



# ***Tendring***

*District Council*



## **Tendring District Local Plan**

### **Issues and Options Consultation Document**

**September 2015**

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is preparing a new Local Plan to guide future development in the Tendring area between now and 2032. Having an up to date Local Plan is critical for creating new job opportunities, attracting investment in new and improved infrastructure, protecting the environment and ensuring that if new homes are required to meet the needs of a growing population, they are at least built in the right locations and achieve the right standards of quality and design. The lack of an up to date Local Plan for Tendring makes it hard for the Council to secure the investment we need and also makes our area vulnerable to unwanted and speculative development proposals in the wrong locations that might harm our district and which are often difficult to defend against when relying on national planning guidance alone.
- 1.2 The new Local Plan should take into account the views of local people and their communities but must also comply with government planning policies. The plan will be examined by a Planning Inspector to ensure that it does comply with government policies before it can be legally adopted by the Council. In 2014, the Council set up a Local Plan Committee to oversee the preparation of this important document and the ideas it has considered to date, including the need to plan for thousands of new homes and the possibility of major development around one or more of our villages, have attracted a great deal of public interest and concern. However, because the Local Plan is critical for the future growth of the district and must comply with government requirements, the Council must make some difficult decisions that will not necessarily be popular with all our residents.
- 1.3 This consultation document is called the 'Tendring District Local Plan: Issues and Options Document' and we are inviting local people and other interested parties to think about, and put forward their views on the big issues facing our district and the difficult decisions that the Council will need to make about the future development of Tendring. This includes the big decisions about housing development and where in our district the majority of new homes should be built, for which four options are put forward in this document for your consideration and comment.
- 1.4 To help you put forward your views, the document contains 29 questions relating to different themes and subjects for you to consider. Your participation is optional and there is no need to answer every question; but we are genuinely interested in your ideas and opinions. Please feel free express your objections and concerns about certain matters, but also let us know where you support certain ideas or options as this will help the Council to make balanced decisions.

## **2. Making your comments**

- 2.1 The consultation exercise will run for six weeks (1<sup>st</sup> September – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015) and all comments must be received before the close of consultation at 5pm on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.**
- 2.2 Please make sure that your response clearly sets out which question or subject each of your comments relate to and please also make sure that your name and contact details are included, as anonymous responses will not be accepted. Please also note that following the close of the consultation and once all of the comments have been processed, all responses will be made publicly available.
- 2.3 Your representations should be emailed to: [planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk)**
- 2.4 If you do not have access to a computer, paper representations can be posted to:**

**Planning Policy Team  
Tendring District Council  
Thorpe Road  
Weeley  
Essex CO16 9 AJ**

- 2.5 If you have any queries or problems in relation to the Local Plan Issues and Options consultation, please contact the Planning Policy team using the contact details below:

Email: [planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@tendringdc.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01255 686177

- 2.6 Following the close of the consultation exercise, the Planning Policy team will collate and summarise the representations received and these will be reported to the Local Plan Committee before the Council makes a decision on what should be included in the new Local Plan. The comments will then be used alongside the evidence we will be gathering to produce the Local Plan: 'Preferred Options Document' that will be published for another round of public consultation. The preferred Options Document will be in the form of a draft Local Plan showing specific sites and including detailed planning policies.

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### 3. Issue 1: Jobs

3.1 Tendring has a diverse economy with local employment across a range of activities including at our ports; on our industrial estates; in our town centres and retail parks; in our schools; hospitals, surgeries and care homes; in our hotels, guesthouses and holiday parks; on our farms; and even in our homes, with many of our people being self-employed or working in small businesses. Like many coastal areas however, some parts of our district have higher-than-average levels of unemployment and deprivation and many of our residents have to commute outside of the district for work; so creating new and better-paid jobs for existing and future generations of Tendring residents is, and will continue to be, one of the Council's top priorities. The Council's Economic Development Strategy (2013) sets out key objectives for growing the economy and creating new jobs in the future. These are:

- **Supporting growth locations** – prioritising economic development projects in and around Harwich, Clacton and Colchester because these towns have the greatest potential for future economic growth and job opportunities and are most likely to attract government funding and assistance;
- **Targeting growth sectors** – promote sectors of the economy with greatest potential for significant growth in the future which for Tendring are offshore renewable energy and care and assisted living;
- **Improving knowledge and skills** – working with businesses, schools and colleges to provide the training and work experience our residents need to address shortages in skills and achieve a diverse and highly skilled workforce to fulfil the demands of new businesses looking to locate in our area;
- **Supporting existing businesses** – working closely with existing businesses, supporting them to expand and diversify, and working with telecommunication companies to improve broadband services; and
- **Building homes to boost the economy** – building more homes and increasing the population in the right locations to boost the demand for goods and services, unlock land for businesses and deliver new infrastructure needed to improve the conditions for investors and employers.

3.2 The new Local Plan will be critical for delivering upon most of these objectives, firstly by ensuring land and premises can be made available, in the right places, for businesses across a range of sectors; and secondly by ensuring new homes and infrastructure are provided, in the right locations and at the right time, to support growth in the economy and create the best conditions for business investment.

3.3 With the right action, the Economic Development Strategy suggests that it could be possible to create **between 3,000 and 5,000 new jobs** in Tendring over the next 15-20 years.

- 3.4 Many of our residents live in Tendring but work in neighbouring Colchester and because of this strong economic connection, it will be very important for this Council to work closely with Colchester Borough Council on both our Local Plans. We are already working with Colchester Borough Council and the University of Essex to explore the opportunity for major development crossing the Tendring/Colchester boundary that will help to attract higher-paid research and development businesses to the area, improve transport connections and deliver new homes. This development is likely to be critical to the economy in both Tendring and Colchester and forms part of all four growth options put forward for consideration under 'Issue 6'.
- 3.5 For our coastal towns, building new homes and increasing the population will be an important part of the overall strategy for creating new jobs because more people will increase demand for goods and services which, in turn, will lead to the creation of new jobs in service sector industries such as retail, leisure, health and education. With an ageing population, it will also be important to ensure sufficient housing is available in the district for young and working age people to ensure we do not lose businesses in the future as a result of a 'shrinking' workforce.
- 3.6 The Council's Employment Land Review (2013) included an assessment of the anticipated need for traditional business and industrial land and premises, taking into account changes in the economy toward more service-sector businesses. This evidence suggests that 8 hectares of additional employment land are likely to be needed over the next 15-20 years and that the best locations are likely to be in and around Clacton, Harwich and Colchester and sites with good access to the strategic road network.
- 3.7 Our town, district, village and neighbourhood centres provide a significant proportion of the district's local employment and business activities and offer a range of shops, services, facilities and activities that meet the needs of both local residents and people that visit the area. This Local Plan will seek to promote the vitality and viability of these centres to remain a focus for economic activity and community life.
- 3.8 Retail and other town-centre activities play a very important role in Tendring's economy. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clearly advocates a 'town centres first' approach and requires planning policies to positively promote competitive town centre environments and manage the growth of centres over the local plan period.
- 3.9 The traditional high street faces a number of challenges, not least from the impacts of the recent recession, including tightening of retail spending and changing consumer behaviour, but also from increasing competition posed by the internet, multichannel retailing and out of centre developments.
- 3.10 In this context, town centre strategies which support the continued evolution of the high street are considered ever more vital. This may involve providing a high quality shopping 'experience', maximising the benefits of tourist trade, and improving the mix of retail and non-retail outlets to increase length of stay and spend. It will be important for our town centres to be well positioned to be able to adapt to on-going changes in the retail and leisure sector over the development local plan period and to reaffirm their unique selling points which differentiate their retail offer from other centres. The on-going pattern of polarisation

suggests that larger centres are well placed to maintain and enhance their offer. However, this is dependent on continued investment to ensure the right mix of retailers and other services.

3.11 The Council's Retail Study (2010) which is currently being updated suggests that:

- Tendring's town centres were performing relatively well despite the economic downturn and recession but some were struggling with vacant units;
- There will be a need for additional retail space in the Clacton area, but not much need anywhere else in the district; and
- Policies for the use of shop units might need to be more flexible to allow leisure uses alongside retail to secure the vitality of town centres in coming years as internet shopping becomes more popular.

3.12 Whilst the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to direct new jobs to built up areas and centres of employment, it is recognised that the district's rural areas and open countryside also make an important contribution to the overall economy of the district and so the Council will seek to achieve sustainable economic growth of its rural economy and maintain a dialogue with agricultural businesses, working with our partners to ensure rural businesses are connected to the best sector and business support available and ensure that rural residents are not prevented from accessing economic opportunities as a result of a lack of IT and broadband connectivity.

3.13 Tourism is another important part of the districts economy and is worth more than £276 million to Tendring, with the industry responsible for approximately 6,000 jobs, equivalent to 13% of the District's employment. It is an essential part of life in Tendring and a central element in transforming life in Tendring for the better. The Councils evidence base suggests that:

- The upgrading and development of existing holiday parks should be encouraged;
- Extensions to existing holiday parks and the creation of new parks should be allowed depending on their environmental impact;
- The development of holiday lodge parks in the rural parts of the district could be encouraged;
- Existing holiday parks should be protected from redevelopment for housing unless they can be proven to be economically unviable; and
- Consideration could be given to extending the operating season of some holiday parks beyond what is currently allowed.

3.14 **Our evidence includes the following studies:**

- Economic Development Strategy (2013)
- Employment Land Review (2013)
- Retail Study (2010 but currently being updated)
- Hotel and Guesthouse Retention Study (2009)

- Holiday Park Sector Review (2009)

### 3.15 **This evidence suggests:**

- Assisted living and off-shore renewable energy are sectors of the economy where Tendring should actively promote growth;
- The demand for general business and industrial premises is expected to be low;
- 800 new jobs could be created in the business and industrial sectors but this is only likely to happen alongside a significant increase in house building;
- Sites around Clacton, Harwich and Colchester are most likely to attract new and expanding businesses;
- Some of Tendring's current employment sites are unlikely to attract businesses and some premises are outdated and could benefit from being relocated to new sites;
- There is good potential for growth in demand for short breaks and holidays in Clacton, Frinton and Walton given the investment proposed for these areas;
- Harwich and Dovercourt are less likely to develop significantly as a leisure break destination;
- Growth in water sports, events and festivals, weddings and family parties, and people visiting friends and relatives could increase demand for hotel accommodation;
- Increased use by contractors and business visitors could also benefit the local hotel industry;
- The Council would be justified in continuing to resist the loss of better quality hotels and guesthouses in Clacton to alternative uses through its planning policies;
- The upgrading and development of existing holiday parks should be encouraged;
- Extensions to existing holiday parks and the creation of new parks should be allowed depending on their environmental impact;
- The development of holiday lodge parks in the rural parts of the district could be encouraged;
- Existing holiday parks should be protected from redevelopment for housing unless they can be proven to be economically unviable; and

3.16 Consideration could be given to extending the operating season of some holiday parks beyond what is currently allowed.

**Questions:**

- 1) Do you agree that creating the conditions for economic growth and creating new jobs should be a top priority for the Local Plan?**
- 2) Do you have any thoughts about how the Council, through the Local Plan, should go about addressing this issue?**
- 3) Do you have any other comments or suggestions about growing the economy and creating jobs?**
- 4) Have we missed any issues that ought to be covered?**

## 4. Issue 2: Homes

- 4.1 Ensuring there are enough homes to accommodate a growing population is a top priority for the government and house building is also an important part of the country's long-term economic plan. Government planning policy requires Councils to identify enough land in their Local Plans to accommodate the number of homes expected to be needed in their area in the future. To work out how many new homes might be needed in the future, the Council has worked in partnership with Colchester Borough Council, Braintree District Council and Chelmsford Borough Council to commission specialist consultants to calculate the 'objectively assessed housing need' for each area taking into account a range of different factors including government population projections which look at births, deaths and patterns of migration, economic projections and the characteristics of the local housing market.
- 4.2 'The Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study (2015)' suggests that, to meet projected population growth, our district will need approximately 600 new homes each year over the period of the Local Plan. This means that our Local Plan will need to identify sufficient land to accommodate approximately 10,000 new homes between now and 2032. One of the main drivers of housing need in Tendring is expected to be continued migration of older people into areas like Clacton, Frinton and Walton looking to retire from places like Colchester and east London.
- 4.3 Over the last few years, many residents have expressed concern about continued housing development in the district and the prospect of further new homes being built in the future. Particular concerns include the impact of additional people on over-stretched hospitals, surgeries, schools, roads and utilities as well as the lack of jobs in the area and permanent loss of agricultural greenfield sites to development. However, by having a Local Plan that properly plans for this growth, the Council can work with its partners to ensure that development is supported by the jobs and infrastructure needed and that, wherever possible, development can be guided towards sites of lowest environmental sensitivity.
- 4.4 Although the Council is required to make provision for a possible 10,000 new homes, it is important for people to understand that no-one is suggesting that Tendring needs 10,000 homes right now. Developers will only build homes if they can sell them, so if the population projections turn out to be wrong and housing demand is lower than expected, it is very unlikely that 10,000 homes will actually be built over the period of the Local Plan. However, if the projections are right and it turns out that we do need 10,000 homes, the Local Plan will ensure that they are built in the right places and are supported by necessary jobs and infrastructure.
- 4.5 Importantly, government planning policy requires Councils to be able to identify (in any one year) enough land to realistically deliver 5-years' worth of new homes measured against the objectively-assessed housing requirements, plus a 20% 'buffer'. If the Council cannot do this, which is the case at the moment, then planning applications for housing development have to be judged on their merits with a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 4.6 The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013) suggests that a range of housing sizes, types and tenures will be needed to meet the district's anticipated housing need over the period of the Local Plan. It also suggests that around three quarters of the district's new homes will need to be market housing for people to buy and rent on the open

market whereas one quarter of the new homes should be 'affordable housing' which can take the form of Council Housing, to rent to local people with lower incomes. The Council will include policies in the Local Plan to ensure that a proportion of new homes are secured, at a discounted price, for use as Council Housing or other forms of affordable housing.

- 4.7 The greatest need for housing in Tendring is expected to be in and around Clacton due to its existing large population and the long-standing popularity of the area for retirement.
- 4.8 To deliver 10,000 new homes, the Council will need to identify a large amount of greenfield land for development. Over the last few years, the Council has been very successful in directing most development to previously developed 'brownfield sites' but these sites have nearly run out now, meaning that greenfield land will have to be used. The Council's latest evidence which includes the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2014) suggests that around 4,000 homes could be built on sites that have already got planning permission and other sites, including brownfield sites, within existing built up areas. This leaves around 6,000 homes to be built on additional greenfield sites around the edge of our towns and villages or through the creation of new settlements. The options for where those homes could go are considered under 'Issue 6' of this document.
- 4.9 The Housing Act 2004 places a legal duty on the Council to address the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers. The government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) requires Councils to use robust evidence to establish the projected accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers and to use this evidence to set 'pitch targets' in their Local Plans and to allocate specific sites to meet this requirement.
- 4.10 The 'Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people Accommodation Assessment' was produced on behalf of Essex Planning Officers Association in July 2014. This assessment provides projections for the number of permanent gypsy and traveller pitches needed in each local authority in Essex for the 20-year period 2013-2033. For Tendring, the projected requirement is 10 additional pitches between 2013 and 2033 which is one of the lowest requirements in Essex. However, since the base date of the GTAA in July 2013, there have been a number of planning decisions that have helped to address part of this requirement. These decisions have reduced the number of additional pitches that the Council needs to plan for, through specific allocations in the Local Plan, to just 4.
- 4.11 Through the new Local Plan, the Council will need to identify sufficient land to deliver this requirement and will also need to include a 'criteria-based' policy that will be used to judge any applications for additional gypsy and traveller pitches.
- 4.12 Viability can be affected by a range of factors including construction costs, site conditions, property prices, the general housing market, planning policies and requirements for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), affordable housing or specific design standards.
- 4.13 A Viability Study prepared by consultants concluded that the housing market in Clacton-on-Sea, Walton-on-Sea and Harwich is relatively weak with houses prices dramatically lower in comparison to the west of the district, Frinton, Manningtree, Mistley and the rural heartland. The evidence suggests that these 'lower value' areas would only be able to make a limited contribution towards a Community Infrastructure Levy or on-site infrastructure such as new schools and health facilities. Therefore, in terms of the final development strategy for this Local Plan it would not be possible to deliver the full housing requirement of 10,000 new

homes and associated infrastructure in just one single location or predominantly in lower value areas such as Clacton.

**4.14 Our evidence includes the following studies:**

- Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study (2015);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013);
- The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014);
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2014 is being updated for 2015); and
- Viability Study (currently being updated).

**4.15 This evidence suggests:**

- The projected need for housing in Tendring is approximately 10,000 homes between 2015 and 2032 (an average rate of just over 700 new homes a year);
- The greatest need for housing in Tendring is expected to be in and around Clacton due to its existing large population and the long-standing popularity of the area for retirement;
- Around 76% of the housing need is likely to be more 'market housing' for people to buy;
- Around 24% of the need is likely to be for 'affordable housing' for people unable to afford to buy or rent property on the open market;
- A range of house sizes and types will be needed;
- Manningtree, Frinton and the district's villages are the most economically viable locations for housing development because houses sell at a better price, landowners can expect more money for their land and they can therefore afford to pay bigger financial contributions toward new infrastructure; and
- Lower house prices in places like Clacton, Harwich, Walton and Brightlingsea mean that the amount of money that landowners can expect to receive for their land in those areas, and the amount they can afford to contribute toward new infrastructure, is generally lower.

**Questions:**

- 5) Do you agree that we need to plan for the right number of new homes, of the right size, type and tenure to be built and in the right locations for current and future generations?**
- 6) Do you have any thoughts about how the Council, through the Local Plan, should go about addressing this issue?**
- 7) Do you have any other comments or suggestions about housing development**

**in Tending?**

**8) Have we missed any issues that ought to be covered?**

## 5. Issue 3: Infrastructure

- 5.1 New jobs and new homes in Tendring can only be delivered if they are supported by the necessary infrastructure including roads, public transport, schools, hospitals and surgeries, community facilities, utilities (electricity, water, drains) and open spaces. Over the last few years, many of our residents have expressed their concern that the district's current infrastructure will not be able to cope with the increases in jobs and homes needed in the future. The Local Plan is critical to ensuring that development is directed to the locations that make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure or otherwise working with developers and service providers to ensure that new and improved infrastructure is put in place.

### Health

- 5.2 Tendring has higher than average levels of long-term ill health and disability which is in part related to its aging population. There is also significant health inequality with life expectancy in some of the district's deprived coastal areas being almost 10 years lower than some of its affluent rural areas. This puts significant strain on local health care provision with many of the required specialist services only available in Colchester.
- 5.3 With a growing and ageing population, the provision of health services in our district is going to become even more important in the future than it already is now. The NHS is currently in the process of reviewing the way in which health care is provided which, in the future, could involve more care being provided in the home, better online 'self-help' services and the creation of a smaller number of larger 'super surgeries' with sufficient doctors to serve a greater number of patients and facilities on site for undertaking a range of minor procedures. Having a Local Plan is critical for the NHS to ensure the healthcare infrastructure implications for future local development have been considered and opportunities for healthy lifestyles (e.g. planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity, and promotes access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for play, sport and recreation) have been considered.

### Schools

- 5.4 In Tendring there are 7 secondary school, 40 primary schools and numerous early years and childcare facilities. While the education landscape is becoming more diverse, the important role schools play in the wider community remains undiminished. Schools are a focal point for communities, especially in rural areas where there is sometimes a lack of community infrastructure.
- 5.5 The districts education facilities are under intense pressure and forecasts from Essex County Council indicate that primary pupil numbers are likely to grow over the plan period without any allowance being made for new housing development as a result of an increased birth rate in the area. Most primary schools are operating either at or close to full capacity and in some areas where significant housing developments are proposed and new primary schools might be needed in particular Clacton. Secondary schools in Clacton will have capacity to take on more children in the coming years but schools in other areas might need to expand.

### Transport

- 5.6 Road and rail networks in the district provide the physical connections that support the journeys that matter to the economy. National planning policy requires us to actively manage

patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations that are or can be made sustainable. National planning policy requires that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel.

- 5.7 Many residents have highlighted concerns about traffic on Tendring's road network and how this could be exacerbated by additional housing. The main areas of concern have been the A133 between Weeley and Frating, the A133 at Clingoe Hill on the entry to Colchester, the B1441 through Thorpe-le-Soken, the A137 through Lawford and the lack of north-south road links which result in heavy vehicles using rural roads.
- 5.8 Although many people are critical of Tendring's transport system, our district has 14 railway stations in total served by three main train services providing access to Colchester and London Liverpool Street and numerous bus routes which serve the Tendring District.
- 5.9 Essex County Council as the Highway Authority are currently undertaking a 'Transport Modelling' exercise which will test different development scenarios and identify sections of the transport network that need to be improved to accommodate additional development. The results of this technical work will inform the preferred development strategy in the Local Plan. This Local Plan will need to ensure that developments that create increased amounts of movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.

#### Green Infrastructure and open space

- 5.10 Green Infrastructure is 'a strategic network of multifunctional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life in sustainable communities.'
- 5.11 The benefits and functions of green infrastructure are diverse and can be summarised as follows:
- Provide opportunities for a healthy and diverse wildlife and ecosystems;
  - Can help mitigate the effects of, and adapt to, a changing climate, through measures such as flood alleviation and drainage schemes;
  - provision of outdoor shady space;
  - Opportunities for informal recreation and access to nature, which can lead to improvements in health and quality of life;
  - Places for community activity, social interaction, education and rehabilitation;
  - Provide opportunities for understanding, promoting and managing the historic environment; and
  - Provide sustainable alternatives to motorised transportation through green transport corridors, where cycling and walking can take place.
- 5.12 The 2008 Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Study identified our district as an area deficient in green infrastructure so the Council will work with its partners to try and rectify

existing deficiencies and where appropriate secure developer contributions towards green infrastructure. Throughout the Tendring district there are a number of existing areas of green infrastructure which are important to the character of our towns, villages and rural areas and provide valuable space for formal and informal recreational activities in our communities. Areas of existing green infrastructure will be protected from development in the Local Plan.

#### Utilities

- 5.13 Our Infrastructure Study has assessed existing infrastructure provision, highlighting any areas of existing pressure. This will help to inform us where further infrastructure investment may be required for new planned development. We will continue to talk with infrastructure providers to make sure their plans also take account of development sites in our emerging Local Plan.
- 5.14 Our infrastructure research has highlighted the sewage network in west Clacton is operating at capacity and if significant new developments take place in that area, the sewage treatment works will need to be extended. In other areas other utilities (gas, water, electric etc.) should be able to cope with suggested increases in housing with some investment in reinforcing the network.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Obligations

- 5.15 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy that local authorities can charge on developments in their area. CIL income can be used to fund additional infrastructure required to support new development including roads, schools, green spaces and community facilities. CIL represents a fundamental change from Section 106 (S106) planning obligations, which can be complex and time consuming. While S106 will still be used for site specific measures required to make a development acceptable, the introduction of CIL means that the use of S106 will be limited.
- 5.16 Once the Council has agreed a preferred development strategy a CIL rate will be set, however, previous economic viability work prepared by Peter Brett Associates concluded that the housing market's in Clacton-on-Sea, Walton-on-Sea and Harwich is relatively weak with houses prices dramatically lower in comparison to the west of the district, Frinton, Manningtree, Mistely and the rural heartland. The evidence suggests that these 'lower value' areas would only be able to make a limited contribution towards a Community Infrastructure Levy or on-site infrastructure such as new schools and health facilities.

#### **5.17 Our evidence includes the following studies:**

- Infrastructure Study currently being updated (2014)
- Transport Modelling (being prepared in 2015)
- Haven Gateway Watercycle Study (2008)
- Open space Strategy (2009)

#### **5.18 This evidence suggests:**

- The Council would be justified in applying 'Community Infrastructure Levy' as a means of securing financial contributions from developers toward the infrastructure that is needed;

- Secondary schools in Clacton will have capacity to take on more children in the coming years but schools in other areas might need to expand;
- Most primary schools are operating either at or close to full capacity and in some areas where significant housing developments are proposed, new schools might be needed;
- The sewage network in west Clacton is operating at capacity and if significant new developments take place in that area, the sewage treatment works will need to be extended;
- The A133 between Weeley and Frating and along Clingoe Hill are the most congested parts of the highway network where improvements are likely to be needed;'
- Health services in Clacton and Frinton are most stretched and this is where investment in new and enhanced facilities is most likely to be required;
- Other utilities (gas, water, electric etc.) should be able to cope with suggested increases in housing with some investment in reinforcing the network; and
- The water cycle capacity in the Haven Gateway Sub Region is close to capacity, and will require investment to accommodate growth.

**Questions:**

- 9) Do you agree that the Local Plan will be critical for making sure we have the right infrastructure in Tendring to accommodate the new jobs and homes we will need in the future?**
- 10) Do you have any thoughts about how the Council, through the Local Plan, should go about addressing this issue?**
- 11) Do you have any other comments or suggestions about infrastructure in Tendring?**
- 12) Have we missed any issues that ought to be covered?**

## 6. Issue 4: The Environment

6.1 The district has rich natural and built environments. We have beautiful landscapes, conservation areas, and significant historic buildings, urban and green spaces. All of these support the quality of life that local people and businesses value so much. The protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment is a key priority for the Council and one of the purposes of the Local Plan is to balance the needs for economic growth and housing with environmental considerations. The district also faces environmental challenges in the future with areas of increasing flood risk, the need for water conservation and the increasing need to generate energy from renewable sources.

### Nature Conservation and Geodiversity

6.2 Tendring has a variety of habitats for both animal and plant life. These habitats form crucial ecology of the district, many of which are protected under European or English Law. As well as benefiting from international national and local areas designated for their habitats, the district also contains a number of home living landscapes which provide broad stable areas for a variety of flora and fauna.

6.3 The Wildlife Habitat Survey lists 125 sites, totalling 1216.8ha of Local Wildlife Site land, including both Hamford Water and parts of the Colne Estuary which are designated as RAMSAR sites, recognising their importance for their wetlands of international importance, habitats for endangered and migratory bird species and listed habitats. The emerging Local plan will seek to afford the highest level of protection to European and nationally designated sites. These are protected under international and English law.

### The Countryside Landscape

6.4 The countryside in our district is one of its key assets both in terms of tourism and the living environment of our residents. The district is diverse in its landscape character and appearance and certain areas are particularly sensitive to development and change. The most notable countryside landscapes include the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the north west of the district and the coastal slopes around the district which afford spectacular views to and from the coast and estuaries.

6.5 The southern shore of the Stour Estuary is recognised in particular for its natural beauty and whilst it is not currently designated as an AONB, the Council supports the inclusion of this area in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB which currently covers only the northern shore of the Stour Estuary in Suffolk.

### Historic and built environment

6.6 The National Planning Policy Framework states that Local Planning Authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In the Tendring district there are 20 conservation areas ranging from town centres to rural settlements that make an important contribution to the high quality of the built environment within the district. Instead of protecting an individual building, a conservation area seeks to preserve an area's whole character. This character can be made up of buildings, spaces between buildings, views, paving materials, trees and boundary features. The objective of defining a conservation area is to provide for the preservation and enhancement of the special interest of the place. The intention is not to stifle change, but to provide for the positive management of these unique areas. There are stricter planning

controls over new development within a conservation area and the council has a duty to enhance, where possible, conservation areas. Policies in the Local Plan will seek to ensure that new development in conservation areas is undertaken in such a way as to achieve a solution which conserves and enhances the particular characteristics of the designated area.

- 6.7 Listed buildings are a finite resource and their continued existence is of significant importance as a visual asset to Tendring and as a means of interpreting past historical or architectural events. Their future well-being needs is safeguarded by adequate and relevant policies designed to ensure that their value is at least maintained and wherever possible enhanced. In dealing with all matters concerning listed buildings, Tendring District Council takes full account of current government advice on Planning and the Historic Environment.
- 6.8 In Tendring there are approximately 1100 Listed Buildings which have been designated by central government as being the most important historic buildings in the council's area. The government takes the protection of listed buildings seriously. It is one of the very few areas of planning legislation where the carrying out of works without the appropriate consent is a criminal offence, which can be punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

#### Good Design

- 6.9 Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations. Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long as well as the short term.

#### Green Gaps

- 6.10 In 2012 the Council identified a number of 'Strategic Green Gaps' in the draft Local Plan with the main purpose to define and maintain the separate identity of the districts settlements. However, it is recognised that the scale of development for the district over the next 15 years mean that existing greenfield areas may need to be considered.. As part of the Local Plan, new strategic and local gap boundaries will need to be identified, which will still maintain the separate identity of the district's settlements. The new boundaries will form the future physical shape of the district and provide an opportunity to create new urban edges, either through new landscaped buffers (green infrastructure) or by new well designed built form such as landmark buildings. Whatever form the new boundaries take, the new boundaries must be robust and in many cases they will represent the minimum separation for maintaining the individual settlements over the next 15 years and beyond.

#### Climate change, flooding and renewable energy

- 6.11 National planning policy and legislation require us to work to mitigate climate change, mainly by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainability. The Government is introducing a range of national policies and initiatives to help meet a UK target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 34 per cent by 2020. There are a number of ways the new Local Plan can help us to play our part in achieving national targets aimed at achieving

sustainable development. We need to ensure that the urban and natural environments are capable of being adapted to meet the expected impacts of climate change.

- 6.12 One way to achieve this is to reduce our carbon emissions from buildings. Most of our buildings' carbon emissions come from the energy used to provide the heating, cooling, lighting and other building services that keep occupiers comfortable and healthy. This energy has financial and environmental costs and generates carbon emissions. We can avoid this by using energy more efficiently, and by finding other ways to generate energy or heat our homes and offices.
- 6.13 Using suitable sustainable construction techniques in new developments will make them more efficient. We also need to consider retrofitting existing buildings as the majority of the buildings we will be using in 2050 have already been built.
- 6.14 It is also important for us to ensure that new development is designed and constructed to minimise the impact on climate change. New homes in the district presently meet the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) level three. However, following a fundamental review of technical housing standards, the government has withdrawn the Code for Sustainable Homes; the government has created a new approach for the setting of technical standards for new housing. This rationalises the many differing existing standards into a simpler, streamlined system which will reduce burdens and help bring forward much needed new homes. The new system will comprise new additional optional Building Regulations on water and access, and a new national space standard (hereafter referred to as "the new national technical standards"). This system complements the existing set of Building Regulations, which are mandatory.
- 6.15 We should also be encouraging where possible renewable and low carbon energy sources. We can no longer continue to rely on fossil fuel sources as they are not sustainable and not secure. The alternative is to produce cleaner energy ourselves, through renewable technologies like wind turbines, solar photovoltaic (energy from sunlight) and biomass, and to improve energy efficiency using technologies like ground/air source heat pumps and Combined Heat and Power (CHP). The amount of energy generated from renewable sources in the UK has roughly doubled since 2006 and the Government is committed to increasing this.
- 6.16 Since the draft Local Plan in 2012 the Council has seen an increase in the number of applications for large scale on-shore renewable energy installations such as wind turbines and solar parks. The National Planning Policy Framework gives positive support for these developments however in the wrong locations they have the potential to cause harm in both visual and audible terms. The Council therefore has a duty to carefully determine such applications. A local planning policy is therefore needed to direct development and assess any adverse impacts caused.
- 6.17 Water is something that, in different ways, poses our district with an unusual dilemma; apart from the issues of flooding and coastal change around the coast which affect land around Clacton, Harwich, Walton and Brightlingsea, this part of the country is also recognised as having the lowest average rainfall and therefore maintaining a supply of fresh water for drinking and the irrigation of crops is a high priority. The presence of and indeed lack of

water is therefore a very important consideration when planning for growth in new homes and jobs and is central to ensure sustainable development in the district.

6.18 The National Planning Policy Framework requires all local planning authorities to mitigate and adapt to climate change, which includes proactive strategies in the consideration of water supply and demand. Development proposals should therefore plan to conserve water supplies, working with water companies, as the infrastructure providers, to ensure necessary water management and appropriate provision. In addition, where relevant, development in areas which are vulnerable to flood risk or drainage issues should be appropriately managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through planned green infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

6.19 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are designed to reduce the potential impact of new and existing developments in relation to surface water drainage discharges, replicating natural systems to drain away surface water run-off, incorporated within the green infrastructure network. The Council will work with its partners to minimise the polluting impact that new development has on groundwater, watercourses and rivers. The Council will also seek to enhance biodiversity and the environment by providing at-surface SuDS solutions which promote habitats for wildlife and opportunities for biodiversity enrichment.

**6.20 Our evidence includes the following studies:**

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2009)
- Essex Shoreline Management Plan (2010)
- Landscape Character Assessment (2001)
- Historic Environment Characterisation Study (2008)
- Tendring Geodiversity Characterisation Report (2009)

**6.21 This evidence suggests:**

- Tendring is at risk from fluvial flooding from the River Ramsey and the Colne and Stour Estuaries. Coastal areas, including most areas of the large urban settlements are also at risk from tidal flooding, although these areas are largely protected by tidal defences;
- Manningtree, Walton, Clacton, Point Clear and Brightlingsea are areas of particular high flood risk (in addition to Harwich and Jaywick). There is also significant surface water flood risk in Brightlingsea, Little Bromley and West Manningtree;
- For the majority of Tendring's coastline, during this plan period, it is the intention to hold the line on most flood defences. However, for Harwich, with the proposed Bathside Bay development, the shoreline will be advanced, and in the case of the Naze cliffs (north), there will be no active intervention;
- Within Tendring there a varying degrees of landscape sensitivity, which could be effected by possible development;

- The most sensitive landscapes in the district are around the coast; and
- Through the provision of green infrastructure existing shortfalls and new demands from the proposed development could ensure the provision of open space, a better quality of life and a decreased impact of the development on the landscape.

**Questions:**

**13) Do you agree that protecting and enhancing the environment is an important issue for this Local Plan?**

**14) Do you have any thoughts about how the Council, through the Local Plan, should go about addressing this issue?**

**15) Do you have any other comments or suggestions about protecting and enhancing the environment in Tendring?**

**16) Have we missed any issues that ought to be covered?**

## 7. Issue 5: Setting out a vision for the future

- 7.1 The Local Plan is critical for shaping the future of our district and should therefore aim to deliver a vision that encompasses the aims and aspirations that we, collectively, have for the area, looking to 2032 and beyond. In 2014 the Council's Local Plan Committee gave its provisional agreement to a statement setting out a possible vision for Tendring in 2032 and through this consultation on issues and options, we would like to give people the opportunity to comment on this statement (set out below) and put forward any alternative ideas.

### **A Positive Vision for Tendring in 2032**

*"In 2032, Tendring will be a vibrant, healthy and attractive place to live, work and visit. It will have a thriving, resilient and prosperous economy that promotes sustainable economic growth, making sustainable use of its natural and historic assets, maritime connections and popularity as a visitor destination.*

*Tendring's residents will have the opportunity to enjoy a safe and healthy quality of life in communities that offer a range of high quality new housing which meet local needs job opportunities and other important services and facilities, including improved retail provision. They will be able to enjoy a variety of landscapes including unspoilt coast, the open countryside with its elements of natural beauty, a wealth of wildlife areas where biodiversity has been conserved and enhanced and a diverse range of attractive historic settlements and assets. The district will be the home to people of all ages and abilities, providing a range of activities, attractions and facilities that will appeal to the active retired, the young and residents of working age. The district will also provide for the specialist needs of all people ensuring, in particular, that children and young people have the knowledge and skills to secure the opportunity for a good start in life.*

#### Seaside towns

*Clacton-on-Sea will have established itself as the place everyone wants to live once their children have grown up and retirement is on the horizon. With the rejuvenation of the town's attractive and safe beaches, high quality shops, restaurants and cafes in the town centre, creation of new country parks and the construction of hundreds of new high quality, spacious and much sought after houses, bungalows and retirement complexes, the economy will have seen a significant resurgence with new job opportunities in the retail, leisure, hospitality and health sectors.*

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

*The town will also have new training facilities with a centre of excellence for health and assisted living and major new specialist medical centres providing a range of primary and secondary health services including specialist facilities and professionals to serve the needs of an ageing population.*

*Frinton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze will both be enjoying more year-round prosperity whilst retaining their very distinctive individual characteristics. Walton will have seen the*

*biggest change with an injection of new housing, holiday accommodation, shops and leisure attractions bringing vitality to the town centre and core visitor areas, with new medical facilities serving the resident population. Frinton will have also seen some new homes and improvements to public spaces but will have succeeded in preserving and enhancing its special historic character and will continue to offer a unique and non-commercialised shopping and leisure experience to its residents and its visitors.*

#### Harwich and the A120 corridor

*The Harwich area will be enjoying an economic resurgence with a number of major employers operating in the area in anticipation of expansion at the container port and making the most of business opportunities along the A120 corridor arising from the ongoing manufacture, assembly, transportation and maintenance of wind farm technology. As a result, the housing market will have picked up and a number of housing developments will have taken place. The Old Town of Harwich will offer new leisure activities and a number of visitor attractions associated with its maritime history. Dovercourt Town Centre and seafront will have also improved its offer of a year round shopping and leisure experience.*

#### Colchester Fringe

**Vision statement for Colchester Fringe to be developed in cooperation with Colchester Borough Council.**

#### Rural Heartland

*In the district's substantial rural heartland, the smaller towns of Manningtree with Lawford and Mistley and Brightlingsea along with some of the larger villages will have seen some modest levels of new housing and employment development to support local shops and services, address local issues and provide for local needs and facilitate investment by local businesses in job opportunities.*

*In some the district's more remote villages, hamlets and other rural communities a flexible approach to small-scale housing development has helped keep those communities vibrant and improvements to the telecommunications network and internet broadband services have given these areas, in particular, a new lease of life with more people able to work, shop and learn from the comfort of their own home".*

#### **Questions:**

**17) Do you agree with the vision for the future of Tendring set out above?**

**18) If not, do you have any alternative thoughts or ideas about the vision for the future and what we should be aiming to achieve?**

## 8. Issue 6: Options for growth

- 8.1 An important part of this consultation process is to invite people's comments on the overall strategy for where most of the district's future development should go, particularly the 10,000 homes that might be needed between now and 2032 and the jobs and infrastructure that will be needed to support them. Councils are required to make sure that the strategy for growth in the Local Plan is the most appropriate, when considered against reasonable alternative and that it is based on evidence.
- 8.2 In 2014, the Local Plan Committee considered a lot of the evidence and was presented with a suggested strategy for growth which included large 'strategic' housing and employment developments on the edge of Clacton, Harwich, Colchester and Weeley. However, alternative options have also been put forward for the Council to consider and we want residents and other interested parties to have their say before any final decisions are made.
- 8.3 The evidence gathered by the Council so far, in particular the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015), suggests that it is reasonable to assume that a large proportion of the housing development expected to be required could be delivered as follows:
- **Around 2,400 homes** will be built on sites that already have planning permission for housing development of which around 500 are in Clacton, 500 are in Harwich, 200 are in Frinton and Walton, 500 between Manningtree, Brightlingsea and the edge of Colchester and 700 in and around our rural villages. These developments include the remaining phases of the Blenheim Gate development in Clacton; the 'Harwich Valley' development off the A120 in Dovercourt and development off Cox's Hill currently under construction in Lawford.
  - **Another 1,500 homes** will be built on other sites within our built up areas including brownfield sites and other small 'windfall sites' that are yet to obtain planning permission. These include the Martello site in Walton, the Delfords site in Harwich and the waterworks sites in Clacton and Manningtree along with a range of other smaller development sites across the district.
  - **Around 3,100 homes** will be built on greenfield sites around the edge of Clacton and Harwich that are yet to gain planning permission. These include land off Jaywick Lane, Thorpe Road, Centenary Way in Clacton which will be accompanied by new schools, medical facilities and open spaces. For the Harwich area, it includes land off Ramsey Road and Low Road.
  - **An additional 900 homes** will be built on greenfield sites around the edge of Tendring's smaller towns of Frinton and Walton, Manningtree and Brightlingsea including land off Elm Tree Avenue in Frinton; Halstead Road in Kirby Cross; Bromley Road in Lawford; Stourview Close in Mistley; and Robinson Road in Brightlingsea.
  - **Around 300 homes** would be built through proportionate expansion around some of the district's larger villages including Elmstead Market, Great Bentley, Little Clacton, St. Osyth and Thorpe-le-Soken.

- A new settlement will be built on land crossing the Colchester/Tendring border planned for jointly by Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council (duty to cooperate) which will deliver approximately **2,000 new homes** between now and 2032 of which 1,000 would count towards Tendring's housing requirements and 1,000 would count towards Colchester's with the potential for further phases of development in the longer-term beyond 2032. The development would be accompanied by new schools, medical facilities, a link road between the A120 and A133 and rapid bus services into Colchester town centre. The development would maintain a countryside gap around the valley of Salary Brook on the edge of Colchester and around the village of Elmstead Market.

8.4 The developments in the areas described above would deliver approximately 9,200 of the 10,000 homes that the Local Plan needs to make provision for the period up to 2032 and would result in a distribution of 3,500 new homes in Clacton, 1,400 in Harwich, 1,100 in the Frinton and Walton area; 800 in the Manningtree area, 2,100 in the new settlement east of Colchester (of which half would count towards Tendring's requirement), 300 in Brightlingsea and 1,000 across Tendring's rural villages.

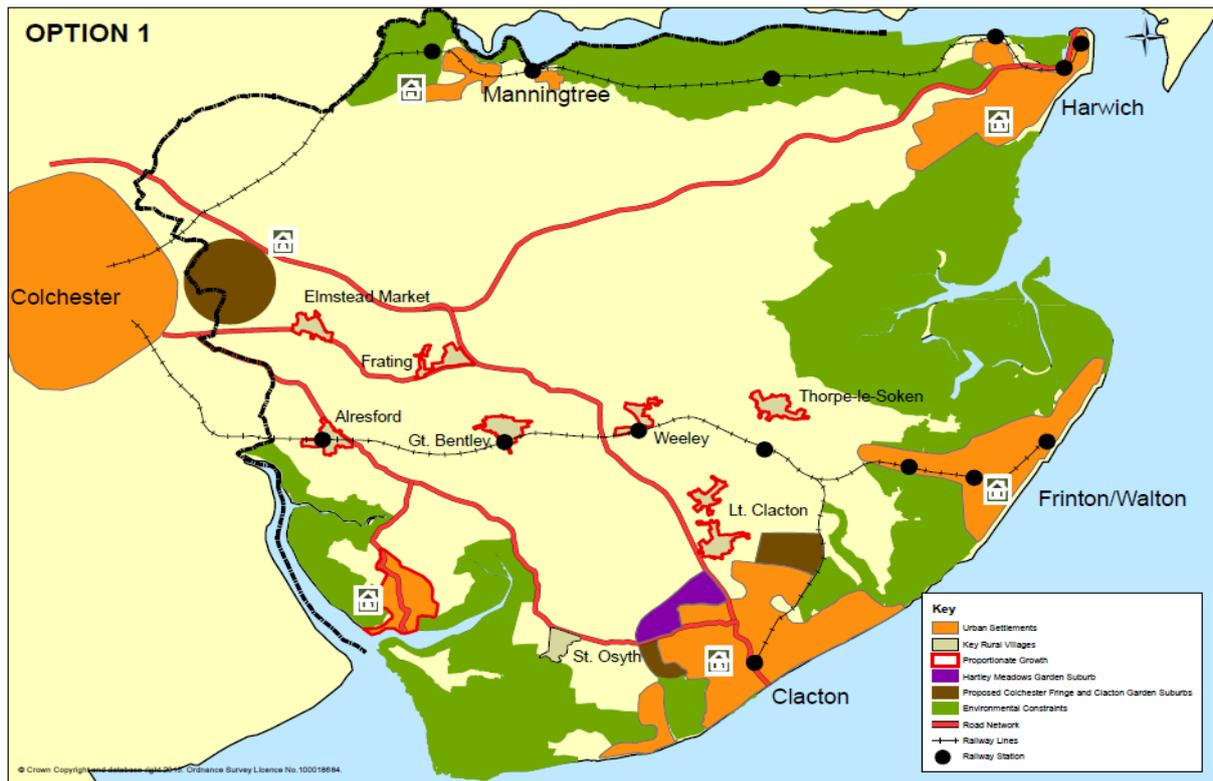
8.5 To deliver the remaining 800 new homes expected to be needed between now and 2032, we are inviting your comments on four alternative options, some of which would involve the creation of new settlements with the potential for further phases of development in the longer-term beyond 2032. The four options we are asking you to consider are:

- **Option 1: Hartley Garden Suburb:** A major development on greenfield land in north-west Clacton;
- **Option 2: Weeley Garden Village:** A new settlement to be built on greenfield land around the A133 at Weeley;
- **Option 3: Tendring Central Garden Village:** A new settlement to be built on greenfield land around the A120 at Frating; and
- **Option 4: Higher Urban Densities:** House building at a higher density in and around our towns to reduce the amount of greenfield land needed for development in other locations.

8.6 These options are described in more detail in the following sections.

#### **Option 1: Hartley Gardens Suburb**

8.7 This option involves a major new suburb being built on greenfield land to the north-west of Clacton that would be accessed through the construction of a new road between the 'Bovill's Roundabout' on the A133 and the roundabout junction of St. John's Road and Jaywick Lane that would also help to relieve traffic on the existing road network. This would be a long-term development project that would deliver around 800 new homes between now and 2032 with further phases of development likely to take place after 2032 which could deliver a further 1,700 homes up to 2047. The development would be accompanied by a new school, new community facilities, new sewerage treatment facility and open space built on the opposite side of the A133 from Brook Retail Park on the gateway into Clacton. If this option is agreed, more than 5,000 of the district's new homes could be built in Clacton.



- 8.8 A similar idea has been considered by the Council in the past and was included, as a concept, as part of a document that was published for consultation in 2010. At that time, the idea attracted a significant level of objection from Clacton residents mainly concerned about the lack of job opportunities in the town and the potential impact of development on its infrastructure with some people upset that Clacton had been singled out to take a significantly large proportion of Tendring's housing growth compared with other towns and villages in the district. In response to these objections, the Council decided to abandon the proposal in favour of a fairer and more proportionate distribution of growth around all towns and villages although the Council was also concerned that the development might be an unrealistic venture because the new link road that would be needed to access the land would be too expensive for developers to fund.
- 8.9 However, in 2014 the concept of a major development in this part of Clacton was revived by a new consortium of landowners represented by land agents Robinson and Hall LLP who presented a new version of the scheme to the Local Plan Committee as a potential alternative to other major developments being considered at that time. The consortium is keen to demonstrate that the link road and other infrastructure can be funded and that the proposal is genuinely feasible.
- 8.10 **The advantages and disadvantages set out below are the views of Tendring District Council Planning Officers and have been included to stimulate debate on each of the development options. If you disagree with any of the advantages or disadvantages or want to suggest alternatives, please comment on this as part of your consultation response.**

### 8.11 Advantages

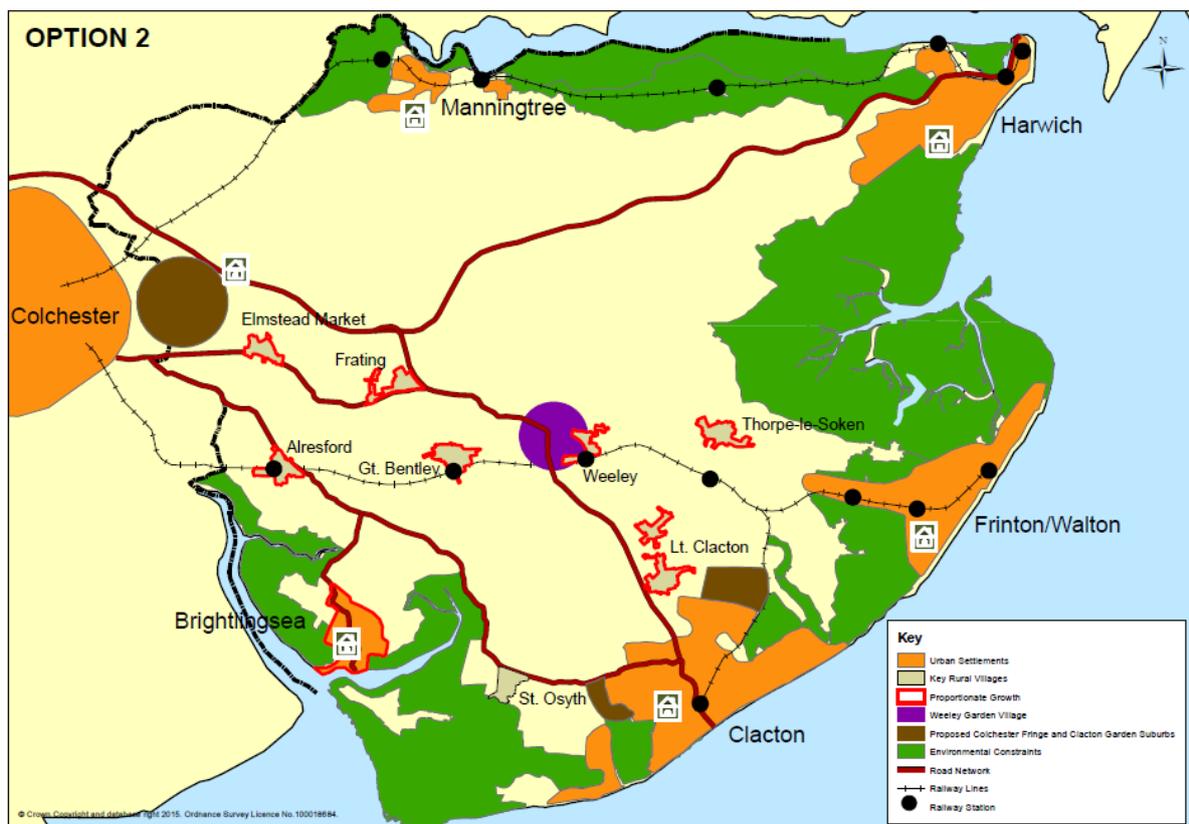
- The site is located at the key gateway into Clacton and it could provide a landmark site and in conjunction with commercial development could help stimulate wider regeneration and investment throughout Clacton;
- The site is located in a sustainable location on the periphery of Clacton within close proximity to the Brook Retail Park, town centre and railway station;
- The existing and planned local communities will benefit from the direct provision of employment, key facilities and services, including; a primary school, medical centre, shops and community facilities in a new local centre;
- The construction of a new road between the 'Bovill's Roundabout' on the A133 and the roundabout junction of St. John's Road and Jaywick Lane could help to relieve traffic on the existing road network;
- The development will provide a range of housing that will help address current deficiencies in the area and contribute to the regeneration of the town;
- The site can be developed without undermining the fundamental purpose of the countryside gap separating the northern edge of Clacton and the village of Little Clacton; and
- The site is not covered by any local or national policy designation and the vast majority of the site is located in flood zone 1 (low risk).

### 8.12 Disadvantages

- There are concerns about the deliverability of this proposal because of the level of upfront infrastructure investment that would be required to deliver this scale of housing development in this location, in particular the new road and the provision of sewage treatment facilities, which might not be deliverable in the current economic climate and because viability is more of an issue in this part of the district where house prices are lower;
- Loss of grade 2 and 3 agricultural land;
- Development is not likely to come forward until the latter stages of the plan period and so will have little impact on the Council's five year supply of housing;
- Development in this location is not supported by the local community; and
- Development of this scale could create housing market saturation in Clacton given the proposed strategic housing growth already being proposed for the west and north of the town.

## Option 2: Weeley Garden Village

- 8.13 The option involves establishing a new settlement on greenfield land off the A133 at Weeley. It would be a long-term project that would deliver around 800 new homes between now and 2032 (more than doubling the population of the parish) with the potential to expand even further west along the A133 beyond 2032 to deliver a further 2,000 homes and associated facilities up to 2047. The development would need to be carefully planned to ensure it integrates with and respects the character of the existing village, is accompanied with the necessary infrastructure which would include a new primary school, medical centre and improvements to the transport network including the A133 between Weeley and Frating and the services and facilities at Weeley railway station.



- 8.14 For many years many of our residents have told us that they are concerned about continual development around the edge of Clacton and Tendring's other seaside towns and that the Council should focus more development further inland or land in the centre of the district with good connections to the transport network, particularly the A120. This concept has been submitted to the Council for consideration.
- 8.15 In 2014, the concept of major development at Weeley was considered by the Council's Local Plan Committee for the first time. The idea has attracted a considerable amount of public objection with a petition of more than 700 names being submitted to the Council in objection to the proposal with many people concerned about the impact of the development on the character of Weeley village and the local infrastructure.

8.16 Weeley is considered to be the location best placed to accommodate development of a scale that, with some investment in new and improved infrastructure, can be made sustainable. Weeley is identified as a 'Strategic Rural Service Centre' in recognition of its existing services and facilities including, critically, rail services, its good connections to the road network and surrounding towns and villages. Weeley is also well located to meet the need for family housing for younger people and commuters in the Clacton sub-area if the focus for development in Clacton itself is likely to be more for older and active retired residents.

**8.17 The advantages and disadvantages set out below are the views of Tendring District Council Planning Officers and have been included to stimulate debate on each of the development options. If you disagree with any of the advantages or disadvantages or want to suggest alternatives, please comment on this as part of your consultation response.**

#### 8.18 Advantages

- The existing and planned local communities will benefit from the direct provision of key facilities and services, including; a primary school, medical centre, shops and community facilities in a new local centre;
- Weeley has good links to the A133 between Clacton and Colchester (and the A120 further west) and the B1027 to Frinton and Walton;
- Weeley has a railway station with direct links to Colchester and beyond to London Liverpool Street, however, it is accepted that the frequency of services needs to be improved;
- The site is not covered by any local or national policy designation and the vast majority of the site is located in flood zone 1 (low risk);

A strategic development in this location has the potential for further phases of development that could deliver a further 2,000+ homes and other facilities beyond 2032; and

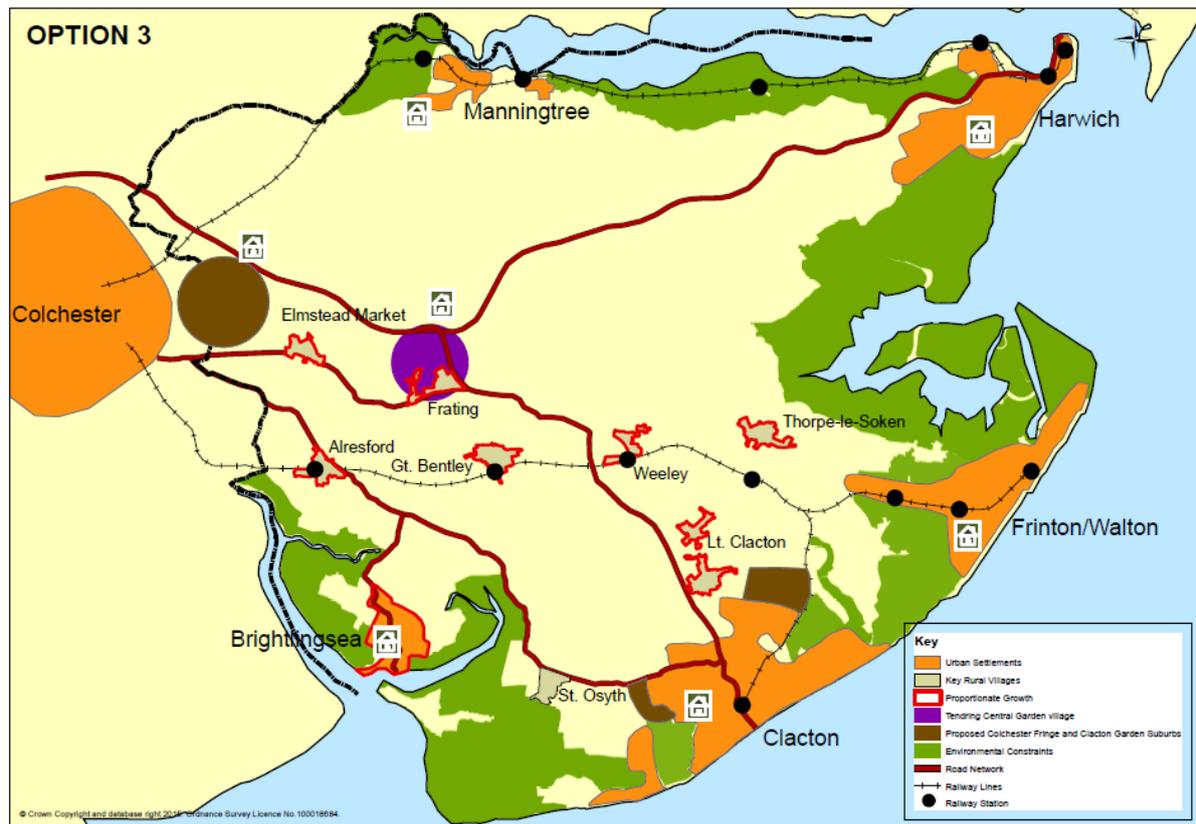
There would be potential to create new employment opportunities and jobs taking advantage of our close links with Colchester.

#### 8.19 Disadvantages

- A development of this scale would significantly increase the size of Weeley affecting its character as a small village;
- Loss of grade 3 agricultural land;
- Development in this location is not supported by the local community; and
- Strategic housing growth in Weeley could divert investment in regeneration opportunities away from other areas in the district such as Clacton.

### Option 3: Tendring Central Garden Village

8.20 The option involves establishing a new settlement on land off the A133 and A120 at Frating. It would be a long-term project that would deliver around 800 new homes and business premises between now and 2032 with the potential for further phases of development that could deliver a further 2,000+ homes and other facilities beyond 2032. The development would be carefully planned to ensure it is accompanied with the necessary infrastructure which would include a new primary school, medical centre and other community facilities.



8.21 Many of our residents have told us that they are concerned about continual development around the edge of Clacton and Tendring's other seaside towns and that the Council should focus more development on land closer to Colchester or land in the centre of the district with good connections to the transport network, particularly the A120. This concept has been submitted to the Council for consideration.

8.22 In 2005 the Council identified, in an earlier draft Local Plan, land east of the A120 slip road for a major business park to be accompanied by a new multi-directional junction on the A120 to allow cars and lorries to travel between the southern parts of Tendring and Harwich without having to navigate some of Tendring's narrow and winding rural roads. In response to this, a consortium of landowners put forward a proposal for a large number of houses on adjoining land nicknamed the 'Oasis' scheme. The proposal attracted a significant level of local objection with thousands of representations submitted to the Council as part of the Local Plan process.

8.23 Following a Public Inquiry in 2006, the Planning Inspector decided to remove the business park proposal from the Local Plan and subsequently rejected the Oasis scheme on the basis

that, following government planning policy in place at the time, Frating would not be a sustainable location for such a large development. However, in 2014, a new consortium of landowners is promoting a major development in the Frating area and they are calling it 'Tendring Central Garden Village' and it was presented to the Local Plan Committee as an alternative to creating a new settlement at either Weeley or to the east of Colchester.

**8.24 The advantages and disadvantages set out below are the views of Tendring District Council Planning Officers and have been included to stimulate debate on each of the development options. If you disagree with any of the advantages or disadvantages or want to suggest alternatives, please comment on this as part of your consultation response.**

#### 8.25 Advantages

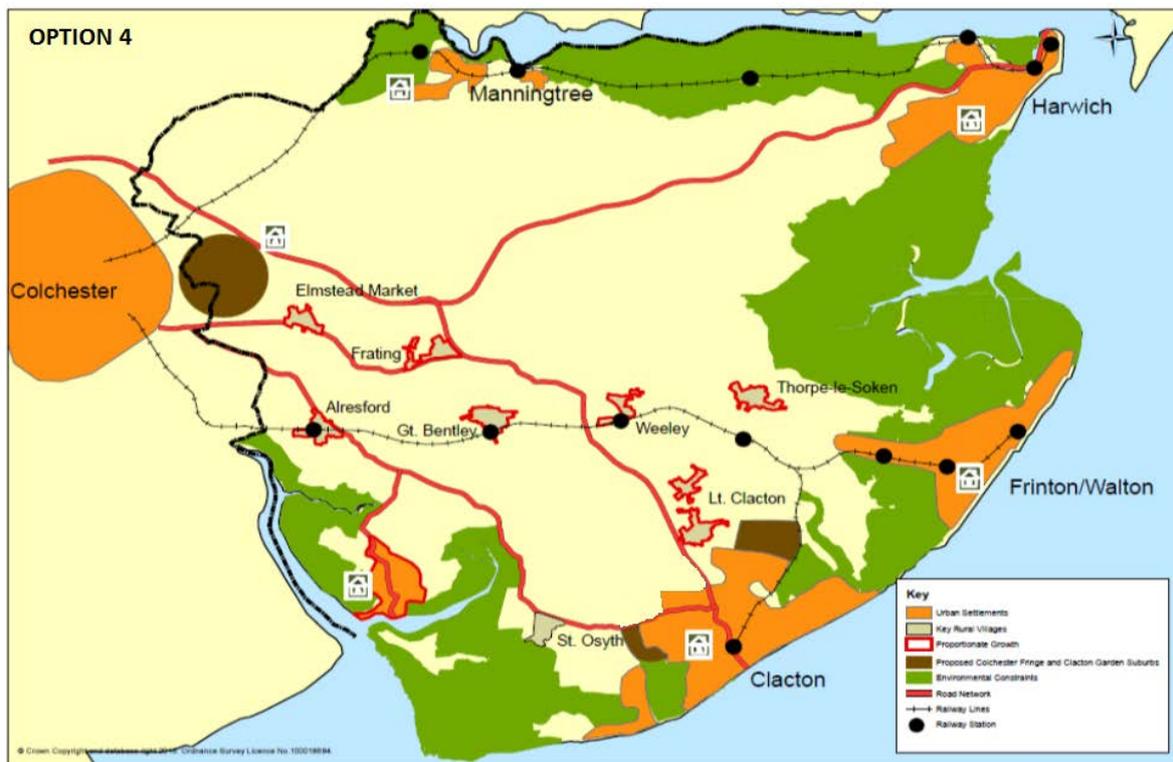
- There would be potential to create new employment opportunities and jobs through a commercial business park taking advantage of the sites close proximity to Colchester;
- The site is in a strategically important location at the junction of the two main roads through the district (the A120 and A133) and this development proposes a new multi-directional road link between the A120 and A133;
- The existing and planned local communities will benefit from the direct provision of key facilities and services, including; new bus links, education and medical facilities, shops and community facilities in a new local centre; and
- The site is not covered by any local or national policy designation and the vast majority of the site is located in flood zone 1 (low risk).

#### 8.26 Disadvantages

- This proposal would effectively result in the complete coalescence and urbanisation of the three existing smaller rural communities of Frating, Balls Green and Hare Green;
- This proposal would result in the loss of grade 1 and 2 agricultural land;
- This location is not as sustainable as other areas due to the lack of shops, services, facilities and essential infrastructure, in particular a railway station and it is unlikely that such a facility would be able to be created in the future and this is likely to generate a high number of vehicular movements to and from Colchester by those who will choose to work in Colchester and use its greater range of shops, services and facilities;
- Because such a developments infrastructure would need to be delivered upfront and will be costly, development is not likely to come forward until the latter stages of the plan period and so will have little impact on improving the Council's position with regard to identifying a five year supply of housing land.

#### Option 4: Higher Urban Densities

8.27 This option involves encouraging housing developments of a higher density (i.e. more properties per hectare of land) on sites in and around Tendring's towns. For most sites, the Council has assumed relatively modest densities of between 20 and 30 dwellings per hectare, but this approach would allow for higher densities nearer to 30 dwellings per hectare and above. Whilst this approach would result in the construction of smaller properties with smaller gardens than many people might wish to see in Tendring but it would also reduce the overall amount of greenfield agricultural land being lost to development so that none of the major developments being suggested for north-west Clacton, Weeley or Frating would be needed, at least for the period between now and 2032.



8.28 The higher density approach would have implications for the amount of housing being built in and around the district's larger towns with around 3,800 homes for Clacton, 1,600 for Harwich and 1,200 for the Frinton and Walton area.

8.29 **The advantages and disadvantages set out below are the views of Tendring District Council Planning Officers and have been included to stimulate debate on each of the development options. If you disagree with any of the advantages or disadvantages or want to suggest alternatives, please comment on this as part of your consultation response.**

#### 8.30 Advantages

- High-density housing can encourage local retail development and help improve the vitality and viability of our districts town centres;

- Higher density developments can help promote and sustain public transport and offer safer routes for walking and cycling;
- Higher density development offers greater efficiency in use of public services and infrastructure;
- High-density developments also help protect our districts natural areas, as well as minimise the encroachment of development on agricultural land, woodland and other ecologically sensitive environments;
- Higher density developments can help stimulate regeneration in our urban centres; and
- In areas with lower land values, providing more homes can ensure that new developments are viable which can deliver the required infrastructure such as medical facilities, new school and road improvements.

### 8.31 Disadvantages

- Higher density developments whilst promoting a mix of dwelling types and tenure could promote smaller house and garden sizes;
- Higher density developments are perceived as being overcrowded and promoting, anti-social behaviour and crime; and
- Higher density development will increase the total volume of new homes being built in and around certain towns, particularly Clacton, Harwich and Frinton/Walton.

#### **Questions:**

**19) Which of the options 1, 2, 3 and 4 do you think is best of Tendring and why?**

**20) Do you agree with the general assumptions about where most housing development will go?**

**21) Are there any alternative options the Council should be considering?**

## 9. Issue 7: Planning Policies

- 9.1 The purpose of the Development Management Policies is to make clear what the Council expects of all new developments and set the policy framework that the Council will use to promote sustainable development and decide planning applications in the future. These Policies will replace the remaining 'saved' policies of the Tendring District Local Plan (2007) and sit alongside the national planning policies (as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework) and other planning documents that may be adopted for Tendring in the future.

### Delivering Sustainable Development

- 9.2 The Council has already been working on planning policies to promote sustainable development. We suggest that the policies include the following topics:
- 9.3 **Development Strategy:** Making sure the majority of new homes, new commercial premises and other development needed in the future are built in and around our existing towns, larger villages or locations that have good transport links.
- 9.4 **Facilities and Infrastructure:** Making sure new development is supported by the necessary facilities and infrastructure including schools, health services, utilities, transport, open space and other community facilities and, where necessary, requiring developers to either provide new facilities or to make appropriate financial contributions toward the facilities that are needed.
- 9.5 **Managing Growth:** Controlling the sprawl of new development and protecting the remaining open countryside by ensuring that the majority of new development is contained within carefully drawn 'settlement development boundaries' around our towns and villages and any new settlements.
- 9.6 **Local Green Gaps:** Protecting important open spaces between different towns and villages from being developed to ensure they do not merge together over time and lose their individual identities.
- 9.7 **Accessibility and Transport:** Ensuring that, wherever possible, development has good access to sustainable modes of transport like walking, cycling and public transport as well as access to the highway network for cars.
- 9.8 **Design:** Ensuring new development is well designed, respects the character of its site and the surrounding area and minimises adverse impact on the environment and the amenities of existing properties.
- 9.9 **Sustainable Construction:** Requiring developers to maximise the use of sustainable construction methods to reduce the environmental impact of new development.

**Questions:**

**22) Are these the right planning policies to help the Council deliver sustainable development?**

**23) Are there any other policies the Council should consider?**

### **Planning for Prosperity**

- 9.10 The Council has already been working on its planning policies to promote economic development and job creation in Tendring. We suggest that the policies include the following topics:
- 9.11 **Public Transport:** Working with bus and train companies to improve services for our residents and visitors and making the most of opportunities to improve bus-stop facilities and the appearance and facilities of railway stations.
- 9.12 **Road Improvements:** Upgrading the A133, A120 and A137 and promoting new link roads to ensure our highway network has the capacity to accommodate additional traffic arising from proposed growth in homes, businesses and tourism.
- 9.13 **Telecommunications:** Working with telecommunications companies to maximise access to super-fast broadband for all residents and businesses and setting out the Council's requirement for new developments to be served by a super-fast broadband connection.
- 9.14 **Town Centres:** Promoting the vitality of our town centres by directing large retail, leisure or office developments to sites in town centres wherever possible and protecting the majority of existing shop units for retail use whilst allowing some room for other complimentary businesses like restaurants, cafes, takeaways, bookmakers and estate agents.
- 9.15 **Regeneration:** Encouraging and supporting development which improves the environment and quality of life for residents within the Council's identified primary areas for regeneration including Clacton town centre and seafront and parts of Jaywick, Harwich, Dovercourt and Walton.
- 9.16 **Tourism:** Encouraging appropriate new development that would support the district's tourist economy including recreational and water sports facilities, educational field centres and conference/function facilities. Protecting the district's holiday parks and camping/caravanning sites.
- 9.17 **Freight:** Ensuring developments for new freight facilities are in locations with good access to road or rail networks and have minimal visual and environmental impact on the landscape.
- 9.18 **Employment Sites:** Protecting our existing employment sites against development for non-employment related uses and encouraging development that will support growth in the renewable energy industry including industrial premises, educational and training facilities.

- 9.19 **Rural Economy:** Supporting development for growth in the rural economy including re-use or conversion of rural buildings for employment, leisure and tourism.

**Questions:**

- 24) Are these the right planning policies to help the Council plan for prosperity?**
- 25) Are there any other policies the Council should consider?**

### Planning for People

- 9.20 The Council has already been working on its planning policies to deliver a choice of quality homes alongside necessary open spaces and community facilities. We suggest that the policies include the following topics:
- 9.21 **Housing Choice:** Requiring large housing developments to include a mix of housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community including family housing, Council or affordable housing, bungalows and retirement/residential accommodation.
- 9.22 **Housing Density:** Ensuring that the density of housing reflects the semi-rural character of Tendring and that high- density developments are focussed on areas with easy access to local services.
- 9.23 **Housing Standards:** Requiring new residential development to have minimum standards for internal space, the provision of private amenity space and car parking space.
- 9.24 **Council Housing:** Requiring up to 25% of new dwellings, in developments of 10 or more dwellings, to be made available to the Council to acquire for use as Council housing for people and families with low incomes.
- 9.25 **Aspirational/Self-Build Homes:** Allowing people to build dwellings of exceptional, unique and bespoke architectural design.
- 9.26 **Care and Assisted Living:** Supporting the construction of high quality care homes and extra-care housing in sustainable locations.
- 9.27 **Houses of Multiple Occupation and Bedsits:** Restricting the development of HMOs and bedsits to town centre locations whilst avoiding having too many in one street and ensuring they meet strict minimum standards for parking and communal open space.
- 9.28 **Green Infrastructure:** Protecting the district's existing network of green infrastructure against re-development, loss or damage and requiring new housing developments to provide areas of new open space and play equipment.
- 9.29 **Travellers:** Setting out the Council's criteria for judging planning applications for either new traveller sites or extensions to existing ones, in line with national policies.

**Questions:**

**26) Are these the right planning policies to help the Council plan for people?**

**27) Are there any other policies the Council should consider?**

**Planning for Places**

- 9.30 The Council has already been working on its planning policies to promote the protection of the district's natural and historic environment. The policies will cover the following topics:
- 9.31 **Flooding:** Directing development to areas of lowest flood risk wherever possible and ensuring new development does not lead to surface water flooding.
- 9.32 **Water, Drainage and Sewage:** Requiring all new development, excluding householder development, to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as a means of reducing flood risk and to demonstrate how water efficiency measures will be incorporated into development to conserve water supplies.
- 9.33 **Nature Conservation:** Protecting sites of importance for nature conservation from harmful development and ensuring that any development that is necessary minimises its impact on wildlife by replacing key features such as important trees, hedges or water features.
- 9.34 **Landscapes:** Working to protect and enhance the district's countryside, historic landscapes and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty by ensuring new development minimises harm and where possible enhances their character, quality and natural beauty.
- 9.35 **Heritage:** Ensuring the conservation, protection or enhancement of heritage assets including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments by refusing proposals which would lead to their harm or loss and requiring evaluation to be undertaken for developments affecting sites which may contain archaeological remains.
- 9.36 **Renewable Energy:** Supporting renewable energy schemes and ensuring they are designed and located to minimise impact on residents and the landscape. Encouraging the incorporation of renewable technologies into new development where viable.

**Questions:**

**28) Are these the right planning policies to help the Council plan for places?**

**29) Are there any other policies the Council should consider?**

## 10. Issue 8: Call for Sites

- 10.1 The 'Call for Sites' is an opportunity for developers, landowners and other interested parties to put forward to the Council sites for development within Tendring District that they believe are suitable for development for homes, jobs or other uses. The site suggestions received by us will be used in the preparation of the new Local Plan.
- 10.2 The call for sites will not determine if a site should be allocated for development. It is a technical exercise aimed at identifying potential sites for development. All proposals will be considered, but it is unlikely that all sites put forward will be included in the new Local Plan. It is likely that the Council will receive many more submissions than it requires to meet housing need and not all sites will be considered suitable for development.
- 10.3 The Council carried out an initial Call for Housing Sites in 2009 therefore developers and landowners who have previously made submissions of land for consideration do not need to re-submit their proposals as part of this Issues and Options consultation, however, additional information can be submitted if considered necessary.
- 10.4 **How do I respond to the Call for Sites and how much evidence should I provide?**
- 10.5 If you want a site (or sites) within the District to be considered for development, we want to hear from you. Sites need not necessarily be in your ownership and could be developed for a wide range of uses. For each site being put forward, site details and a map showing a clear site boundary must be provided.
- 10.6 **How will suggested sites be assessed?**
- 10.7 An objective assessment of the sites suggested will be carried out. This will include site survey work and may lead to a further request for information. The most appropriate and deliverable sites will be taken forward in the final version of the Local Plan.
- 10.8 **Will all sites suggested for development be included in the Local Plan Allocations options consultation Document?**
- 10.9 All proposals will be considered, but it is unlikely that all sites put forward will be included in the final version of the Local Plan. The reasons why sites are not included will be fully explained.
- 10.10 **Will there be opportunities for future involvement?**
- 10.11 You will have the opportunity to have your say when we publish the submission draft of the Local Plan consultation document for stakeholder and community consultation. Further details of the consultation will be made available in due course.