no qualifications is meanwhile very high at 23.9%. Education deprivation, as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, is particularly high on Canvey Island, reflecting the inequalities that exist in Castle Point.

**19.37** Adult education has a role to play in addressing issues associated with a low skills base and inequalities in educational attainment. ECC have increased the profile of Adult Community Learning in both supporting the economy, and in providing opportunities for people to learn new skills. Adult learning therefore has a role to play in addressing deprivation and inequalities in the population by helping people become more employable, and able to take on better paying jobs. It also has a role to play in reducing social isolation by providing opportunities for the active older population to get involved in new activities and meet new people. The demand for adult education may therefore grow over time, although this will not necessarily be linked to demographic change.

## Youth Services

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**19.38** There are several organisations that provide young people with opportunities to extend their skills and abilities beyond traditional education through community engagement and activity, and through participation in extra curricula activities. These organisations usually require additional facilities to run services but require the regular and continuing use of existing facilities within the community. Other military, community and charity-based groups also operate within Castle Point to offer opportunities for young people to develop their skills and fulfil their potential.

## Libraries

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**19.39** There are currently four libraries within the Borough. These provide opportunities for the whole community to access self-learning tools including books, computers and other types of media. The way people access library services is changing and will continue to change as a result of technology. The Council will work closely with ECC to ensure ongoing access to library services for residents.



### Policy Infra3 – Improving Health and Wellbeing

The Council will work to improve the health and wellbeing of residents by:

- a. Working in partnership with the NHS and Public Health to ensure residents can access high quality primary and secondary health care services and that new and improved services are put in place, where appropriate, to serve the growing population;
- b. Seeking mitigation, provided and/or secured by planning obligations or by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as appropriate, towards new or enhanced health facilities from developers where new housing development would result in a shortfall or worsening of health provision;
- c. Supporting the NHS, Social Services and Public Health to deliver a service which meets the needs of residents within the local community;
- d. Working with stakeholders on projects that provide better service integration, locating services where access can be improved, particularly for vulnerable groups and communities;
- e. Encouraging healthier communities through targeting issues identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment;
- f. Requiring a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on all development sites delivering:
  - i. 50 or more dwellings;
  - ii. all development in Use Class C2 (Residential Institutions);
  - iii. all non-residential developments delivering 1,000 square metres or more gross internal floor space; and
  - iv. 'sui generis' hot food takeaways.
- g. The HIA should be carried out in accordance with the latest Healthy Places Guidance (as promoted locally through the Essex Planning Officers' Association) and responds to the latest local public health data and community insight gathered by the applicant's team;

- h. The HIA scope should be agreed with the Council's development management and public health professionals prior to commencement of the assessment at the earliest opportunity; and
- i. The HIA should be undertaken at an early stage of the development process and there should be evidence that the assessment has informed the overall design of the proposal.

### Reasoned Justification

**19.40** An overarching objective of the NPPF is that the planning system and local planning policies should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and plan to meet current and future need to support the community's health and wellbeing.

**19.41** There are currently sixteen pharmacies, nine dental surgeries, ten opticians, four community clinics and thirteen GP practices in Castle Point. These facilities provide a full range of services to residents, including outreach clinics from Southend University Hospital.

**19.42** Despite this provision, there is currently a deficit in GP practice space in Castle Point of around 2,796m<sup>2</sup>. This means that as new residential development is permitted, new healthcare space is required. Developer contributions will be secured for this purpose, with the NHS determining how new provision should be provided. The Council will support the NHS in this task, and where possible help to identify land and/or buildings for new provision.

**19.43** There is no hospital within the Borough, the closest hospitals are in Basildon and Southend, approximately 6 miles away from central areas of the Borough or Chelmsford which is around 19 miles away. During the [Issues and Options Consultation](#), a key concern raised was the lack of healthcare provision in the Borough, and how existing facilities nearby are over stretched. However the Council will also work with partners in the NHS to retain and continue to extend outreach services from the Mid and South Essex University Hospitals into the local area. Residents value access to local blood test, X-ray

and others services normally provided in hospitals, and opportunities to broaden this provision would be welcomed.

**19.44** More broadly, the Council will work with the NHS, Public Health and other partners through the South East Essex Alliance and the Castle Point and Rochford Health and Wellbeing Board to address issues and priorities emerging through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the [Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). This will not only involve improvements to facilities and services, but also improvements to housing and to the environment, such as requiring good accessibility standards in new homes, improving active design, improving the quality of open spaces and making our roads safer for walking and cycling.

**19.45** The Essex JSNA 2022 sets out an evidence base to inform decisions on health and wellbeing priorities across the county. Accordingly, it is used by local authorities, Health and Wellbeing Boards and NHS leaders. It is an ongoing, iterative process presented as a suite of resources – interactive reports, briefings, downloadable reports, and datasets – that is updated regularly as new analysis and insight becomes available. The Essex JSNA has been developed to consider the wider determinants of health, using the County Health Rankings Model and informs the [Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), as well as more local health and well-being strategies for the Essex Borough, district and city councils. The more detailed individual district profiles are a key information and evidence source for Local Plan preparation. These profiles provide detailed insights into the current health of local populations and trends for the future, e.g. increasing incidence of obesity, health inequalities within districts across different geographies, or other avoidable health challenges.

**19.46** The [Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) has been updated to cover the period from 2022 – 2026. This identifies the following five overarching priority areas:

1. Improving mental health and wellbeing
2. Physical activity and healthy weight
3. Supporting long term independence
4. Alcohol and substance misuse
5. Health inequalities & the wider determinants of Health

**19.47** With an ageing population in Castle Point, social care is an important component of local service provision. The policy on specialist housing addresses the potential needs of this population in terms of housing, but social care provision also includes the provision of day centres, respite care and other services and activities for older people and others with support needs. It is critical that these social care services are provided within our communities because they help to improve wellbeing, reduce social isolation and overall reduce pressure on healthcare services. Good community based social care provision can also prevent or delay the need for residential/ nursing care which is especially expensive.

**19.48** The Council will therefore support the provision of social care provision in the community and will work with ECC to secure appropriate contributions towards enhanced provision from appropriate developments.

**19.49** To ensure that new development contributes towards positive health and wellbeing outcomes a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) will be required consistent with thresholds set out in Policy Infra3. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a tool that can be used to assess a proposal, plan or policy and determine the positive and negative impacts that it may have to health and wellbeing. Through this process it is possible to identify potential negative impacts to health and wellbeing and provide a way to mitigate that impact to result in better, healthier places.

**19.50** The Essex Health Places document is an advice note on how planners, developers and designers can incorporate health into proposals and the key attributes in creating healthy places. This includes guidance on how a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) should be undertaken. It is important that these are undertaken in consultation with the Council and public health professionals, and are prepared early in the plan making process to effectively inform the design of the development. Late stage Health Impact Assessments (HIA) are less likely to be able to achieve a full range of positive health outcomes.



## Policy Infra4 – Open Spaces

1. Local Open Spaces are designated on the [Policies Map](#) and in [Appendix J](#).
2. Development resulting in a loss of any existing or publicly accessible open space and/or playing pitch will only be supported where:
  - a. An assessment has been undertaken which indicates that the existing facility is surplus to requirements (in terms of quantity, quality, access and value) and the reduction in open space will not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area; or
  - b. The loss will be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in suitable locations; or
  - c. The development is for alternative sports or recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or most recent use.
3. Proposals which have a primary purpose of improving access to open space, including those open spaces which are not currently publicly accessible, will be supported.
4. Limited minor scale ancillary development on open spaces will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:
  - a. The development will increase opportunity for public recreational use or improve the recreational quality of the space;
  - b. The overall use of the space is retained for recreational purposes and does not prejudice the use of the open space;
  - c. The reduction in open space will not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area;
  - d. The development will not impact on the ability of the open space to provide other environmental services and benefits, including but not limited to, biodiversity, flood storage and the accommodation of future flood defence works.

5. Major development proposals in premium sustainability locations and on other urban brownfield sites will be required to make a contribution towards improving the quality, quantity and/or accessibility of nearby open space provision, recognising the impact increased intensity of use may have on that space. Development in other locations may also be required to make contributions where the evidence demonstrates deficits of open space typologies in terms of quantity, access or quality; and where it is not possible to provide on-site.
6. New open spaces will be required for major developments on grey belt sites and greenfield sites in the urban area. This will be required where there is a deficiency (by quantity or access) of open space types, or where the implementation of the development itself will lead to a deficiency. The benchmark scale of development that is normally expected to provide equipped/designated open spaces on site is as follows:

Type of Provision	10-19 Dwellings	20-49 Dwellings	50-199 Dwellings	200+ Dwellings
Allotments and Informal Growing Spaces	X	✓	✓	✓
Amenity Green Space	X	✓	✓	✓
Parks and Recreation Grounds	X	X	X	✓
Play Space (Children)	X	X	✓	✓
Play Space (Youth)	X	X	X	✓
Accessible Natural Green Space	X	✓	✓	✓

7. Where part 9 of this policy applies to a proposal for older peoples' accommodation, equipped play spaces for children and young people will not be required.

## Reasoned Justification

**19.51** Open spaces play a valuable role in contributing to the delivery of national and local priorities and targets, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and health and wellbeing.

**19.52** The Castle Point Open Space Needs Assessment recommends standards for ensuring there is an adequate provision of open space across the Borough over the Plan period. It establishes quality standards for a whole range of different types of open spaces, and quantity and accessibility standards for the most common types of open space.

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1,000 pop)	Access standard (walking time, straight line)	Additional open space to be delivered over the Plan period
Allotments	0.2	15 mins (720m)	2.45 Ha
Amenity Green Space (sites >0.1 Ha)	0.6	10 mins (480m)	7.43 Ha
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.1	15 mins (720m)	13.46 Ha
Play Space (Children)	0.7	10 mins (480m)	0.87 Ha
Play Space (Youth)	0.7	15 mins (720m)	0.87 Ha
Accessible Natural Green Space	1.80	15 mins (720m)	22.03 Ha
Total for new provision	3.84		47.02 Ha

**19.53** There is a need to improve the overall level of open space provision in the Borough. Given the urban first approach to development being taken, it may not be possible to secure this level of additional open space provision. However, there is scope to think about how we improve our open spaces to maximise opportunities. For example, children's play space does not have to be a stand-alone area in a field, it can be an obstacle course in a woodland. The lack of accessible natural green space in some areas may be offset by access to linear spaces such as the sea wall or Canvey lake. What is critical is that we continue to protect open spaces and enhance them so that both

young people and adults have access to open space near to where they live that meets their needs.

**19.54** In addition to meeting the needs of residents, open spaces have an important role to play in addressing other matters. A key role for open space in Castle Point is helping to manage recreational pressures away from areas with nature conservation value to less sensitive areas.

**19.55** Some open spaces in Castle Point also provide flood water storage. Other open spaces are located adjacent to the sea defences on Canvey Island and may need to be kept clear of development to allow future flood defence works to take place. Open spaces are part of the Green Infrastructure network in Castle Point, and consideration of the other environmental services that open space provides should be a consideration when determining applications affecting such areas.

**19.56** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage for any facility near to Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA or Holehaven Creek SSSI (as functionally linked land), in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.





### Policy Infra5 – Sports Provision

To increase participation in physical activity, the Council will seek to secure the following for indoor leisure, playing pitches and sports:

- a. The retention, and increased access for the public to existing indoor leisure and sports facilities;
- b. The use of a wider range of existing facilities for indoor leisure and sports;
- c. In line with the most up to date Built Indoor Facilities Strategy, where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought to enable the delivery of additional or enhanced indoor leisure and sport facilities.
- d. In line with the most up to date Planning Pitch Strategy, where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought to enable the delivery of additional or enhanced outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches.

### Reasoned Justification

**19.57** The NPPF is clear that access to opportunities for sport and physical activity is important to the health and well-being of communities.

**19.58** Locally, the Health and Wellbeing Partnership aims to increase adult physical activity in the Borough, which has been identified as an issue in the Borough. Castle Point has the highest level of obesity amongst the adult population in Essex, and relatively low levels of adult participation in regular physical activity.

**19.59** The Castle Point Built Facilities Strategy Assessment Report found that most of the sports assessed have sufficient facilities in the Borough or nearby to support current need, although to improve and preserve participation levels most venues are encouraged to enhance or maintain existing facilities. It is

essential that Castle Point provides a variety of different sporting activities to suit all abilities and ages.

**19.60** Furthermore, the Built Facilities Strategy concludes that key public sports halls and swimming pools are operating close to capacity and may therefore struggle to accommodate the additional demand generated by growth in this Plan. There is therefore a need to enhance or provide new facilities to address any growth in demand.

**19.61** It should be noted that indoor physical recreation is not limited to provision within purpose-built leisure centres and gymnasiums. Exercise classes are regularly provided in community halls and school halls across the Borough and contribute towards the variety of opportunities for residents to take part in physical activity.

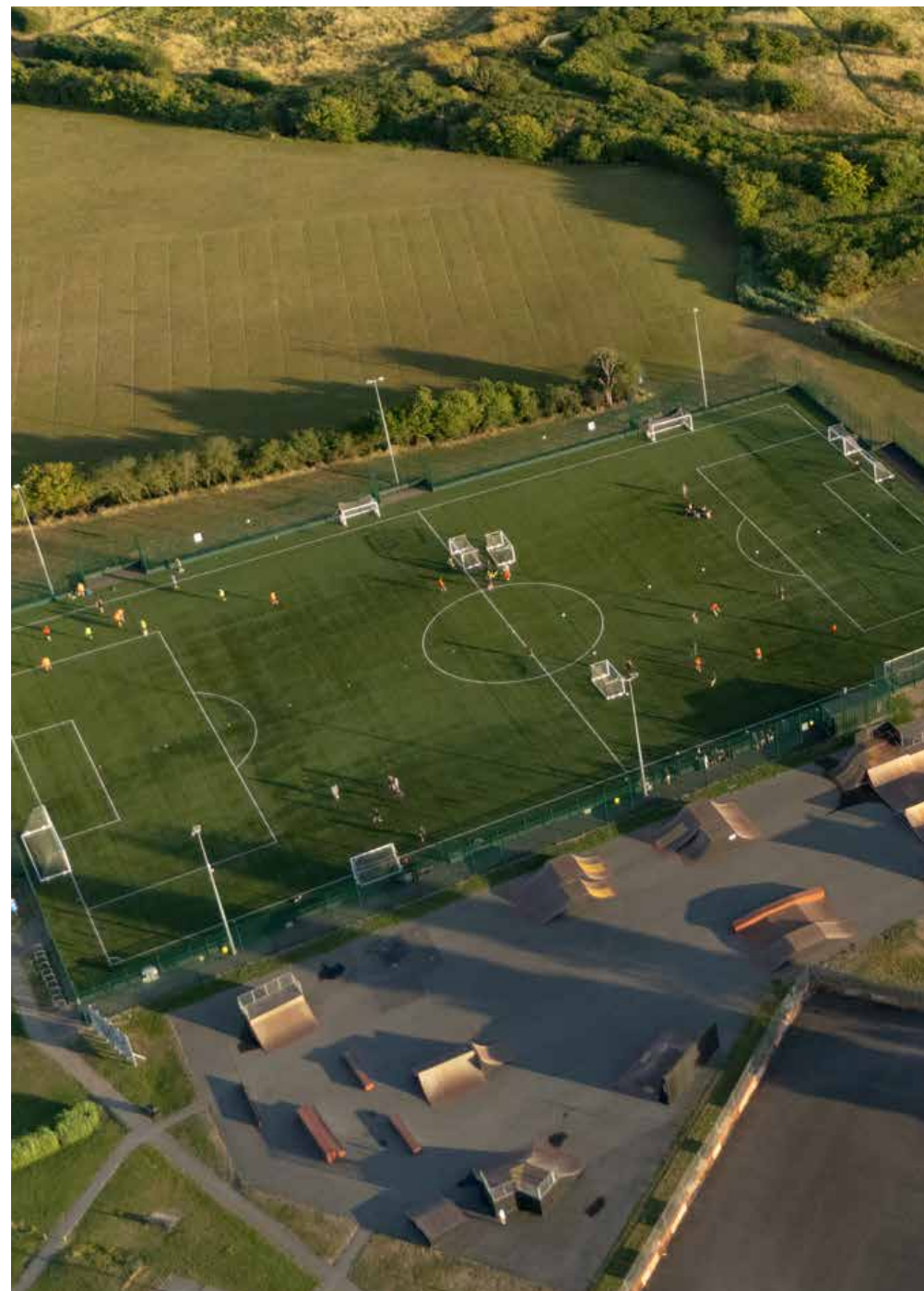
**19.62** The Built Facilities Strategy recommends the use of community use agreements to secure access for the community to school halls and other such places where indoor activities can take place outside operational hours.

**19.63** The Built Facilities Strategy recommends the use of developer contributions calculated using the Sport England Facilities Calculator to fund needs arising from growth.

**19.64** With regard to formal outdoor sports facilities, the Castle Point Playing Pitch Strategy and Castle Point Playing Pitch Assessment identified the need for some additional pitch provision in Castle Point to address both existing deficiencies and also the needs arising from population growth. It also identified the need to improve the quality of some aspects of provision. The assessment specifically found that there is a need to provide additional third generation pitches (3G) (artificial grass) in the Borough, this will help enhance current participation levels as well as reducing strain on current facilities. The outcomes of the Playing Pitch Strategy are reflected in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. In order to deliver improvements in provision, the use of community use agreements is advocated to secure access to those outdoor sports facilities located in schools and colleges. The Council will use Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator to inform developer contributions for any new facilities required to support such growth.

**19.65** New development will introduce additional need for open space and for outdoor sports facilities. The Open Space Assessment indicates where it may be appropriate to secure this on-site. It also provides the costs that should be charged in relation to contributions in the event that such provision is made off-site, or a contribution is made in lieu of on-site provision.

**19.66** Meanwhile, in order to ensure the ongoing sustainability of provision the Playing Pitch Assessment is clear that financial contributions should be secured towards new outdoor sports facilities provision from developments. These contributions should be used towards community based or Boroughwide delivery of pitches, with the sports governing bodies and the Playing Pitch Strategy taking a lead on what that provision should look like. As an example the Football Association have a Local Football Facilities Plan which sets out their priorities for local football pitch provision. The Playing Pitch Strategy is supported by the Playing Pitch Calculator which enables playing pitch contributions to be calculated.





### Policy Infra6 - Communications Infrastructure

1. All new residential, commercial developments and other appropriate developments/uses must be served by a gigabit broadband connection to the premises and 4G/5G mobile connectivity. Connection should include the installation of appropriate cabling within the homes or business units (or other buildings) as well as a fully enabled connection of the developed areas to at least two open access network providers, enabling future occupiers to subscribe to gigabit broadband services without the need for further engineering work.
2. When determining applications, or prior approval applications for the siting and design of permanent telecommunications equipment and other associated permanent structures, there will be a presumption in favour of proposals which can demonstrate:
  - a. They are designed sensitively and appropriately in respect of their setting and location; and
  - b. Where the proposed mast, antennae, base station or other equipment will emit time-varying electric, magnetic or electromagnetic fields (EMF), there is:
    - i. An International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) declaration issued and signed by a qualified and competent person from a registered company that is on the OFCOM Register of persons with powers under the Electronic Communications Code and contains the relative measurements that allow for public scrutiny; and
    - ii. A satisfactory risk assessment provided which includes the outcomes of consultation with all residents and businesses within 500m of the installation, including any schools, colleges or residential institutions. Where the consultation highlights risks to persons that could be affected by levels of EMF radiation below ICNIRP safety thresholds this should be highlighted and addressed in the risk assessment; and

- iii. Information that demonstrates that satisfactory consideration has been given to areas of non-compliance (exclusion zones)<sup>2</sup> and cumulative impact, to the extent that risk to human health has been avoided. The Council will apply the agent of change principle when determining if exclusion zones are appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> See Code of [Practice for Wireless Development in England](#) (para 44, Annex C scenarios)

### Reasoned Justification

**19.67** The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) supports the provision of high quality and reliable communications infrastructure to deliver economic growth. The Government has confirmed that telecommunications infrastructure should be considered alongside other key infrastructure such as roads and utilities.

**19.68** Digital connectivity is becoming increasingly essential to access services and to access work. To this end the Council will require all new developments to have access to fibre to the premises services. The Government have committed to all existing homes having access to fibre to the premises by December 2026. This is being delivered in Castle Point over the course of 2024 – 2025, and therefore there will be an existing fibre network for new developments to make use of. It is therefore expected that this requirement is broadly deliverable across the Borough.

**19.69** Another key component of modern communications is the mobile phone network, with existing 3G, 4G and 5G infrastructure present across the Borough. Many people rely on the mobile network for their day-to-day activities and business whilst they are out and about, and this is therefore also critical infrastructure.

**19.70** However, initial roll out of 5G provision has highlighted some design, layout and siting concerns that need to be addressed in future provision. The Essex Design Guide includes a section on ‘Planning for 5G’ including a

planning protocol to guide the pre-application and planning application process where planning permission is required for new infrastructure or equipment.

**19.71** Furthermore, the recent case of *Thomas v Cheltenham Borough Council* [2024] EWHC 1035 (Admin) highlights the potential risk to some individuals with medical devices from the electro-magnetic field (EMF) associated with such installations.

**19.72** Traditionally, certification of equipment under the ICNIRP Statutory Guidelines is sufficient. However, the 'Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England' provides guidance to Code Operators (referred to as 'operators' throughout the Code of Practice), including the Mobile Network Operators and wireless infrastructure providers, their agents and contractors, Local Planning Authorities, and all other relevant stakeholders in England on how to carry out their roles and responsibilities when installing wireless network infrastructure. Amongst other things, this requires consultation with the public prior to application.

**19.73** The case of *Thomas v Cheltenham Borough Council* indicates that where the public raise issues with regard to the impact of the EMF on medical devices, this should be taken into account in the decision making process. A risk assessment addressing any concerns raised during public consultation should therefore be prepared to accompany any application.

**19.74** The Code also expects the operators to address any issues of non-compliance with ICNIRP guidance. This may include introducing an exclusion zone around equipment. Where such an exclusion zone would prevent people enjoying their existing property or would exclude people from using public land which they can currently access, the proposal will be considered against the agent of change principle and may not be acceptable.





## 20. Promoting Sustainable Transport

### Castle Point Context

**20.1** Essex County Council is the local Highways and Transportation Authority for Castle Point. It is responsible for local transport planning and the provision and maintenance of the highway network and public rights of way network in Castle Point.

**20.2** The approach to planning for transport is set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Currently this is set out in LTP3 adopted in 2011. LTP3 is outcome focused with a vision for transport provision in Essex to create ‘a transport system which supports sustainable economic growth and helps deliver the best quality of life for the residents of Essex’.

**20.3** Since LTP3 was adopted in 2011 there has been an evolution of policy which places a greater emphasis on the provision and use of active (walking and cycling) and sustainable transport and the decarbonisation of the transport network.

**20.4** This shift in local policy has been driven by the Essex Climate Action Commission work which makes recommendations to achieve net zero carbon transport emissions in Essex by 2050. The Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral report details an Avoid, Shift and Improve approach for reducing transport emissions:

- **Avoid:** encourage residents to avoid or reduce unnecessary private car journeys through changing travel behaviour with regard to how and why we are travelling;
- **Shift:** embrace a shift in the use of active and sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and taking the bus or train to encourage their use and reduce pollution and congestion; and
- **Improve:** where road journeys are essential vehicle efficiency needs to be improved by making alternative fuel options, such as electric vehicles viable. It must be made easier for people to take alternative methods of transport and to improve their reliability and quality.

**20.5** ECC have set out the vision to deliver and enable safer, greener and healthier travel for current and future users of the transport network in Essex. Greater emphasis should also be placed upon the provision and use of sustainable transport and the decarbonisation of the transport network as set out in the [Essex Climate Action Plan](#) and [Transport East Transport Strategy](#).

**20.6** ECC are currently in the process of updating the LTP, with a new LTP4 scheduled for adoption in 2025. LTP4 will reflect the updated Essex local policies and place significant emphasis on supporting sustainable growth, increased access to opportunities, enhanced wellbeing and the long term sustainability of the Essex transport network. It will also contain a South Essex Implementation Plan covering Castle Point, Basildon and Rochford Districts and parts of South Chelmsford and East Brentwood.

**20.7** Transport East is the sub-regional Transport body covering Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend and Thurrock providing a single regional voice for transport investment and transport priorities. The Transport East Strategy to 2050 similarly advocates an avoid, shift and improve approach through its goals for the regional transport network to:

- Reduce demand through local living;
- Shifting modes from private car to active and passenger transport and goods to rail;
- Switching to net zero carbon fuels at the earliest opportunity; and
- Promoting zero carbon growth by supporting authorities and developers to plan, locate and design new development that reduces the need for people to make carbon intensive transport trips in the future.

**20.8** Whilst Castle Point sits within the area covered by the Essex LTP, Southend to the east and Thurrock to the west, unitary authorities are also preparing new LTPs to align with the Transport East Strategy. Work at a South Essex level is underway to develop a shared strategic approach to transport planning across the area, to align and enhance cross boundary improvements and investment to the strategic transport network and opportunities for economic growth.

### Policy T1 - Transport Strategy

The Council will work with the local Highways and Transportation Authorities and service providers to secure transport network improvements in Castle Point to reduce carbon emissions and be net zero by 2050, and ensure local air quality is maintained at acceptable levels. It will achieve this by:

1. Securing development in sustainable and accessible locations with good access to services and integrated transport, including walking and cycling infrastructure and public transport. Developer contributions will be secured to enhance access where necessary. Development in locations with poor accessibility will be refused in accordance with Policy T6;
2. Requiring new development to be designed using active design principles so that people are able to walk, cycle and wheel in their local area with ease;
3. Securing improvements to provide well connected walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure to key employment and education destinations, funded through developer contributions where appropriate;
4. Securing improvements to the reliability, frequency and quality of the local bus network. Developer contributions will be secured to ensure new development is well connected into local bus services;
5. Creating mobility hubs at Benfleet Station, Kiln Road, employment areas and town centres to which are of high quality design and accessibility;
6. Supporting the provision of new public transport, walking and cycling, and more efficient road connections which connect residents into employment and training opportunities and services across South Essex;
7. Supporting the provision of alternative fuel and EV charging infrastructure,

8. Supporting the transport network improvements of routes and junctions within the Borough aimed at reducing congestion providing more reliable journey times and reducing vehicle emissions. Where congestion at a junction cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level, development impacting on the junction will be refused in line with policy T5.





## Reasoned Justification

**20.9** Castle Point is a green Borough, and it is important that its transport network reflects that. The Council is therefore embracing the avoid, shift and improve approach established through the Essex Climate Action Commission through this Plan and will support the local Highway and Transport Authority in moving to an integrated transport approach. In doing so, this will also help to ensure that transport related emissions do not worsen to the detriment of local air quality and the health of the community.

**20.10** This approach aligns with the urban first approach adopted for development through this Plan. In delivering higher density development through the optimisation of land in the existing urban areas, we are looking to use the existing transport networks for more people by facilitating the provision of active and sustainable transport. On the one hand this is good, as it brings people and what they are doing closer together, meaning they don't have to travel so far to interact. However, on the other hand it puts more pressure on what is already a highly congested network, both at peak times and at various points over the weekends.

**20.11** It is therefore critical that this Plan supports an integrated transport approach to help with the delivery of places that are safe and convenient to walk and cycle around, as advocated through the active design principles developed by Sports England and the Essex Design Guide. These contribute both to the creation of sustainable places and to better health and wellbeing outcomes.

**20.12** It is also critical that this Plan supports improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure and to public transport connectivity.

**20.13** The Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Castle Point identifies opportunities to improve walking and cycling across the area. Further prioritisation will be undertaken to identify a pipeline of schemes that can be subject to future funding bids for their design and delivery, linked to the future demand arising from planned and future growth to help increase the propensity to both walk and cycle across the area. However, on-road opportunities in Castle Point are limited due to the width of roadways and the level of traffic. The Council will therefore work with the local Highways and Transport Authority to identify additional routes through open spaces

and through new developments over the Plan period to complement the on-road provision. A countywide LCWIP is also being prepared to develop routes connecting more rural areas to cities and towns across administrative boundaries.



Photography: Sally Chinea, for *This is Us*.

**20.14** ECC are implementing the Essex bus strategy. Currently the uptake of bus as a mode of travel is low. There is a bus service improvement plan for the Borough and neighbouring authorities. This is potentially because bus services operating within Castle Point are part of the Southend and Basildon bus networks. This means Castle Point is peripheral to the network and whilst there are good services during the day on most routes, service frequency is not as good in the evenings and on Sundays. However there is an opportunity to increase usage through the urban first approach with higher density developments in and around town centres and transport hubs to facilitate improvements to bus services (routes and frequency).

**20.15** Additionally, there are areas of employment within Basildon and Southend, near the A127, that are not served by direct bus services from Castle Point, with journeys to these locations requiring a change of service and taking more than one hour. Furthermore, connections to Southend Hospital have been reduced and do not cover all parts of the Borough, which is significant for a community with an ageing population.

**20.16** There is therefore a need to improve the coverage, frequency, reliability and quality of bus services if a modal shift is to be achieved. This needs to be not just to key destinations within the Borough but also to destinations outside the Borough where there are employment opportunities, training provision and key services.

**20.17** Many journeys in Castle Point will continue to be made by car, especially in the short term before modal shift is achieved. It is therefore important for the local environment that we encourage a shift towards alternative fuels and electric vehicles.

**20.18** It is important that we improve the efficiency of the road network, both locally and at a sub-regional level to reduce emissions arising from waiting vehicles. These not only contribute towards carbon emissions and climate change, but also to poorer local air quality. The transport modelling for this Plan identifies where there are current congestion hotspots, and where these are likely to worsen into the future as a consequence of growth.

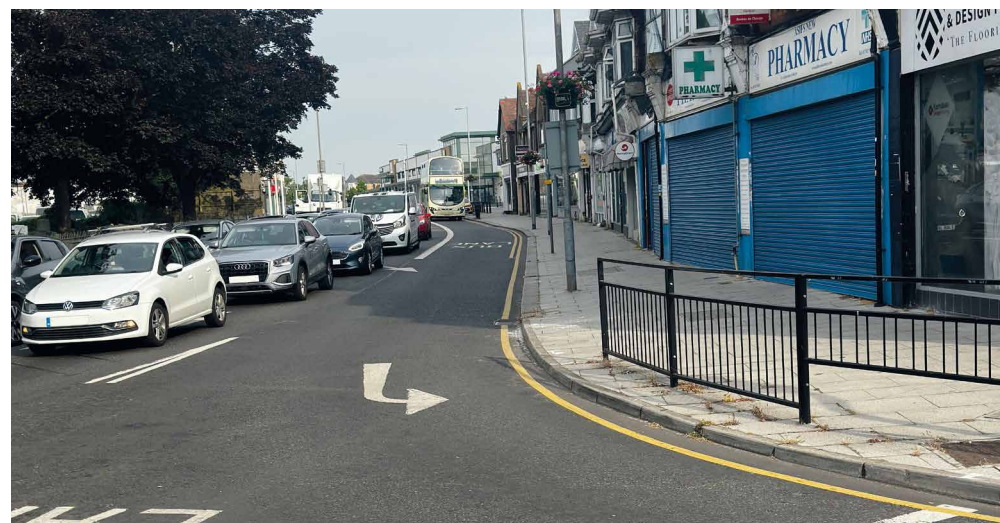
**20.19** In summary, based on the level of growth set out in the Plan, by 2043:

- Journey times in peak hours will be twice the journey time of that can occur at free flow on the A13, the A127 and the A130/Canvey Way.

- Queue lengths will worsen significantly at Tarpots, Sadlers Farm and Waterside Farm junctions.
- Canvey Way will be operating at over 100% capacity at peak times, and journey times will be 3 minutes longer in the morning peak and 2 minutes longer in the evening peak.
- The following other routes will also be at or over 100% capacity:
  - A13 around Sadlers Farm
  - A13 in Hadleigh
  - Long Road
  - A129 both north bound and south bound

**20.20** This means that whilst the focus on modal shift is important, it is also necessary to make improvements to local junctions and routes to ease the flow of traffic. This will aid bus services as well as private vehicles, as there is limited segregation of bus routes in Castle Point.

**20.21** It is also important to work with partners beyond our boundaries to explore opportunities for new routes that better connect people with services, jobs and training opportunities. This could involve new cycling connections, new public transport routes and services, new roads or potentially new services utilising the Thames. Work underway at a South Essex level is exploring these opportunities.





### Policy T2 - Highway Improvements

1. In line with policy T1, the Council will seek to manage congestion on key roads and junctions within the Borough by taking into account the transport improvements identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
2. Developments will be required to provide and/or make appropriate and proportionate financial contributions towards transport improvements identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
3. Where necessary, the Council will secure highway works (s278) and/or financial contributions (S106) to deliver highways projects necessary to accommodate the growth from this Plan.
4. Additional highway improvements or new access arrangements required to support development must complement the identified highway improvements. Where the delivery of other planned highway improvements is affected, the development may be refused, or a condition used to phase the development accordingly to minimise impact.
5. All highway improvements, including additional highway improvement or new access arrangements required to support development, must be designed to facilitate walking and cycling and the use of public transport. Where the design of such infrastructure does not achieve this or would frustrate existing walking and cycling movements or bus travel, it will not be acceptable, and the associated development will be refused.
6. The Council will support the local Highways and Transportation Authority in securing improvements to the A13, A127 and A130, and associated junctions including the A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange (short and long term).
7. The Council will resist development that would impact on the effective operation, safety or resilience of the A13, A127 or A130, or associated junctions.
8. The Council will work with partners to progress studies regarding improved access to and around Canvey Island.

9. Any improvements to accessing Canvey Island must avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites.

### Reasoned Justification

**20.22** Due to the physical constraints on the local and strategic highway network in the Borough and further afield, new infrastructure provision to the transport network is fundamental, including the provision of a wider choice of active and sustainable modes. Through the Essex Local Transport Plan and ongoing engagement in the preparation of the Plan with the Highways and Transportation Authority, site promoters and local residents, a number of measures have been identified to provide improvements to the transport network by all modes within the Borough.

**20.23** The transport modelling for this Plan has identified those transport improvements required to ensure that the delivery of this Plan does not have a severe impact on the transport network. This is important because congestion on roads and at junctions contributes to carbon emissions from waiting vehicles and has the potential to worsen local air quality.

**20.24** The transport improvements required by this Plan are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and developments will be expected to make appropriate and proportionate contributions towards their delivery. The costs set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan are fixed at a point in time, high level, and should be treated as indicative and subject to amendment taking into account any adjustment for inflation at the time any developer contributions are being negotiated.

**20.25** During the Plan period, windfall development will come forward impacting upon the transport network. Consequently, additional transport improvements may be required. This policy allows for this, but in doing so expects that these additional improvements complement the planned transportation infrastructure required to deliver the growth.

**20.26** All transport improvements, should be designed to ensure that high quality walking and cycling access is secured including safe and direct

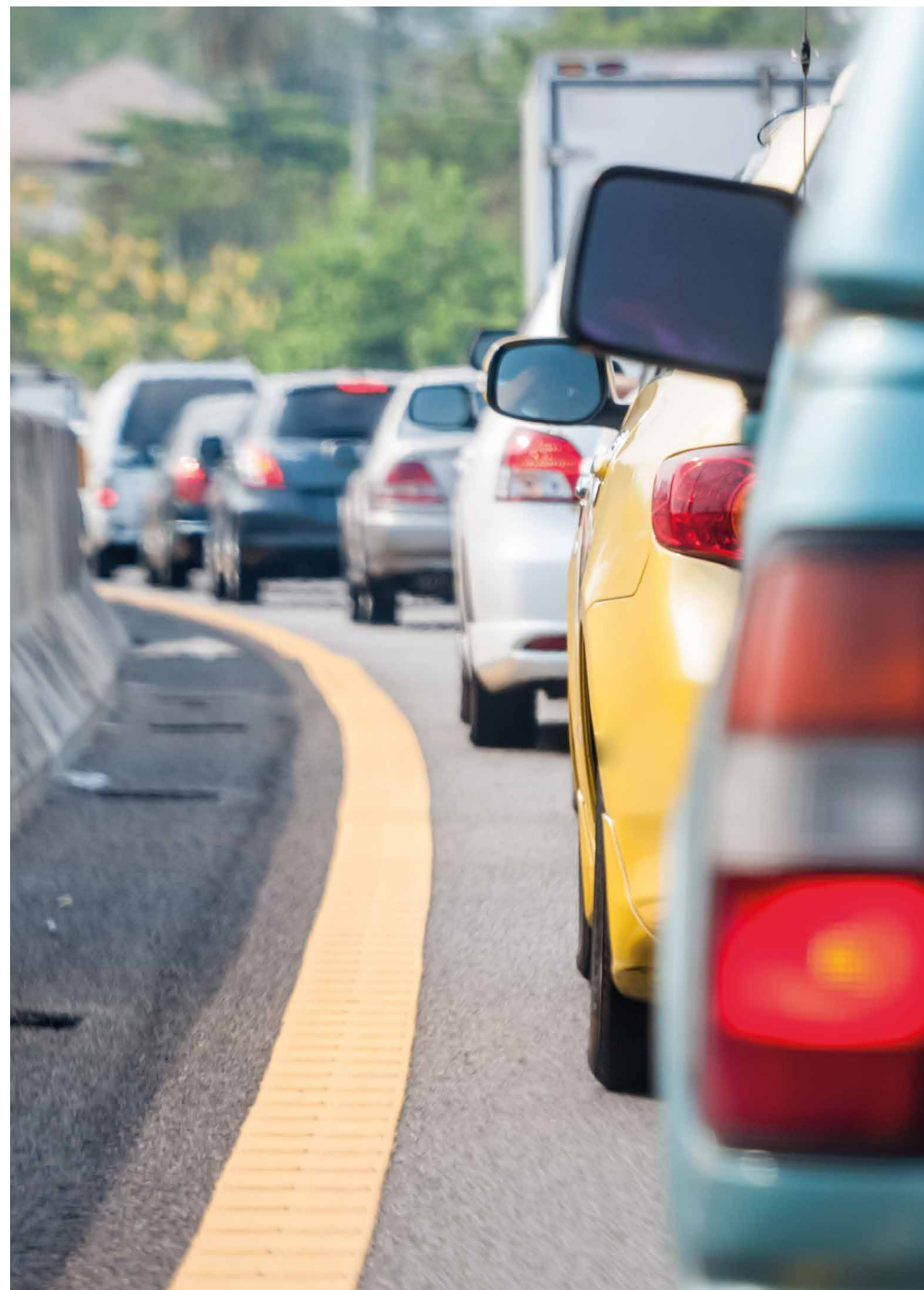
walking to schools and bus services are accessible. This is consistent with the avoid, shift, improve approach required to secure a net zero transport network.

**20.27** Castle Point sits within the wider Essex and South Essex highway network. Congestion on strategic routes and junctions within this wider network is common and impacts on the ability of residents and those doing business to move around the area with ease, having an economic impact. It is therefore critical that the Council works with the Local Highways and Transportation Authorities and other partners to secure improvements to these strategic routes and to protect them from development proposals that would impact their effectiveness or resilience.

**20.28** The strategic routes are the A13, A127 and A130. Key junctions relevant to Castle Point are A13/A130 Sadlers Farm, A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange and the Rayleigh Spur, and the A127/A129 Rayleigh Weir. The A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange is of strategic importance for both east west connectivity to London and the main north south connection to the rest of Essex. Work on improvements to the Fairglen Interchange is expected to commence in due course.

**20.29** The Lower Thames Crossing, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), will provide a new river crossing between Thurrock and Kent and will have impacts across the network which will need to be addressed over the Plan period.

**20.30** Reflecting on policy C5 – Improving Access to Canvey, this policy also identifies the need to improve access to, from and within Canvey Island. At this time, it is not known if it would be appropriate in planning or environmental terms to provide an additional route to Canvey. However, the existing routes are within the Green Belt and the surrounding land is covered by policy C4 – West Canvey which supports nature conservation enhancements. However, further studies are required to explore this further. Any improvements to the access to Canvey Island must avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats Sites. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.





### Policy T3 - Active Travel Improvements

1. New development must be designed to prioritise and maximise opportunities for safe and convenient active travel routes supporting healthy and active lifestyles. This requirement should also be reflected in development proposals and master plans.
2. In line with policy T1 and T2, the Council will seek to secure active travel improvements within the Borough by taking into account the transport improvements identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
3. Developments will be required to make appropriate and proportionate financial contributions towards active travel improvements within the Borough taking into account requirements of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
4. Where necessary, the Council will secure highways works (\$278) and/or financial contributions (\$106) to deliver active travel projects necessary to accommodate the growth arising from this Plan.
5. Proposals for multi-functional active travel routes through open spaces will be supported, subject to their design providing safe and inclusive access and not conflicting with the purpose of the green spaces. This includes the creation of routes to provide recreational opportunities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

### Reasoned Justification

**20.31** As part of the urban-first approach to development in the Plan, and to help manage congestion on parts of the highway network new growth is to be located to maximise opportunities for single trips being made for multiple purposes, particularly within the Borough's town centres. Development at these locations will be required to provide new and enhanced active and sustainable and public transport connectivity to enable residents and visitors make the choice to travel by modes other than the private car.

**20.32** This is consistent with the avoid, shift and improve approach, and it should be the starting point when considering locations for development. New development should be in sustainable and accessible locations, with good levels of walking and cycling connectivity within and to local services and schools. This is consistent with active design principles and will encourage better health and wellbeing outcomes for residents. It is therefore critical that this is secured in new developments, including those developments that require master planning.

**20.33** For clarity, ECC includes 'wheeling' within its definition of active travel. This term covers not just bicycles but also scooters, mobility scooters and wheelchairs. As Castle Point has a population that is older than average, this wider definition is important in ensuring that active travel infrastructure supports the whole community, including those who are less able, and are at risk of social isolation.

**20.34** The Transport Assessment for this Plan identified an 'Initial Schedule of Interventions' including a series of potential improvements to local walking and cycling networks. This schedule was updated to reflect the outcome of the transport modelling for this Plan.

**20.35** The Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Castle Point identifies a walking and cycling network and potential schemes to improve these networks. Further prioritisation will be undertaken to identify a pipeline of schemes that can be subject to future funding bids for their design and subsequent delivery. New developments should look to either provide contributions to deliver sections of these routes if they are in the vicinity or provide active travel connections to them. A county wide LCWIP is also being prepared to develop routes connecting further out to more rural areas and connecting cities and towns across administrative boundaries. It identifies the potential to connect into the A127 Enterprise Corridor from Thundersley, providing a potential active travel alternative to the car.

**20.36** The potential improvements identified through the Transport Assessment and in the LCWIP are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. New developments will be expected to provide proportionate contributions towards their design and delivery as appropriate, in accordance with Policy T2.

**20.37** It is inevitable that during the Plan period, that windfall development will come forward, and these will need to be supported by good quality active travel infrastructure. This policy allows for this.

**20.38** As set out in Policy T1, the Council will seek to secure additional active travel routes through multi-functional green infrastructure to complement the potential routes in the LCWIP. This will build on some existing strong provision in open spaces that already exists. The open space assessment notes the contribution that linear spaces such as Canvey Lake and the seawall make to recreation provision. Recreational routes also exist across South Benfleet Playing Fields, through our woodlands and through Hadleigh Country Park. In addition, the Thames Estuary Path Project, recommends a number of projects within and outside Castle Point to provide a footpath and cycleway network connecting Tilbury to Leigh-on-Sea. Proposals would need to have regard to biodiversity and nature designations.

**20.39** Enhancement of these routes to improve their safety and inclusivity of access could provide alternative opportunities off-road for walking and cycling, potentially increasing uptake. Enhancements will need to have regard to biodiversity and nature recovery as identified in the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and may help to provide multi-functional green infrastructure connectivity, improving recreational opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding in the Borough. This aligns with the wider ambitions of this Plan in terms of multi-functional green infrastructure and in terms of improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

**20.40** A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage in order to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.



Photography: Sally Chinea, for *This is Us*.



### Policy T4 - Improvements to Public Transport Infrastructure and Services

1. All new development should be within 400m of a bus stop with frequent service provision and reflected in relevant master plans.
2. In line with policy T1 and T2, the Council will seek to secure public transport infrastructure and service improvements within the Borough by taking into account the transport improvements identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
3. Developments will be required to make appropriate and proportionate financial contributions towards public transport infrastructure and service provision within the Borough taking into account the requirements of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
4. Where necessary, the Council will secure highways works (\$278) and/or financial contributions (\$106) to deliver public transport projects necessary to accommodate the growth arising from this Plan.
5. Proposals which extend public transport provision for Castle Point residents with enhanced accessibility connecting town centres in the Borough with employment locations, education, services and leisure/recreation opportunities within the Borough and directly to employment locations in Basildon, Thurrock, Rochford and Southend, and to the hospitals in Southend and Basildon, will be supported.
6. Proposals which deliver improvements to mobility hubs including rail services, waiting facilities and interchange facilities at Benfleet Railway Station will be supported, subject to compliance with policy D9.



## Reasoned Justification

**20.41** New developments should be in sustainable and accessible locations, utilising existing transport infrastructure, including bus and rail services, with services in place at the outset to encourage modal shift. Residents who live near bus stops with frequent service provision are more likely to use buses as a convenient means of travel. To this end, the local Highways and Transportation Authority encourages new development to be within 400m of a bus stop, the equivalent of a 5-minute walk.

**20.42** For the purposes of this policy frequent service provision means services that operate at least hourly between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday and has a Sunday service. The existing First services 21, 22, 27 and 28, and Arriva service 1 which operate in the Borough exceed this standard. Service 3 which serves Daws Heath does not.

**20.43** The Transport Assessment for this Plan established a 'Initial Schedule of Interventions' which identified a series of potential improvements to the public transport services and infrastructure to improve public transport connectivity and usage. This schedule was updated to reflect the outcome of the Transport Assessment for this Plan.

**20.44** The transport improvements required by this Plan are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and developments will be expected to make appropriate and proportionate contributions towards their delivery. The costs set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan are fixed at a point in time, are high level, should be treated as indicative, with the local transport authority providing more accurate costs, including any adjustment for inflation at the time any developer contributions are being negotiated.

**20.45** It is inevitable that during the Plan period, unplanned development will come forward, and that transport conditions will change. Consequently, additional public transport infrastructure and service improvements may be required. This policy allows for this.

**20.46** Castle Point sits within the wider South Essex transport network. Bus services in Castle Point are operated as part of the Southend and Basildon networks, and do not provide direct access to employment opportunities in the employment corridor in Basildon, to Southend Airport or to the ports in

Thurrock. It is therefore critical that the Council works with the Local Highways and Transportation Authority and other partners to secure improved public transport connectivity to these areas for residents. Basildon and Southend Hospitals are also critical locations for connectivity that need to be addressed due to the ageing population.

**20.47** Rail services in Castle Point are provided from Benfleet Station on the London, Tilbury, Southend line, terminating at London Fenchurch Street. This line has a high service frequency and good levels of reliability. Weekend services provide additional connectivity into Stratford and London Liverpool Street.

**20.48** The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) 2021 - 2026 outlines that ECC is to follow the Enhanced Partnership (EP) approach between the Local Transport Authority (LTA) and Bus Operators to provide a new, high quality and reliable bus network. The BSIP sets out local issues relating to bus networks and how local authorities can tackle them.

**20.49** Bus Network Reviews have been undertaken for all local authority areas in Essex. The Reviews form an important source of data and make recommendations including potential service enhancements, highway network enhancements and ticketing schemes. The Review documents are 'live' documents listing schemes to be considered for progression but are not a prescriptive list of actions/projects that will be progressed and already have secured funding. ECC currently anticipates that one District Enhanced Partnership will be progressed per year but a programme is yet to be determined.

**20.50** The Council will support proposals which retain and enhance this service provision as part of rationalisation of the service and will further support proposals which enhance the station in terms of the quality of its waiting facilities and also in relation to interchange with bus services and active travel options. Due to the location of the station however, any proposals will need to be delivered in line with the South Benfleet Conservation Area Management Plan, and associated design code.



### Policy T5 - Highway Impact

1. Developers will be required to prepare a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement, and a Travel Plan, having regard to the guidance on thresholds published by the local Highway and Transportation Authority.
2. The Transport Assessment or Statement must demonstrate how the impacts of the development on the highway network will be mitigated to limit significant effects on highway and junction capacity and safety.
3. Subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, favourable consideration will be given to development proposals which fully mitigate their impacts on highway and junction capacity and safety. Applications will be refused where:
  - a. A development is not able to mitigate its impacts to an acceptable degree; and
  - b. A junction or link of highway is expected to exceed its designed capacity resulting in residual cumulative impacts which are assessed to be severe; or
  - c. A junction or link of highway that already exceeds its designed capacity will see its peak hour capacity exceeded still further and as a result the residual cumulative impacts are severe.
4. Where necessary, the Council will secure planning conditions, highway works (s278) and/or financial contributions (s106) to deliver mitigation works necessary mitigate the impacts of development.

### Reasoned Justification

**20.51** The NPPF is clear that developments should only be prevented on transport grounds where the residual impacts of development, following

mitigation, are severe or there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

**20.52** The transport modelling undertaken for this Plan indicates that there are several junctions in the Borough which are close to or are operating at or over capacity currently. The modelling shows that conditions at these junctions will worsen if they are not mitigated. The Council considers that where a junction is operating in excess of its designed capacity any additional exceedance is likely to have a severe impact on the transport network and need to be mitigated for development to go ahead.

**20.53** The transport assessment identified potential mitigations which are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Other mitigations may also be required in respect of specific sites having undertaken a detailed Transport Assessment to support the planning application, especially if they are not identified in this Plan.

**20.54** To understand the full implications of development proposals, the Council will require either a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement to be submitted with planning applications to consider Local Plan policy requirements and other relevant works identified at application stage. Essex County Council's Development Management Policies establish the threshold when each is required.

**20.55** All developments that generate significant amounts of movement will be required to produce a Travel Plan having regard to the thresholds in Essex County Council published guidance. The Travel Plan will need to identify and deliver the sustainable transport interventions, behaviour changes and travel planning mechanisms required to ensure the development reduces carbon emissions to become net zero and achieve modal split targets. Proposals must include an appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator and provide Travel Packs for new residents including information on public transport discounts, bike/e-bike/e-scooter hire schemes, car clubs and car sharing schemes. Suitable digital travel information should be made available to all residents and occupiers across the development and keep up-to-date details of all active and sustainable travel information. Any Travel Plan should include an Action Plan setting out specific actions, timelines and targets to be monitored and reviewed annually.

**20.56** As these policies are subject to change separately to this Plan, the Council requires that applicants have regard to the most up-to-date Development Management Policies issued by ECC when preparing an application, as the Council will seek the Local Highways and Transportation Authority's advice in the determination of applications along with pre-application advice. grounds where the residual impacts of develop.

## Safe Access

### Policy T6 - Safe Access

**To ensure that development proposals offer safe access either directly or via appropriate mitigation, the following requirements must be met:**

- a. Safe access to the highway network for all users, having regard to the highway access policies of the Local Highways and Transportation Authority; and**
- b. Safe access to the site for cyclists and footway provision for pedestrians, including the approach to the site from the nearest public transport node.**

## Reasoned Justification

**20.57** The NPPF is clear that developments should only be prevented on transport grounds where the residual impacts of development, following mitigation, are severe or there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

**20.58** With regard to the need for safe access arrangements to new developments, the Essex Local Transport Plan highlights the importance of ensuring that new developments can be accessed safely by all types of users including cars, bicycles and pedestrians and other vulnerable users in order to prevent road traffic accidents. The Essex Design Guide seeks to encourage active design in new developments through a range of measures including establishing walkable neighbourhoods, well-connected walking and cycling routes, co-location of community facilities and establishing multi-functional green spaces, all of which encourage the use of active and sustainable modes and promote healthier lifestyles.

**20.59** ECC are working with schools to assist with the development of School Travel Plans. These have multiple aims including providing a safe environment around schools through limiting vehicle access and drop off, improving pupils' road safety, interlinking with Healthy Schools status, bikeability, and helping everyone get to and from school actively via safe direct walking and cycling routes.

**20.60** Access to a development site is the key point at which highway safety issues may arise, especially if there is a need for vehicles to cross the path of oncoming traffic to enter or leave the site. It is therefore critical that access arrangement advice is sought at pre-application stage and are designed in accordance with the policies and guidance issued by the Local Highway and Transport Authority within their Development Management Policies and presented in the Essex Design Guide.

**20.61** Meanwhile the ability to access the site by foot or by bicycle is also an important consideration. Not only are pedestrians and cyclists more vulnerable road users if the access is not safely designed, but the perceived pleasantness and safety of access arrangements for these users may influence the take up of these modes. Policy T1 actively encourages walking and cycling as a means of delivering a net zero transport network, and therefore it is especially important that walking and cycling access to sites is safe and well connected. Again, the Development Management Policies set out standards for cycling and footway access that should be applied.



### Policy T7 - Parking Provision

1. Proposals for development will be required to make provision for all users having regard to the EPOA Parking Guidance (Part 1 and 2).
2. Proposals which provide below these standards should be supported by evidence detailing the local circumstances that justify deviation from the standard.
3. Proposals for development will be required to the Electric Vehicle Charging Standards set out in the EPOA Parking Guidance.

### Reasoned Justification

**20.62** Parking is a critical issue affecting the optimisation of land use and the quality of street scenes. However, car ownership in Castle Point is high. Therefore, it is critical that an appropriate balance is struck between providing for car parking and making the best use of land.

**20.63** The Essex Planning Officers Association's (EPOA) Essex Parking Standard (2024) were prepared with both the above balancing act in mind, and the need to move towards a net zero transport network. This provides the standards for powered and unpowered vehicles by use class proposing a level of provision that balances demand with the need to create quality public/private spaces. The standards comprise Part 1 – for most development applications including a parking calculation based on a zonal approach with a relationship to transport assessments and travel plans and Part 2 – for Garden Communities and Large Scale Developments (including a 'Connectivity Tool'). A study was commissioned to understand parking needs across Essex and the potential for parking levels to be adjusted based on the sustainability of a development location. A zonal map identifying high, moderate and low accessibility areas was developed. An extract of that map showing Castle Point is provided at [Appendix D](#).

**20.64** The EPOA Parking Guidance 2024 use this mapping to apply zonal parking requirements based on the accessibility of a location to service provision and to public transport provision. The more accessible a location is, the less parking is required. Locations with poor accessibility meanwhile require more parking.

**20.65** This approach aligns with the Council's urban first approach and its aspiration to optimise urban land in town centres and other sustainable locations, including transport/mobility hubs. Therefore, the Council will apply these standards when determining applications for development.

**20.66** These standards also set out requirements for electric vehicle charging provision as part of new development. Due to the importance of such infrastructure in shifting to net zero, these standards will also be applied.

**20.67** Separately, ECC has prepared an Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy to deliver 'the Right Charger in the Right Place'. By 2030, residents, businesses and visitors in Essex, will be able to use electric vehicles and have access to a reliable, easy-to-use, safe and fairly priced charging network. The Strategy will be refreshed to look at longer-term private car use and EV uptake. It will explore the supply of renewable energy to EV charge points and how the conversion of public transport, taxis and freight vehicles to cleaner fuels can be achieved. Separate strategies will be developed to provide for alternative clean and zero emission fuels, such as hydrogen.

**20.68** The EV charging standards may therefore be updated when this Plan is reviewed.



### Policy T8 - Access for Servicing

1. Development proposals that require regular servicing by HGVs should be located on main or secondary distributor routes, with appropriately designed servicing areas that enable HGVs to access and egress the development safely, in forward gear, without creating congestion.
2. Such proposals will be required to submit a Freight Management Strategy setting out how freight, home deliveries and servicing will be managed and mitigated within the development for approval.
3. All other developments should be designed to ensure that properties can be accessed in a safe and convenient way by waste collection operatives and delivery vehicles.

## Reasoned Justification

**20.69** The Essex Local Transport Plan Development Management Policies sets out specific requirements for developments that are likely to be regularly accessed by HGVs at policy DM19. This policy expects such developments to be located close to strategic, main or secondary distributor routes, with short sections of roadway connecting the development to these routes.

**20.70** Proposals must submit a Freight Management Strategy setting out how freight, homes deliveries and servicing will be managed and mitigated within the development for approval. The Strategy should have regard to the adoption and implementation of the following methods to manage urban logistics, namely neighbourhood delivery and servicing hubs; micro-consolidation centres; E-cargo bike delivery schemes for last mile' deliveries for business and residential areas; promotion of cargo-bikes to residents; and freight and servicing plans for high trip generating sites.

**20.71** Within Castle Point, the waste collection authority requires all new developments to have safe and convenient access for collection vehicles, or suitable on road stopping, with the access roads and highways being

constructed of materials able to withstand the weight of the collection vehicles. Preferably suitable turning facilities should be provided within all developments, in order to prevent the need for collection vehicles to reverse. However, where there is a necessity to reverse, this should be limited to short distances only, and the route must allow clear visibility, free from sharp turns and obstacles. This standard appears appropriate for other servicing and delivery vehicles that occasionally access many developments also.





## 21. Sustainable Development

### Castle Point Context

**21.1** Castle Point is an area which is extremely vulnerable to climate change. The low-lying nature of Canvey and parts of South Benfleet mean that there is a risk from flooding, both from tidal sources and from surface water flooding during extreme rainfall events. These extreme rainfall events are becoming more frequent, and climate scientists anticipate that storm rainfall intensity could increase by up to 45% by the latter part of this century. Sea levels are expected to rise by as much as 1m by 2125. There are also areas across the Borough at risk from surface water, fluvial and ground water flooding. Essex is in an area which is the driest and warmest part of the country. This means that water supply levels are stressed, and that the area is vulnerable to extreme heat during the summer months. In 2022, this resulted in local wildfires across Castle Point and elsewhere across the county and nationally.

**21.2** Flood risk, poor water supply levels and extreme heat can all impact on health, especially in vulnerable populations. Due to the ageing population of Castle Point vulnerability levels locally are high and this is reflected in excess deaths during periods of extreme heat.

**21.3** Climate change is also a risk to the local assemblage of biodiversity and habitats. Rising sea levels will see freshwater habitats become more saline and will see new species accustomed to warmer climates invade the area. This poses a risk to native species.

**21.4** It is therefore important that measures are taken to minimise our impact on Climate Change and to adapt and manage to its long-time effects, increasing resilience. Policies throughout this Plan seek to secure this, with those policies in this chapter ensuring that our efforts are fully maximised.

### Tidal Flood Risk Management

#### Policy SD1 - Tidal Flood Risk Management

1. The extent of the Canvey and Hadleigh Marshes Tidal Flood Risk Management Areas is defined on the [Policies Map](#), within these areas:
  - a. The Council will support the necessary improvements to the sea defences in the Borough as set out in the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan;
  - b. New bungalows and other forms of self-contained residential accommodation at ground level will be refused on Canvey Island unless an internally accessible and suitably sized and designed place of refuge above the predicted floor levels can be provided within the development, and favourable consideration will be given to the conversion of bungalows to houses, subject to those privacy, amenity and urban design considerations set out in the Castle Point Design Code;
  - c. The Council will work with partners to maintain and improve nature conservation in the Hadleigh Marshes area, with a long-term view of securing appropriate compensatory sites within the Thames Estuary for any loss of designated habitats resulting from climate change; and
  - d. South Benfleet Playing Fields will be retained as a flood storage area for both tidal flooding and surface water management. Opportunities to increase the storage capacity of this area will be secured in the long-term.
2. The Council will work with partners in the railway industry to identify economically viable solutions to the potential risk of flooding of local railway lines in the long-term, to ensure the ongoing provision of services.
3. Within flood zones 2 and 3a new development proposals will be permitted only where they meet the following criteria:
  - a. They pass the Sequential Test and where appropriate the exception test, as set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#);

- b. They have been designed to make space for water and do not increase flood risk elsewhere and where possible reduces flood risk overall; and
  - c. They are designed to be flood resistant and resilient and provide safe refuge for users/residents above predicted flood water depths for a 0.1% annual exceedance percentage event including uplifts for climate change. Buildings must also be hydrostatically and hydrodynamically resistant to prevent damage to the structure. In this context resilient includes the ability of the development to be brought quickly back into use after a flood event.
4. A 19m wide buffer of land adjacent to the existing flood defences on Canvey Island, as shown on the Policies Map, is safeguarded for future flood defence works, landscaping, environmental enhancements and amenity.
  5. Where land safeguarded for future flood defence works falls within a development site, opportunities should be taken to integrate future flood defence requirements into the landscaping and open space provision for the site.
  6. Development proposals must ensure that habitats sites are not adversely effected.

## Reasoned Justification

**21.5** The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to take a proactive approach, when determining planning applications, to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding where informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment following the application of the Sequential Test, and if required the Exceptions Test.

**21.6** The aim of the Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas with no or low risk of flooding from any source both now and in the future, using the SFRA and if necessary, the Exceptions Test. Any such development would need to demonstrate that the development will offer wider sustainability benefits

that outweigh the flood risk, and would be safe for its entire lifetime, without exacerbating or creating flood risk elsewhere.

**21.7** The NPPF states that planning policies should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas and not exacerbating the impacts of physical changes to the coast. A Coastal Change Management Area should identify likely areas to be affected by physical changes to the coast and be clear as to what development will be appropriate in such areas, in what circumstances, and make provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from such areas.





**21.8** The Environment Agency's flood map for planning identifies Canvey Island as being within Flood Risk Zone 3a. Currently sea defences are effective in preventing Canvey Island from flooding from tidal inundation from extreme tides with an annual chance of occurrence of 0.1% or greater.

**21.9** This makes the application of the sequential approach challenging, as Canvey Island comprises around 40% of the Borough's area and is home to around 40,000 people and the Borough's largest employment area. There is a need to regenerate the Island and its communities. In applying the sequential and exceptions test it is important that the Island is helped to thrive and is not blighted by restrictive planning policies that create urban decay.

**21.10** To this end, the focus of the application of the Sequential and Exception tests on Canvey for sites in the urban area, and brownfield land will be the safety of future residents and/or users.

**21.11** The SFRA 2024 undertook modelling of the risk of flooding to Canvey Island. This modelling was based on a failure of the defences and took into account climate change projections. This modelling shows that there is a residual risk of extensive flooding across Canvey in the event of the defences failing. It is this residual risk that needs to be taken into account when preparing development proposals and determining applications.

**21.12** Due to the residual and reduced chance of tidal flooding, but because of the significant hazard it proposes should it ever occur, a proportionate approach is taken to new development within existing urban areas on Canvey Island. No new bungalows are permitted, and the policy actively encourages the conversion of bungalows and other vulnerable developments such as park homes to houses. New homes need to have a safe place of refuge above the modelled flood depth for that site. Properties also have to be constructed to withstand the pressures of moving and standing water, so that if people are taking refuge within them during a flood they are structurally safe and can sustain a safe sheltering environment for residents should the building be surrounded by hazardous floodwaters.

**21.13** The TE2100 Plan, prepared by the Environment Agency and partners, sets out a policy for the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences on Canvey Island in line with climate change projections. Improvements have already been delivered to the Island's southern revetments and will be required over the next 40 years to keep up with climate change. The Council will work with the Environment Agency to ensure that these ongoing improvements are delivered. Any works to retain or enhance sea walls, or within the 19m safeguarded buffer zone, should avoid causing adverse effects on site integrity. This will need to be demonstrated through a project level HRA.

**21.14** The current preferred tidal flood risk management policy for the tidal defences within the TE2100 Plan's Canvey Island policy unit is to take further action to keep up with climate and land use change so that flood risk does not increase. In order to help deliver the TE2100 Plan's aspirations for the Canvey Island policy unit, it is necessary for land adjacent to tidal defences to be left free from development as far as possible. This is to provide the space for the permanent footprint required of larger defences. Accessibility is also essential in delivering such improvements (both for facilitating the construction of new defences as well as for vehicular access (4x4 or construction plant) to maintain and inspect and repair the defences over their lifetime). The Environment Agency has advised that a 19m buffer, as measured from the landward edge of the current sea defence structure, should be left free from development for this purpose.

**21.15** Developers are encouraged to enter into discussions with the Environment Agency at a very early stage when formulating development proposals close to or within the safeguarded sea defence area. Flood Risk Activity Permits were introduced under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations in April 2016. Early discussions with the Environment Agency will avoid the potential for costly development design and layout revisions or to avoid the risk of having a flood risk permit application refused by the Environment Agency. Flood Risk Activity Permits are separate to the planning application process and are required by the Environment Agency for certain activities within set distances from tidal defences – further guidance is set out by the [Environment Agency](#).

## Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet

**21.16** Tidal Flood Risk also affects Hadleigh Marshes and parts of South Benfleet, with parts of both areas being located within Flood Risk Zone 3 as identified by the Environment Agency and modelled by the SFRA 2024. The SFRA indicates that the risk, depth and extent of flooding in these areas will increase because of climate change.

**21.17** Hadleigh Marshes is a largely undeveloped area, protected from significant levels of development by other policy and nature conservation designations. The TE2100 Plan's Hadleigh Marshes policy unit has a preferred tidal flood risk management policy to maintain flood defences at their current level, accepting that the flood risk will increase, and are seeking to involve communities to prepare for this flood risk. This has two significant challenges that will require collaborative work to manage:

**21.18** The loss of inter-tidal marshland habitats. The Benfleet and Southend Marshes is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and is recognised for its assemblage of migratory birds under the Ramsar Convention. As a consequence, there is a need to identify compensatory habitat. The TE2100 Plan seeks to identify compensatory provision to account for this loss. Any development within Hadleigh Marshes should avoid causing adverse effects on sites integrity. This will need to be demonstrated through a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment.

**21.19** The London Fenchurch Street to Southend railway line passes through the area and is likely to be at risk from major flooding in the future. The owners and operators of this line will need to consider how they will deal with this issue. There is the potential that in the long-term (50+ years) they may decide to cease services if an economically viable solution to retaining the line in this location cannot be identified. The TE2100 Plan seeks to develop a joint long-term programme to ensure the long-term implications of climate change on the railway are understood, and to build in infrastructure improvements and flood warning.

**21.20** The area at risk of flooding in South Benfleet is largely undeveloped flood plain in the form of South Benfleet Playing Fields – upstream of the Benfleet tidal flood barrier. There are however a small number of properties at risk of flooding in South Benfleet. The TE2100 Plan outlines that for the Bowers

Marshes policy unit (encompassing South Benfleet) the aspiration is to take further action to keep up with climate and land use change so that tidal flood risk does not increase.

**21.21** South Benfleet Playing Fields are a flood storage area recognised by the Environment Agency as a category C reservoir under the Reservoirs Act 1975. This area is therefore classified as falling within Flood Risk Zone 3b i.e. it is a functional flood plain. A functional flood plain is an area where water has flowed, or is stored, at times of flood with an annual probability of flooding of 5%. Policy B9 requires a Master Plan for this area as a multi-functional green space.





### Policy SD2 - Non-Tidal Flood Risk Management

1. The Critical Drainage Areas for the Borough are defined by ECC as the Lead Local Flood Authority within the South Essex Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP).
2. New development proposals within an area at risk of fluvial flooding, or within an area at risk from surface water flooding in a 1 in 100 year event, will be considered against the sequential test set out in the NPPF.
3. If the sequential test shows that it is not possible to use an alternative site, the exceptions test will be applied as appropriate. Development would be permitted where through the application of the exceptions test, the sustainability benefits of the development to the community outweigh the flood risk, and that the development will be safe for its lifetime considering the vulnerability of its users, and that it will not increase flood risk elsewhere.
4. Where a development proposal is in an area at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding and passes the sequential test and, where appropriate, the exception tests, the design and layout of development must avoid built development on those parts of the site most at risk of flooding. This includes those parts of the site that form natural or pre-existing flow paths for fluvial flood water or surface water.
5. A minimum 8m buffer of land is safeguarded from development on either side of the River Thames, Prittle Brook and Benfleet Hall Brook and their tributaries to allow for flood risk management.
6. Where a development proposal is for a site in an area at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding, or is within a Critical Drainage Area, any natural or semi-natural water features such as ditches, dykes and ponds must be retained in their natural or semi-natural form to maintain existing attenuation provision and existing flow paths.
7. Consideration must be given to whether the capacity of existing flow paths, and the design capacity of any SuDS proposals for a development, could cope with extreme rainfall events. Where appropriate, additional flow paths should be provided to direct excess surface water away from people and property. This must not increase the risk to existing properties nearby.
8. To protect people and property, any development located in an area at risk from fluvial or surface water flooding should be designed to be flood resistant to a 0.1% annual exceedance probability including an appropriate uplift for climate change. Fluvial and/or surface water must not be able to enter property, and buildings should be hydrostatically and hydrodynamically resistant to prevent damage to the structure. Regard should be had to the Essex County Council Interactive Flood and Water Management Map, to determine the need for flood resistant design. Where an application relies on guidance from the Map, a precautionary approach will be taken, and upper flood depths for the location of the site will be applied when determining the appropriateness of the resistance proposed. Applications which seek to provide lower levels of resistance must be supported by their own robust, site specific, modelling which demonstrates that the development will be resistant to fluvial and/or surface water inundation and hydrostatic damage.
9. All development must integrate Sustainable Drainage Systems in line with policy SD3 to contribute towards the management of surface water flood risk

## Reasoned Justification

**21.22** The NPPF requires that strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment and should manage flood risk from all sources.

**21.23** The South Essex Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009) prepared by the Environment Agency, sets out the approach that should be taken to fluvial and surface water flood issues in South Essex. It identifies two policy units covering watercourses in the Castle Point area. These are:

- **Southend-on-Sea / Rayleigh policy unit.** Within this populated area it is expected that further action will be taken to reduce flood risk now and in the future.
- **Thames Urban Tidal policy unit.** Within this area further action should be taken to sustain the current level of flood risk into the future, responding to the potential increases in risk from development and climate change.

**21.24** The surface water flood risk across the Borough shown on the ECC Interactive Flood and Water Management Map, excluding Canvey Island, is driven predominantly by topography relating to watercourse channels of Benfleet Creek, Prittle Brook and tributaries. Localised flooding is attributed in most cases to the steep westward sloping topography from an area of high elevation running through the mainland part of the Borough, local topographic depressions, insufficient capacity in ordinary watercourse and culverted systems, and obstructions in the flow of surface water.

**21.25** In respect of Canvey Island the surface water flood risk is largely associated with the localised capacity of the existing surface water sewer network to accommodate high intensity rainfall events or an associated failure of the managed and pumped drainage network during such events or as a result of tide locking of gravity outfalls.

**21.26** There are 25 main rivers, watercourses and many smaller reaches of ordinary watercourses (minor ditches and dykes), most of which are tributaries to main river reaches. Those on Canvey Island have been incorporated into a wider drainage system, elements of which are regulated by various risk management authorities and is reliant predominantly upon gravity whilst

being pumped to tide by external pumping stations. The areas of the Benfleet Creek, Prittle Brook and their tributaries and the tributaries of the Rawreth Brook are vulnerable to fluvial flooding, which can contribute to surface water flooding.

**21.27** The TE2100 Plan sets out specific actions required for different areas along the estuary which aim to deliver the aspired tidal flood risk management policies. Three of the Plan's policy units fall within Castle Point, the Bowers Marshes, Canvey Island and Hadleigh Marshes policy units. These areas have different requirements that may impact what additional benefits of partners could be achieved there – including the amounts and sources of funding available to deliver the relevant aspirations of the TE2100 Plan. For example, where flood defences are sought to be increased on Canvey Island there may be co-funded opportunities for improvements to footpaths, or in the Hadleigh Marshes where flood risk is expected to increase habitat improvements that are compatible with the increased flood risk level could be suitable.

**21.28** ECC is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and are responsible for surface water flooding. ECC's Interactive Flood and Water Management Map identifies Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs), these are areas, where multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk cause flooding during a severe rainfall event affecting people, property or infrastructure. There are seven defined CDAs in Castle Point covering most of the Borough's land area. These are as follows:

- South Benfleet (NCAST\_001)
- North Canvey Island (NCAST\_002)
- Leigh Beck (NCAST\_003)
- Reeds Hill Farm (NCAST\_004)
- Eastwood (NRoch\_001)
- Southend- On-Sea (NRoch 002)
- New Thundersley (NCAST 005)

**21.28** In terms of fluvial flooding, the SFRA 2024 identifies the Prittle Brook and Benfleet Hall Sewer, as being sources of fluvial flood risk. Fluvial flooding is also possible from the watercourses and dykes that form the drainage system



on Canvey Island, due to the flat and low-lying topography of the island and the finite capacity of the culverted sections of the drainage infrastructure. Some of this network drains to tide via flapped outfalls which only operate at low-tide. If water were to overtop these dykes, the flat topography of the Borough could cause it to disperse over large areas.

**21.29** A single integrated urban drainage model (IUD) has been prepared to enhance the understanding of the drainage network, and associated flood risk on Canvey Island. This collaborative work between risk management authorities (the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and ECC) has provided a detailed representation of the drainage network on Canvey Island. Although managing the risk of flooding from surface water is the responsibility of LLFAs, the Environment Agency have produced the updated Flood Map for Surface Water as part of its strategic role in England. This combines the Environment Agency's nationally produced surface water flood mapping and appropriate locally produced maps from LLFAs. The IUD has also updated the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Surface Water. This map ascribes a high risk of surface water flooding to those areas where there is a 1 in 30-year chance of surface water flooding. A medium risk is ascribed to areas with a 1 in 100-year chance of surface water flooding.

**21.30** The evidence and guidance provided under the Tidal Flood Risk Management Area section, in respect of flood risk, and the use of the Sequential and Exception Tests is equally relevant when considering the impact of development and its location from all sources of flood risk.

**21.31** ECC as the LLFA expect the use of sustainable drainage systems in development.

**21.32** All developments on Canvey Island will need to avoid any adverse effects on site integrity. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required at application stage to demonstrate no adverse effects on site integrity.



### Policy SD3 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

1. All new development will be required to incorporate water management measures to reduce surface water run-off or adverse impact on water quality and ensure that it does not increase flood risk elsewhere. The principal method to do so should be the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). As well as providing appropriate water management measures, where possible SuDS should be designed to be multi-functional to deliver amenity, recreational and biodiversity benefit for the built, natural (including green infrastructure) and historic environment.
2. All major development will be required to submit a drainage strategy to demonstrate how both on and off-site flood risk will be managed and mitigation measures should be satisfactorily integrated into the design and layout of the development.
3. Proposals must demonstrate how the SuDS feature(s) reflect and respond to site circumstances, landscape character and the green-blue infrastructure network, and have regard to Essex County Council's SuDS Design Guide for Essex.
4. SuDS will be required to meet the following criteria:
  - a. The design must follow an index-based approach when managing water quality. Implementation in line with the updated Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) SuDS Manual is required.
  - b. Maximise opportunities to enhance biodiversity net-gain.
  - c. Improve the quality of water discharges and be used in conjunction with water use efficiency measures.
  - d. Function effectively over the lifetime of the development.

5. Surface water connections to the public sewerage network should only be made where it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives (this applies to new developments and redevelopments) and where there is no detriment to existing users.
6. Where a site-specific flood risk assessment is required for development proposals (see policies SD1 and SD2) this should be used to inform the design of appropriate drainage systems.
7. All proposals for SuDS should include arrangements for their whole life management and maintenance.

### Reasoned Justification

**21.33** Essex County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority and is responsible for securing improvements to local surface water flood risk across the County, including in Castle Point. They are a statutory consultee in relation to applications for development and expect sustainable urban drainage systems to be incorporated into new development in order to reduce the risk of surface water flooding. This is important in Castle Point given the level of risk, as detail in respect of policy SD2.

**21.34** Essex County Council has prepared a SuDS Design Guide for Essex. This not only addresses technical requirements for SuDS, but also details how SuDS can be integrated into the design and layout of development to offer wider environmental benefits, and form part of the multi-functional green infrastructure provision.

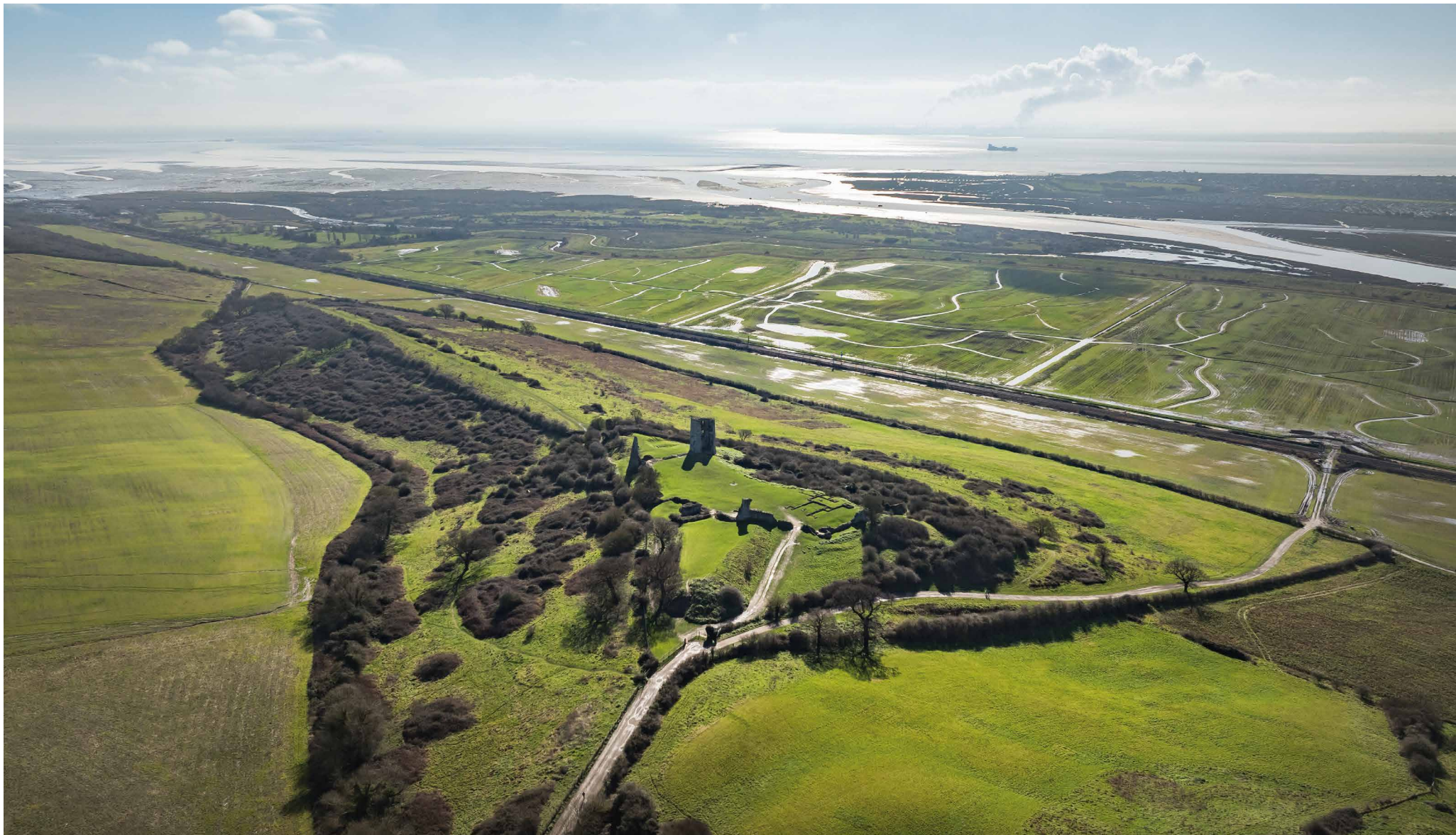
**21.35** SuDS should be utilised in small developments where there is the opportunity, for example through permeable paving in areas of hard standing and rain gardens.

**21.36** ECC as the LLFA supports the redevelopment of brownfield sites as this can be an opportunity to reduce surface water run off rates and implement



SuDS where there previously had not been any. The LLFA encourages new developments to look for ways to harvest rainwater for re-use and move away from the use of foul and combined sewers to discharge surface water. The LLFA will not support developments that propose to connect to foul sewers as these systems can become overwhelmed.

**21.37** Well-designed SuDS can contribute significantly towards the urban greening factor requirements set out in policy ENV3 SuDS can also contribute to climate change adaption and water efficiency, through provision of rainwater harvesting to assist in water capture to reducing risk of flooding and reduce water demand.



## Policy SD4 – Net Zero Carbon Development (In Operation)

### A) New build development (residential and non-residential)

All new buildings shall be designed and built to be Net Zero Carbon in operation at occupation or, in exceptional circumstances, have an agreed strategy to achieve net zero within five years of occupation. They must be ultra-low energy buildings, fossil fuel free, and generate renewable energy on-site to at least match annual energy use.

All new buildings (1 dwelling and above for residential; 100m<sup>2</sup> and above for non-residential) are required to comply with requirements 1 to 5 as set out below:

#### 1. Requirement 1: Space heating demand limits

- a. Residential buildings (apart from bungalows) and non-residential buildings must achieve a space heating demand of 15 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA (gross internal floor area)/year or less;
- b. Bungalows must achieve a space heating demand of 20 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year or less.

#### 2. Requirement 2: Fossil fuel free

- a. No new buildings shall be connected to the gas grid; and
- b. Fossil fuels must not be used on-site to provide space heating, domestic hot water or cooking.

#### 3. Requirement 3: Energy Use Intensity (EUI) limits

- a. Residential buildings (Use Class C3 and C4) must achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of no more than 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/yr;
- b. The following non-residential buildings must achieve an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of no more than the following (where technically feasible) by building type or nearest equivalent:

- Offices – 70 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year;
- Schools – 65 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year ;
- Light Industrial – 35 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> GIA/year;

- c. For other residential and non-residential buildings, that are not covered by a) and b) above, applicants should report their energy use intensity but are not required to comply with a certain limit.

#### 4. Requirement 4: Renewable energy must be generated on-site for all new developments by whichever of the following results in the greater amount of solar PV energy (electricity) generation:

- a. The amount of energy generated in a year should match or exceed the predicted annual energy use of the building, i.e. Renewable energy generation (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year) = or > predicted annual energy use (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year); or
- b. the amount of energy generated in a year is:
  - at least 80 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> building footprint per annum\* for all building types; and
  - at least 120 kWh/m<sup>2</sup> building footprint per annum for industrial buildings.

#### 5. Requirement 5: As-built performance confirmation and in-use monitoring:

- a. All developments must submit as-built performance information at completion and prior to occupation; and
- b. In-use energy monitoring is required on a minimum of 10% of dwellings for development proposals of 100 dwellings or more, for the first 5 years of operation.

For development proposals where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that meeting Requirement 4 is not technically feasible then renewable energy generation on-site should be maximised and the residual amount of renewable energy generation (equivalent to the shortfall in meeting the annual energy use of the



building in kWh/year) must be offset by a financial contribution (to cover the administration, purchasing and installation of a solar PV renewable energy (electricity) system elsewhere in the Plan area, which is able to generate a similar amount of energy) and be paid into the Council's offset fund. The offset price is set at £1.35 per kWh or the most recent updated version and the contribution shall be calculated at the time of planning application determination.

Proposals that are built and certified to the Passivhaus Classic or higher Passivhaus standard are deemed to have met Requirements 1 and 3. Requirements 2, 4 and 5 must also be met to achieve policy compliance.

### B) Extensions and Conversations

Applications for residential extensions and conversions affecting existing buildings (but excluding listed buildings) are encouraged to meet the minimum standards approach fabric specifications set out below and maximise renewable energy generation where practical and feasible.

	Residential Developments	Block of Flats Low Rise	Terraced Semi-Detached House)	Bungalow
Fabric	Floor U-Value	0.08 - 0.10	0.08 - 0.10	0.08 - 0.10
	External Wall U-Value	0.10 - 0.14	0.10 - 0.13	0.09 - 0.12
	Roof U-Value	0.09 - 0.11	0.09 - 0.11	0.09 - 0.10
	Windows U-Value	0.80 - 0.90	0.80 - 0.90	0.80 - 0.90
	Windows G-Value	0.45 - 0.55	10.45 - 0.55	0.45 - 0.55
	External Doors U-Value	-	0.90 - 1.2	0.90 - 1.2
	Thermal Bridging	0.04 W/m²K	0.04 W/m²K	0.04 W/m²K
	Air Permeability	<1 ach	<1 ach	<1 ach

## Policy SD5 – Net Zero Carbon Development (Embodied Carbon)

Proposals for large scale new-build developments (a minimum of 100 dwellings or 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space) must submit a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment that demonstrates the following building targets have been met:

### a) Upfront embodied carbon emissions:

- i. Residential: <500kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup>
- ii. Non-residential: <600kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup>

### b) Total embodied carbon:

- i. Residential: <800kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup>
- ii. Non-residential: <970kgCO<sub>2</sub>/m<sup>2</sup>

## Reasoned Justification

**21.38** The built environment (in operation) is estimated to account for 23% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. This proportion is substantially higher when emissions embodied in the materials and construction process of new buildings is included. The UK has a statutory target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 (as set out in the Climate Change Act 2008, as amended). The Climate Change Act also sets, through the Sixth Carbon Budget, a further legal target of a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035, which builds upon the commitment to reduce emissions by 68% from 1990 levels by 2030. The Climate Change Committee warns that the UK is off target and rapid and deep cuts to emissions must be made in all sectors.

**21.39** It is therefore imperative that new build development is built to be net zero carbon in operation from the outset and minimises embodied carbon emissions through all stages of a building's life cycle. Embodied emissions include those related to raw material supply, manufacturing and transport, construction processes and demolition and disposal. For a building to be net

zero carbon in its operation then it must be an ultra-low energy building that meets high building fabric and energy efficiency standards, does not use fossil fuel and maximises renewable energy generation to achieve operational energy balance.

**21.40** Retrofitting buildings is more disruptive, costly and time consuming than designing buildings to be net zero carbon in the first place. In Essex, a target for all planning permissions for new buildings to be net zero carbon by 2025 and carbon positive by 2030 was recommended by the Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC) in July 2024. The ECAC recommendations are relevant to all Local Planning Authorities in Essex.

**21.41** Evidence commissioned by the ECAC demonstrates that building to the net zero carbon (in operation) standard set out in Policy NZ1 is:

- Technically feasible (Report 1: Essex Net Zero Policy – Technical Evidence Base by Introba, Etude, Currie & Brown, July 2023 and Report 2: Essex Net Zero Policy – Policy Summary, Evidence, and Validation Requirements by Introba, Etude, Currie & Brown July 2023);
- Financially viable (Net Zero Carbon Viability Study for Essex by Three Dragons, August 2022); and
- Legally justified (Essex Open Legal Advice – Energy policy and Building Regulations by Estelle Dehon KC, Cornerstone Barristers, April 2023).

**21.42** Separately, the Essex Embodied Carbon Embodied Policy Study provides the evidence for setting targets for reduced embodied carbon requirements in new development.

**21.43** The outcomes of this work have fed into the [Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Homes and Buildings in Greater Essex](#) document. This sets out policies SD4 and SD5 and provides an explanation of each of the different policy requirements in detail. This should be referred to when interpreting this policy.

**21.44** The viability assessment for this Plan has confirmed that the requirements of policies SD4 and SD5 are generally financially viable in Castle Point.





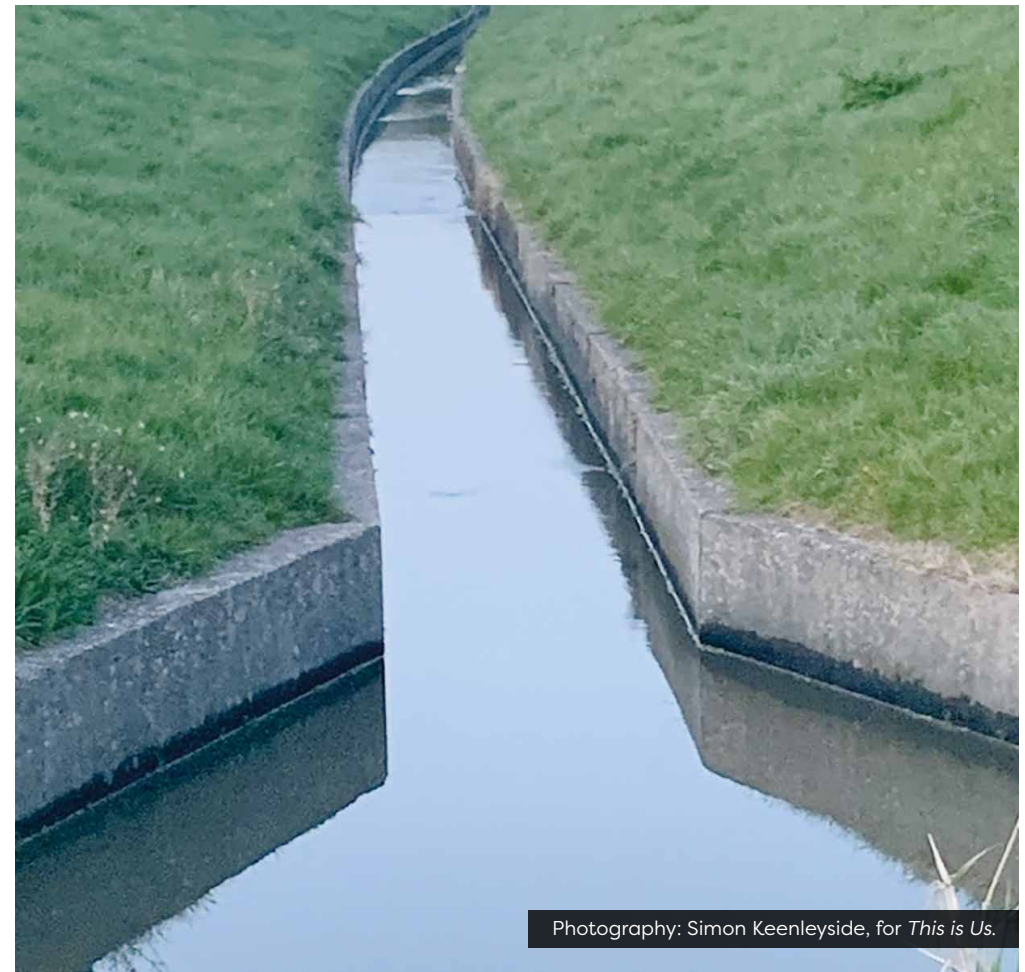
### Policy SD6 - Pollution Control

1. Development proposals should be designed to manage and reduce pollution through energy and water efficient design, the installation of sustainable drainage systems, and the delivery or enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure.
2. Development proposals should be located, designed and constructed in such a manner as to not be put at unacceptable risk from, be adversely affected by, or cause a significant adverse effect upon the environment, the health of new and existing residents or surrounding residential amenity. This may include by reason of pollution to land, air or water, or because of any form of disturbance including, but not limited to unacceptable levels of noise, light, odour, heat, dust and vibrations.
3. Development proposals adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, existing businesses or community facilities will need to demonstrate that the ongoing use of the existing businesses or community facilities would not be prejudiced by the proposed development, and that the impact of the continuing operation of the existing businesses or community facilities on the amenity of occupiers of the new development can be satisfactorily mitigated through the development proposals.
4. All major development proposals must be accompanied by a Construction Environment Management Plan prepared with regard to pollution prevention guidance. These plans shall include details of the proposed mitigation measures that will be implemented to prevent undue noise and disturbance to adjoining occupiers and Habitat Sites and the entry of pollutants into the environment by all potential pathways including, but not limited to watercourses (including when dry) and air. Where necessary, seasonal working may be required to avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites.
5. Where necessary, the Council will seek to manage and mitigate the effects of pollution and/or disturbance arising from development, (including during site clearance and construction) by means of appropriate planning conditions. Exceptionally, a Section 106

Agreement may be used to secure measures to control pollution and/or disturbance necessary to make the impacts of development acceptable.

### Reasoned Justification

**21.45** New development should be appropriate for its location considering the likely effects (including cumulative effects) on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.



Photography: Simon Keenleyside, for *This is Us*.

## Air pollution

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**21.46** The Castle Point Air Quality Annual Status Report (2024) identified that air quality in the Borough is of relatively good quality, and there are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) designated within the Borough.

**21.47** There are 34 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) monitoring locations throughout the Borough. The highest readings are normally located on the major transport corridors in the Borough. However, no areas currently exceed the limits for NO<sub>2</sub>. This has been the case for several years, most likely due to improvements in the emissions from vehicles. The Council will continue to monitor this situation and will review this policy if it becomes likely that this situation will change.

**21.48** It is however recognised that improvements in air quality could be delivered through urban greening and the delivery of sustainable buildings. Other policy requirements of this Plan will therefore help to secure ongoing good air quality in the Borough.

## Noise pollution

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**21.49** Noise can constitute a statutory nuisance and is subject to the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and other relevant law.

**21.50** There are no monitored Noise Agglomerations in the Borough. As the Borough has largely separated land uses, industrial/ residential noise quality conflicts are not regarded a major problem, but this will need to remain a consideration as permitted development occurs incrementally over time, in the consideration of development proposals, and as proposals are progressed bringing employment and residential uses into closer proximity through careful planning and design.

**21.51** Development proposals should consider noise impacts through a number of different sources, this could include, but not be limited to highways rail, evening economies, industrial uses and construction.

## Water pollution

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**21.52** The Environment Agency's Thames River Basin Management Plan identifies that the lower Thames Estuary is of a moderate quality in terms of its ecological status and is failing to achieve a good chemical status. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017 aims to secure no further deterioration of waterbodies and to ensure that the status of waterbodies is improved. Whilst the Thames Estuary is the main waterbody in Castle Point to which this applies, it also applies to all other main rivers in the Borough.

**21.53** The Habitats Regulations Assessment identifies that new development is likely to impact on water quality. Improvements to water quality however can be achieved through the delivery of the Asset Management Plans of the water supply company and the drainage undertakers, through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and ensuring that Water Recycling Centres have the capacity to accommodate growth.

**21.54** ECC as the LLFA will not support developments that propose to connect surface water to foul sewers as these systems can become overwhelmed, increasing the risk of flooding and pollution occurring. SuDS features should be designed in line with the updated Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) SuDS Manual (CIRIA C753). Water quality Management guidance can be found within Chapter 26 of the manual. When choosing potential SuDS features, consideration around ground conditions and contamination is paramount. Currently, the LLFA does not support infiltration basins/features within contaminated ground, however there is the option for lined SuDS features to be installed, should site conditions allow. Evidence of pollution mitigation supplied must be demonstrated.

**21.55** The ECC Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex, provides guidance on the appropriate use of SuDS in the Borough. The Canvey Island Six Point Plan specifies the approach to be taken on Canvey Island in particular to managing surface water flood risk, and consequently any impact on water quality arising from surface water flows. It is especially important for Castle Point that the Six Point Plan is implemented through the Asset Management Plans of drainage undertakers, and that the impact of development on water quality is managed to ensure there is no that there is no adverse effect to the integrity of the nearby nearby Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site or the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site.



## Light pollution

**21.56** Light pollution obscures the night sky and amenity around many urban areas within England and can also have a disruptive impact on wildlife and habitats. At a local level light nuisance exists where a source of artificial light significantly and unreasonably interferes with a person's use and enjoyment of their property or is prejudicial to their health. By encouraging good design, new developments will be required to consider the impact of potential light spillage on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, nature conservation, and health and wellbeing.

## Industrial development

**21.57** Industrial development may give rise to pollution to land and water, and/or result in disturbance to habitat sites. Due to the limited scale of industrial development, proposed studies have not focused on the impacts of this type of development in the Borough. These will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in order to ensure that activities do not have an adverse impact on the environment or residential amenity. In particular, the implementation of SuDS in non-residential development proposals needs to be carefully considered, to ensure any pollutants carried in surface water do not result in the contamination of land or local water courses nearby, or further afield, or result in adverse impacts to human health and residential amenity.

## Residential amenity

**21.58** Planning conditions and environmental health regulations can be used to ensure that pollution and amenity impacts do not become a widespread issue within the Borough. Where required, conditions limiting hours of construction, opening hours and placing requirements on applicants to submit details of waste storage and disposal have previously been implemented to ensure that any impacts on the environment and living environments have been reduced.

**21.59** Harm to living environments may be caused where different uses, be it residential and commercial, come into conflict. Harm may also occur where

new residential development is poorly located, poorly designed, or constitutes over-development resulting in a significant increase in disturbance to existing residents nearby. It is normal for individual development proposals in Castle Point to be considered in terms of their impact on residential amenity having regard to matters such as noise, light, heat, dust, and vibrations. Any new development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring or existing uses in the vicinity of the development and protects wider amenities by avoiding unacceptable levels of polluting emissions, including noise, light, smell, fumes and vibrations, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented and maintained.



### Policy SD7 - Development on Contaminated Land

1. Where appropriate, development proposals on land classified as contaminated, potentially contaminated, or suspected as being contaminated, should be supported by a desktop environment study, and (if guidance from statutory body indicates it is necessary) an intrusive site investigation
2. Where a site is contaminated the Council will only permit development where it is satisfied that land is capable of remediation and is fit for the proposed use.
3. An agreed programme of remediation and validation must be undertaken before the implementation of any planning consent on a contaminated site. Following the remediation, the site must not pose a threat to public health or that of the environment, nor pose a threat of pollution to controlled waters including ground water. Evidence of remediation should be to the satisfaction of relevant statutory regulators.

### Reasoned Justification

**21.60** National policy places great importance on safeguarding the health of the environment and the public from contaminated land. Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 defines contaminated land as 'any land which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that:

- (a) significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused; or
- (b) pollution of controlled waters is being, or is likely to be caused.

**21.61** The NPPF states planning policies and decisions should also ensure the site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and land instability, including from natural hazards or former activities of the

land and pollution arising from previous uses. Proposals or remediation of land should ensure that after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

**21.62** Contaminated land could be created as a result of uses such as petrol stations, car washes, sites used for industrial and commercial storage, and agriculture due to pollutants produced by the previous or existing site uses. It is important to ensure pollutants do not harm the health of the public or environment and that future development does not exacerbate these issues.



Photography: Simon Keenleyside, for *This is Us*.



### Policy SD8 - Developments near Hazardous Uses

Development proposals will be assessed in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance where they fall within a consultation zone for one or more hazardous installations. Where the HSE advises against development the planning application will be refused on health and safety grounds.

## Reasoned Justification

**21.63** The HSE provides planning advice to local authorities on developments which fall within the consultation zones of hazardous installations.

**21.64** There are two hazardous installations in the Borough located towards the south of Canvey Island. These installations are regulated by the HSE in accordance with Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations.

**21.65** Each installation or pipeline has its own consultation zone which is determined by the HSE depending on the materials stored and technology operated at the site. These zones are periodically reviewed, and updated where necessary by the HSE, and used in the determination of any relevant planning application within those zones.

**21.66** Any development proposal within the HSE consultation zone will be subject to consultation with the HSE by applying the Planning Advice for Developments near Hazardous Installations (PADHI) methodology. This will result in either a “Do not Advise Against” or “Advise Against” determination based on the level of risk posed to prospective occupants of the development. The Council will place great weight on the recommendation provided by the HSE.



### Policy SD9 – Water Supply and Waste Water

1. All new residential developments will be required to achieve a water efficiency standard of 90 litres per person per day. Where it can be demonstrated that this is not feasible part G2 and regulation 36(2)(b) of the Buildings Regulations will apply.
2. All non-residential development should achieve full credits for Wat 01 of BREEAM.
3. All new developments should incorporate rainwater harvesting and grey water technologies for non-potable water uses on site to minimise overall water consumption and maximise its reuse. This should be integrated with the sustainable drainage provision on site, as required by policy SD3.
4. All new development should demonstrate that adequate foul water treatment and drainage already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development. This must include confirmation that there is adequate quantitative and qualitative capacity at the Water Recycling Centre that will serve the development.

### Reasoned Justification

**21.67** The Water Strategy for Essex and the Environment Agency is clear that Essex, including Castle Point is within an area of serious water stress. Serious water stress is defined in the Water Industry (Prescribed Conditions) Regulations 1999 as where ‘the current household demand for water is a high proportion of the current effective rainfall which is available to meet that demand; or, the future household demand for water is likely to be a high proportion of the effective rainfall which is likely to be available to meet that demand’.

**21.68** The quantity and quality of our water is a major issue now and for future generations and how we live and work. Agriculture, growth, energy, food, and environment in this region will be affected by water insecurity. The

consequences of having too little water and uncertainty of supply can have devastating effects on wellbeing, planning for economic growth and on nature and biodiversity (both quantity and quality).

**21.69** The [Environmental Improvement Plan](#) sets out a road map and action plan, as expanded in [Defra’s Plan for Water 2023](#) to reduce the demand for water and explore further water efficiency savings in new developments, through planning and building regulations. This includes considering mandating a new minimum water efficiency standard for new homes down from 110 litres to 100 litres per person per day (l/p/d) in seriously water stressed areas such as Essex in the future; and to investigate dual pipe systems and water recycling of options for new housing as part of the planning review.

**21.70** The recent [Future Homes Hub Water Efficiency Report \(April 2024\)](#), to inform HM Government’s roadmap for water efficient new homes goes further and sets recommended water efficiency targets for 2025 and 2035 for seriously water stressed areas including Essex from 90-80 l/p/d.as follows:

- *2025-105 Litres Per Person Per Day (LPPPD) achieved through the fittings approach and 90 LPPPD in seriously water stressed areas to enable sustainable growth, and*
- *a Target 2035 90 LPPPD achieved through fittings approach and further innovation 80 LPPPD in water stressed areas. To be determined in seriously water stressed areas to enable sustainable growth.*

The fittings approach is where water fittings and appliances are selected which have a capacity up to the maximum flow rate only.

**21.71** The Water Strategy for Essex seeks for developments to become water neutral over time and therefore recommends that Local Planning Authorities promote water efficiency in new developments and encourage the use of grey water. Policy SD9 seeks to achieve this by requiring the standard set out by the Future Homes Hub for areas of serious water stress for 2025. Further application of these enhanced standards to the levels proposed for 2035 will be considered as part of a review of this Plan, noting the potential viability implications. If the enhanced standard for 2025 is not feasible on a particular development, the optional mandatory enhanced standard set out in Part G of the building regulations, which is currently set at 110 l/p/d will nonetheless apply due to the level of water stress experienced in Essex. The discharge of



water through the sewer systems is also a consideration from a water quality perspective. There are four Water Recycling Centres serving Castle Point (Benfleet, Canvey, Rayleigh and Southend). They all discharge into the Thames Estuary or its tributaries potentially impacting on its ecological and chemical status. The Environment Agency is responsible for the monitoring of this, and for issuing discharge licenses to the drainage undertaker, setting quantitative and qualitative limits.

**21.72** Anglian Water is the drainage undertaker in Castle Point and is responsible for ensuring that it does not exceed the licenses for discharge set by the Environment Agency.

**21.73** As the statutory undertaker, developers pay Anglian Water to connect to the drainage network and Anglian Water use that income to deliver necessary improvements to the network to accommodate that connection.

**21.743** Where growth locations are known through this Plan, Anglian Water can plan for that growth through their five-year Asset Management Plans, approved by OFWAT. Anglian Water have reviewed the sites identified in this Plan and provided advice on the improvements needed within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**21.75** Where additional sites come forward Anglian Water will need to provide advice on the capacity within the drainage network including at the Water Recycling Centres, and any discharge consents, to accommodate this growth.

**21.76** Furthermore, in order to prevent storm water discharges, for which OFWAT can fine Anglian Water, it is essential that new developments also implement SuDs in accordance with policy SD3. To further improve water efficiency, this should include rainwater harvesting and grey water technologies as recommended by the Water Strategy for Essex. This may include site or development wide rainwater recovery systems or the use of a specific roof pitch within a development to optimise rainwater harvesting. Recovered water can be used for tasks such as flushing toilets, washing laundry and watering gardens and plants. Site layouts will need to make the necessary space available to accommodate rainwater collection/reuse systems.





## 22. Monitoring Framework

**22.1** The Castle Point Plan will need to be monitored regularly to ensure that the policies are delivering the objectives of this Plan. This also helps identify if an early review of the Plan is required.

**22.2** The Monitoring Framework is set out below. It shows the alignment between the monitoring of the Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal.

**22.3** Monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis, with the results published as part of the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR covers the following:

- Progress in preparing planning policy documents against the programme set out in the Local Development Scheme;
- Performance in terms of the delivery of development over the preceding year, in particular the delivery of new housing;
- A housing trajectory identifying the assessed supply of land for housing provision in the future;
- Information on the effectiveness of planning policies having regard to output indicators and appeal decisions;
- Infrastructure Funding Statement as required by Regulation 121A Schedule 2 paragraph 3 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 as amended by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019.

**22.4** In order to ensure the policies in this Plan remain relevant and applicable to the socio-economic and environmental circumstances of the Borough, and any policy context in which the plan-making and development management processes operate, the Council will, as necessary, undertake partial reviews of the Castle Point Plan. The results of monitoring against the monitoring framework set out below will be used to indicate where socio-economic or environmental change justify such a review.

**22.5** A full review of this Plan will be completed within 5 years of its adoption and every 5 years thereafter. The Plan will be rolled for 5 years on each review to maintain a 15 year Plan period.





SA Objective	Policies	Monitoring Indicator
Castle Point Plan Objective 1: Protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development		
To maintain, conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	SP1 – Supporting Enhancement of the Borough's Green Spaces  GB1 – Development affecting the Green Belt  GB2 – Previously Developed Land in the Green Belt	The amount of development permitted within the Green Belt
Castle Point Plan Objective 2: Increase the amount of good quality multi functional green and blue infrastructure in the Borough		
To improve the quality, range and accessibility to essential services, facilities, green infrastructure and open space	Infra4 – Open Spaces	Areas of additional open space provided
	ENV1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape and Landscape Features	Areas of open space lost
Castle Point Plan Objective 3: Secure multi-functional green corridors between the different green spaces in and on the edge of our Borough that promote active travel		
To improve the quality, range and accessibility to essential services, facilities, green infrastructure and open space	Infra3 – Improving Health and Wellbeing	The amount of development permitted within the South Canvey Green Lung
	ENV1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape and Landscape Features	Delivery of South Benfleet Playing Fields Master Plan
Castle Point Plan Objective 4: Plan positively to protect and secure an uplift in biodiversity networks present in the Borough		
To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species, and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	ENV3 – Securing Nature Recovery and Biodiversity Net Gain	Number of brownfield schemes delivering 10% biodiversity net gain
	ENV5 – Design Features that Encourage Biodiversity	Number of greenfield schemes delivering 20% biodiversity net gain
		Annual Contributions collected as part of Essex Coast RAMs
Castle Point Plan Objective 5: Locate development to avoid or manage flood risk from all sources and; Castle Point Plan Objective 8: Secure improved water quality in our waterbodies		
To adapt and respond to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change  To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and ensure sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth	SD1 – Tidal Flood Risk Management  SD2 – Non Tidal Flood Risk Management  SD3 – Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	Number of planning application approved contrary to advice from ECC (as Lead Local Flood Authority) or Environment Agency

SA Objective	Policies	Monitoring Indicator
Castle Point Plan Objective 6: Secure the delivery of net zero development and encourage the retrofit of existing properties		
To reduce contributions to climatic change by adapting and responding to the implications of a changing climate	SD4 – Net Zero Carbon Development (in operation)	Number of new buildings designed to be Net Zero in operation
	SD5 – Net Zero Carbon Development (Embodied Carbon)	Number of Whole Life Cycle Carbon Assessments submitted meeting all targets
Castle Point Plan Objective 7: Secure improved water efficiency in new buildings		
To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and ensure sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth	SD9 – Water Supply and Wastewater	Percentage of residential developments achieving water efficiency standard of no more than 90 litres per person per day
		Percentage of non residential developments achieving full credits for Wat 01 of BREEAM
Castle Point Plan Objective 9: Make the most effective use of vacant and underused brownfield land in our urban area		
To contribute to the sustainable use of land	SP2 – Making Effective use of Urban Land and Creating Sustainable Places  SP3 – Meeting Development Needs	Review and development of Brownfield Register
Castle Point Plan Objective 10: Improve the quality of the public realm and private buildings in our town centres and employment areas		
To contribute to the sustainable use of land  To improve the quality, range and accessibility to essential services, facilities, green infrastructure and open space	Policy C1 – Canvey Town Centre  Policy C4 – West Canvey  Policy Had1 – Hadleigh Town Centre	Net total amount of floorspace created for town centre uses (m²)
		Delivery of Public Realm Improvement Plans or Strategies
Castle Point Plan Objective 11: Protect and enhance key heritage and cultural assets		
To maintain and enhance the Borough’s cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings	C4 – West Canvey  Had2 – Hadleigh Country Park, Hadleigh Farm and Benfleet & Southend Marshes  DH1 – Green Space Connectivity in Daws Heath  D9 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	Number of designated Heritage Assets on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register



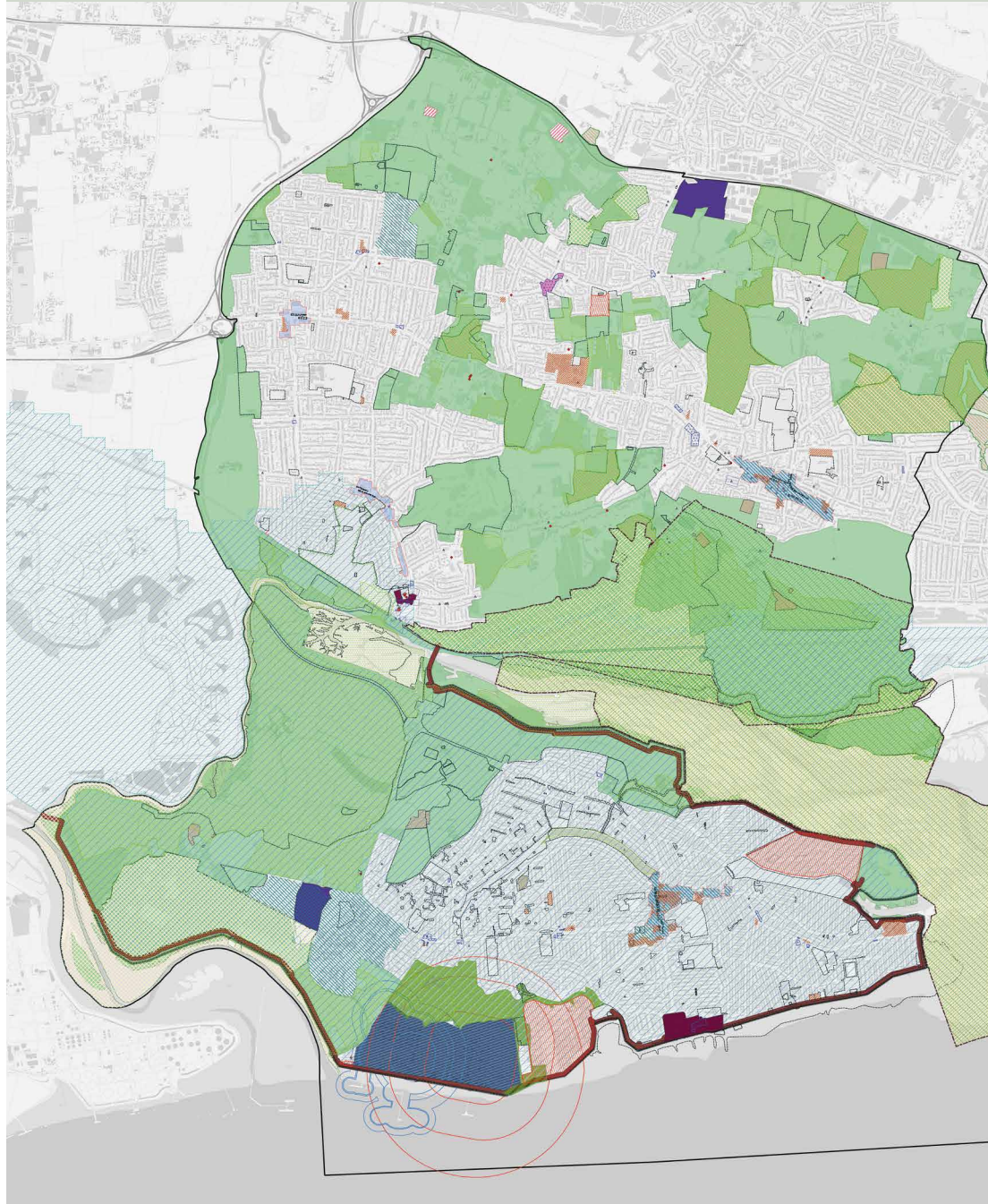
SA Objective	Policies	Monitoring Indicator
Castle Point Plan Objective 12: Improve the vitality of our town centres and seafront areas		
To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres	C1 – Canvey Town Centre B1 – Benfleet Town Centre B2 – Tarpots Town Centre Had1 – Hadleigh Town Centre E2 – Development of New Employment Floorspace in and around Town Centres Supporting Local Retail Centres (Policies TC1 to TC5)	Net total amount of floorspace created for town centre uses (m²)
Castle Point Plan Objective 13: Provide good quality local job opportunities and; Castle Point Plan Objective 15: Make it easy to start or grow a business in the Borough		
To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth by improving efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy and help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	E1 – Development on Strategic Employment Land Supporting Local Retail Centres (Policies TC1 to TC5)	Net total amount of floorspace created by employment type (m²)
Castle Point Plan Objective 14: Support the upskilling of our residents so they can access well paid jobs		
To improve the education and skills of the population	E3 – Development of Local Skills	Level 2 qualifications by working age residents
		Level 4 qualifications and above by working age residents
Castle Point Plan Objective 16: Secure growth in well connected and sustainable locations and; Castle Point Plan Objective 18: Provide well designed homes that meet local needs in terms of quality, affordability and any accessibility requirements		
To provide appropriate, affordable and decent housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community, and reducing disparity  To contribute to the sustainable use of land	SP3 – Meeting Development Needs Hou1 – Housing Supply Hou3 – Securing More Affordable Housing Hou5 – Specialist Housing Requirements Ho7 – Gypsy and Traveller Provision	Annual Housing Completions  Annual Affordable Housing Completions  Annual Specific Housing Needs Completions  Number of Gypsy and Traveller Plots granted planning permission per year

SA Objective	Policies	Monitoring Indicator
Castle Point Plan Objective 17: Make it easier and more convenient to safely walk and cycle around the Borough		
To reduce the need to travel and promote and encourage the use of sustainable and active alternative methods of travel to motorised vehicles to reduce road traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution	T3 – Active Travel Improvements	Percentage of journeys to work and education by walking and cycling
		Percentage of journey to work and education by public transport
Castle Point Plan Objective 19: Secure improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents enabling more active and healthier lifestyles, creating healthy living environments and reducing health inequalities		
To improve the population’s health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities	Infra3 – Improving Health and Wellbeing	Submission of Health Impact Assessments
Castle Point Plan Objective 20: Secure the transport and community infrastructure needed to support growth		
To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	Infra1 – Community Facilities  Infra5 – Indoor Leisure and Sports	Number of new community facilities granted planning permission per year
		Key transport infrastructure projects delivered





## Policies Map



### Map Key:

	Housing Allocations		RAMSAR
	Employment Allocations		Open Space
	Broad Locations		Borough Boundary
	Gypsy and Traveller Sites		Scheduled Ancient Monuments
	Park Homes		Special Protection Area
	Canvey Seafront Entertainment Area		Site of Specific Scientific Interest
	South Benfleet Leisure Quarter		Green Lung
	Primary Shopping Area		Green Belt
	Out of Centre Retail		South Benfleet Playing Fields
	Shopping Parades		Hadleigh Country Park, Hadleigh Farm and Benfleet Southend Marshes
	Thundersley Centre		Sea Wall
	Town Centre Boundaries		Port Related Facilities
	Listed Buildings		HSE Consultation Zone 1
	Locally Listed Buildings		HSE Consultation Zone 2
	Conservation Area		Land Safeguarded for Flood Defence
	Ancient Woodland		Tidal Flood Risk Management Area
	Local Wildlife Sites		

# Appendices

## Appendix A - Glossary

**Affordable Housing** – Includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

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

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

**Community Facilities** – Are buildings, which enable a variety of local activity to take place including, but not limited to, the following:

- Schools, Colleges and other educational facilities
- Libraries and community centres
- Doctors surgeries, medical centres and hospitals
- Public houses and local shops
- Museums and art galleries
- Child care centres
- Sport and recreational facilities

- Youth clubs
- Playgrounds
- Cemeteries
- Places of worship

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

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

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

**Development Plan** – This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Development Plan is the starting point for decision making.

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

**Edge of centre** – For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

**Exception Test (Flood Risk)** – The Exception Test requires two additional elements to be satisfied (as set out in paragraph 164 of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) before allowing development to be



allocated or permitted in situations where suitable sites at lower risk of flooding are not available following application of the sequential test. It should be demonstrated that:

- development that has to be in a flood risk area will provide wider [sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk](#); and
- the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

**Functionally Linked Land** – Land situated outside a Habitats site, but which supports designated features of Habitats sites.

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

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

**Gypsies and Travellers** – Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such. In determining whether persons are "gypsies and travellers" consideration will be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

- a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
- b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
- c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

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

**Habitats Sites (also known as 'International Sites')** – The network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive (includes Special Protection areas (SPA), and Ramsar sites).

**Infrastructure** – Infrastructure means any structure, building, system, facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or well-being including (but not exclusively):

- footways, cycleways and highways
- public transport
- drainage and flood protection
- waste recycling facilities
- education and childcare
- healthcare
- sports, leisure and recreation facilities
- community and social facilities
- cultural facilities
- emergency services
- green infrastructure
- open space
- affordable housing
- broadband
- facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

**International Sites** – See 'Habitats Sites' above.

**Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** – Essex's JSNA is a process through which local authorities and NHS organisations assess the current and future health, care and wellbeing needs of the local community to inform the decisions they make.

**Legibility** – The ability to navigate through or 'read' the [urban environment](#). Can be increased through a number of means such as [good connectivity](#), [landmarks](#) and wayfinding [signage](#).

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

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

**Local Plan** - The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the Development Plan Documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be Development Plan Documents, form part of the Local Plan.

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

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

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

**Mixed Use** - Developments which combine residential, commercial, and sometimes industrial or cultural spaces within a single property or area. They can be 'vertical', in which a single building accommodates multiple uses. Alternatively, they can be 'horizontal' mixed-use development where a range of different buildings on the same site each fulfill a specific purpose. These developments reflect modern urban planning trends, aiming to create vibrant, multi-functional spaces that enhance the quality of life for residents and the economic viability of businesses.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** - Government planning policy which replaces a large number of Planning Policy Guidance notes and

Planning Policy Statements with one single document. It sets out new planning requirements and objectives in relation to issues such as housing, employment, transport and the historic and natural environment amongst others.

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

**Original building** - A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

**Out of centre** - A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

**Out of town** - A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

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

**Planning Practice Guidance** - Guidance and detail supporting the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) which is published online and regularly updated.

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

**Premium Sustainability Areas** - Within Castle Point these are defined as:

- Sites within 800m of a town centre or railway station; and
- Sites within 400m of a bus stop.

**Previously Developed Land** - See brownfield land above.

**Primary Shopping Area** - Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).



**Primary and Secondary Frontages** – Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

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

**Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)** – A tool used to manage and mitigate the adverse effects from new developments on habitats sites.

**Sequential Test (Flood Risk)** – The sequential test for flood risk steers development to areas with the lowest risk. It compares a proposed site with other available sites to show which one has the lowest flood risk. The LPA may refuse planning permission if other, lower risk sites are identified.

**Sequential Test (Retail)** – A test required to demonstrate that no other sites are available in a location which is ranked as preferable. Centre sites are sequentially preferable, followed by edge of centre sites. Sequential testing starts from the Primary Shopping Area for Retail Uses and the Town Centre Boundary for all other main town centre uses.

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

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

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

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

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

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** – This will set out the standards that the Local Planning Authority intend to achieve in relation to involving the community and all stakeholders in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Plan Documents and in significant planning applications, and also how the Local Planning Authority intends to achieve those standards. A consultation statement showing how the Local Planning Authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement should accompany all Local Development Documents.

**Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA)** – A study prepared for the Local Planning Authority's Evidence Base further to national guidance which identifies sites with development potential for development and assesses their developability, deliverability and capacity.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** – A document produced by the Local Planning Authority to add further detailed guidance and information on a particular subject such as developer contributions or design guidance. An SPD is subject to a formal consultation period and then is used as a material consideration when determining planning applications.

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

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

**Sustainable Communities** – places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents,

are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

**Sustainable Construction** – Is the name given to building in an energy efficient way. The incorporation of many new technologies and energy saving techniques into a building can dramatically reduce the CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and carbon footprint of a building. Initiatives include grey water recycling systems, solar panels, home recycling, wind turbines and ground water heating systems.

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

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

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

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

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

**Use Class** - Different uses are given a classification as defined by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (As amended). For example, a C3 use would refer to a residential use.



Photography: Sally Chineea, for *This is Us*.



## Appendix B - Superseded Policies

Policies in this Plan will replace in their entirety the 2007 saved policies from the Castle Point Borough Local Plan adopted in 1998.

Saved policies 2007	Relevant policies in the new Local Plan
<b>Green Belt</b>	
GB2 – Re-use of buildings in the Green Belt	GB1, GB2
GB4 – Rebuilding of existing dwellings in the Green Belt	GB1, GB2
GB5 – Extensions to dwellings	GB1, GB2
GB6 – Garden extensions	-
GB7 – Agricultural dwellings	-
<b>Environment and conservation</b>	
EC2 – Design	D1, D2, D3, D4
EC3 – Residential amenity	D1, SD6
EC4 – Pollution	SD6
EC5 – Crime prevention	-
EC7 – Natural and semi-natural features in urban areas	ENV1
EC8 – The green lung	C6
EC9 – Development affecting commercial farmland	-
EC10 – Protection of high quality agricultural land	-
EC13 – Protection of wildlife and their habitats	ENV3
EC14 – Creation of new wildlife habitats	SP1, ENV3
EC15 – Control of permitted development in sensitive areas	-

Saved policies 2007	Relevant policies in the new Local Plan
EC16 – Protection of landscape	ENV1
EC17 – Special landscape area	Had2
EC18 – Permitted development in the special landscape area	Had2
EC19 – Ancient landscapes	C4, DH1
EC20 – Landscape improvement area	-
EC21 – Woodland management and tree preservation orders	ENV3
EC22 – Retention of trees, woodland and hedgerows	ENV3, D4
EC23 – Tree and shrub planting	D4
EC25 – Principles of control	D9
EC26 – Design and development	D9 and South Benfleet Conservation Area Design Code
EC27 – Planning applications	D9
EC28 – Restrictions on permitted development	D9
EC29 – Control of demolition	D9
EC30 – Shopfront design	D7
EC31 – Advertisements	D5
EC32 – Protection from demolition	D9
EC33 – Alterations to listed buildings	D9
EC34 – Setting of listed buildings	D9
EC35 – Re-use of listed buildings	D9
EC36 – Grant aid	-
EC37 – Local list of buildings	D9 and Appendix H
EC38 – Archaeological sites and monuments	D9
EC39 – Seafront entertainment area	C2

Saved policies 2007	Relevant policies in the new Local Plan
<b>Housing</b>	
H2 – Residential land	Hou1
H3 – New development sites	-
H4 – Safeguarding of land for long term housing needs	-
H5 – Safeguarding of land for long term housing needs	-
H6 – Safeguarding of land for long term housing needs	Had4
H7 – Affordable housing	Hou2
H9 – New housing densities	SP2
H10 – Mix of development	Hou3
H11 – Accessible and wheelchair housing	Hou4
H12 – Piecemeal development	SP4
H13 – Location of development	SP2, SP3
H14 – Living over the shop	TC1
H16 – Winter gardens	-
H17 – Housing development – design and layout	D1, D2
<b>Employment</b>	
ED1 – Provision of land to the south of Northwick Road	C4
ED2 – Long term employment needs	C4
ED3 – Protection of employment areas	E1
ED5 – Piecemeal development	-
ED6 – Parking and servicing	T7, T8
ED7 – Environmental improvements	E1
ED9 – Hazardous installations	C3, SD8

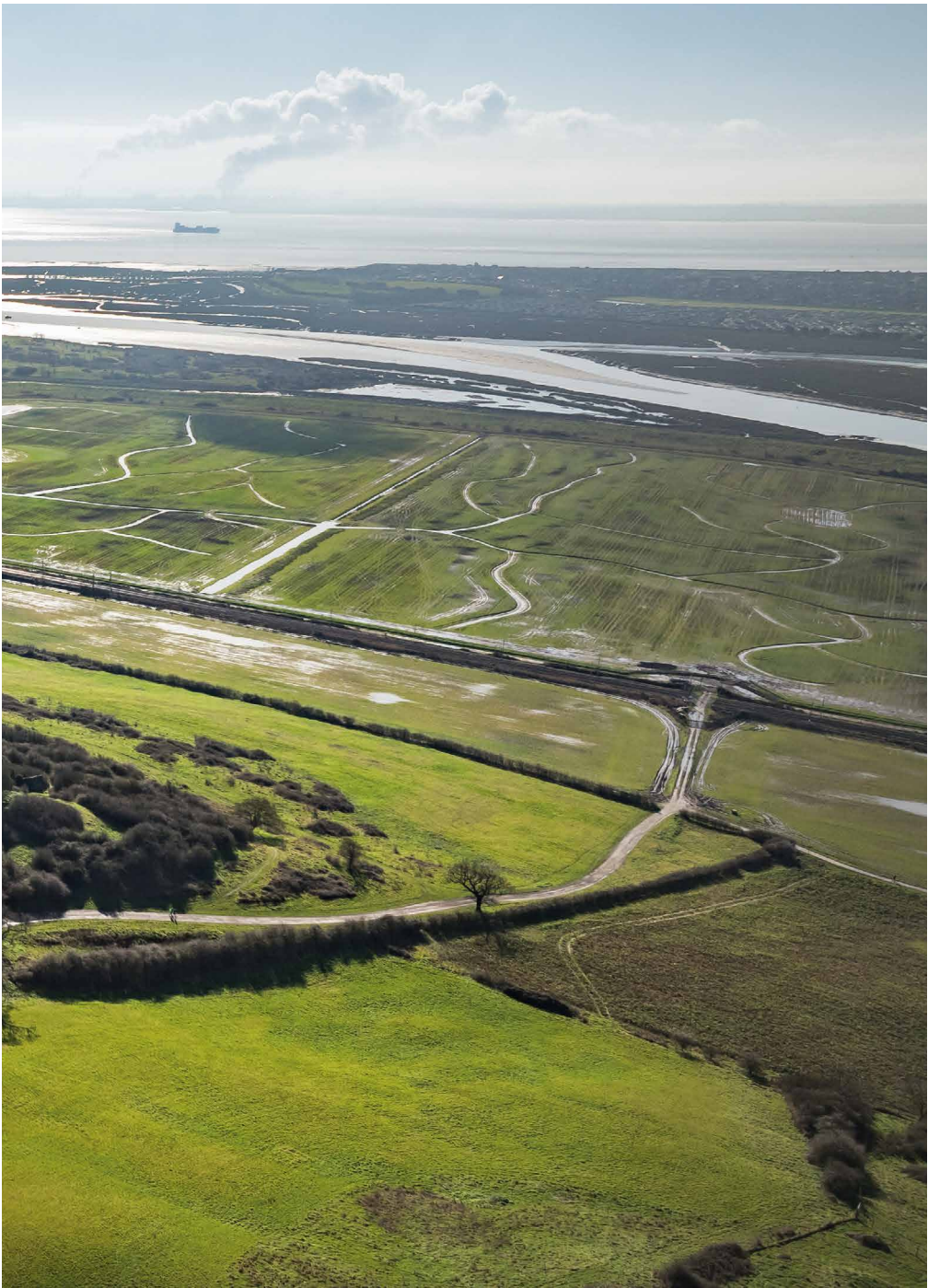
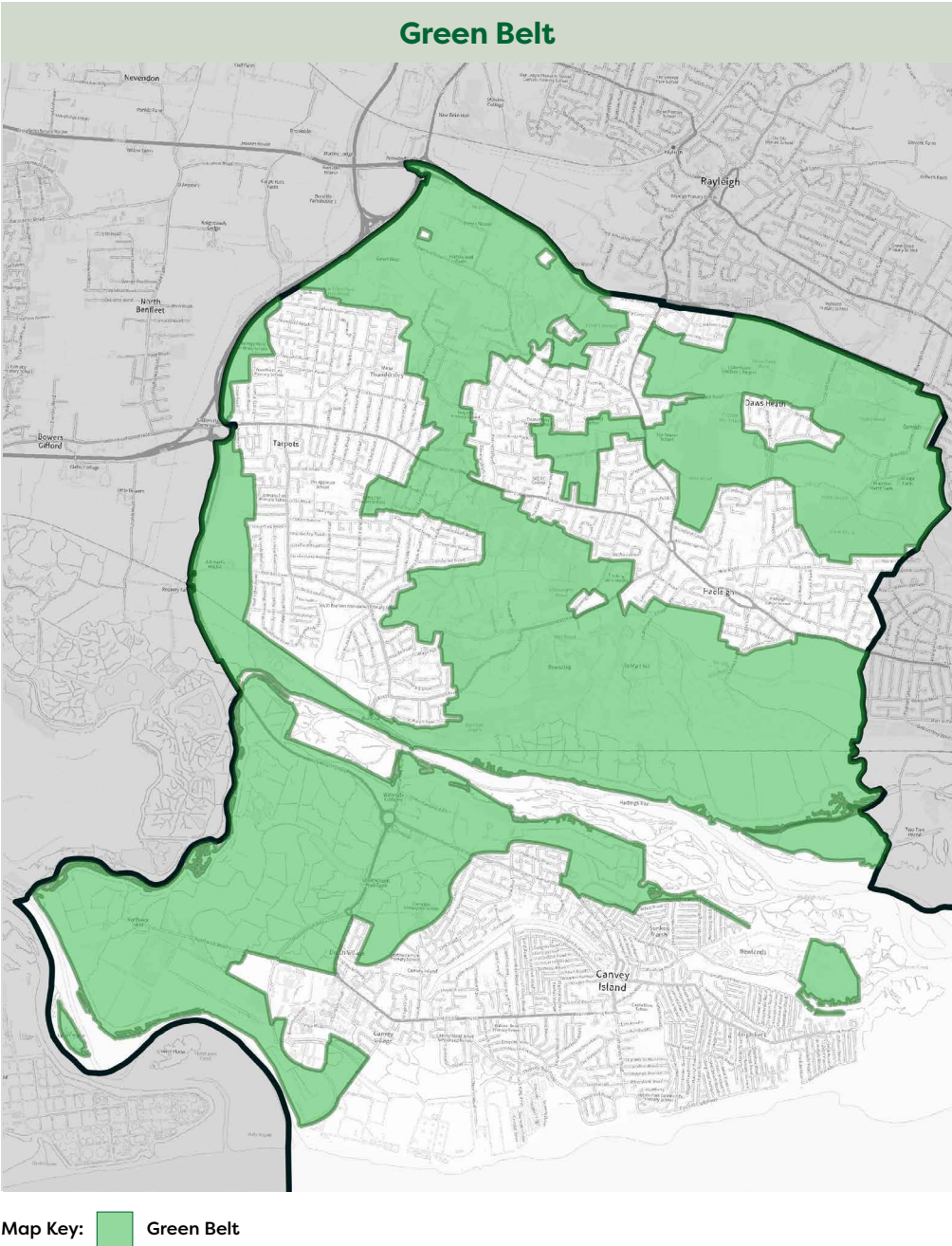
Saved policies 2007	Relevant policies in the new Local Plan
<b>Shopping</b>	
S1 – Location of retail development	TC1, TC2, TC3
S2 – Shopping facilities at Rayleigh Weir	TC3
S3 – Primary shopping frontages	TC1
S4 – Non-retail development	TC1, TC2, TC3, E2
S5 – Parking and servicing	T7, T8
S7 – Environmental improvements	TC1, C1, B1, B2, Had1
S9 – Local shopping parades	TC2
S10 – Supermarket and retail warehouse development	TC1, TC3
S12 – Design, siting and illumination of advertisements	D5
S13 – Proliferation of advertisements	D5
S14 – Advertisements and public safety	D5
S15 – Hoardings and poster panels	D5
<b>Transport</b>	
T1 – Strategic highway network	T1
T2 – Intensification of access use	T5
T5 – New link road access to employment land	-
T6 – Access to employment land	-
T7 – Unmade roads	-
T8 – Car parking standards	T7
T10 – Cycleways	T3
T11 – Cycleway construction	T3
T12 – Bus services	T4
T15 – Water-borne freight	-



Saved policies 2007	Relevant policies in the new Local Plan
<b>Recreation</b>	
RE2 – Golf courses	-
RE4 – Provision of children’s play space and parks	Infra4
RE5 – Public open space	Infra4
RE6 – Allotments	Infra4
RE7 – Romsey Road allotments	-
RE8 – Hadleigh Castle Country Park	Infra4, Had2
RE9 – Informal recreation in the countryside	SP1, Infra4, GB1
RE10 – Water recreation	Infra4
RE12 – Public rights of way	T3
RE14 – Planning agreements and recreational development	SP4, Infra4
<b>Community facilities</b>	
CF1 – Social and physical infrastructure and new developments	Infra1
CF2 – Education facilities	Infra2
CF4 – Workplace nurseries	-
CF6 – Places of worship and community centres	Infra1
CF7 – Health facilities	Infra3
CF8 – Non-residential health care	Infra3
CF9 – Access and non-domestic development	-
CF12 – Powerlines and cables	-
CF13 – Phasing of development	SP4
CF14 – Surface water disposal	SP4, SD3
CF15 – Water supply	SP4, SD7
CF16 – Telecommunications	Infra6
CF17 – Waste recycling	-

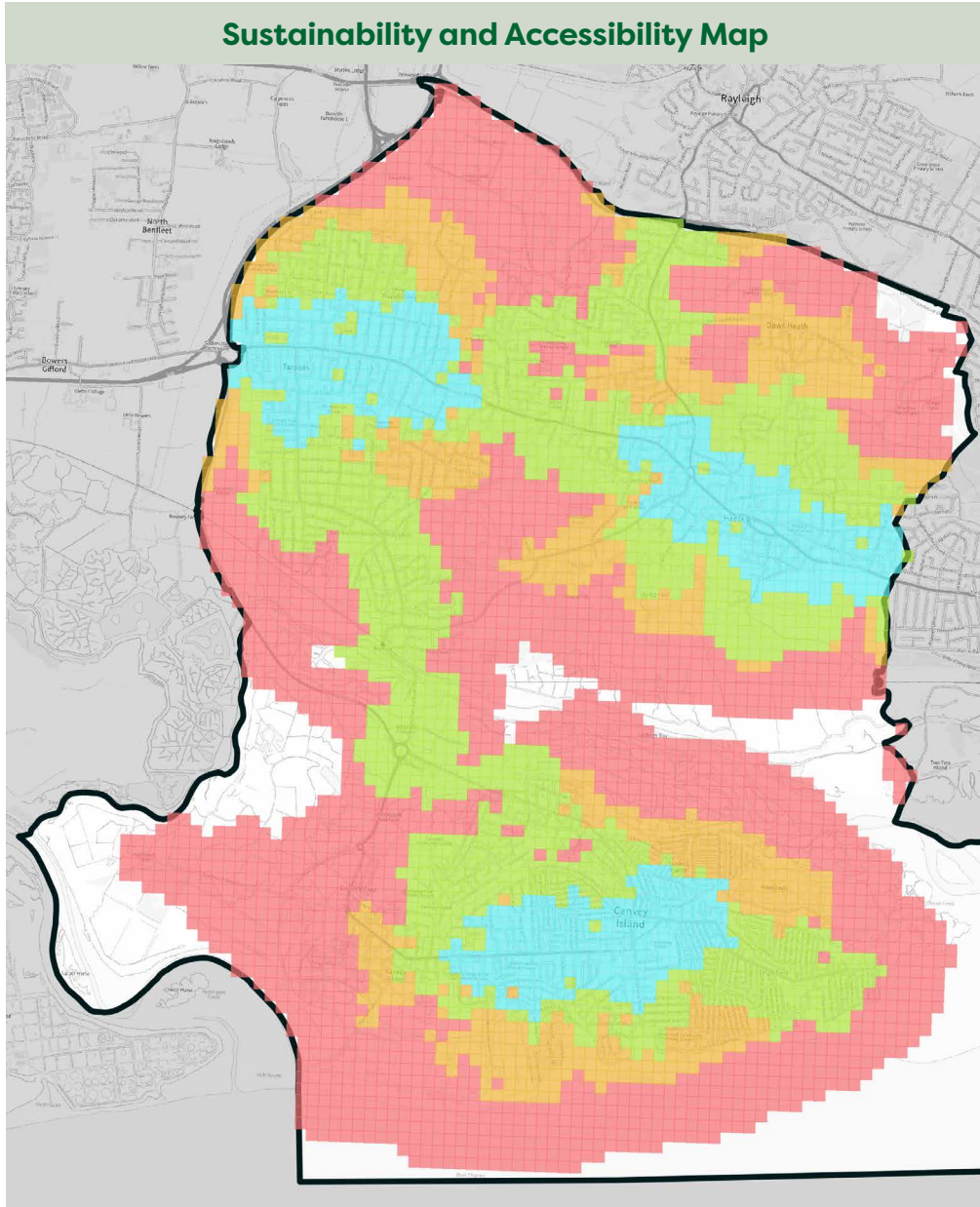








## Appendix D – Sustainability and Accessibility Map



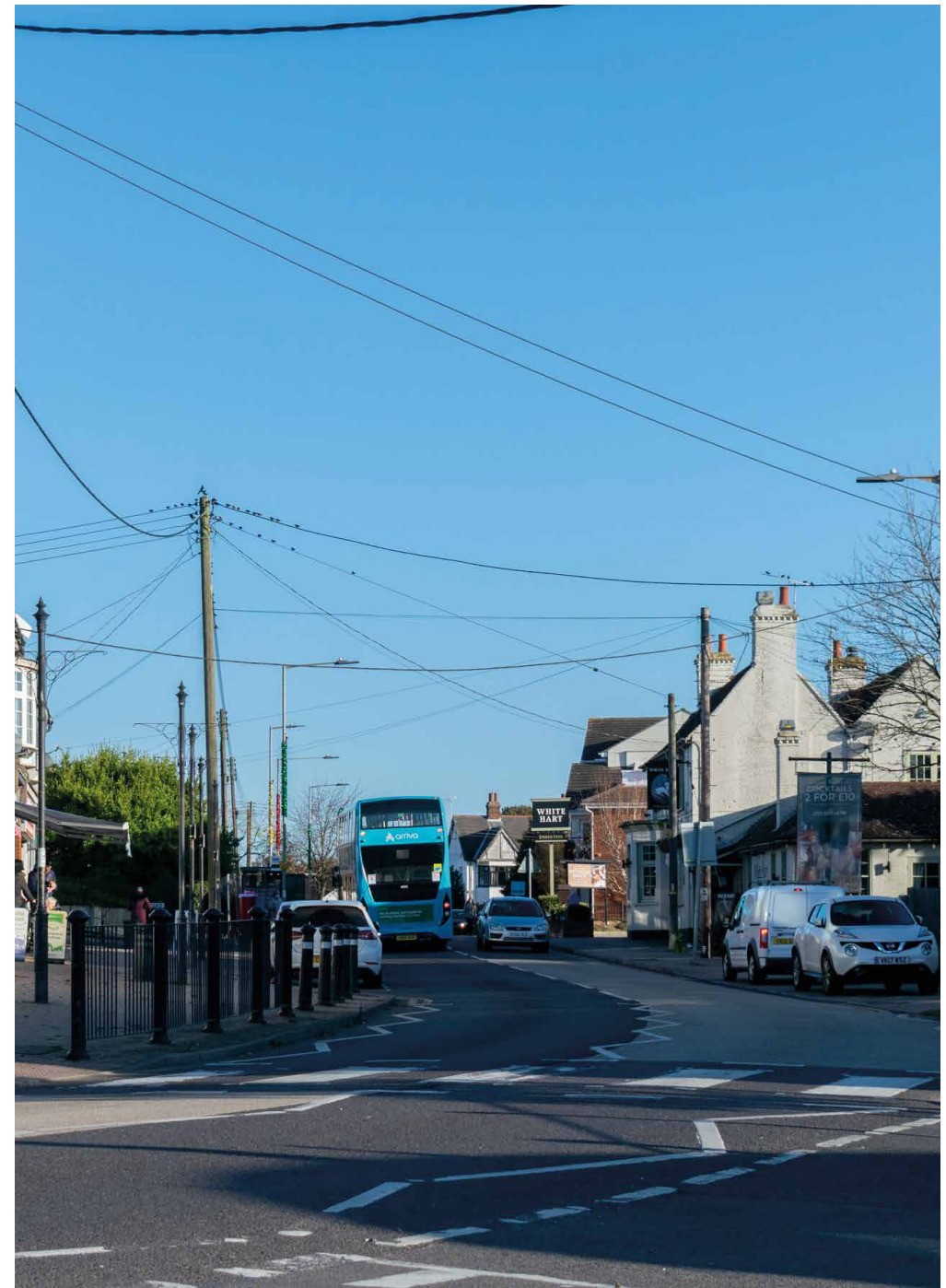
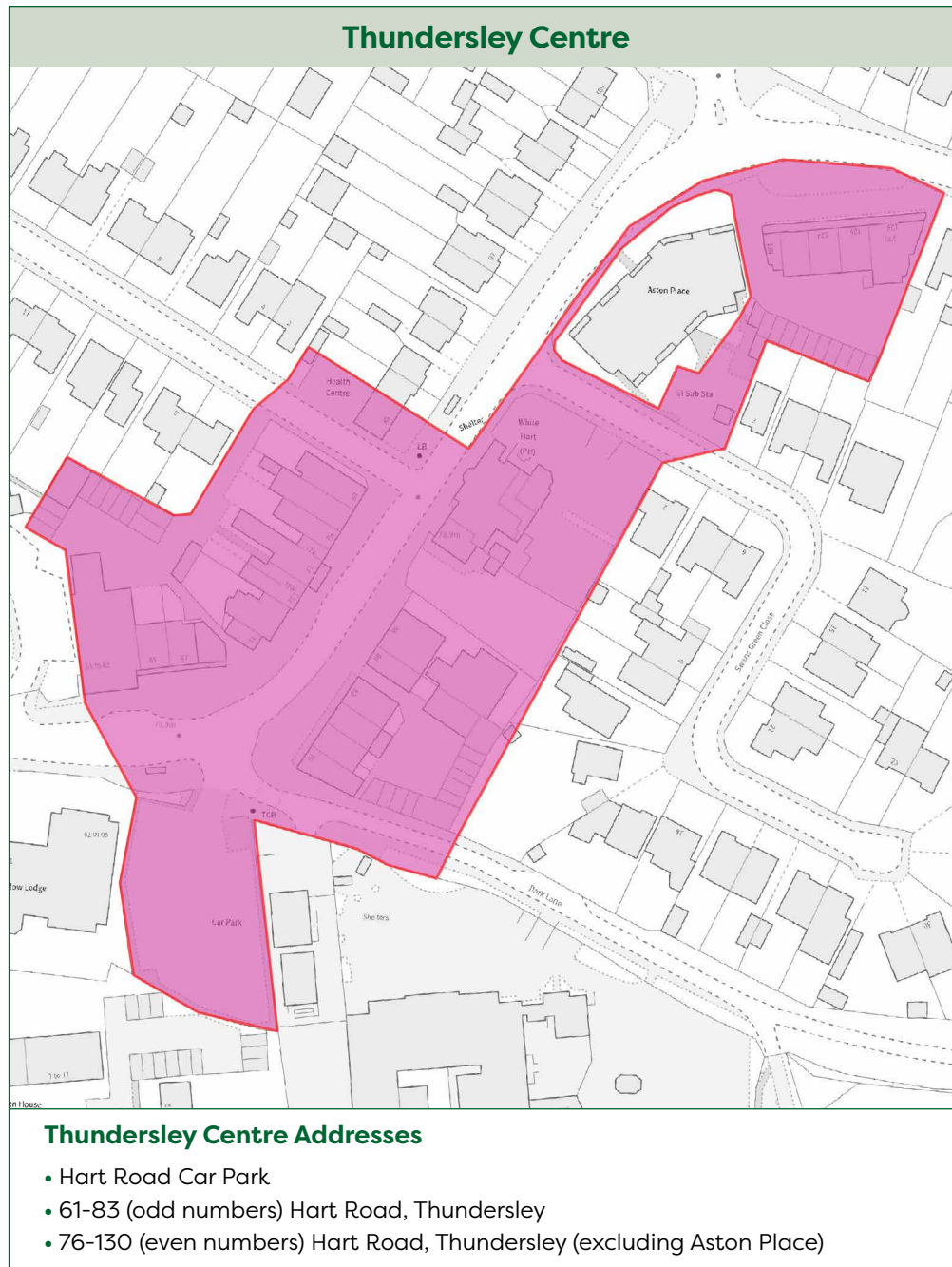
Map Key:

(0) Very Low (1) Low (2) Moderate (3-4) Good (5-7) High Borough Boundary

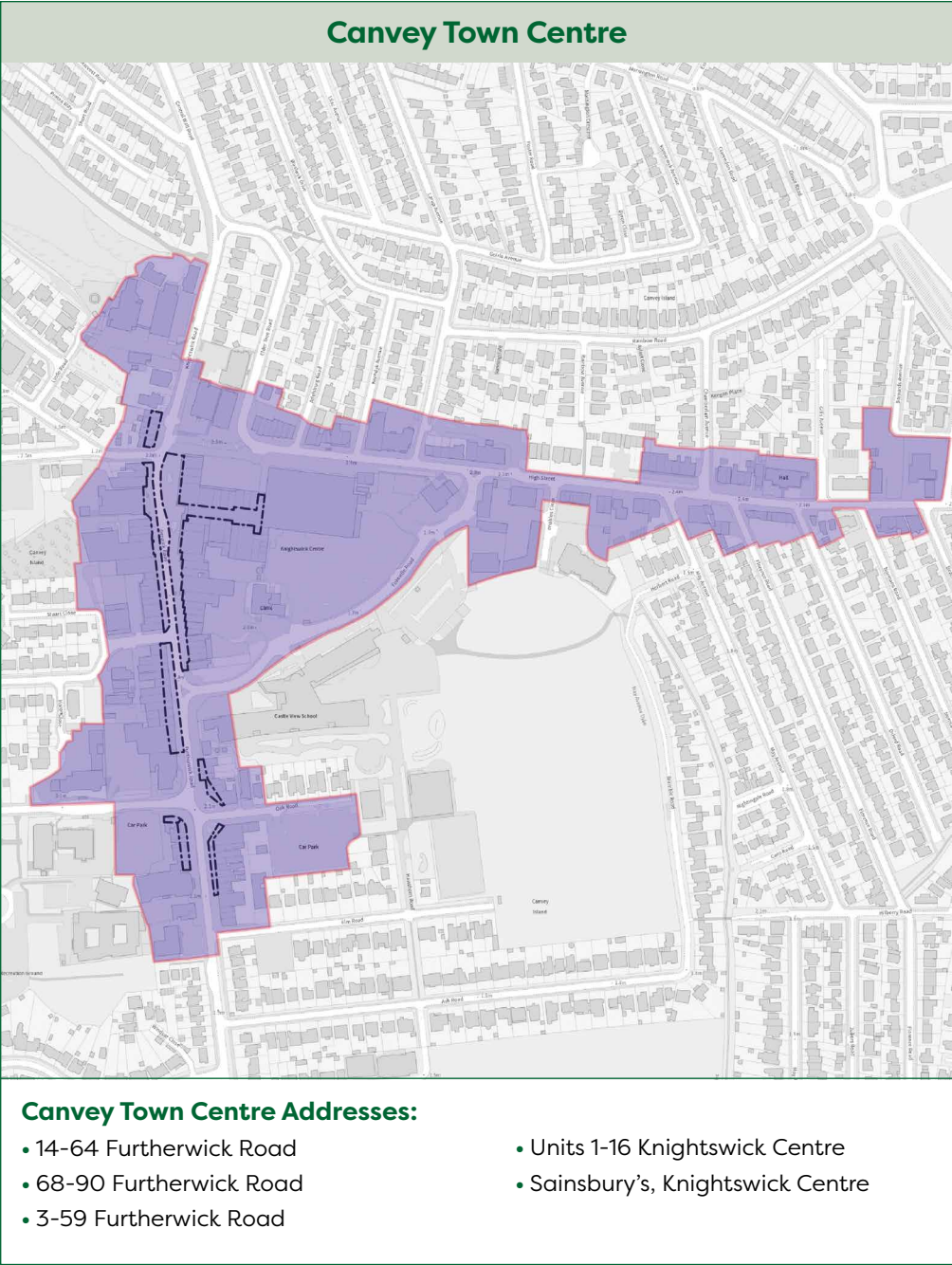




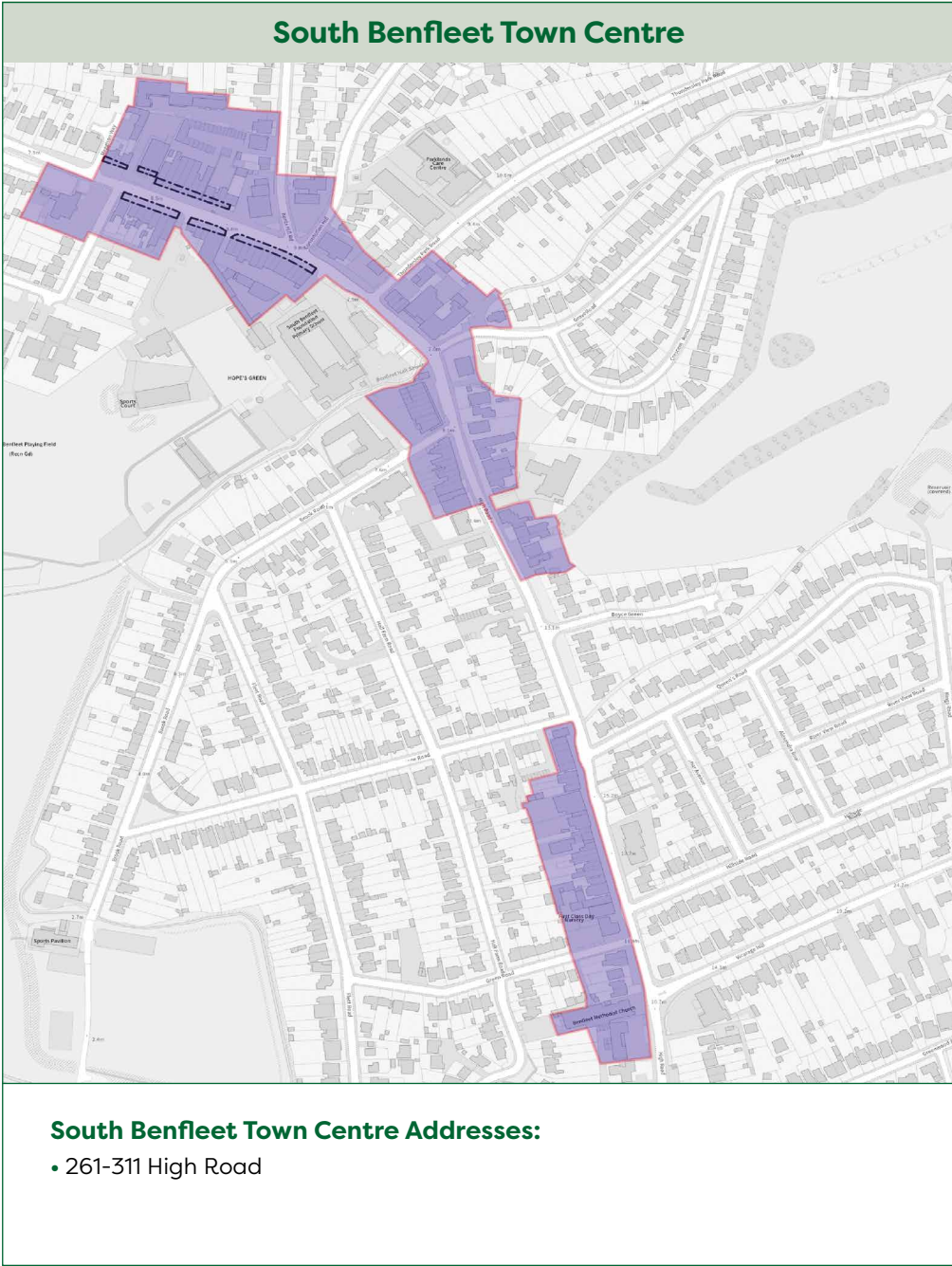
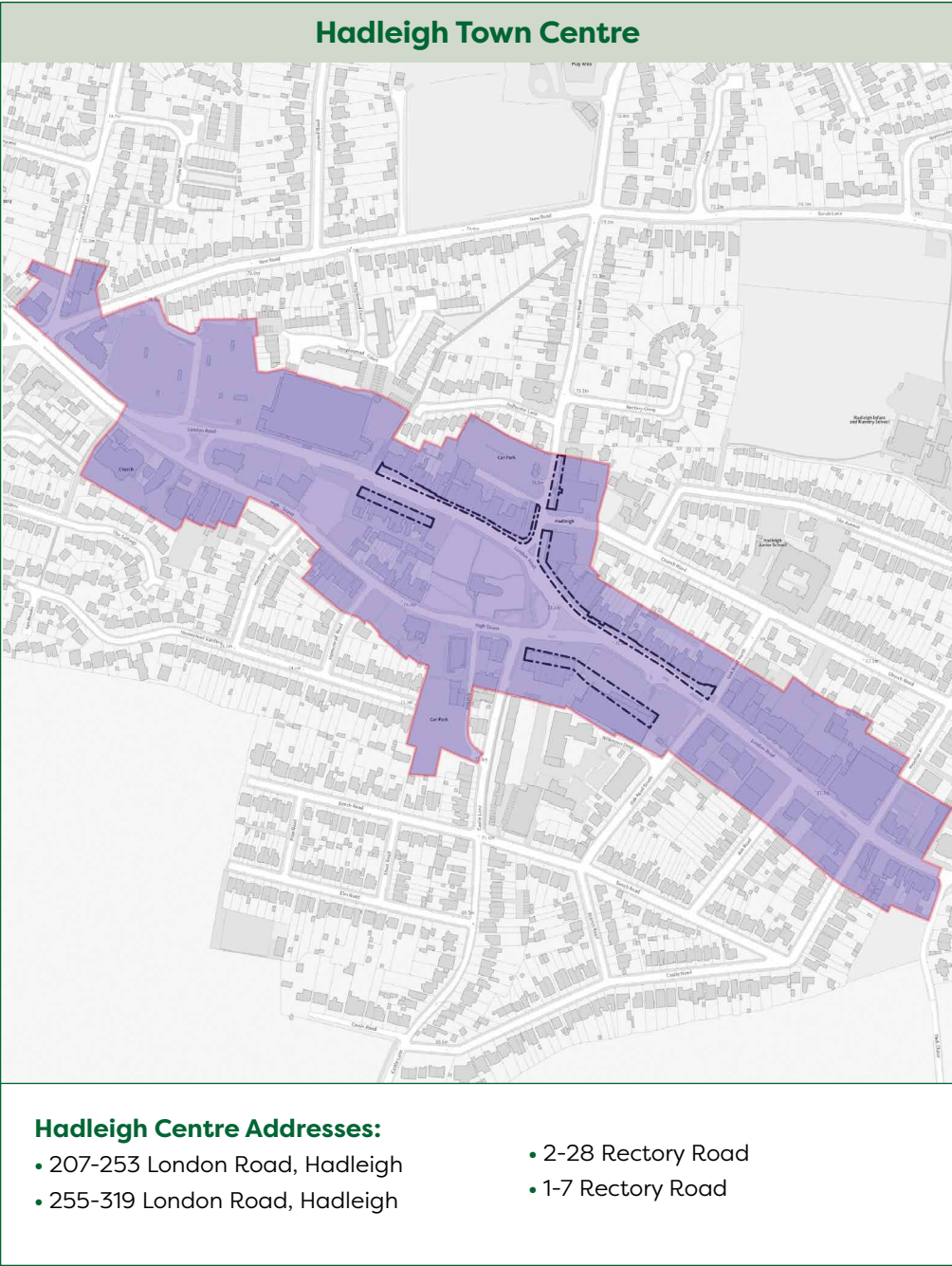
## Appendix E – Properties in Thundersley Centre (Policy Thun1)













## Appendix G – Local Shopping Parades List (Policy TC2)

The Table below sets out the local shopping parades in Castle Point, as identified on the Policies Map and referenced in Policy TC2.

Canvey Island	
<b>1 Third Avenue</b>	15-23 (odd numbers) Third Avenue, Canvey Island
<b>2 King Canute</b>	1-5 Haven Road, 1-9 (odd numbers) Canvey Road, the King Canute Public House Canvey Road, and 348-362 (even numbers) Long Road, Canvey Island
<b>3 Long Road j/w Grasmere Road</b>	353-365 (odd numbers) Long Road, Canvey Island
<b>4 Denham Parade</b>	169-179 (odd numbers), 162-176 (even numbers) Long Road, 2 Craven Avenue, 2&3 Denham Road Canvey Island
<b>5 Point Road</b>	86-98 (even numbers) Point Road, Canvey Island
<b>6 Meppel Avenue</b>	8-12 (even numbers) Pauls Court, Meppel Avenue, Canvey Island
<b>7a High Street j/w Seaview Road</b>	270-276 (even numbers) and 286-290 (even numbers) High Street, Canvey Island
<b>7b High Street j/w Station Road</b>	269-275 (odd numbers)
<b>8 High Street by Arcadia Road</b>	192-196 (even numbers) High Street, Canvey Island
<b>9 High Street by Vanderwalt Ave</b>	191-215 (odd numbers) High Street, Canvey Island
Hadleigh	
<b>1 Woodfield Road</b>	93-99 Woodfield Road, Hadleigh
Benfleet	
<b>1 London Road j/w Kents Hill Road</b>	312-322 London Road (Evens) 323-329 London Road (odds) 347 and 411 Kents Hill Road
<b>2 Roseberry Walk</b>	159-173 (odd numbers) Church Road and 1-16 Roseberry Walk
<b>3 High Road j/w Wavertree Road</b>	501 to 503 (odd numbers), High Road, South Benfleet

<b>4 Essex Way &amp; High Street</b>	1, 8, 10 Essex Way; 3-27 High St (Odds), 43, 69, 95 High Street; 80-84 High St, 24-32, 42 High Street
<b>5 Arundel Road &amp; Rushbottom Lane</b>	92 -96 (even numbers) Arundel Road, South Benfleet
<b>6 High Road (South)</b>	16-32 (even numbers) High Road, South Benfleet
Thundersley	
<b>1 Thundersley Centre (Policy Thun 1)</b>	61-83 (odd numbers) Hart Road, Thundersley 76-130 (even numbers) Hart Road, Thundersley (excluding Aston Place)
<b>2 Victoria House Corner</b>	288-302 (even numbers) Kiln Road and 2-28 (even numbers) Benfleet Road, Thundersley
<b>3 Parkfield</b>	255-275 (odd numbers) Kiln Road, Thundersley
<b>4 Woodmans Arms</b>	357-363 (odd numbers) Rayleigh Road and 297 Hart Road, Thundersley



## Appendix H – Heritage Assets List (Policy D9)

The tables below identifies the designated and non-designated heritage assets as set out in Policy D9.

### Designated Heritage Assets

#### Listed Buildings

##### Benfleet

There are 20 Listed Buildings located in Benfleet.

**Table 5.1 Benfleet Listed Buildings**

Address / Building Name	Grade	Date First Listed
Benfleet Water Tower, Benfleet Road	II	06-10-1981
The Round House, 106 Benfleet Road	II	22-06-1981
Shipwrights, 241 Benfleet Road	II	30-10-1979
5 and 7 The Close	II	15-01-1980
Street Lamp outside 7 The Close	II	22-07-1986
The Anchor Inn and Building attached to right, Essex Way	II	22-07-1986
South Benfleet War Memorial, Essex Way	II	28-02-2008
Former Pumping Station, High Road	II	22-07-1986
Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street	I	07-08-1952
Group of headstones between 18-22m south east of south porch of Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street	II	22-07-1986
Table tomb approximately 14m south of south porch of Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street	II	22-07-1986
The Hoy and Helmet Inn, High Street	II	07-08-1952
Street Lamp to west of 23 High Street	II	22-07-1986

Address / Building Name	Grade	Date First Listed
The Half Crown Inn, 25, 27, 29 High Street	II	22-07-1986
Benfleet Conservative Club, 67 and 69 High St	II	22-07-1986
Jarvis Hall, Thundersley Park Road	II	22-07-1986
Barn immediately to north of Jarvis Hall, Thundersley Park Road	II	22-07-1986
Cartlodge immediately north east of barn at Jarvis Hall, Thundersley Park Road	II	22-07-1986
Old Vicarage, Vicarage Hill	II	14-02-1994
Tombstone of Sir Charles Nicholson and family, High Street	II	09-11-2021

##### Canvey Island

There are five Listed Buildings on Canvey Island.

**Table 5.2 Canvey Island Listed Buildings**

Address / Building Name	Grade	Date First Listed
Dutch Cottage, Canvey Road	II	05-02-1952
Dutch Cottage, 6 Haven Road	II	05-02-1952
The Lobster Smack Public House, Haven Road	II	03-11-1972
1 - 9 Coastguard Cottages, Haven Road (consecutive)	II	13-09-1973
Labworth Café, Western Esplanade	II	16-04-1996



## Hadleigh

There are four Listed Buildings in Hadleigh.

**Table 5.3 Hadleigh Listed Buildings**

Address / Building Name	Grade	Date First Listed
Hadleigh Castle, Castle Lane	I	07-08-1952
Church of St James the Less, High Street	I	07-08-1952
Junction of London Road and Meadow Road Milestone	II	06-06-1990
Hadleigh War Memorial, Memorial Recreation Ground, London Road	II	15-06-2020

## Thundersley

There are five Listed Buildings in Thundersley.

**Table 5.4 Thundersley Listed Buildings**

Address / Building Name	Grade	Date First Listed
Great Burches Farmhouse, Burches Road	II	22-07-1986
Church of St Peter, Church Road	II	07-08-1952
Thundersley Hall, 192 Church Road	II	05-02-1981
8 and 10 Hart Road	II	22-07-1986
Thundersley Lodge, Runnymede Chase	II	22-07-1986

## Daws Heath

There are two Listed Buildings in Thundersley.

**Table 5.5 Daws Heath Listed Buildings**

Address / Building Name	Grade	Date First Listed
Tylerset Farmhouse	II	22-07-1986
96 and 98 Daws Heath Road	II	22-07-1986

## Designated Heritage Assets

### Scheduled Monuments

#### Benfleet

There are no Scheduled Monuments in Benfleet.

**Canvey Island** - There are three Scheduled Monuments on Canvey Island.

**Table 5.6 Canvey Island Scheduled Monuments**

Address / Monument Name	Date First Listed
Heavy Anti-aircraft gun site 170m south west of the junction of Cedar Road and West Crescent	22-01-2001
Roman Saltern 260m south east of Great Russell Head Farm	15-03-1972
Heavy Anti-aircraft gun site 380m east of Northwick Farm	07-07-2000

**Hadleigh** - There are three Scheduled Monuments in Hadleigh.

**Table 5.7 Hadleigh Scheduled Monuments**

Address / Monument Name	Date First Listed
Hadleigh Castle: An enclosure castle and an associated dam and mill	13-01-1915
Roman Fort (near Hadleigh)	14-01-1955
Heavy Anti-aircraft gun site on Sandpit Hill	09-03-2001

**Thundersley** - There are no Scheduled Monuments in Thundersley.

**Daws Heath** - There is one Scheduled Monument in Daws Heath.

**Table 5.8 Daws Heath Scheduled Monuments**

Address / Monument Name	Date First Listed
Roman-British site N of Pound Wood	13-09-1974

## Designated Heritage Assets

### Conservation Areas

**Benfleet:** There is one Conservation Area in Benfleet.

**South Benfleet Conservation Area** - Designated 18th November 1988  
An Article 4 (2) Direction was made on 29th October 1997 which removed permitted development rights for the following:

- The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney on a dwellinghouse or on a building within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse
- Any of the following development which would front a highway, waterway or open space:
  - The enlargement, improvement or any other alteration of a dwellinghouse
  - The alteration of a dwellinghouse roof
  - The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse
- The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a building, or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such, or the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of such a building or enclosure
- The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a hard surface for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse, or within its curtilage
- The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement, alteration or demolition of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse
  - The painting of the exterior of any part of a dwellinghouse or a building or enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

**Canvey Island:** There are no Conservation Areas on Canvey Island.

**Hadleigh:** There is one Conservation Area in Hadleigh.

**Florence Gardens Conservation Area** - Designated 18th November 1997  
An Article 4 (2) Direction was made on 29th October 1997 which removed permitted development rights for the following:

- The erection, alteration or removal of a chimney on a dwellinghouse or on a building within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse
- The enlargement, improvement or any other alteration of a dwellinghouse where any part would front a highway, waterway or open space
- The alteration of a dwellinghouse roof where any part would front a highway, waterway or open space
- The erection or construction of a porch outside any external door of a dwellinghouse where that would front a highway, waterway or open space
- The provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of a hard surface for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such where it would front a highway, waterway or open space
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on a dwellinghouse, or within its curtilage, where the part of the building or structure on which is to be installed would front a highway, waterway or open space
- The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement, alteration or demolition of any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse where it would front a highway, waterway or open space
- The painting of the exterior of any part of a dwellinghouse or a building or enclosure within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

**Thundersley:** There are no Conservation Areas in Thundersley.

**Daws Heath:** There are no Conservation Areas in Daws Heath.



## Non Designated Heritage Assets

The following assets have been identified by the Council to be locally important.

### Benfleet

8 Essex Way, South Benfleet
Horse Trough, Jotmans Lane/Benfleet Park Road (Cemetery Corner), South Benfleet
Ravenswood House, 148 Essex Way, South Benfleet
The Woodmans Arms, Rayleigh Road, Benfleet
Vicarage Hill Homes, Nos. 73, 77, 81, 85, 89 and 93 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet

### Canvey Island

2-3 Beechcroft Road, Canvey Island
Canvey Island Police Station, 161, 167 Long Road, Canvey Island
Canvey Transport Museum, 105 Point Road, Canvey Island
Former Admiralty Building, Western Esplanade, Canvey Island
St Katherine's Church, 22 Canvey Road, Canvey Island
Sydervelt Clinic, 173A Long Road, Canvey Island
The King Canute Building, Canvey Road, Canvey Island

### Thundersley

17 Chancel Close
15 Common Approach
523 & 529 Rayleigh Road
The Woodmans Arms, Rayleigh Road

### Hadleigh

12, 14 High Street Hadleigh
31 & 33 Rectory Road, Hadleigh
73 London Road, Hadleigh
Hadleigh Junior School, Church Road, Hadleigh
Hadleigh Old Fire Station, High Street, Hadleigh
Methodist Church, Chapel Lane, Hadleigh
Park Farm House, Park Chase
Sayers Farmhouse, Chapel Lane
Seaview Terrace, Hadleigh
Solby's House, off Rectory Road, Hadleigh
The Castle Public House, High Street, Hadleigh

### Daws Heath

Destination Signage, Junction of St. Michaels Road and Bramble Road Street sign, Daws Heath
137 Daws Heath Road
304 & 305 Daws Heath Road
389 Daws Heath Road
399 & 401 Daws Heath Road
320 & 322 Daws Heath Road
339-353 Daws Heath Road
412 & 414 Daws Heath Road
209 Bramble Road. Daws Heath Road
Peculiar People Former Chapel, 185 Daws Heath Road
Peculiar People Graveyard, Daws Heath Road
Daws Heath Social Hall, Daws Heath Road

## Appendix I - Local Wildlife Sites, Local Geological Sites and Potential Local Wildlife Sites List (Policy ENV4)

The table below identifies the Local Wildlife Sites and Potential Local Wildlife Sites as set out in Policy ENV4.

Local Wildlife Site	LoWS No.	Area (Ha) in 2023
Badger Hall Woods	CPT43	5.1
Belfairs Park Wood	CPT34	15.3
Benfleet Creek and Seawall	CPT39	44.3
Benfleet Creek North	CPT6	16.7
Benfleet Marsh	CPT37	3.8
Brick House Farm Marsh	CPT38	12.7
Canvey Village Marsh	CPT5	28.5
Castle Farm	CPT25	53.4
Coombe Wood	CPT10	11.9
Coopers Wood	CPT20	1.2
Cottage Plantation	CPT26	7.1
Coxall Wood	CPT30	1.0
Fane Road Meadows	CPT8	2.0
Hadleigh Castle Grasslands	CPT42	25.7
Hadleigh Marsh Borrow Dyke and Sea Wall	CPT27	15.9
Jervis Wood Lane	CPT15	1.7
Kents Hill Wood	CPT9	1.4
Little Haven/Tile Wood Complex	CPT28	55.3
Mount Road Wood	CPT11	3.8
Nine Acre Wood	CPT22	4.6
North Benfleet Hall Wood	CPT7	3.6
Northwick Farm and Sea Wall	CPT36	33.4
Oakwood Reservoir	CPT33	0.5
Poors lane	CPT44	1.0
Pound Wood	CPT31	23.4

Reeds Hill Farm Pasture	CPT13	1.6
Rushbottom Lane Flood Pound	CPT3	3.3
Shipwrights Meadow	CPT17	1.2
Shipwrights Wood	CPT18	12.3
The Chase Paddocks	CPT16	5.0
The Lake, Canvey	CPT19	6.3
Thornycreek Fleet	CPT35	2.6
Thundersley Brickfields	CPT40	1.6
Thundersley Glen	CPT14	13.3
Thundersley Great Common Wood	CPT21	5.0
Thundersley Plotland	CPT23	10.8
Two Tree Island West	CPT29	28.9
Vicarage Hill	CPT12	11.6
Wall Wood	CPT41	0.6
West Canvey Marshes	CPT4	347.4
West Wood	CPT24	33.2

Potential Local Wildlife Site	LoWS No.	Area (Ha) in 2023
Brick House Farm Marsh extension	PLoWS 13	20.5
Windermere Road Wood	PLoWS 5	17.8

Local Geological Site	LoGS No.	Area (Ha) in 2023
Coombe Wood	CptG1	
Hadleigh Castle Landslip	CptG2	
Hadleigh Park	CptG3	
Pound Wood Nature Reserve	CptG4	
Shipwrights Wood	CptG5	
St Peter's Church Boulders	CptG6	
West Wood	CptG7	



## Appendix J – Local Open Spaces List (Policy Infra4)

The table below identifies the Local Open Spaces identified in Policy Infra4.

Open Space Area
16 Tilberg Road to 15 Sydervelt Road
16-26 Ferrymead
20-34 Smallgains Avenue
228-274 Long Road
2-60 Kellington Road
28-54 St Michaels Road
29 St Agnes Drive to 54 St Micheals Road
36-50 North Avenue
50-76 Linden Way
5-19 Linden Way
53-65 First Avenue
58-72 Cedar Road
77-95 Cedar Road
92-110 Cedar Road
Alley between Whernside Road and Athos Road
Ambleside Walk
Ambleside walk and Bridles
Amenity surrounding First Avenue and Second Avenue
Appleton School
Arthur Stevens Open Space
Ashcroft Place Green Corridor
Ashcroft Place LAP

Open Space Area
1Ashcroft Place LAP Amenity
Ashcroft Place LEAP
Ashcroft Place LEAP Amenity
Avondale Walk
Behind 11 Seventh Avenue
Benfleet to Leigh Pathway
Between 1 and 2 Greenways
Between 158 and 160 Link Road
Between 165-169 High Street (CI)
Between 170 and 172 Central Avenue
Between 18 and 19 Norfolk Way
Between 41 London Road and 2 Bartley Road
Between 42 and 44 Ambleside Walk
Between 51 and 34 Benderloch
Between 8 Maple Way and 2 Pine Close
Between 95 & 97 Cedar Road
Between Atherstone Road and Meynell Avenue
Between Chestnut Walk and Miramar Avenue
Between Church Close and Willow Close
Between Dalen Avenue and Pennial Road

Open Space Area
Between Elm Rd and Ash Rd
Between Leigh Beck Road and Southfalls Road
Between Orange Road and Westerland Avenue
Between Rayleigh Road and Arterial Road
Between Starbucks and Mcdonalds (CI)
Between Station Road and Seaview Road (South End)
Beveland Open Space
Between Harvest Road and Hilversum Way
Boyce Hill Golf Course
Brindles
Canvey FC
Canvey FC Youth Team
Canvey Gateway
Canvey Heights Country Park
Canvey Infant and Junior Schools
Canvey Sea Wall (North)
Canvey Skills Campus (Formerly Castle View)
Canvey Wick SSSI
Castle Point Golf Course
Castle View School (Formerly Furtherwick Park)
Castle Walk
Cedar Hall School
Central Wall (Path)

Open Space Area
Champlain Avenue
Chichester Close to Kitkatts Road
Chiltern Approach East and West
Church Road Benfleet Allotment Site
Concord Rovers FC
Coombe Wood
Cornelius Vermuyden School
Corner of Linden Way, Maple Way and Fern Walk
Corner of Little Gypps Road and Little Gypps Close
Creekside
Daws Heath Allotment
Daws Heath Evangelical Church
Dodds Grove
Dorset Way
Dutch Cottage Gardens (REMOVE FROM ACCESS/QUANTITY)
East corner of Cedar Road and Linden Way
East Corner of Little Gypps Road and Willow Close
East of 15 Gifhorn Road and 25 Limetree Road
East of 162 Long Road
East of 7 Denesmere
East of 7 Pine Close and Around 16-24 Maple Way
East of Almond Walk
East of Budna Road

Open Space Area
East of Morrisons Petrol Station (CI)
Elm Road Tennis Club
End of Almond Walk
End of Birch Close
Esplanade Paddling Pool (east)
Esplanade Paddling Pool (west)
Fane Wood
Field between New Road and Maple Way
Field between North Avenue and Denham Road
Field to the rear of Limberg Road
Fir Walk
Geesh Road
Glenwood School
Great Wood Golf Course
Great Wood Nature Reserve and Belfairs Park
Greenview
Greenways
Hadleigh Castle
Hadleigh Country Park
Hadleigh Farm Play Area
Hadleigh Primary School
Hatley Gardens Allotment
Holly Walk
Holy Family Catholic Primary School
Inland Esplanade
Ivy Walk

Open Space Area
John H Burrows Play Area
John H Burrows Recreation Ground
John H Burrows Recreation Ground Bowling Pavilion
John H Burrows Recreation Ground Tennis Courts
Jotmans Farm Allotment
Jotmans Hall Primary School
Kellington Road to Kings Caravan Park
Kents Hill Infant and Junior School
Kickstar Mx Club
King George V Childrens Play Area (Canvey)
King George V Play Area (Canvey)
King George V Playing Field (Thundersley)
King George V Playing Field Play Area (Thundersley)
King George V Recreation Ground (Canvey)
King John Senior School
Kingsdown Walk
Kingston Primary School
Kismet Park
Kismet Park Adizone
Kismet Park Play Area
Labworth Park
Labworth Park Bumblebee Park
Labworth Park Sensory Gardens
Land adjacent to drain Thames and Jasmine

Open Space Area
Land adjacent to Drain Thames and Lavender (W)
Land adjacent to drain Thames and Lavender (E)
Land connecting Beach Road, Normans Road, Rosbach Road, Oxford Road and Florence Road
Land connecting Brandenburg Road, Tewkes Road, Heilsburg Road, Landsburg Road and Munsterburg
Land connecting Devon Way, Warwick Close, Brookside and Sussex Close
Land connecting Link Road, The Ridings and Sussex Way
Land connecting Sycamore Close and Long Road
Larup Avenue
Larup Gardens
Legacy XS Centre MUGA
Legacy XS Centre Skate Park
Leigh Beck Infants and Nursery School
Leigh Beck Junior School
Leigh Beck Recreation Ground
Little Havens Nature Reserve
16-23 Glenwood
114-132 Cedre Road, Linked to Canvey Lake
12 St Christophers Close to St Davids Walk
15-33 Dinant Avenue
15-41 St Johns Crescent
Leigh Beck Recreation Ground MUGA

Open Space Area
Leigh Beck Recreation Ground Play Area
Link Road to Seventh Avenue
Little Common
Little Haven Nature Reserve
London Road Allotment
Long Road Playing Field
Lubbins Park Primary School
Meadow View Walk and Land connecting Suffolk Way and
Lincoln Way
Memorial Ground
Memorial Ground Play Area
Memorial Ground, War Memorial Garden
Mitchells Walk
Montgomerie Junior and Infant School
Mornington Park
Next to 20 Little Gypps Road
North Benfleet Hall Wood
North of 16 Sixth Avenue
North of 2-12 The Fairway
North of 26-28 Abbotswood
North of 65 Gafzelle Drive
North of 74 and 76 Steli Avenue
North of 75 Gainsborough Ave and 70 Gafzelle Dr
North of 94 Link Road
North of Castle Point Recycling Centre



Open Space Area
North of Dove Drive
North of Elderstep Avenue
North of Farm Road
North of Miramar Avenue
North of Zealand Drive
North West of Almond Walk
North West of Morrisons Supermarket (CI)
Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Schools
Northwick Road Playing Fields
Opposite 1 Jesmond Road
Opposite 14-26 Marine Approach
Opposite 2-12 Copenburg Walk
Opposite 41a The Parkway
Opposite 65 The Driveway
Opposite 8 The Parkway
Opposite The Chilterns leading to the Lake
Opposite William Read Primary
Oulton Avenue
Path between Boyce Green and Queens Road
Path from Kingfisher Drive to Peregrine Drive
Pound Wood
Pumping Station to Climmen Road (CWR)
Robert Drake Primary School
Runnymede Paddocks

Open Space Area
Russel Head Farm (Privately Owned)
Seamore Walk
Shipwrights Wood
Smallgains Allotment
Smallgains Recreation Ground
Solby Wood Farm Open Space
South Benfleet & Canvey Bowling and Croquet Club
South Benfleet Cemetery
South Benfleet Playing Fields
South Benfleet Playing Fields Basketball Court
South Benfleet Playing Fields Play Area
South Benfleet Primary School
South of 1 Station Approach
South of 69 Margraten Ave and 66 Shellbeach Rd
South of 81 Gainsborough Ave
South of Atherstone Close
South of Burnside
South of Chapman Court
South of Hall Farm Close
South of Hart Close
South of Pine Close
South of Rhoda Road North
South of Short Road
South of Smallgains Creek
South of Smallgains Marina
South of Smart Avenue

Open Space Area
South of St Marys Close
South of Westcliff Gardens
Southwick Dyke
Southwick Dyke Play Area
St Georges Walk
St Josephs Primary School
St Katherines Primary School
St Michaels Church
St. James-the-less Churchyard
St. Katherine's
St. Mary's Churchyard
St Micheals Churchyard and field
St. Peters Churchyard
Starvelarks Wood
Surrounded by 121-135 Harvest Road
Surrounded by Wilmslowe, Holmswood, and Dovedale
Swans Green Recreation Ground
Swans Green Recreation Ground Play Area
Tabora Avenue
Tantelen Road
Tarpots Play Area
Tarpots Recreational Ground
Tewkes Creek
Tewkes Creek Recreation Ground
Thames Estuary Waterside
The Chase Playing Fields
The Crescent Play Area

Open Space Area
The Crescent Recreation Ground
Thundersley Glen
Thundersley Great Common
Thundersley Great Common Recreation Area
Thundersley Great Common Recreation Play Area
Thundersley Oaks Natural Park
Thundersley Primary School
Tile Wood
Two Tree Island
Villa Road Play Area
Villa Road Recreation Ground
Waterside Farm Allotment
Waterside Farm MUGA
Waterside Farm Recreation Ground
Waterside Farm Recreation Ground Play Area 1
Waterside Farm Recreation Ground Play Area 2
Waterside Farm Skate Park
Waterside Synthetic Pitch
Watington Allotment
West Canvey Marshes (RSPB Land)
West Canvey Marshes Play Area
West corner of Little Gypps Road and Willoe Close
West of 1-27 Mayflower Court
West of 38 Maple Way
West of 76 Winterswyk Avenue

Open Space Area
West of Antony Close
West of Aspen Close
West of Bruges Road
West of Hilton Dyke
West of Island Yacht Club
West of Merrivale
West of Morrisons Supermarket (CI)
West of Willow Close
West Wood
Westwood Primary School
William Read Primary School
Willow Cemetery
Windsor Gardens to Carlton Drive
Winter Gardens Primary School
Woodham Ley Primary School
Woodside Avenue Open Space
Woodside Cemetery
Woodside Park
Woodside Park Bowls Pavilion
Woodside Park MUGA
Woodside Park Playing Fields
Woodside Park Playing Fields Play Area (East)
Woodside Park Playing Fields Play Area (West)
Woodside Park Playing Fields Play Area NEW (West)
Wyburn Wood (Tile Wood West)



Photography: Tessa Hallmann, for *This is Us*.



## Appendix K – Previously Developed Land

The NPPF defines Previously Developed Land (PDL) as:

*“Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape”.*

Determining PDL is not always straightforward and the NPPF definition includes a number of terms and elements which are potentially subjective in nature. It is therefore helpful to refer to relevant Appeal decisions, case law and where relevant locally determined interpretations of what does and does not constitute PDL. It is essential that a consistent approach is applied across Green Belt in the Borough.

The following interpretation of key terms within the PDL definition are:

**Equestrian uses:** Land with permission for equestrian use is PDL as well as any land that features clear permanent structures for equestrian use e.g. a manège or stables and where online research identifies promoted equestrian facilities. Other sites will be deemed as agricultural use and therefore not PDL.

**Residential uses in non built-up areas:** Curtilage outside of built-up areas taking into account its function – does it appear to be actively used as part of the residence e.g. mowed lawns, planting, recreation, storage of household items. Consider proximity – areas close are more likely to be part of the curtilage than remote parts. Where several properties/curtilages are adjoining to plot this is considered as one block rather than defining each.

**Residential uses in built-up areas:** As there are no settlement boundaries in the Borough, whether an area is considered to be in a ‘built-up’ area will be a matter of planning judgement and will take into account factors such as the number of buildings, their density and the cohesion of the properties.

Where a house is outside of the Green Belt and determined in a built-up area, but a garden is within the Green Belt, the garden will not be considered as PDL. Where a house is within the Green Belt but clearly connected to a built up area outside of the Green Belt only the built form will be considered as opposed to curtilage.

**Sports uses:** To what extent are these included as PDL in non built-up areas reflecting reference in definition to exclusion of ‘land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments’. The built form (buildings/ car parks/ artificial surface i.e. tennis court) only.

**Cemetery uses:** Plot built form and parking.

**Allotment uses:** Excluded from PDL.



Photography: Jack Delmonte, for *This is Us*.

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# THE CASTLE POINT PLAN



Your Community. Your Views



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