

**North Essex Garden Communities**  
**Colchester Braintree Borders**  
**Garden Community**  
Concept Framework



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Town Planning and Urban Design



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## North Essex Garden Communities Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community

Concept Framework

# Introduction

# Introduction

- i. David Lock Associates (master planning consultants), Peter Brett Associates (development and infrastructure consultants) and David Jarvis Associates (landscape consultants) have been commissioned by Braintree District, Colchester Borough, Tendring District, and Essex County Councils (hereafter referred to as the North Essex Authorities) to prepare Concept Frameworks for two potential new Garden Communities: on land on the Colchester Tendring Borders, east of Colchester and west of Elmstead Market; and land on the Colchester Braintree Borders near Marks Tey.
- ii. The North Essex Authorities have formed a partnership and are working collaboratively on a strategic approach to the allocation and distribution of large-scale, housing-led, mixed-use development, including employment opportunities, community services and facilities and infrastructure provision. This has led to the identification of land for the creation of three new Garden Communities as one way to address comprehensively long-term growth aspirations across North Essex. This commitment is embedded in a common Strategic Section 1 for the Braintree District, Colchester Borough and Tendring District Draft Local Plans which gives primacy to the role of Garden Communities as part of each Council's sustainable strategy for growth.

## The Brief and Role of the Concept Framework

- iii. The brief requires the production of a Concept Framework Plan that will explore the development potential of land identified for the creation of each new Garden Community through the preparation of conceptual spatial development options. It builds on the 'Concept Feasibility Study' work prepared by AECOM, which helped to inform the North Essex Authorities' selection of three Garden Communities to be taken forward through consultation on Preferred Options (2016), and to inform subsequent Strategic Growth Locations Development Plan Documents (DPDs) following public consultation on the Draft Local Plans.
- iv. The role of the Concept Framework can be summarised as follows:
  - to refine the **boundaries of development areas** in order to define **optimum development capacities**
  - to articulate a **Vision** for the new community
  - to identify clear **rationales for the range and disposition** of land uses and key **spatial structuring principles**
  - to identify **options for phasing** arrangements
  - to **assess outcomes** against the North Essex Garden Communities Charter.
- v. Each Concept Framework will inform the basis of a DPD, following public consultation on the Draft Local Plans, and provides a structure and context to guide the future development of the site and subsequent master planning stages that will follow. parts:

## Report Structure

- vi. This report is structured in three parts:

**Part One** - Addresses the strategic context of North Essex. David Lock Associates and the wider consultant team are commissioned to prepare Concept Frameworks for two of the three proposed new Garden Communities. These are located west and east of Colchester, and together propose up to 33,000 new homes. In our view, an understanding of the opportunities and implications for the delivery of the new Garden Communities for the whole urban area of North Essex, particularly in terms of provision of and investment in **transport infrastructure** and **economic development and jobs growth**, are critical to the success of the Garden Communities and their sustainability in the long-term.

**Part Two** – defines a Vision for the Garden Community and provides guidance on placemaking. It goes on to address the Spatial Elements of the Concept Framework. It identifies development principles and presents a series of high-level frameworks which are recommended to structure future master planning stages.

**Part Three** - Refers to the 'Non-Spatial' Elements of the Concept Framework. It focuses on delivery and implementation of a Garden Community, both within the new Local Plan period (up to 2033) and beyond. It also provides an appraisal of the Concept Framework against the North Essex Garden Communities Charter (June 2016), which sets out 10 placemaking principles that underpin the North Essex Authorities' ambition for the Garden Communities, and in accordance with which the development will be designed and delivered.

**Part 1:**

The

Strategic

Context



# PART 1: The Strategic Context

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 The creation of three new Garden Communities in North Essex is a pragmatic and strategic response to the need to plan, long-term, for the economic and housing development needs of the whole area in a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable way.
- 1.1.2 The three Local Planning Authorities across North Essex – Braintree District, Colchester Borough and Tendring District, - in collaboration with Essex County Council - have formed a planning partnership to prepare a common strategic chapter for their new Local Plans, and are now partners in North Essex Garden Communities Ltd, a promotion and development company that will drive the creation of the new Garden Communities and investment in the infrastructure across the wider area.
- 1.1.3 This approach is embodied in a shared Section 1 to three Local Plans that sets the strategic context for development and puts in place strategic planning policies that will shape the future development of North Essex through the next plan period and beyond.

## 1.2 GROWTH

- 1.2.1 The basis for this arrangement is a desire to make proper provision for continued substantial growth in households and population in a way that is sustainable in the long-term, and does not need to be unduly constrained by administrative borders. This is achieved in a joint Section 1 Local Plan to be published in June 2017 which provides:

“a strategic vision for how planned growth in North Essex will be realised; set strategic objectives and policies for key growth topics; set out the numbers of additional homes and jobs across the area that will be needed covering the period to 2033. The choices made, particularly in relation to the location of garden communities, will also set the framework for development well beyond the plan period; and highlight the key strategic growth locations across the area and the necessary new or upgraded infrastructure to support this growth.”

1.2.2 The planned scale of growth is substantial. For the plan period to 2033, The North Essex Authorities have to provide land for 43,720 new homes (2,186 per annum for 15 years). They must plan for an additional 1,908 new jobs per annum and allocate between 65 and 137.1 ha of additional employment land to do so. In both cases the rates of growth are expected to continue beyond 2033. The Section 1 Local Plan recognises the substantial investment in infrastructure necessary to make this growth sustainable. Existing main settlements have infrastructure constraints that limit the potential for them to expand to accommodate the required growth.

1.2.3 Instead, the focus for this growth will be three new Garden Communities distributed across North Essex in cross-boundary locations, well related to but distinct from existing population centres, and well served by a strategic road network. These new communities will accommodate some of the housing and employment growth planned for North Essex within the plan period, with a significant amount beyond the plan period in a sustainable way that meets the Local Plan vision and strategic objectives, and provides a quality of development and community that would not occur in the absence of a holistic approach to planning and delivery.

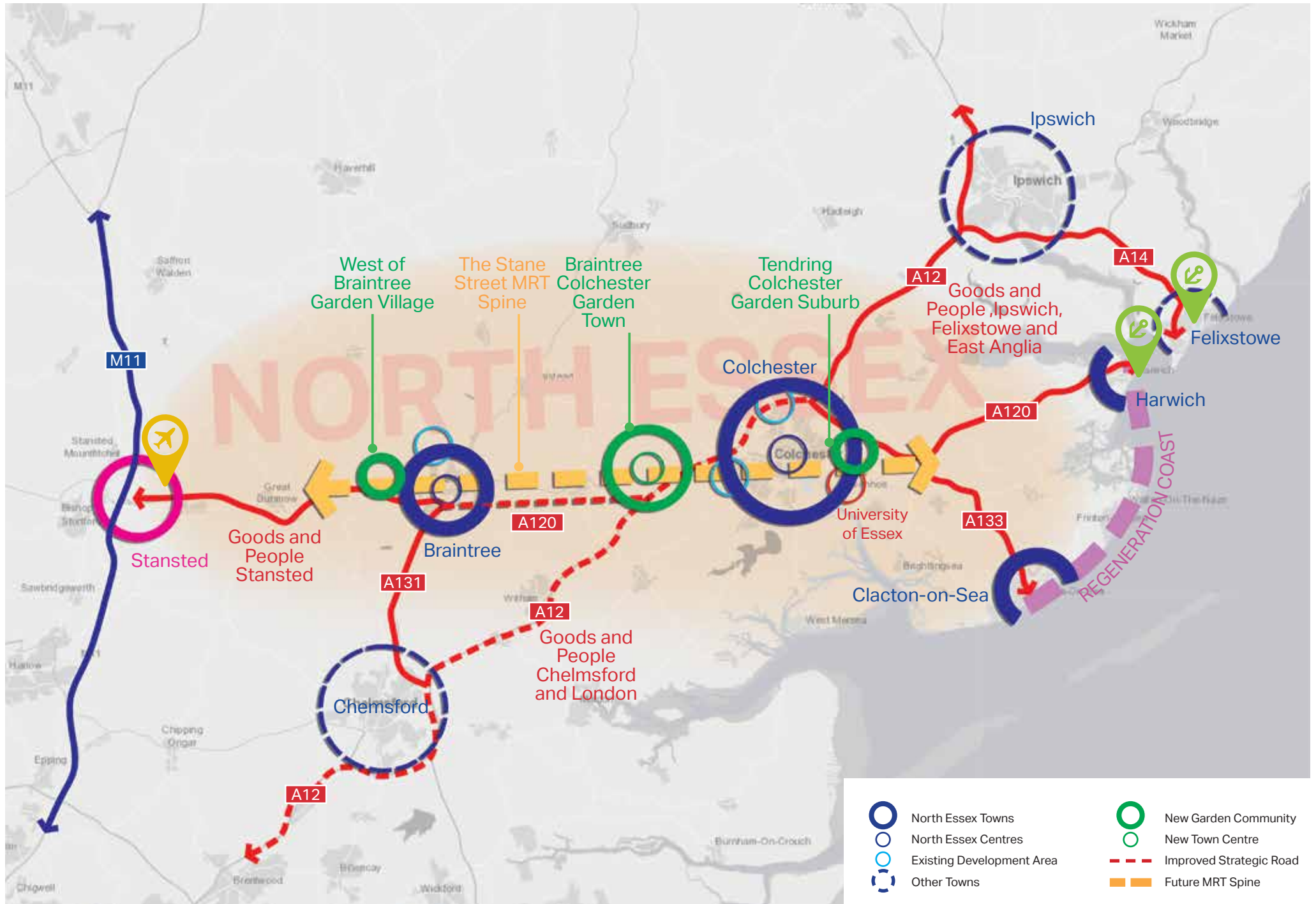
1.2.4 Each of the new Garden Communities is relied upon to deliver 2,500 dwellings during the Plan Period to 2033 to be allocated across the three Local Planning Authorities against their housing needs.

1.2.5 Together the three new Garden Communities are planned to provide land for between 29,000 and 43,000 new homes in total, at least 7,500 by 2033.

### 1.3 GOVERNING STRUCTURE

1.3.1 The North Essex authorities have created an overarching governance body known as North Essex Garden Communities Limited (NEGC Ltd) to coordinate the development and delivery of the new Garden Communities. Further mechanisms for delivery will be established for each proposed Garden Community with the capacity to drive the delivery of each community on a comprehensive basis and with proportionate local authority support to help secure a high quality of place and the delivery of infrastructure set out in the policies in the Local Plan. In addition to strong local authority involvement and leadership, delivery of Garden Communities will also rely on active and sustained engagement with existing local communities and stakeholders. The Councils will explore other models of delivery if they can be confident that it will deliver the same quality and timing of outcomes for the community as a whole, both those in the new Garden Communities and in the existing communities that will be affected.

Figure 1.1: North Essex Garden Communities



**Part 2:**

The

Concept

Framework

# PART 2: The Concept Framework

## 2.1 SYNTHESIS OF BASELINE

- 2.1.1 The North Essex Authorities previously identified four broad search areas for new Garden Communities and commissioned AECOM to undertake a 'Garden Communities Concept Feasibility Study' (June 2016) (Stage 1) to explore the potential of each of these four locations to support a new garden community.
- 2.1.2 Volume 1, "Baseline Compendium", collates and presents existing data across a number of social, economic and environmental themes in relation to the four broad search areas. Volume 2, "Opportunities and Constraints", maps the key opportunities and constraints identified from an analysis of the evidence presented in the Baseline report. Areas of analysis include: access and connectivity; landscape, ecology and heritage; employment and economy; and services and utilities. Volume 3, "Options and Evaluation", identifies a number of options within each of the broad search areas supported by high level indicative development capacities and deliverability and viability assessments and presents an evaluation of each option.
- 2.1.3 This Concept Feasibility Study informed the Councils' selection of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC) as one of three new Garden Communities to be taken forward through consultation on the Preferred Options Local Plan.
- 2.1.4 The DLA-led consultant team has been provided with further information from Essex County Council, the landowner consortiums and wider stakeholders at a series of meetings and workshops. We have also undertaken a baseline review of existing and emerging Policy, as well as conducting a series of site visits.
- 2.1.5 A review of this data and evidence in-the-round has enabled a synthesis of the baseline information and an understanding of the constraints within the site,; constraints that are both objective, relating to physical characteristics, and subjective, driven by perceptions.
- 2.1.6 Appreciation of both has informed a "concept framework" that provides a structure for future master planning stages in accordance with a set of sound design and placemaking principles.

## Site Context

2.1.7 CBBGC lies at the confluence of two national strategic roads – the A12 and the A120 (Stane Street) – where they meet the Great Eastern Main Line railway. It lies midway between the towns of Colchester, (10km) to the east, and Braintree, (15km) to the west). The local authority boundary bisects the site, near to its western extent, in a broadly north-south direction. The site area and its context are shown in Figure 2.1

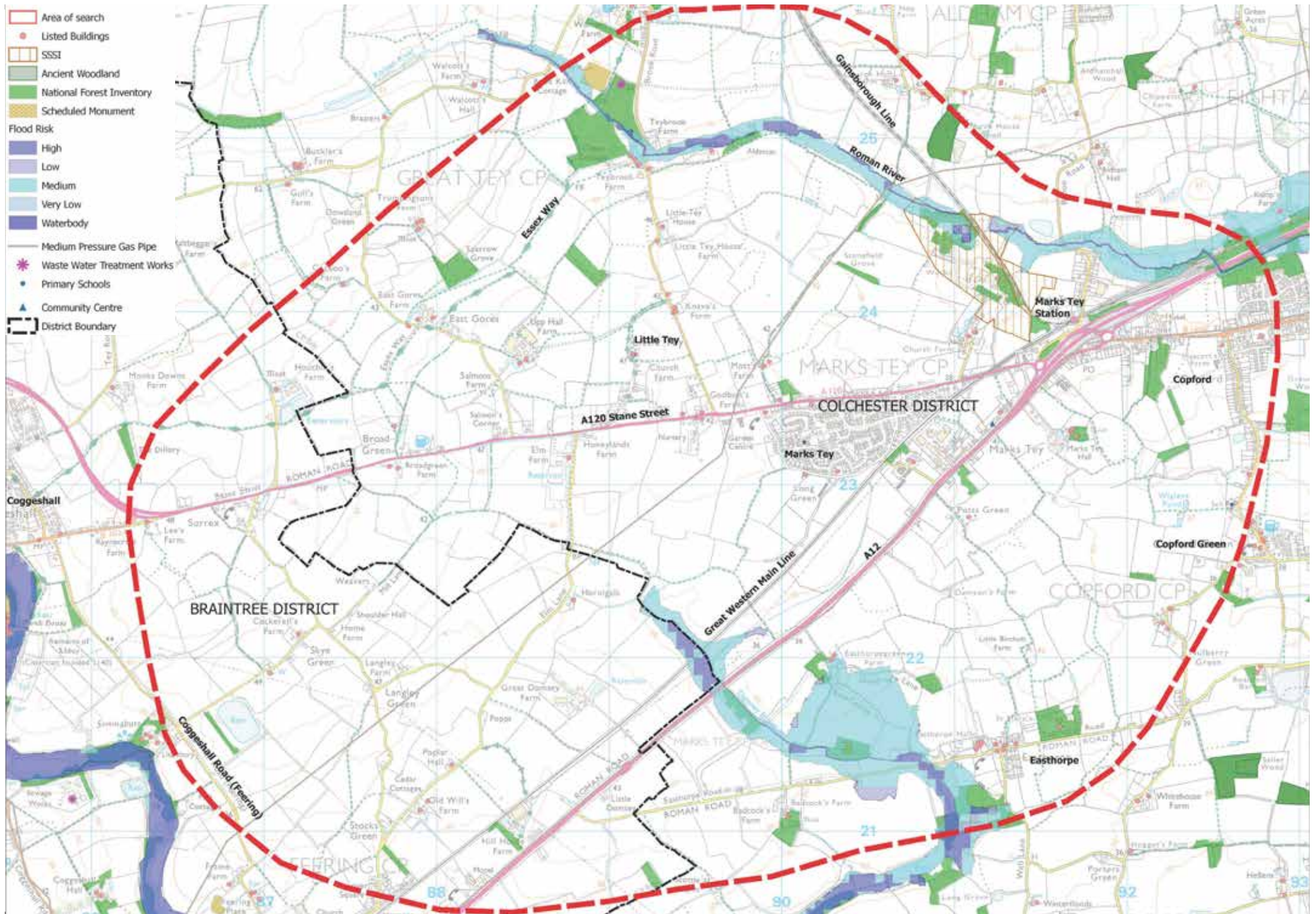
2.1.8 The site is adjacent to the existing villages of Marks Tey, Little Tey, Copford and the hamlet of Surrex. There are some relatively isolated residential properties and farms within the site itself.

Figure 2.1: Site Plan and Context



- 2.1.9 The major part of the land within the site is controlled by two landowner consortia. Gateway 120 are promoting land to the north and south of the A120 and northwest of the A12. RF West Ltd are representing themselves and other adjoining landowners on land south and east of the A12.
- 2.1.10 The A12 divides the existing village of Marks Tey which sits both west and east of the A12. The A120 further divides Marks Tey from the hamlet around its Parish Church, its railway station and the villages of Great and Little Tey. These strategic roads heavily influence its character. The Marks Tey interchange is a double roundabout connecting the A120 with the A12. Both routes suffer from heavy congestion and are the subject of current consultation on improvement options.
- 2.1.11 Copford and Copford Green sit east of Marks Tey. Stanway is some 2km further east of the site and provides out-of-town “District Centre” retail facilities. Coggeshall, a small, historic, former market town with higher order village services, lies 2km to the west along the A120. The settlements of Feering and Kelvedon lie to the south west and Aldham to the north east.
- 2.1.12 Marks Tey has areas of small-scale, light industrial employment and commercial premises along the A12, and there is a cluster further north associated with the brickworks. Marks Tey is served by a railway station which provides regular services to Chelmsford and London, and to Colchester and on to Ipswich, as well as less regular local services to Sudbury via the Gainsborough Line.
- 2.1.13 The site lies on a relatively flat farmland plain. There is a mix of field sizes of irregular form, with broken field hedges and scattered small woodlands. These compose a historic landscape punctuated by farmsteads.
- 2.1.14 There are two areas of distinct landscape character within the site. Land to the north of Stane Street (A120) is gently undulating and has a greater sense of enclosure through more regular hedgerow-bounded field patterns. It has a more rural appearance; the urbanising features of the railway line and A12 are less apparent. Land to the south of the A120 appears more open, with larger field patterns and less undulating landscape.
- 2.1.15 Two main water courses flow through the site; the Domsey Brook flows south west and joins the River Blackwater east of Kelvedon; the Roman River, which defines the north eastern limits of the site, and drains to the River Colne. These two catchments also reinforce distinction in landscape character between land to the south and north of the A120.
- 2.1.16 There are also a number of drainage ditches and smaller streams that flow through the site.
- 2.1.17 Marks Tey Brick Pit, a designated geological SSSI, lies to the north of the site.
- 2.1.18 There are two local wildlife sites with associated areas of ancient woodland, also in the northern part of the site. The quality of agricultural land is ‘Good’ (Grade 2), with some areas of good to moderate (Grade 3 in the south-western part of the site).
- 2.1.19 There are a number of historic buildings adjacent to the site which includes Marks Tey Hall and Easthorpe Hall (Grade I). The two highly graded listed churches at Marks Tey and Little Tey are within the site area.
- 2.1.20 Large areas of the site are also designated as sand and gravel Mineral Safeguarding Areas, which does not prevent future development but will be a consideration as part of the policy-making process for the site.
- 2.1.21 The site is free from restrictive strategic utilities infrastructure.
- 2.1.22 A summary of the key constraints is presented in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Site Constraints





## Key Influences

### 2.1.23 Capacity issues on the existing strategic network (A120 and A12):

improvements to these two key routes provides a real opportunity positively to shape the creation of a new community at CBBGC. There are opportunities to improve the amenity for the existing communities adjacent to the A12, through its realignment, and a downgrading and reclaiming of the A120 section through Marks Tey as part of a new preferred route for the A120. There are also opportunities for prioritisation of public transport. The form that the proposed road infrastructure will take will have a significant influence on the development capacity of the site and the resulting landscape and GI strategy.

### 2.1.24 Landscape Features - Domsey Brook

is a key feature within the development site that can help structure a linear eastnorth-west south park that runs through the development and influences the shape and extent of development parcels. A range of wildlife habitat areas associated with the Brook can be retained and enhanced. Green Infrastructure links and cycleway/footway provision could be developed to branch off this central green spine. **Roman River and Great Essex Way** help to define a northern limit to development and provide a defensible and historic reference point.

2.1.25 Figure 2.3 illustrates the landscape influences and opportunities within the site.

### 2.1.26 Proximity to existing settlements

will determine the distance from new development to retain separation from settlements at Coggeshall, Feering, Copford and Aldham.

Figure 2.3: Landscape

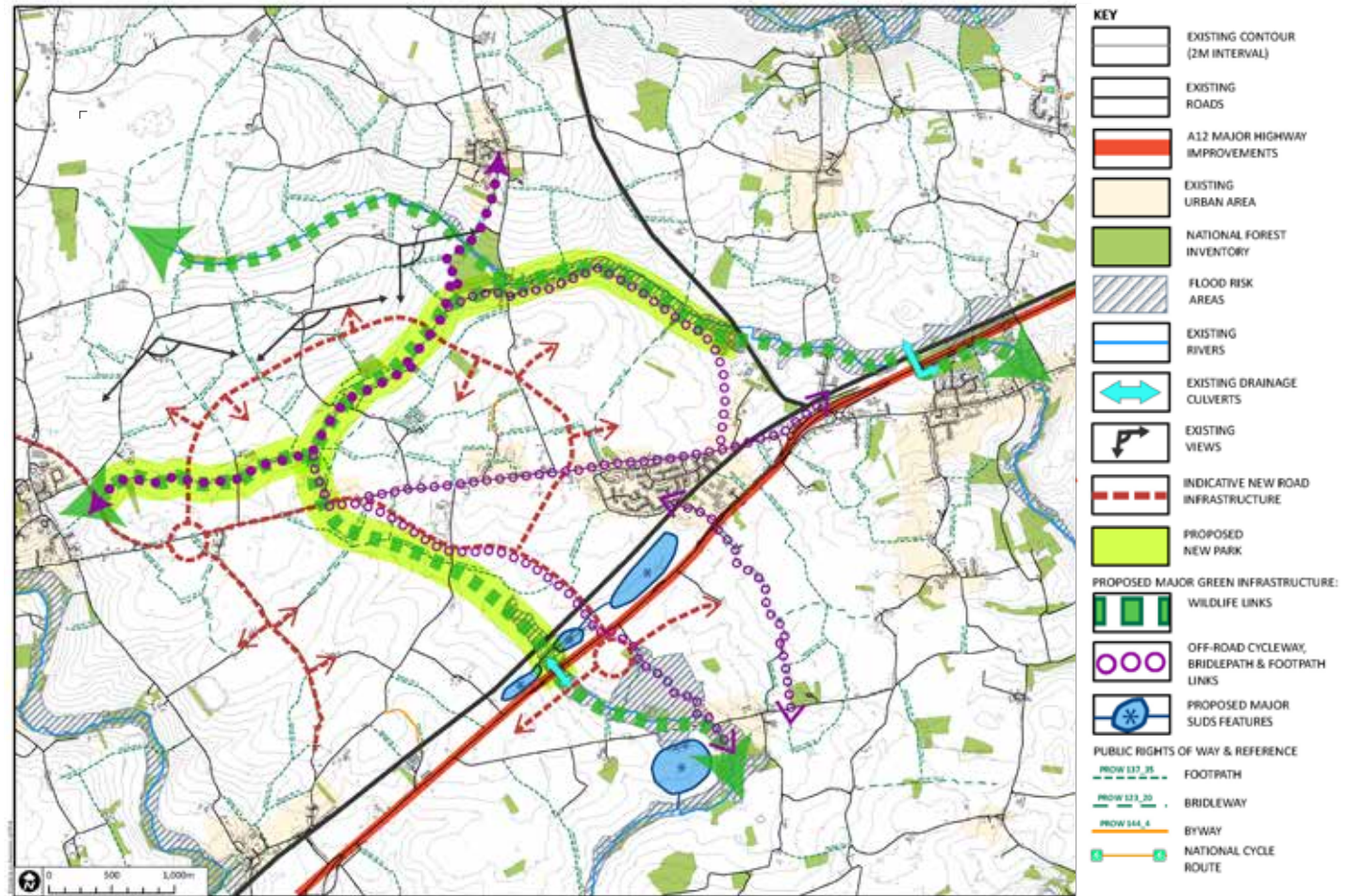
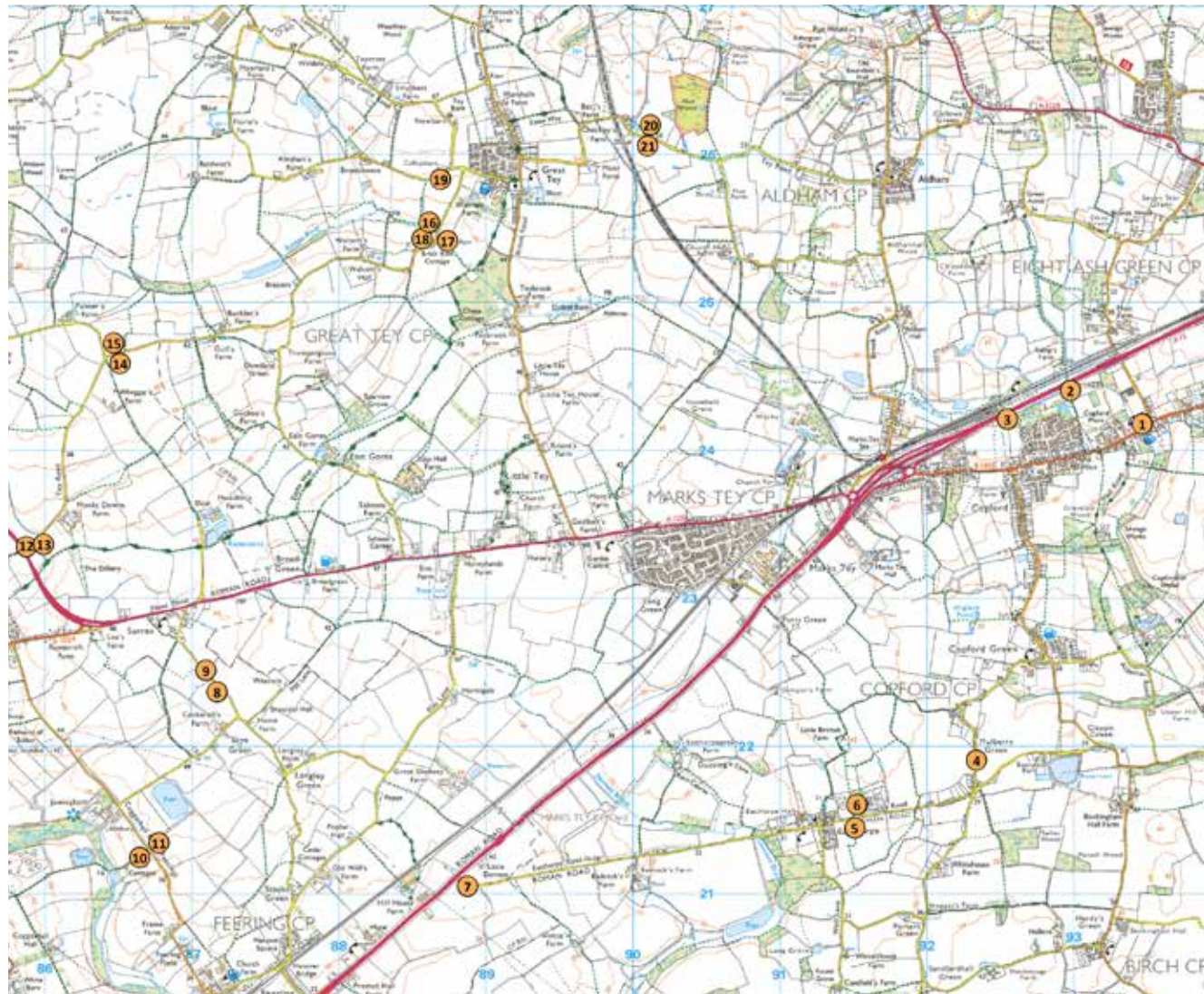


Figure 2.3.1: Photo Location Plan



14.



17.



19.



22.



## 2.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### The Vision

- 2.2.1 Stakeholder engagement has been an important part of the process of preparing this Concept Framework. It has helped to reach out to local community groups and facilitate the beginnings of a dialogue with local community groups and parishes.
- 2.2.2 DLA has facilitated two stakeholder events, the first was a workshop event that took place in November 2016 at the start of our commission. This workshop was part of the baseline work for the study, and was prior to any prescribed framework outcome. The aim of the workshop was to encourage participation and sharing of ideas to help shape the concept framework thinking. The second event took place in June 2017, and was a briefing which report back on the progress of the Concept Frameworks and discussed the extent to which the outcomes presented in the Framework, were consistent with the stakeholder feedback from the earlier event.
- 2.2.3 The Councils' project team established the potential stakeholders for the workshops based on the local representative community bodies which they felt would be interested in participating. Attendance at the meetings was by invitation only.

- 2.2.4 The invitation list for the workshop was targeted towards interested local community representatives and groups: including County and Ward Councillors, Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan Groups, Local Heritage & Conservation Groups and Action Groups.
- 2.2.5 DLA prepared a stakeholder feedback report for each event, which was circulated to invitees as a record of the meeting and the issues discussed. These are provided at Appendix B to this report.

### Stakeholder Workshop

- 2.2.6 The early stakeholder workshop was held on the evening of 14th November 2016 at the Best Western Marks Tey Hotel, Colchester. The workshop was attended by 24 delegates, together with a number of Officer representatives from Braintree District, Colchester Borough, and Essex County Councils. Participants were asked to consider the key issues that would have to be addressed in the planning, design and delivery of a new Garden Community if it was to progress through the Local Plan process. Stakeholders were given a broad site area as a reference for the consultation (Figure 2.1).
- 2.2.7 The points raised can be summarised under 10 headings, and the table below shows how the emerging Concept Framework responds:

## Colchester Braintree Borders Community Concerns

1. “Infrastructure first i.e. facilities before houses.”

## Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Concept Framework Response

The Concept Framework for this new Garden Community envisages a number of key infrastructure investments, planned to be delivered in parallel with the development of the new Garden Community:

- Realignment of the A120 between Braintree and Marks Tey and a new junction with the A12; this is critical to the realisation of any capacity for future development.
- Realignment and widening of the A12 from Feering to Marks Tey as part of a more extensive scheme.
- New primary, to include early year provision, and secondary schools, public open space, community services and facilities planned to be delivered alongside new homes.
- Local Centres, including shopping and related services and facilities, planned to be delivered alongside new homes and jobs.

New walking, cycling and public transport to be an integral part of development within the new Garden Community and wider connections beyond.

2. “Need to deal with current A12/A120 capacity issues prior to additional development.”

Realignment and reconstruction of the two roads is to be planned and designed with the development potential of the new Garden Community in mind. Development capacity is significantly limited until the new roads are in place.

3. “Early delivery of schools and healthcare facilities.”

New primary, to include early year provision as well as standalone early years and childcare facilities and secondary schools to be delivered alongside new homes.

## Colchester Braintree Borders Community Concerns

## Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Concept Framework Response

4. “Get the key service providers on-board.”

A Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV), comprising a partnership of the Councils, landowners and developers, or alternative delivery mechanism will be charged with the planning, design and delivery of the new Garden Community and will be working closely with service providers and wider stakeholders to coordinate future investment programmes.

5. “Real jobs are needed and not just additional employment land.”

There will be a concerted and comprehensive economic development and employment strategy for the whole of North Essex. This will be the number one priority. The LDV will have an explicit role to plan to maximise the creation of jobs and to actively seek out investors and businesses to locate to the new Garden Community.

6. “Respect the identity and character of existing communities.”

The Concept Framework includes an extensive landscape framework that protects the settings of all existing communities and other heritage assets within a green space setting, but with enhanced public access.

7. “Repairing the severance of existing communities, especially Marks Tey.”

The proposed realignment of the strategic roads will assist the reunification of the existing communities and remove the environmental intrusion of heavy traffic.

Realignment of the A120 will take through traffic away from Marks Tey and reunite the village with its Parish Church. It will encourage walking and cycling as a means of local mobility, and will permit better and more reliable public transport services. It will also downgrade the importance of the junction with the A12 giving greater priority to sustainable modes of transport and improving the setting, environment and accessibility of the existing station.

Realignment of the A12 could take the heavy traffic away from the heart of the Marks Tey community. As a result, Marks Tey would be much better integrated with ready access for all residents to all its facilities and services, now and new in the future.

## Colchester Braintree Borders Community Concerns

## Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Concept Framework Response

8. "Realising the true Garden City Principles i.e. strong Green Infrastructure, strong Design Philosophy and a wide range of housing."

The Garden Communities Charter (2016) sets the benchmark for the quality of development to be delivered in this new Garden Community. Sensitivity to the existing landscape and topography and the need for access to natural green space and for storm water management means that all parts – existing and future neighbourhoods – will benefit from an enhanced landscape setting as part of the green infrastructure. This infrastructure will extend to form a connected network of accessible green spaces across the new Garden Community and into the surrounding countryside.

There will be maximum variety of housing densities, sizes, types and tenures as part of the evolution of the new Garden Community, all underpinned by a set of standards for their layout, design and environmental performance.

9. "A clear transport strategy (which maximises public transport, sorts out road and rail capacity issues and helps to minimise commuting)."

The overall strategy for North Essex and the Concept Framework for CBBGC sets out packages of work and investment to deliver integrated sustainable transport for the new communities and existing communities. Together these will cover all aspects from walking and cycling strategies through traffic management to new rapid transport connections within the new community and with other key locations across North Essex.

A central element could be a Mass Rapid Transit System along the Stane Street Spine to Colchester that could form part of a wider MRT network that could extend across North Essex. This network could provide good value, frequent, high-quality, reliable public transport, and could include buses, guided buses with full priority, to trams. The key will be to create mobility corridors with the flexibility to accommodate changing technologies over time.

10. "The need for a Special Purpose Vehicle/Local Development Vehicle to ensure legally binding agreements."

The Councils are committed to the creation of a special company that will have responsibility for the delivery of the new Garden Community. This will be a joint-venture with the landowners and developers and will bind them to work together to develop and implement the best plan.

Landownership will allow the LDV to control the quality of development by contract rather than just planning permission and enforcement.

## Stakeholder Briefing

2.2.8 The second consultation event took place on 20th June 2017 at the Holiday Inn, Eight Ash Green, attended by 19 delegates. This took the form of a briefing to present DLA's emerging ideas, and collectively to explore choices relating to the spatial and functional form of a Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders.

2.2.9 It was made clear at the Briefing that DLA is not preparing a master plan for a new Garden Community, nor does DLA make a recommendation for one particular development form or scale. Furthermore, until there is further clarity on the emerging highway proposals for both the A12 and A120, as consulted upon by Highways England and Essex County Council, it is not possible to conclude the Garden Community work through the presentation of a final option.

2.2.10 The presentation explored a potential growth scenario that illustrated how a new Garden Community of scale could be developed over time. Stakeholders were reminded of the main design principles/priorities identified during the first planning and design meeting, held on the 14 November 2016 and were encouraged to consider if these principles were supported by the options presented.

2.2.11 The points raised at the event can be summarised under 5 key headings

## Infrastructure

- Uncertainty of infrastructure (A12/A120 connections – uncertainty in delivery, both route and timings);
- Need to consider advantages and disadvantages of each highway consultation option – each will lead to a different outcome;
- How do you solve severance? Concern that major roads divide communities and do not unite them;
- There must be a joined-up approach in any consideration of development in this location. Decisions on road, rail, scale of development and economic investment must be aligned to deliver maximum benefits.

## Scale of development

- Need to secure defensible boundaries – they are important, how are they protected in perpetuity;
- Whatever the maximum size a new community is – it must be planned to ensure that development is not piecemeal and stops/ slows before necessary infrastructure items are delivered;
- Phasing is important – where does development start? It must prioritise solutions to deal with existing congestion issues in the early stages of development.



## Community and Benefits

- Context and relationship within and between the neighbouring settlements (such as Coggeshall, Feering, Kelvedon, Marks Tey, Great Tey) and a new community needs to be clearly understood to maximise benefits to the existing communities and minimise unfavourable impacts;
- The benefits to the existing communities must be clearly articulated;
- There should be commitment to addressing congestion and segregation at Marks Tey, a solution should be delivered early in the lifetime of the development;
- Creating conditions for social cohesion is important, places need to promote social interaction across a range of demographics;
- Neighbourhoods should integrate a mix of uses within the built form to provide focuses of activity.

## Economy and Jobs

- A new community must have a thriving commercial heart and a good range of employment opportunities – it should be allowed to flourish without fear of competition with Colchester town centre;
- How can the development support the needs of the local population, housing, jobs, infrastructure? It should not be designed as a commuter town;
- Must attract high quality employment and jobs.

## Community Engagement

- There must be a role for local community groups in the shaping of a new community (Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan Groups, local schools and youth groups);
- Consider role of Parish Councils as part of a delivery structure that could offer some form of local control;
- Sustained, meaningful and transparent community engagement is important to build trust and mobilise community participation.



## 2.3 VISION, SCALE OF OPPORTUNITY, AND RATIONALE

### A Vision for a New Garden Community

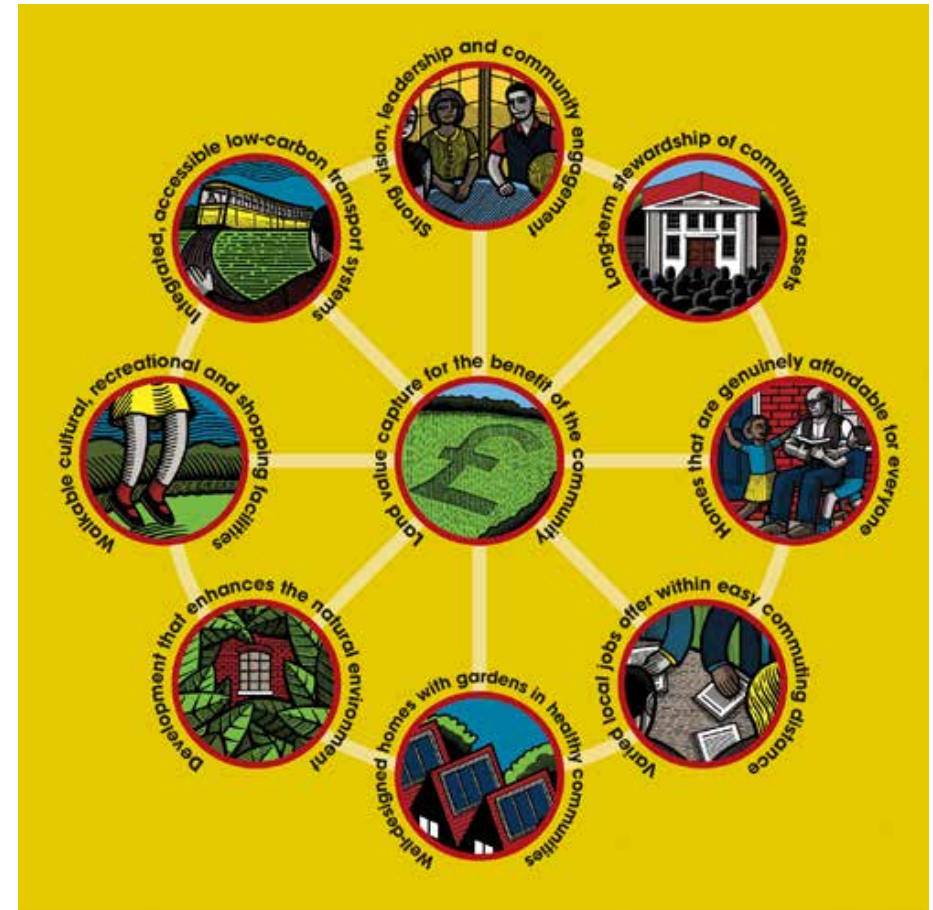
- 2.3.1 The Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC) will be an exceptional place to be born, to grow up, to make a career, to raise a family, to retire; to enjoy a rich and fulfilling life. It will be a beautiful place with a strong sense of community and belonging. It is planned to be big enough to become a beautiful community in its own right with a strong sense of identity, community and inclusion. The proposal to create a new Garden Community, delivering on all aspects of Garden Community principles, is unprecedented in the UK in the last 45 years.
- 2.3.2 Not since the designation of Central Lancashire as the last new town (1970) has a new settlement of this scale been mooted in the UK. Now the ambition in North Essex is to create a new focus for economic development that will be a catalyst to transform the economic prospects and prosperity for the whole area, and it will be the main location for housing development for the next thirty years and more. It will be planned for a population approaching 60,000 with jobs, schools, shops and services to meet the population's needs. This is twice the size of the planned expansion of Bicester in Oxfordshire, widely regarded to be the first of the new generation of Garden Towns.
- 2.3.3 This new Garden Community requires a different sort of "Vision", one that considers all aspects of creating a new place. It is not just a case of building houses in open countryside.
- 2.3.4 Whereas large developments connected to existing towns may provide 5-6,000 homes to be delivered in a single rolling programme of development by one or two developers, creating a new Garden Community of up to 24,000 homes requires a structure of main roads and green spaces and utility services, and must be planned as defined and distinctive neighbourhoods within this framework. Development can take place in several locations at the same time by many different developers, and the rate of development can be considerable.
- 2.3.5 The new Garden Community will not be reliant on the capacity of existing infrastructure – schools, primary healthcare, roads, utility services, parks and open spaces, etc. The plan for its development will include new provision under each of these headings. Most will be built in parallel with the completion of new homes to ensure that new residents have their needs met in a timely and coordinated way. But some, in particular systems of roads and public transport, will have to be created in advance of development to ensure that the new Garden Community has the best possible start and has the minimum adverse impacts on existing communities. Indeed, one of the benefits from the development is that existing residents will have access to a much greater array of facilities and services nearby than they have at present, yet their immediate environment may not change radically or quickly.
- 2.3.6 The timescales over which the Garden Community will grow and develop will offer the unique prospect of incorporating exciting new technological innovations within the movement strategies for the development, allowing the emerging neighbourhoods to respond to sociocultural changes and patterns of travel behaviour which are constantly changing, thus ensuring their longevity.
- 2.3.7 But what makes a new Garden Community different from any other large housing development?

## Garden City Principles

3.8 The key is adherence to Garden City Principles, set down by Ebenezer Howard in 1902 and now articulated for a 21st century context by the Town and Country Planning Association. It is these principles that should underpin the development of a Garden Community on the Colchester Braintree Borders to produce a different offer to that typically delivered by the market.

2.3.9 This new Garden Community should be “a holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. The Garden City principles are an indivisible and interlocking framework for their delivery, and include” :

*TCPA nine Garden City Principles:*



1. “Land value capture for the benefit of the community”.

When land changes from being agricultural to development, its value increases enormously. The aim here would be to use a development agreement with the landowners to capture a significant proportion of that uplift to provide funds for investment in the infrastructure and public services that the new community will need, and to repay pump-priming investment from the public purse.

2. “Strong vision, leadership and community engagement”.

The partnership of four Councils is working together to develop a long term and visionary plan for this new Garden Community. They have created a company – North Essex Garden Communities Ltd – to oversee this process. This provides strong and committed leadership. The partnership will expand to involve landowners and developers in joint “Local Delivery Vehicles” or their equivalent as the proposals are refined and implemented. The partnership is also committed to community participation in the planning and design process, working with existing communities in the beginning and then involving new residents when the new Garden Community is underway.

3. “Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets”.

There will be large areas of the new Garden Community that will be community assets – extensive public open space, community meeting spaces, land and buildings for community and charitable organisations, etc - that need to be managed by, and accessible to, the whole community, in perpetuity. The new Garden Community should have mechanisms to place ownership and management in the hands of local people; the Milton Keynes Parks Trust, the Letchworth Heritage Foundation and local Community Foundations and Community Trusts are good models for future stewardship without placing an additional burden on local tax payers.

4. “Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable”.

In order to support a thriving and diverse community and to address the long-term housing needs of the whole local population, the new Garden Community should plan for a wide variety of housing types and tenures: contemporary and traditional; large, small and much in between; open market for sale, private rental and all types of affordable; lifetime homes and retirement homes. It will be important to find the means by which low cost housing for lower income households can be sustained as a key part of the mix.

5. “A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes”.

The key characteristic that will distinguish the new Garden Community from a simple housing development will be concerted efforts to establish its economy and a range of job opportunities within the development that are available to the wider population. Indeed, this is the factor that drives the creation of new Garden Communities across North Essex. This new Garden Community is planned at a scale that can offer a variety of development opportunities for businesses and other employers allied to a concerted strategy to attract investment and employers to locate in this new place, all part of the strategy to transform work opportunities and economic development within the new Garden Community and across North Essex. The development will include employment within a town centre and other neighbourhood centres, and in modern premises well related to homes and to the wider transport networks. Improved public transport will provide connections for new residents to work in the wider North Essex area and will also allow others to travel to the jobs in the new Garden Community, all by more sustainable means.

6. “Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food”.

This is the characteristic that can distinguish a new Garden Community from other large-scale, urban developments. There will be a conscious commitment to creating a beautiful place that supports healthy and fulfilling lives. A place where homes and businesses and schools and centres sit in a garden setting of extensive and lush greenspace. Where people will feel proud of their environment and feel compelled to look after it. The guarantee that this vision will be delivered lies in the public control of the land and future investment in the quality of design and construction that this control affords, supported by clear objectives, policies and standards. Public accountability and stewardship will be open to community scrutiny at all stages. The scale of the proposed new Garden Community means that the best skills can be employed to realise the vision.

7. “Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience”.

Approximately 40% of the total area of the new Garden Community will be accessible greenspace of one form or another. To this can be added the private gardens of houses and other buildings. Compared with the agricultural fields that currently exist, these should increase biodiversity and will make accessible extensive natural greenspace where at present public access is significantly restricted. Milton Keynes is a model for the quality of environment that can be created in this new Garden Community.

*Neighbourhoods*



8. “Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods”.

The plan should create walkable neighbourhoods, each with a distinctive character, and each well integrated with the others and with the new Garden Community as a whole. The concept framework has respect for heritage assets, making them jewels for the whole new community to cherish. Each neighbourhood should be focussed on a local centre where local shops, local employment, healthcare, other services and facilities and a primary school should be located, no more than a 10 minute walk from any home, and served by public transport, cycling and walking routes. Green space and play areas should be readily accessible to every home.

*Village Centre*



9. “Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport”.

A new Garden Community will fail if it is reliant on cars for longer journeys; but it has the scale to facilitate and support a transformation in mobility within its own boundaries and across North Essex. There is a potential opportunity to relocate and to expand the railway station and its services as the centrepiece of the new Town Centre, and to make this a hub for local and wider public transport routes. There is the potential to divert traffic away from the existing A120 and B1408 and to reallocate the road space as a quality mobility corridor for priority public transport services to Braintree and Stansted in the west and to Colchester in the east. The corridor will have the flexibility and capacity necessary to accommodate new technologies in the future. A new network of streets within the new Garden Community can be designed to accommodate local bus services and direct, safe walking and cycling routes, designed with the flexibility and capacity to accept new technologies in the future. The objective will be for as many journeys as possible to be easy and attractive by sustainable and active modes. Emerging technology including autonomous cars, transport on demand and shared cars will be researched ensuring the plan adapts and is future-proofed.

### North Essex Garden Communities Charter

- 2.3.10 The North Essex Authorities have adopted a North Essex Garden Communities Charter that interprets the key criteria from the TCPA’s Garden City Principles. The charter sets out 10 place-making principles that underpin the North Essex Authorities’ ambition for the Garden Communities, and in accordance with which the development will be designed and delivered.
- 2.3.11 Section 3.2 of this document provides further detail on how the Concept Framework meets the principles of the Charter.

### The Rationale for CBBGC

- 2.3.12 The North Essex Councils have planned for a Garden Village to the west of Braintree; a Garden Suburb to the east of Colchester, close to the University; and this large new Garden Community between Colchester and Braintree where the A12, A120 and the Great Eastern Main Line railway all meet.
- 2.3.13 The Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (CBBGC) is a project unique in the UK today. Unique in terms of its ambition, its scale, its complexity; and unique in terms of its potential to unlock economic growth and development across North Essex and to satisfy the long-term needs of a growing population.
- 2.3.14 The strategic roads that connect the new Garden Community with other parts of North Essex and the UK could be realigned and reconstructed to provide additional capacity, and the railway connections to London and to East Anglia could be improved and up-graded.
- 2.3.15 Delivering a new community of this scale has real complexity; careful consideration of all aspects of its planning, design, delivery and management is required from the beginning. The Concept Framework defines the form and extent of CBBGC and its influential role within wider North Essex. Development parameters and design principles will be refined and realised in stages over the next 30 years, but with a clear view of its final form and extent, and its role in the wider North Essex.

2.3.16 The development of a Garden Community is a more sustainable and long-term choice for delivering development. If population growth is accommodated by simply making existing towns and villages bigger, the conditions for everyone will deteriorate – congestion, availability of services and facilities, access to natural green space.

2.3.17 Our collective goal is to create an attractive new settlement that makes opportunities for people to live and to work and to spend their leisure time in an environment that supports 21st century lifestyles. The new Garden Community will be different. It will be rooted in Essex distinctiveness but with the convenience of a layout and form planned to make local journeys easier and with jobs, facilities and natural green space close to hand and accessible to everyone.

2.3.18 This new Garden Community will attract a great diversity of businesses to create jobs, and that will increase the strength and resilience of the whole North Essex economy, creating skilled and high value employment opportunities to people within the new community but also to people across the whole of North Essex.

### Scale of the Opportunity

2.3.19 The population of North Essex is set to increase substantially over the period to 2050, and, given that the average household size will continue to fall, that population will need even more new homes. The North Essex economy is strong enough to create plenty of new jobs alongside new homes, but only if the bottlenecks in infrastructure can be overcome. All the indicators reveal the need for many thousands of new homes and jobs and all the services and facilities to support them over the next 30 years.

2.3.20 The North Essex Councils are planning a long-term solution to population increase that will optimise economic growth in the period to 2050 and beyond. This involves the creation of three new Garden Communities across the area – new communities with the capacity to provide up to 40,000 new homes with new jobs and infrastructure, and all the services and facilities that their communities will require. Together these new communities will justify substantial investment in new physical and social infrastructure that will unlock economic potential.

### North Essex – Potential Benefits

2.3.21 Benefits that flow to the wider North Essex community from the delivery of a new Garden Community of this scale are considerable. Existing towns and villages are protected from additional development that would deliver little by way of enhanced infrastructure, facilities and services and would rapidly use up any capacity that currently exists. The new Garden Community would be a new economic engine that can be a focus for inward investment and economic development to the benefit of the whole population. Improvements to strategic roads and rail networks mean that the whole of North Essex is better connected. And the growth in new households meets local needs, keeps people local, enhances the catchment population for existing shopping and cultural and leisure attractions across North Essex, and creates the potential for more and new attractions.

### Existing Communities – Potential Benefits

2.3.22 Impacts are most contentious, and indeed are felt most at the local level. It is therefore important to consider what benefits might be realised for communities close to the new Garden Community.

2.3.23 At present the community of Marks Tey is divided and blighted by heavy through traffic. The village of Marks Tey is split into three parts by strategic roads and the residents feel isolated. The existing railway station is remote from where people live and difficult to get to.



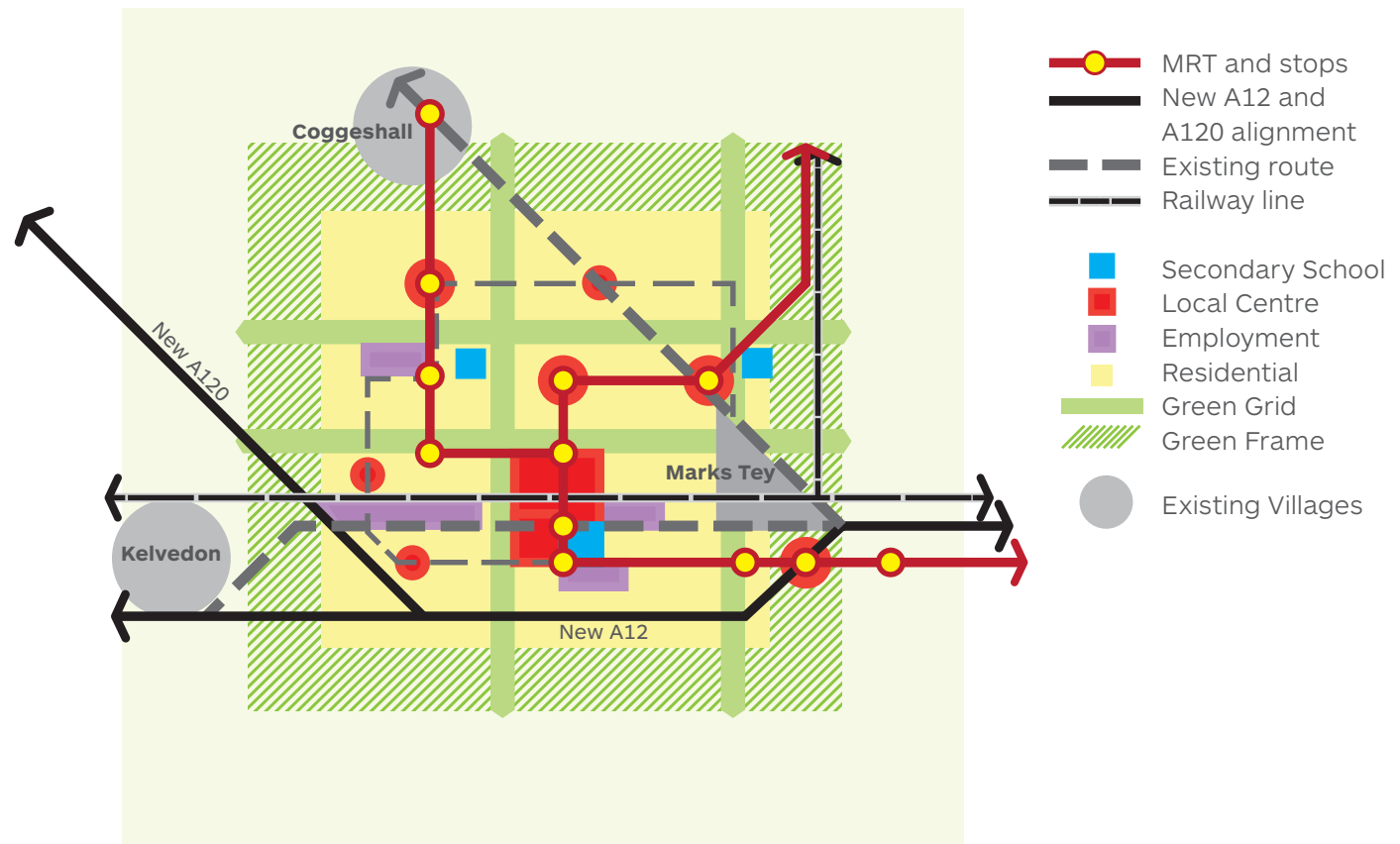
2.3.24 Because the village is disjointed, the existing communities have limited local facilities and services relative to the size of the population in terms of local shopping, healthcare, leisure and recreation. There is no secondary school and no real choice of primary school. The communities are surrounded by agricultural land which is valued for its visual qualities but there is limited access for recreational use.

2.3.25 Creating a new Garden Community in this location could enable the communities along the A120 (Coggeshall to Marks Tey) to be re-united. Realignment of the A12 could also help to improve severance issues, particularly those south of the present alignment of the A12, and would facilitate easier access to existing community facilities and services. Existing homes could experience improvements to noise, vibration and pollution. The existing railway station could be made more accessible in the short-term, while a new railway station in the medium-term would mean that the existing communities would be much better connected. Better, reliable and quick public transport would transform choices for local journeys, including to centres such as Colchester and Braintree.

2.3.26 A new Garden Community would have a new Town Centre close to and accessible from existing communities with all the services and facilities that a town centre should have but now close-to-hand. The new Garden Community would have new healthcare and social care facilities to serve the whole population, meaning less need to travel or to move away.

2.3.27 There would be up to 9 new primary schools, with early years provision, and three new secondary schools available to the whole community, great choices for education at all levels. And the transformation of private fields into a network of accessible greenspaces around existing communities and around and through the new Garden Community would expand the opportunities for recreation significantly.

Conceptual Diagram



## 2.4 DESIGN EVOLUTION: TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT

### Garden Suburb Envelope

2.4.1 Following the baseline synthesis, the Garden Suburb envelope has been refined from options presented in the “Options and Evaluation” work undertaken by AECOM in July 2016 and influenced by stakeholder consultation with local community representatives in November 2016, as well as our consideration of a number of criteria which include:

- identification of clear and defensible boundaries (water courses, roads, woodland belts);
- appreciation of distance and separation of communities – (physical, visual, perceived);
- relationship to existing settlements and historic landscape and assets;
- nature of land that will perform the role of a “green buffer” which will define an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated that remains distinct from other existing settlements;
- planning policy protection (how might this land be protected “in perpetuity” from built development whilst allowing complementary activities that support both the new community and existing communities?).

### Strategic Area for Development

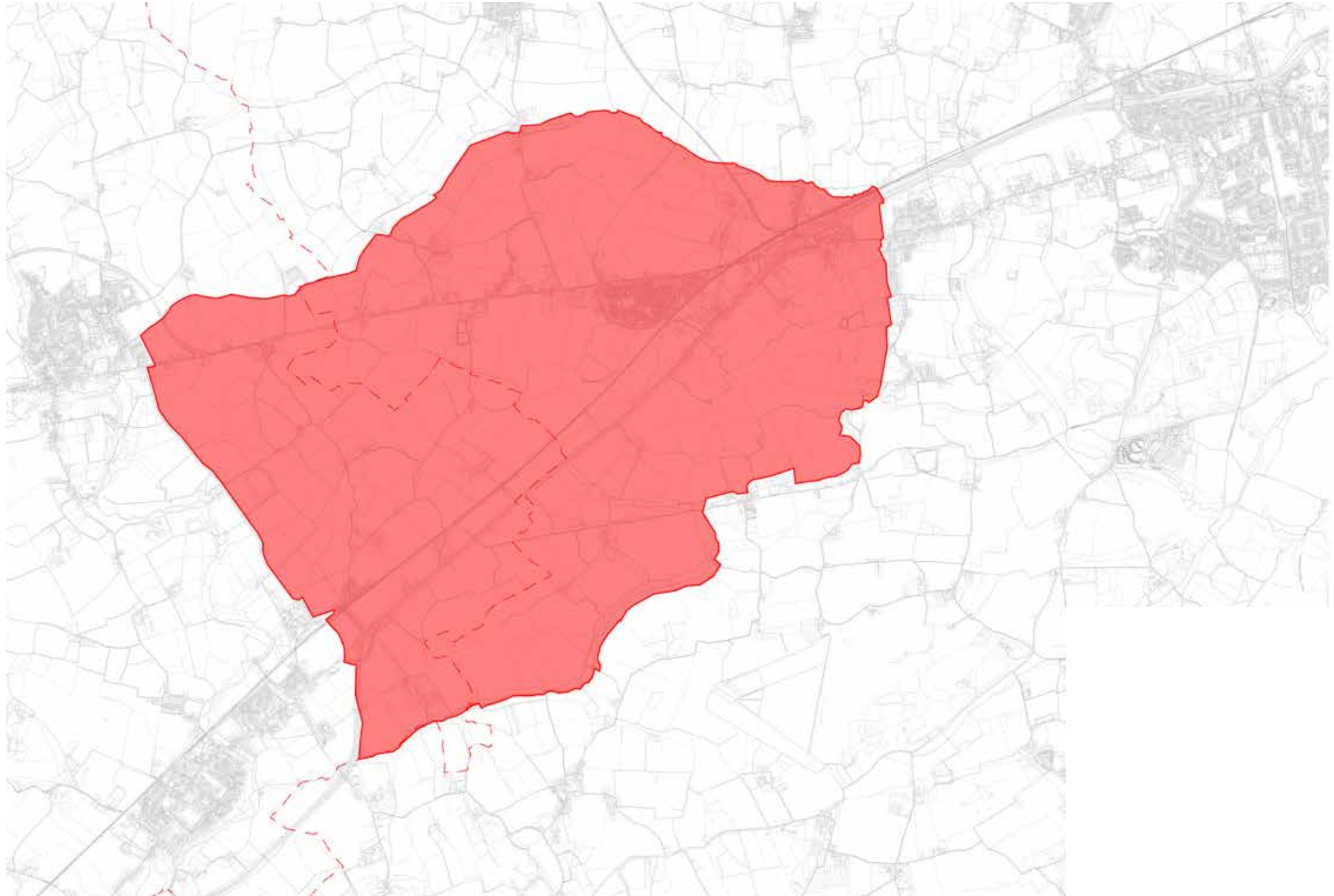
2.4.2 Once adopted, the Policies Map will identify a strategic area for development of a new Garden Community. The proposed area for development in the Joint Strategic Development Plan Document is presented at Figure 2.4. More precise boundaries will be reviewed and refined through further master planning and plan-making stages.

2.4.3 The strategic area for development is consciously broad at this stage, the rationale being to include all land that provides for the built development area and land required to ensure that development is integrated within the landscape, in particular with reference to the setting of nearby existing settlements. It also takes into account the potential extents of the Garden Community subject to a number of external influences, such as the planned and proposed improvements to the strategic highways in the immediate vicinity of the site.

2.4.4 It is important to recognise, when considering development at this scale, that strategic boundaries do not necessarily align with built development boundaries; they include proper provision for green edges that provide soft transition with the open countryside, in part influenced by historic field patterns and other landscape and topographic features.

2.4.5 The land identified as a strategic area for development is some 2,375 hectares in size and covers some 6.5 km from its western to eastern extent, and 5.9 km from its northern to southern extent (measured at the further parts).

Figure 2.4: Proposed Strategic Area of Development



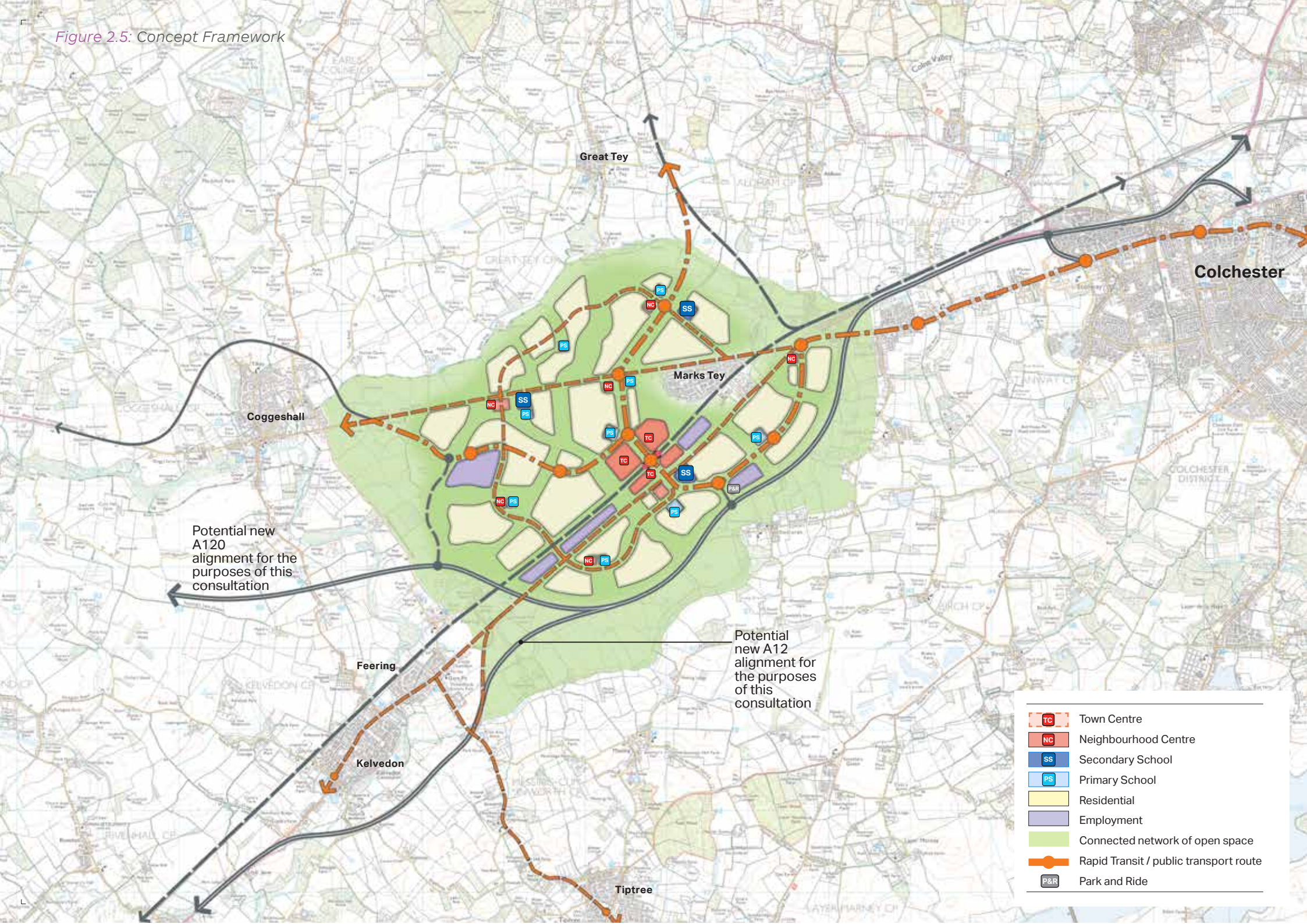
## Boundaries

- 2.4.6 The northern extent of the site is defined principally by the Roman River to the north east which forms a natural edge to the site, and the route of the Essex Way beyond which the land rises to a shallow ridge, then falls away to the Roman River further to the north. The Gainsborough Line railway forms a boundary to the north east of the site, with Marks Tey station and the existing junction of the A12 and A120 further south. The allocation includes land around the station and railway lines to safeguard any future development potential related to relocation and/or re-routing of the rail services and associated facilities.
- 2.4.7 The south eastern extent of the allocation is determined by the B1404 London Road and the linear properties that front it, and the rear of properties fronting School Road, Copford.
- 2.4.8 The southern extent of the site is defined by the setting of the hamlet of Easthorpe and route of Easthorpe Road. Further to the southwest, the Domsey Brook defines part of the south-eastern boundary. North of the A12 the boundary is defined by the Coggeshall to Feering road and the settlement of Feering.
- 2.4.9 The western extent of the site is influenced in part by the continuation of the Essex Way, and distance from the settlement of Coggeshall, taking into account the relatively flat landscape between.

## Concept Framework

- 2.4.10 The Concept Framework, Figure 2.5, is a diagram of a structure for CBBGC that has tested the development potential against known constraints, and has taken account of critical review following local consultation. It interprets the key criteria from the TCPA's Garden City Principles and the North Essex Garden Communities Charter. It will be subject to further review and refinement.
- 2.4.11 Whilst it sets out opportunities for development of a new Garden Community and a potential strategy that should govern its sustainable development, it is not yet a master plan for the new Garden Community, nor is it a recommendation for one particular development form or scale.
- 2.4.12 A critical influence on both the scale and form of the new Garden Community will be the final form of proposed strategic highway improvements.

Figure 2.5: Concept Framework



## Strategic Highway Improvements

**2.4.13** Public consultations were undertaken between January 2017 and March 2017 on improvements to both the A12 (A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme promoted by Highways England for widening between Junction 19 near Chelmsford and Junction 25 (Marks Tey)), and A120 Braintree to A12 Consultation on Route Options by Essex County Council. Decisions made on the routing, connections and timetable for delivery are likely to have significant implications for a master plan for this new community. For this reason, the Councils are committed to optimising the opportunities that investment in strategic infrastructure will bring to the area, and will seek actively to influence the proposed changes to the strategic road network to ensure support for ideal new community development solutions and to maximise opportunities for economic growth in this location.

**2.4.14** In this vein, the Concept Framework for CBBGC, as presented by DLA, embraces an A12 'off-line' route solution, as referred to in Jacobs' report 'North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study May', which provides the opportunity to convert the existing A12 alignment to a boulevard function through the Garden Community with one carriageway repurposed for rapid transit and active modes.

**2.4.15** Specifically, the new A12 option presented in the Concept Framework takes an alignment that is more off-line than options presented by HE. An off-line realignment of the A12 for the section of the A12 between Feering and Marks Tey to the south and east of its current alignment (and west of Copford) could take the heavy traffic out of the heart of the Marks Tey community and define a defensible southern and eastern edge to the new community.

**2.4.16** The re-alignment of the A120 from Braintree to Marks Tey, south of its existing route, as presented in the Concept Framework, could help form part of a defensible south-western edge to the new community. A new junction with the A12 designed to provide network efficiency, potentially via free-flowing slips, could be created north of Kelvedon. A new junction would present an opportunity to downgrade the existing junction with the A12 (J25), and to reconnect the divided Marks Tey village, giving greater priority to sustainable modes of transport and improving the setting, environment and accessibility of the existing Marks Tey railway station. The realignment could also remove the intrusion of heavy traffic and reclaim Stane Street as a local route, supported by environmental improvements of benefit to the existing communities.

**2.4.17** Concept Framework Figure 2.5, 'Completing the Plan', reflects the highway routing outcomes referred to above and presents these alongside a comprehensive approach to development at CBBGC. It presents a choice to be made in terms of scale of development, but it sets out: the scale of the development opportunity; local and strategic infrastructure provision; and community benefits that could be realised through a comprehensive long-term approach to place-making.

**2.4.18** A rationale for a development that realises full development potential for CBBGC is provided below:

- The potential of the development opportunity should be presented at a scale significant enough to capture the Government attention so as to be considered for infrastructure funding in the plan-making timescale;
- Development at scale provides a rationale for the creation of a new railway station which can capitalise on the existing Network Rail programme 'Norwich in 90';
- Scale enhances the prospects of delivering a genuinely different offer that meets the principles articulated in the North Essex Garden Community Charter;
- Scale helps to generate sufficient value to support the robust management and maintenance of the green infrastructure, which makes up around 40-50% of the land within the CBBGT; and

- It provides defensible edges to a footprint within which to consider development options.

2.4.19 Recognising that the strategic A120 and A12 schemes will take time to be developed, to progressed through the Government Scheme Identification and approval process and to be implemented, it is appropriate sensible to set out a series of “episodes of development” that illustrate the steps necessary to optimise the success and potential of the Garden Community. These “episodes of development” are set alongside key stages of investment in infrastructure and are defined not only by scale, but also by the need for infrastructure-led, high-quality place-making that creates the conditions necessary for communities to be self-sustaining and to endure in the longer-term.

2.4.20 The episodes are presented in Figures 2.6 and 2.7 and are consistent with the potential transport solutions proposed by Jacobs (consultants to Essex County Council) as part of their ‘North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study May’ (May 2017) in terms of their identification of strategic highway intervention. These have been informed by a preliminary analysis of demands and origin destination data as reported in Peter Brett Associates’ “Transport Demand Analysis and Transport Scheme Review” document dated February 2017.

2.4.21 The initial “episode” of the Concept Framework Plan is illustrated at Figure 2.6 and shows that some limited development can commence in the absence of strategic highway interventions (until decisions on alignment of A12 widening and programme, funding and alignment of A120 Braintree to A12 route are confirmed by Government). However, to deliver development of any significant scale, a new highway connection will need to be delivered between the A120/Coggeshall bypass and the A12. This is because Stane Street (A120) is at capacity during the network peak periods and cannot support additional development of any significant scale; additional traffic would have an unreasonable additional impact on existing communities.

2.4.22 Early commitment to the delivery of a new by-pass link between the existing Coggeshall bypass and a new junction with the A12 (southwest of Junction 25), is necessary for the delivery of a first phase of development. This junction would be an interim strategic design solution, pending any formal re-routing of the A120 and/or the A12. It could:

- unlock the site, connecting proposed development land north and south of the existing A12,
- facilitate a reduction of traffic movements through Marks Tey, and

- create a focus of activity, which, by careful land reservation, can be secured to support future town centre uses, together with a new railway station and public transport interchange.

2.4.23 This interim route, its crossing of the railway and its connection to the existing A12 will have a long-term role as a development road serving the new community.

2.4.24 Once routes, funding and implementation timetables for the A120 and A12 are fixed, there are significant opportunities for the site to deliver development in several locations at the same time, extending east, south and west. Ideal solutions for the A12 and A120 can realise significant transformational change, underpinned by a vibrant and well-connected new town centre, that could be anchored by a new railway station, illustrated in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.6: Episode 1 - Within Local Plan period

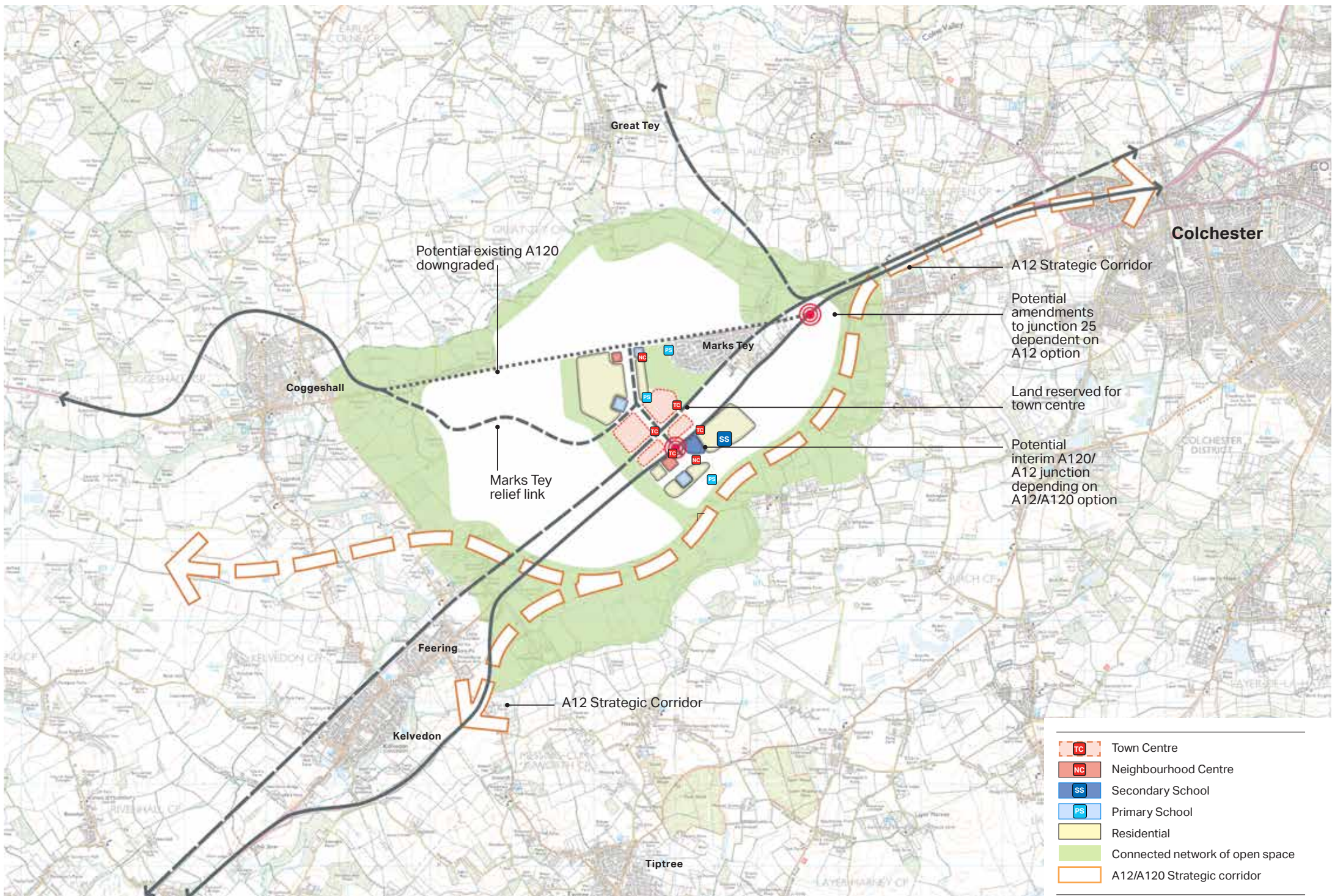
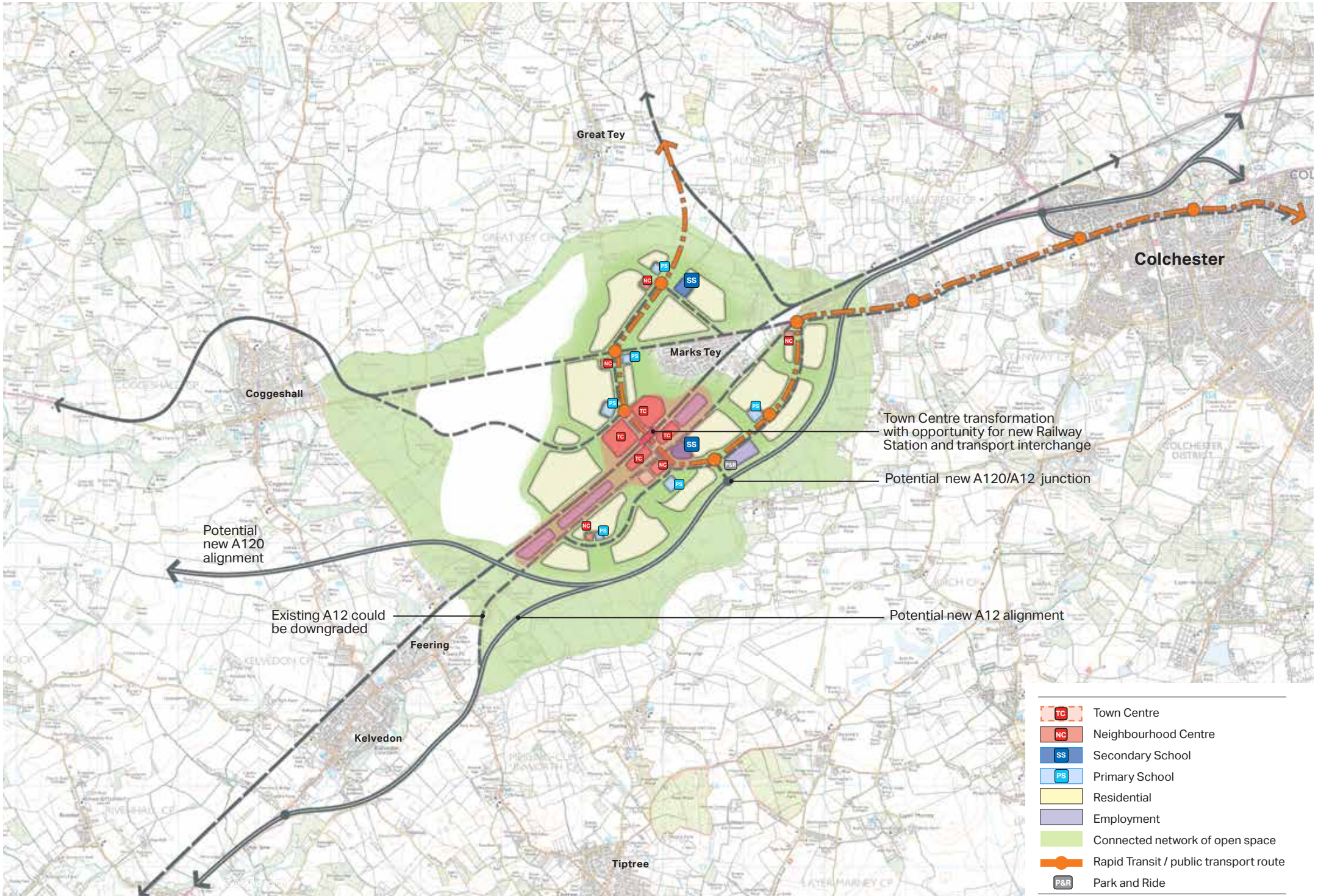




Figure 2.7: Episode 2 - Centre Transformation



## New railway station area

2.4.25 A new community for some 60,000 people cannot be supported by the strategic highway network alone. There is an existing station at Marks Tey that provides both Great Eastern services and Gainsborough Line services; however, the location of the existing station, its relationship to the A12, and its interchange with London Road/Stane Street, constrain its expansion, and the relative distance from the new communities that would collectively comprise CBBGC, would limit the potential for the existing station to function as an anchor for an all-mode transport interchange. The existing station is not considered capable of fully realising the scale of ambition that the North Essex Authorities should be seeking.

2.4.26 Whilst the Concept Framework is not predicated on moving the railway station, there is a significant opportunity to locate a new (or relocated and improved) station within the town centre. There is a strong place-making rationale for locating a station area within the heart of a new place. It generates a focus of activity and opportunity for transport interchange for a town centre, which supports design criteria such as higher density development, a rich mix of uses, and creates an active and vibrant centre.

2.4.27 It is not only the point of arrival to a place, but becomes the space within which all modes of transport can interchange (cycling, walking, MRT, bus services), further reinforced by the confluence of the strategic routes A12 and A120. Provision of an all-mode interchange

supports a real choice in transport modes. Investment must be made to improve choice of travel modes that provide real alternatives to the private car.

2.4.28 Rail interchange is widely regarded as a locational advantage for inward investors – it could become a key driver for inward investment and would help embed town-related activities (employment, retail, leisure) at a quicker pace.

2.4.29 If the station does not move from its current location, there must be a robust movement strategy that delivers reliable and efficient services between the new community, its town centre and station, as part of a MRT network.

### Development Assumptions

2.4.30 The Concept Framework has been informed by tests of development potential and capacity using DLA's GIS land-use tool. Tests have been undertaken in parallel to design work.

2.4.31 The land-use tool relies on a set of key assumptions:

- A lower residential density of 30 dwellings per ha
- A higher density of 35-40 dwellings per ha
- A housing density in mixed use centres of 60 dwellings per ha
- An average household size of 2.33

- 0.3 Primary School pupils per household
- 0.2 Secondary School pupils per household
- 1 Job per household

2.4.32 The residential density levels selected are informed primarily by the design rationale for the Garden Community, its landscape setting, the need to deliver a balanced community and to ensure critical mass of development to deliver the quantum of development included in the emerging planning policy. Densities also reflect the North Essex Garden Communities Charter, which seeks higher density development associated with mixed use centres and rapid transit nodes. Further detail on density strategy is presented at paragraph 2.4.68.

2.4.33 The average household size is consistent with that adopted in AECOM's baseline work, which utilised the 2001 Census data, collating the three North Essex Local Authorities.

2.4.34 The school place assumptions are consistent with those referred to in Essex County Council - Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (2016).

2.4.35 Principle 3 of The North Essex Garden Communities Charter requires Garden Communities to seek to provide access to one job per household within the new community or within a short distance by public transport.

## Indicative Development Capacity

2.4.36 An indicative development capacity for the land uses and key elements shown in the Concept Framework (Figure 2.5) is presented below:

Land Use	Area
	Hectares (Ha) approx.
<b>Residential <sup>1</sup></b>	
	c.727 Ha 24,000 dwellings @ 33 dph average density
<b>Mixed use <sup>2</sup></b>	
Town Centre	c.40 ha
<b>Employment <sup>3</sup></b>	
Employment area	c.60 ha
<b>Education <sup>4</sup></b>	
Primary School	c.18 ha
Secondary School	c.24 ha
Park-and-Ride(s)	c.4 ha
Core Garden Community Development Footprint <sup>5</sup>	c. 1290ha

2.4.37 The Concept Framework does not seek to challenge the quantum referred to in the policy, but indicates a potential development capacity, based on an assumed quantum of residential land presented in the Concept Framework, and applying an average density of 33 dwellings per hectare (see residential density plan 2.13).

2.4.38 Development capacity and the form and disposition of land uses presented for CBGCT, will be further explored and refined through future policy making and master planning stages.

<sup>1</sup> Residential Areas are gross parcels (i.e. make full provision for accesses, streets, landscape, local and informal open spaces such as play areas, informal amenity space etc).

<sup>2</sup> Mixed Use areas will also be provided within the local centres. Mixed use areas will include an element of residential use. These areas will be built at a higher density than the core residential areas.

<sup>3</sup> Employment land includes three employment areas offering a mix of employment uses (B1/ B2/ B8). A large enterprise area adjacent to the new Town Centre and railway (c.30 ha), a second employment gateway adjacent to the A12 supported by Park and Ride (c.10 ha), and c.20 ha of employment land at the western extent of the Community. There will also be additional employment floorspace within the Town Centre and neighbourhood centres.

<sup>4</sup> Primary School – 9 @ 2ha (including early years provision); Secondary school – 3 @ 8ha

<sup>5</sup> The remaining land uses with the Core Garden Community Development Footprint will comprise Open Space uses, these will be accessible and varied in form and will include playing pitches, amenity space, community

orchards, allotments, play areas, retained and new woodland, storm water attenuation areas, informal parkland, continued agriculture and grazing. NB There will be additional open space uses/ retained landscape that sit outside of the core development footprint, but falling within the strategic development boundary.

### Framework Elements

2.4.39 The Concept Framework Plan is revealed as a number of layers under the following headings:

- Development Parcels and Neighbourhoods
- Strategic Open Space and Landscape Framework
- Mobility and Access Framework
- Employment/ Jobs
- Density Strategy

2.4.40 The 'Comprehensive Scenario' is used to present the these layers of planning and design thought.

## Development Parcels and Neighbourhoods

2.4.41 In combination, the constraints set limits on the extent of land that has development potential and this creates a basic framework within which development can be accommodated. Within this Concept Framework we have defined five neighbourhoods, presented at Figure 2.8, each with its own characteristics and each with a particular role to play in the new community as a whole.

2.4.42 Delivering a new community of this scale is a significant challenge and a long-term commitment. Each neighbourhood will be planned to be a complete community in its own right, incorporating all of the day-to-day services that its residents and businesses will require. Each will also be an integral part of the whole town, well connected to benefit from the services and facilities that the whole town will deliver. The five residential neighbourhoods will be served by primary schools and a local centre providing convenience shopping, healthcare facilities, social and community facilities, and specialist homes, all delivered in parallel.

2.4.43 High level land use and development capacity assumptions for each neighbourhood are set out below, supported by a summary of the development rationale from which more detailed master planning principles can be established.

### Town Centre Neighbourhood

Approximate Neighbourhood Area (Developable): <b>220 Ha (544 acres)</b>	
Potential Uses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential (c.136 Ha)</li> <li>Mix of uses within the Town Centre (c.40ha)</li> <li>New Railway Station</li> <li>1 x Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>2 x Primary school (c.4Ha)</li> <li>1 x Secondary school (c.8Ha)</li> <li>Employment Land (c.10ha)</li> </ul>
Anticipated Development Capacity:	c.3,240 dwellings (81Ha @ 40dph average) c.3,330 dwellings (55Ha @ 60dph average in Town Centre) c. 50,000 sqm @0.5:1 plot ratio (part of A12 Enterprise Corridor)

### Eastern Neighbourhood

Approximate Neighbourhood Area (Developable): <b>160 Ha (395 acres)</b>	
Potential Uses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential (c.88 Ha)</li> <li>1 x Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>1 x Primary school (c.2Ha)</li> <li>1 x Park-and-Ride (c.4Ha)</li> <li>Employment (c.10Ha)</li> </ul>
Anticipated Development Capacity:	c.3,080 dwellings @ 35dph average c. 50,000 sqm @0.5:1 plot ratio (Eastern Gateway Business Park)

### Northern Neighbourhood

Approximate Neighbourhood Area (Developable): <b>243 Ha (600 acres)</b>	
Potential Uses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential (c.139 Ha)</li> <li>1 x Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>2 x Primary school (c.4Ha)</li> <li>1 x Secondary school (c.8Ha)</li> </ul>
Anticipated Development Capacity:	c.4,170 dwellings @ 30dph average)

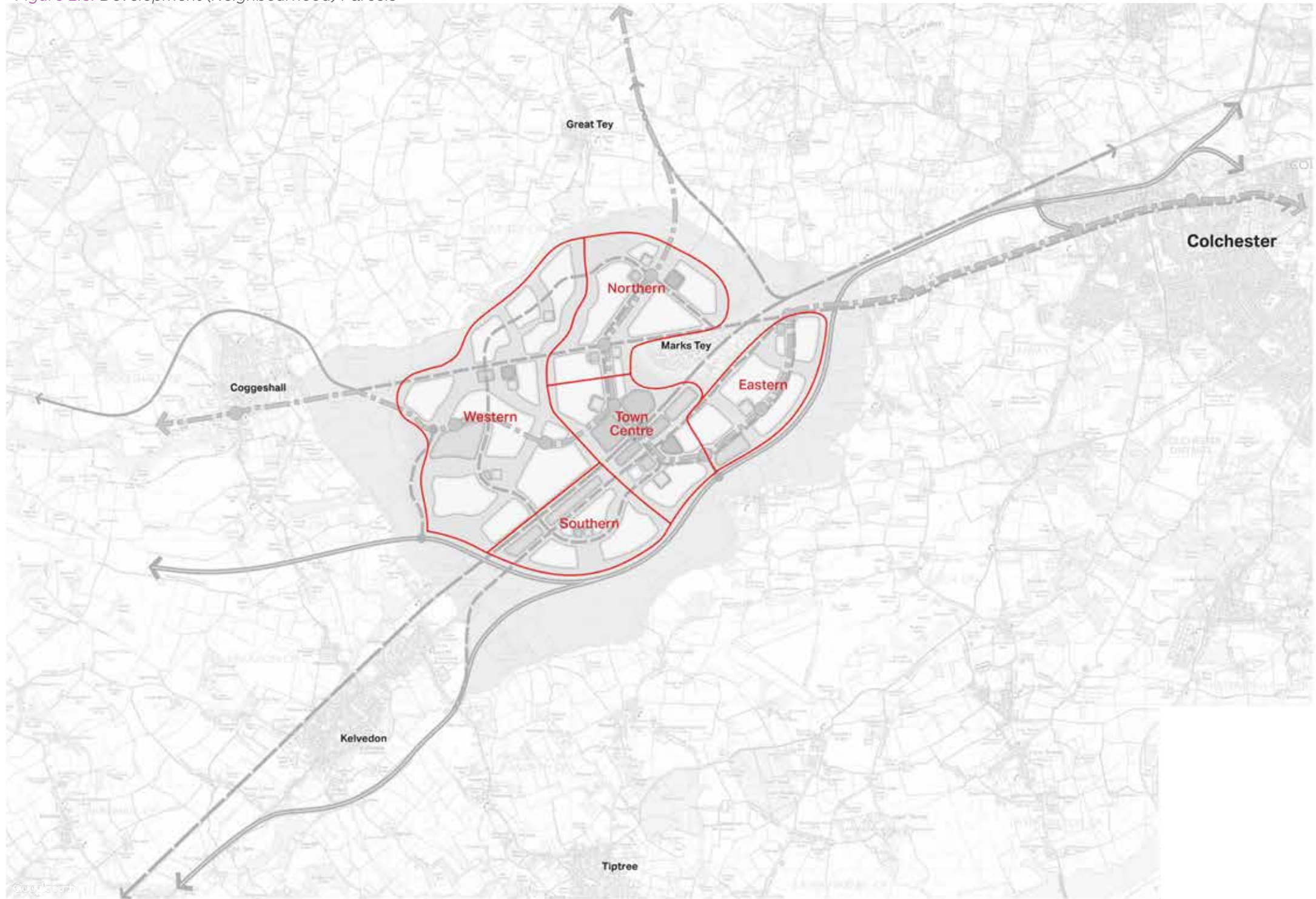
### Southern Neighbourhood

Approximate Neighbourhood Area (Developable): <b>157 Ha (388 acres)</b>	
Potential Uses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential (c.68 Ha)</li> <li>1 x Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>1 x Primary school (c.2Ha)</li> <li>1 x Secondary school (c.8Ha)</li> <li>Employment (c.20Ha)</li> </ul>
Anticipated Development Capacity:	c.2,090 dwellings @ 30dph average c.100,000 sqm @0.5:1 plot ratio (part of A12 Enterprise Corridor)

### Western Neighbourhood

Approximate Neighbourhood Area (Developable): <b>511 Ha (1263 acres)</b>	
Potential Uses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential (c.296 Ha)</li> <li>2 x Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>3 x Primary school (c.6Ha)</li> <li>1 x Secondary school (c.8Ha)</li> <li>Employment (c.20Ha)</li> </ul>
Anticipated Development Capacity:	c.8,880 dwellings @ 30dph average c.100,000 sqm @0.5:1 plot ratio (Western Gateway Business Park)

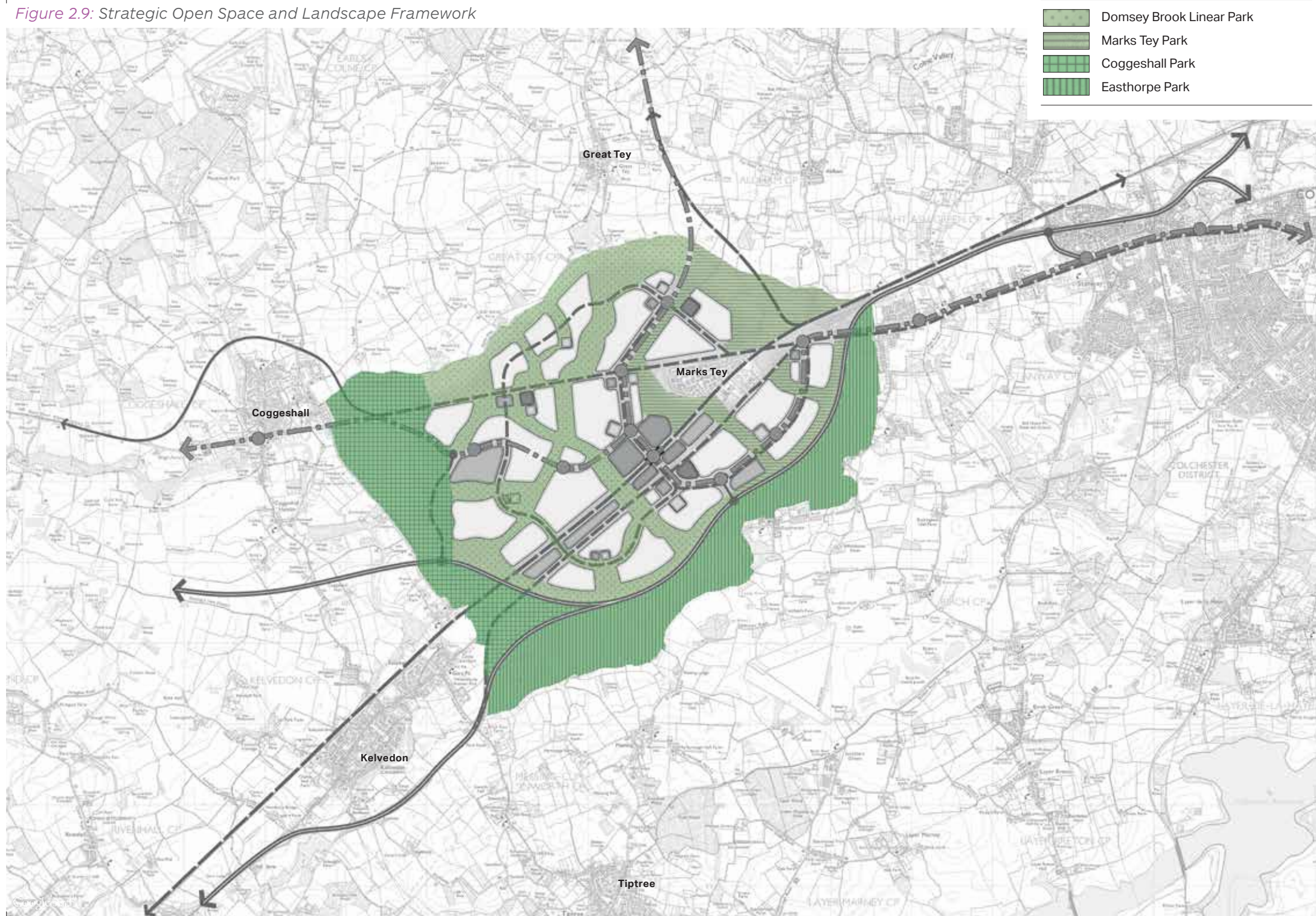
Figure 2.8: Development (Neighbourhood) Parcels



## Strategic Open Space and Landscape Framework

- 2.4.44 Draft Planning Policy SP9 Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community requires the development of the CBBGC to draw upon natural and historic assets and features within the site to generate high standards of design. It requires an approach that sets development within a strong green landscape framework.
- 2.4.45 Figure 2.9 illustrates a Strategic Open Space and Landscape Framework that recognises the value of existing landscape and historic features and their ability to absorb and shape the development of a new community. In addition the Strategic Open Space and Landscape Framework:
- provides an attractive setting to built development;
  - creates a valuable and appropriate and functional landscape in environmental terms;
  - protects the amenity of existing and nearby settlements.
- 2.4.46 This initial green framework could underpin the development of a more detailed green infrastructure framework that would accommodate the following functions:
- Formal open space, sports pitches, recreation and play areas;
  - Informal space for free play and recreation for all ages;
  - SUDS/drainage and watercourses;
  - Woodland, trees and hedgerows and areas of informal amenity;
  - Productive landscapes such as allotments, orchards, agriculture;
  - Active green space which could include income generating uses supported by some built elements related to recreational activities, including access footpath and cycle routes;
  - Noise mitigation close to strategic roads and the railways; and
  - Development buffers to existing settlements.
- 2.4.47 The Strategic Open Space and Landscape Framework defines the limits of built development, 'designing-in' green edges as one element of a wider, comprehensive GI strategy that responds to the historic landscape structure, and provides the basis for planning policy protection.
- 2.4.48 The Concept Framework identifies a generous embedded green infrastructure framework that includes two types of open space resource areas that have a direct relationship (functional and spatial) to built development, and areas that have a more strategic function as part of a setting for the wider development.
- 2.4.49 Domsey Brook Linear Park and Marks Tey Park are formal open spaces that broadly follow the alignment of the Domsey Brook and Roman River watercourses. They are located close to development parcels, accommodate active travel networks, and provide formal and informal play and recreation opportunities. They are important open space resources for both existing and growing communities.
- 2.4.50 Coggeshall Park and Easthorpe Park are an integral part of the green infrastructure framework; they provide a setting for the new Garden Community and the existing communities that surround it. The parks are a "green buffer" that defines an envelope within which a new community can be accommodated, distinct from existing settlements.
- 2.4.51 The precise role and function of land within the green framework will be refined as part of future master planning stages. Some 'green grid' land may be identified to have a wider function which can accommodate income generating uses such as continued farming or new recreational pursuits, which can in turn provide income to sustain the open space resource over the long-term as a 'working estate', as well as a quality recreational and amenity asset.
- 2.4.52 The appropriate approach to the definition and protection of the green grid land can be further defined through policy formulation as part of the preparation of site specific DPDs. Key considerations that will inform an approach to the protection and designation of land include:
- The form and implementation and long-term robustness of urban separation;
  - The scale of the land so designated;
  - The functional, visual and environmental/ecological relationship with surrounding land;
  - The role of the historic landscape elements;
  - The anticipated period of protection (Plan Period to "in-perpetuity");
  - The future purpose of the green space so defined and any proposed change of use; and
  - Ownership, control and stewardship, long-term.

Figure 2.9: Strategic Open Space and Landscape Framework

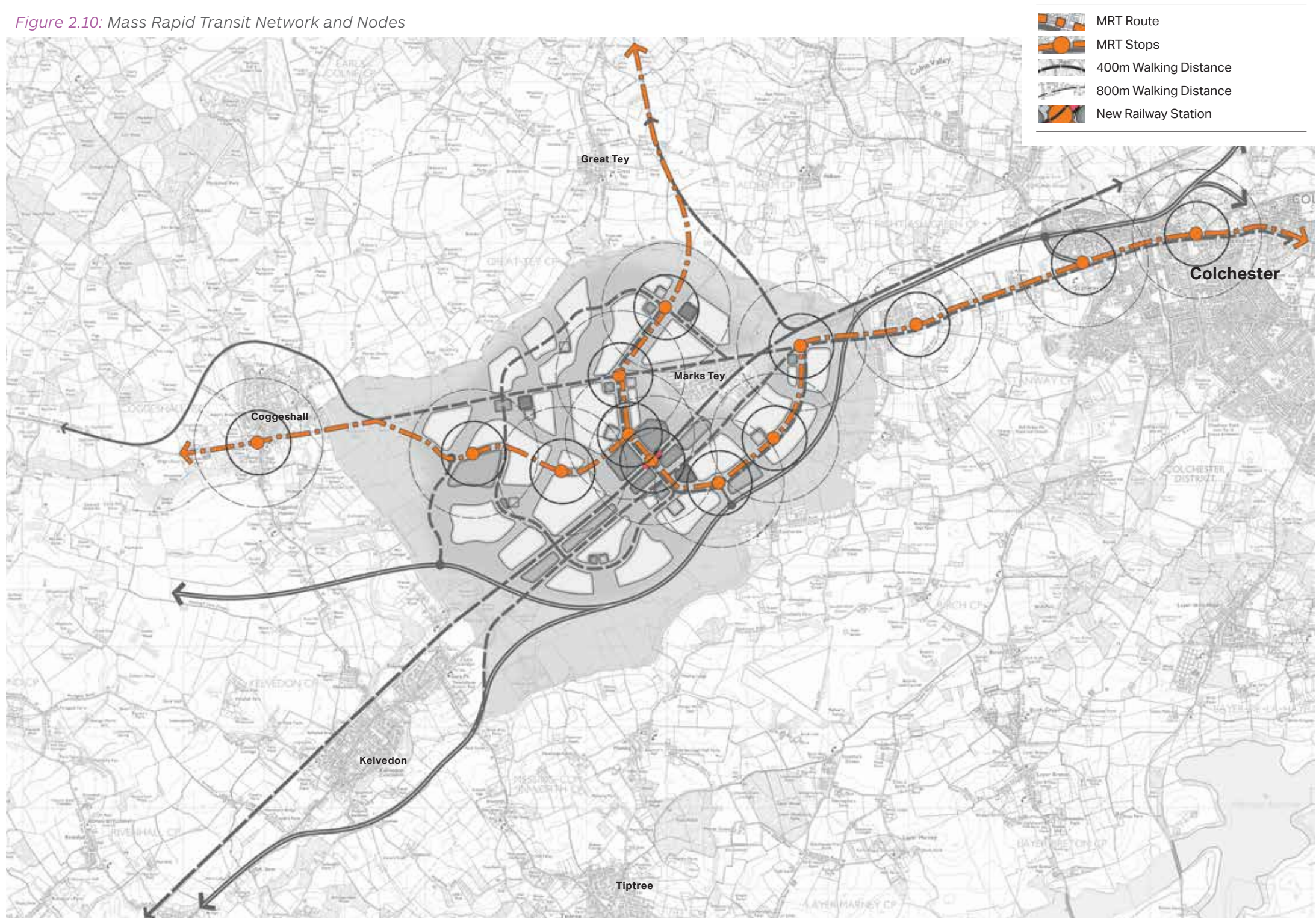


## Mobility and Access Framework

- 2.4.53 Draft Local Plan Policy SP9 Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community requires a package of measures to encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new community, and to maximise sustainable travel patterns both within the new community and connections to Colchester and the wider area.
- 2.4.54 The draft policy recognises the importance of a hierarchy of movement networks that include pedestrian and cycle networks to encourage permeability within the new development. It especially focusses on promoting walking and cycling to access mixed use centres and rapid transit. This network should provide direct, attractive, safe links, including priority pedestrianised zones.
- 2.4.55 Based on the findings of a preliminary assessment by Peter Brett Associates, a key element of the access and movement strategy is the integration of a mass rapid transit system that connects Colchester, its town centre and its stations with the new Garden Community. There may be opportunities for rail-based services to provide frequent and reliable journeys to rail stations, which, over time, could be expanded as part of a wider Mass Rapid Transit network that extends across the urban area of Colchester with onward connections both to the east to the North Essex coast and west towards Braintree. The Stane Street corridor would be central to this new network.
- 2.4.56 A further opportunity to improve access to railway services is identified - a relocation of the mainline railway station to occupy a central position within the new Garden Town Centre. This could be a key driver for investment in the new Garden Community and would help embed town-related activities (employment, retail, leisure) at a quicker pace. A new station would need to be attractive, in terms of level of service, passenger facilities and access; it must also integrate with other transport modes to provide an efficient interchange hub.
- 2.4.57 Figures 2.10 and 2.11, illustrate a series of mobility principles which provide a framework for movement and access within, and connections to and from, the new community. They are consistent with, and help illustrate, the solutions proposed by Jacobs (consultants to Essex County Council) as part of their 'North Essex Garden Communities Movement and Access Study May' (May 2017). These schemes also respond to the demands identified in Peter Brett Associates' 'Transport Demand Analysis and Scheme Review' document dated February 2017.
- 2.4.58 The Concept Framework illustrates a strategy for highway access and demonstrates the opportunities provided by development of scale adjacent to strategic highway routes.
- 2.4.59 The proposed realignment of the strategic roads (A12 and A120) could assist the reunification of the existing Marks Tey community and remove the environmental intrusion of heavy traffic.
- 2.4.60 Realignment of the A120 could take through traffic away from Marks Tey and reunite the village with its Parish Church. It will provide the opportunity to improve the local environment and help encourage walking and cycling as a means of local mobility, and will permit more reliable public transport services through reduced delays. It will create an opportunity for a significant change to the form and character of Stane Street.
- 2.4.61 The mobility and access framework could also downgrade the importance of the existing junction of the A120 with the A12 (J25) for vehicular traffic, allowing greater priority to be given to sustainable modes of transport and improving the setting, environment and accessibility of the existing station.
- 2.4.62 If the A12 widening scheme can be secured off-line, the old A12 alignment could be prioritised for public transport movements. Provision of Park and Ride facilities would further support this objective, enhancing the quality of the public transport offer.
- 2.4.63 The A12 is a key strategic route connecting London with Ipswich and the rest of East Anglia beyond. The A120 provides strategic connections from the North Essex ports to Stansted Airport, the M11 and onward to Cambridge and the A14. The movement and connectivity objectives for CBBGC are underpinned by its proximity to the strategic road network, but should create opportunities to realign key strategic routes to take heavy traffic out of the heart of communities, whilst providing convenient access for residents to make journeys over a wide area, particularly by sustainable modes of transport.



Figure 2.10: Mass Rapid Transit Network and Nodes



- 2.4.64 At the opposite end of the scale, the new Garden Community should be a place where walking and cycling to local destinations – schools, convenience shops, play spaces, places of work – is a realistic alternative to the private car.
- 2.4.65 Figure 2.11 illustrates a framework of high quality public transport corridors. It identifies potential routes that would serve the development and highlights opportunities for enhanced bus connections beyond the development site: west towards Coggeshall and Braintree; south towards Feering and Kelvedon and Chelmsford; and east towards Stanway and on to Colchester Town. These are informed by the origin destination analysis from the 'Transport Demand Analysis and Scheme Review' document dated February 2017 by PBA.
- 2.4.66 Figure 2.10 further reveals the opportunities for the implementation of a Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) service as a step change in public transport provision for Colchester Town and the wider urban area. The MRT route includes a principal route serving the Garden Community and its Town Centre, as part of a string of MRT nodes that extend eastwards along London Road (B1408) towards Stanway and onto Colchester Town, and, potentially, north along the Gainsborough Line to connect with Sudbury.
- 2.4.67 As a first stage, a rapid transit loop from London Road to Stane Street would be provided that could support guided bus and/or rail-based systems. Key MRT nodes would be complemented by a series of local transport interchanges as illustrated by Figure 2.11, and would support the physical integration of the public transport system with cycling / pedestrian networks. This network would promote the principles of walkable community catchments, and serve key community facilities such as schools.

Figure 2.11: High Quality Public Transport Corridors



## Employment

- 2.4.68 Draft Local Plan Policy SP9 Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community requires land for a wide range of employment opportunities.
- 2.4.69 There must be a clear and coordinated strategy to grow job opportunities in parallel with new homes as part of the development of the new Garden Community supported by a wide range of employment sites and good quality business premises. This would be a cornerstone of a wider strategy to transform work opportunities and economic development within the new Garden Community and across North Essex.
- 2.4.70 The development of the new community will include employment within a town centre and other local centres, and in modern premises well related to homes and to the wider transport networks.
- 2.4.71 Improved public transport will provide connections for new residents to work in the wider North Essex area and will also allow others to travel to the jobs in the new Garden Community, all by more sustainable means.
- 2.4.72 Figure 2.12 illustrates the range of employment opportunities identified as part of the new community.
- 2.4.73 The Concept Framework Plan recognises the economic advantages provided by the co-location of a new Town Centre, a new central Railway Station, MRT interchange, and direct and convenient access to the A12. This is defined as an A12 Enterprise Corridor, which could accommodate a mix of employment uses such as office, R&D and high skill employment uses associated with a Town Centre location, as well as B2 and B8 opportunities supported by its accessibility to the strategic transport networks.
- 2.4.74 Opportunities for two business park sites are identified, capitalising on strategic accessibility of the A120 and A12:
- Adjacent to the A12 (Eastern Gateway); and
  - At the western extent of the new Garden Community (Western Gateway Business Park), with convenient access to the A120.
- 2.4.75 More employment opportunities will also be provided within the neighbourhood centres, complementary to the provision of retail, community uses and schools.

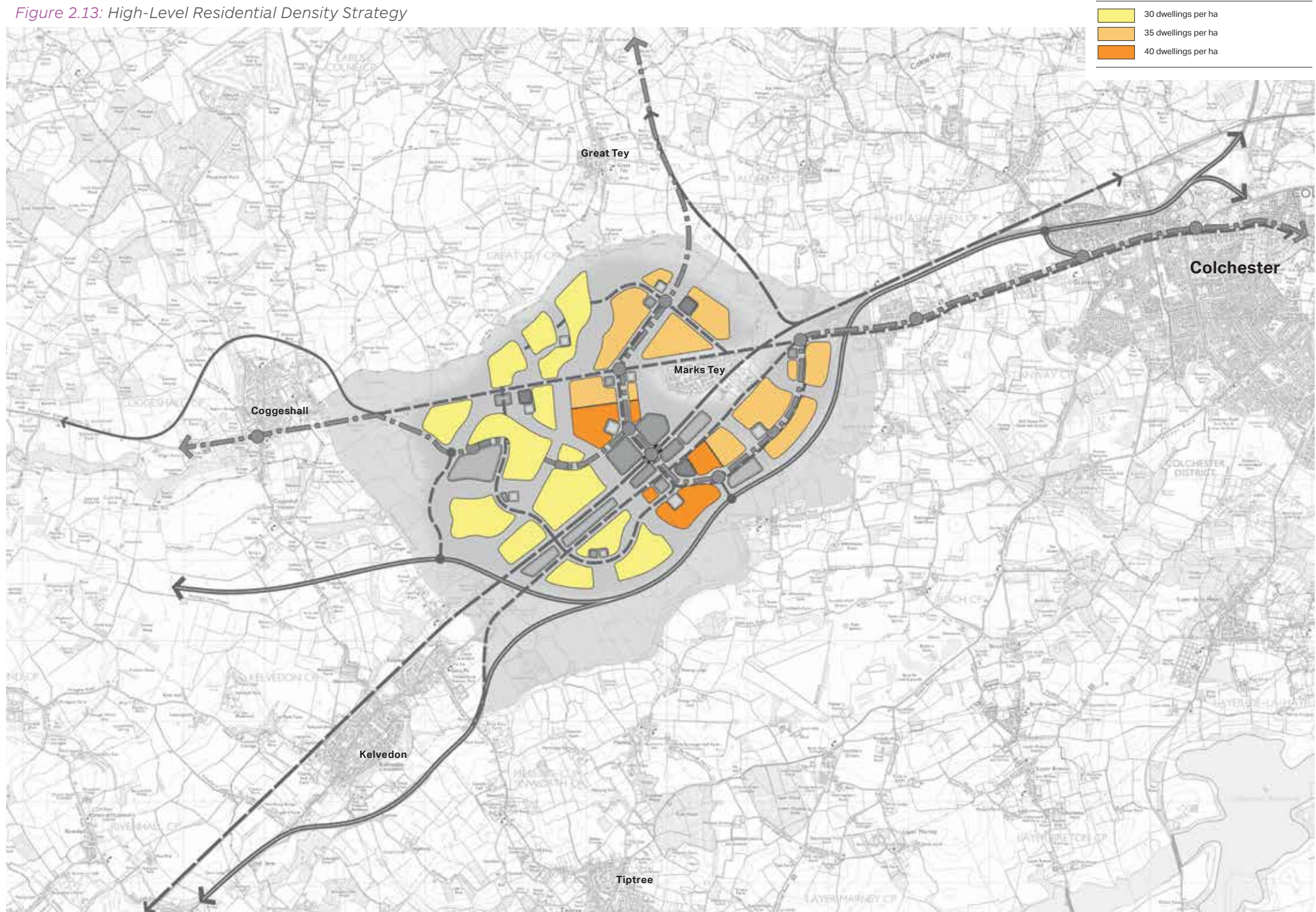
Figure 2.12: Employment Opportunities



## Density Strategy

- 2.4.76 There is an inherent relationship between land use and density. The approach adopted within this Concept Framework is master plan-led; it responds to the need to:
- deliver a balanced community and ensure a critical mass of development;
  - provide density variation to differentiate between more urban forms of development at 'centres' and lower density rural transition areas; and
  - maximise patronage for mass rapid transit nodes.
- 2.4.77 Figure 2.13 provides a high-level residential density strategy which articulates the relationship of these elements to support the overall sustainability of the development. When planning at this scale, the most important aspect of residential density is to demonstrate how variety between different parts of the development can be achieved.
- 2.4.78 There is a clear rationale. More dense development increases the catchment population within easy walking distance of the town centre, neighbourhood mixed use centres and public transport nodes, and this is fundamental to their initial viability and long-term sustainability.
- 2.4.79 Higher density residential areas better support mixed uses and offer significant urban form benefits, creating attractive urban places for shopping and leisure, incorporating space for businesses, and reinforcing the legibility of the community as a whole.
- 2.4.80 Residential neighbourhoods close to the town centre could accommodate densities of some 40 dwellings per hectare (dph). Within the town centre, higher density development of some 60-100dph could be achieved and will help to establish high levels of patronage to support an MRT interchange and promote a vibrant heart to the new Community as a whole.
- 2.4.81 The provision of an MRT service within the garden Community requires a conscious master planning framework that supports its establishment. Higher density residential development, of some 60 dph, should be sought around the MRT nodes to maximise the adjacent catchment population to support its MRT patronage. Denser residential forms will also complement and help frame mixed use areas associated with local centres, providing legibility and character to the built form distinct from wider residential areas.
- 2.4.82 Figure 2.13 presents a density strategy for core residential areas, suggested to be delivered at a range of 35-40 dph – a conventional "Garden City" density - with lower density areas around 30 dph identified around the western and southern edges of the site, to ensure sensitive integration of development within the landscape. There could be scope to increase residential densities beyond this range, as part of a more detailed master planning exercise.

Figure 2.13: High-Level Residential Density Strategy



## 2.5 PLACEMAKING IN A GARDEN COMMUNITY

### Housing Areas

- 2.5.1 Important considerations in developing at scale are how to create an identifiable sense of place and identity for residents whilst ensuring adequate opportunities for positive relationships with existing communities, and how to create conditions that will respond to changing lifestyles, remain flexible to shifting priorities, but will sustain investment values in the long-term.
- 2.5.2 A new community of some 24,000 homes will take time to establish. Its pioneer residents are very important, and they must be afforded the right conditions for the development to flourish.
- 2.5.3 The Concept Framework expresses a spatial dimension to place-making to create identifiable neighbourhoods that:
- are distinct in character and form;
  - reflect design aspirations such as walkable communities;
  - create a sense of place and identity; and
  - achieve sufficient critical mass to support provision of community facilities – schools, shops, community hubs, local employment and open space.
- 2.5.4 The framework proposes the structuring of development into distinct neighbourhoods each with a different character. Shaping development in this way has a number of benefits for place-making, design quality, sense of community and delivery. It creates distinct and recognisable places reinforced through layout, architectural style and the materials palette. It provides a ‘human-scale’ of development which is proportionate to the walking distances that people might experience day-to-day – to schools, local shops, transport services, recreation and leisure facilities.
- 2.5.5 Creating distinct neighbourhoods can also have benefits for phased implementation, and the provision of social infrastructure and community development support alongside development of housing.
- 2.5.6 Due to the scale of development it is imperative that new housing achieves variation in density, form, character and architectural detail to reinforce legibility throughout the Garden Community. This will also deliver a wide range of housing types and tenures to achieve a mixed and balanced community within vibrant and sociable neighbourhoods.



## Town Centre

2.5.7 A Town Centre is proposed as the heart of the new community. It will provide a wide range of retail, leisure, employment and community uses that support a town in its economic, social and cultural life.

2.5.8 Established town centres have evolved over a long period of time, in response to the changing requirements and trends of the market and the growing population they support.

2.5.9 A common aim must be to seek to develop a town centre which offers a full range of supporting activities necessary for day-to-day needs, and which also provides an attractive and recognisable focus for a new Garden Community. But this cannot be achieved overnight or from day one: it is well recognised that the development of the town centre is likely to take place over a number of years as the Garden Community matures.

2.5.10 It is critical that a framework is established, that endures over the long-term, to support the delivery of a vibrant town centre that is self-sustaining and is the focus for commercial, community and transport uses.

2.5.11 The town centre will be built in phases over the life of the project and will continue to evolve beyond that. Adherence to the following principles is critical to its success:

- Reserving Land/Sites - recognising the importance of 'futureproofing' and reserving sites over time to ensure that future uses (as yet unspecified, unviable or unforeseen) - or those uses to come in later phases of the scheme - have a choice of sites and sufficient space to locate within a new Town Centre.
- Flexibility - the precise position and location of land uses within a town centre cannot be planned from the outset with a high degree of certainty. Changes in planning policy, market demand, community need, occupancy requirements and land values will all combine to create changing circumstances for new development over the length of time it will take to develop the centre of a new Garden Community. A future framework should therefore not be unduly prescriptive but should be used to guide the long-term development of a town centre rather than to provide a fixed schedule for implementation.
- Mix of land uses – development mix should reflect a diversity of activities. Retail space, employment space, civic spaces, amenities and community services, leisure facilities, cultural spaces and a residential population are all inherent components of a Town Centre.

## Neighbourhoods, services and facilities

2.5.12 Each neighbourhood will be supported by a neighbourhood centre. These help to reinforce the concept of self-sustaining neighbourhoods, each supported by its own mixed-use area where commercial and community uses are focused to support the day-to-day needs of residents, ideally co-located with a primary school.

2.5.13 Neighbourhood centres are located consciously to maximise the proportion of residential properties within 400m or 5 minutes walk. Locating community facilities in the most accessible location within a new neighbourhood as part of a mixed-use centre reinforces the social and economic sustainability of a place, encourages linked trips and helps to facilitate the development of social networks, and social groups and community activities.

2.5.14 Emphasis should be on the early delivery of the community facilities, to create a social and design 'anchor' for new housing to focus around a hub of activity.

2.5.15 Early provision of facilities is necessary to meet with the aspirations of a true Garden Community, particularly with regard to schools, but also has "business case" benefits in attracting new residents to the area.

2.5.16 CBBGC will have a range of brand new schools developed alongside its housing; three new secondary schools and as many as 9 new primary schools across the planned town to serve its distinct neighbourhoods. There could be a campus for the Colchester Institute in the town centre, offering the full range of higher education and training with strong links to local businesses.

## Employment

2.5.17 CBBGC will underpin economic growth and development across North Essex. There will be a wide variety of jobs available to residents in modern businesses housed in modern accommodation – in the new town centre, and in business parks located close to the strategic road network, all accessible from homes by sustainable transport.

2.5.18 It is vital that there is a coordinated, active employment and investment programme to grow job opportunities in parallel with new homes as part of the development of the new Garden Suburb. Such a programme is critical to create a balanced and self-sustaining community. Further work related to employment supply and demand and job creation will be undertaken as part of the preparation of the DPD, which will help to shape the employment strategy for the new community.

2.5.19 A range of employment opportunities must be identified as part of the new community, provided on a variety of sites and premises for businesses and other employers that provide high quality modern accommodation and should include investment opportunities currently not found in established centres.

2.5.20 Support will be given to local SME's to help promote entrepreneurship and embed local firms within the wider Colchester economy. This might also include an element of homeworking. Furthermore, a choice of travel modes, including high quality public transport, provide households in CBBGC with the opportunity to seek employment in locations across North Essex and beyond.

# **Part 3:**

# Delivery and Implementation

# PART 3: Delivery and Implementation

## 3.1 DELIVERY, INVESTMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### A Step Change in Delivery

- 3.1.1 CBBGC is a long-term development project; the majority of the development will be constructed beyond the current Local Plan period (post-2033). However, the Councils' ambition for and commitment to the optimum development outcome from CBBGC will be enshrined in policy SP6 and SP9. It will need concerted, consistent and coordinated effort over the long term to ensure delivery of the Vision.
- 3.1.2 The partnership of four Councils is coordinating its operations and services to make this proposal possible. It has set up a company, North Essex Garden Communities Ltd, to oversee this coordination and to be the means by which there is full scrutiny of the proposals. NEGC Ltd will be the gatekeeper to public funds for investment and the policeman for the quality of what is planned and delivered.

- 3.1.3 NEGC Ltd will form partnerships with landowners and developers for each of the three new Garden Communities by creating a new delivery agency for each, a Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) or equivalent. An LDV will be commissioned to deliver the new Garden Community on the Colchester Braintree Borders. It will need the powers and resources to purchase and to hold land and to commission plans, designs and contracts that deliver the parts of the development. It will also need to oversee economic and community development work, and will deliver legacy organisations and arrangements to own and manage public assets in perpetuity.
- 3.1.4 The delivery of a new Garden Community in this location is sufficiently complex that the NEGC Ltd may consider the creation of a locally accountable Development Corporation with powers "generally to do anything necessary or expedient for the purposes of the new town or for purposes incidental thereto"<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.1.5 This will offer the greatest potential to deliver on the Vision set out in Chapter 2.

### Phasing within the Plan Period

- 3.1.6 It is recognised that limited development can be delivered off the existing A120 (Stane Street). Therefore, early commitment to the delivery of a new road link between the A120/Coggeshall bypass and the existing A12, as an initial development investment, is considered essential to deliver development of any significant scale. This would be coupled with a new junction onto the existing A12. These interventions would be part of an interim strategic design solution, prior to the formal re-routing of the A120 and A12. A first phase would capitalise on this new road link and could commence at the central part of the site, adjacent to the A12 and south of the A120 to establish two development fronts both north and south of the A12.
- 3.1.7 Delivery of an interim A12-A120 link could be supported by the delivery of a Park and Ride facility as part of a wider urban strategy, but could help establish patterns of public transport movement early into the development.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/en/ukpga/1946/68/contents/enacted>

## Key Highway and Transport Infrastructure Investment

**3.1.10** There must be a clear focus on the provision of infrastructure from the outset, the master planning and transport planning stages must be aligned.

**3.1.11** Any highways and transport infrastructure strategy for the development would need to consider a wide range of transport topics and be supported and directed by local transport policy, particularly in relation to the following:

- Walking and cycling
- Public transport priority
- Parking
- Park-and-Ride
- Traffic signal control and Intelligent Transport Systems
- Demand management
- Travel Planning
- Mass Transit
- Future technologies

**3.1.12** The development should support early build-out of a dense internal network of high quality walking and cycling infrastructure which includes improved accessibility to Marks Tey railway station and consideration of opportunities to remove severance caused by the A12 and Great Eastern Mainline through the potential construction of foot / cycle bridges.

**3.1.13** There should be a clear commitment to continue to engage with and shape strategic highway reconstruction and realignment and junction improvements for both the A12 and A120. Prior to the delivery of a new A120, a western distributor road, from Coggeshall bypass to a new junction on the A12, would enable early delivery of a first phase of development.

**3.1.14** Park and Ride (P&R) sites could be provided, well connected to a rapid transit corridor to facilitate prioritisation of sustainable transport modes and alleviate congestion on local roads.

**3.1.15** In the short term the existing station at Marks Tey would continue to be the primary focus for rail services for the Garden Community. Downgrading of the existing A120 along Stane Street, coupled with improvements to the existing A12 junction (J25) could enable significant public realm improvements and provision for active modes of sustainable transport to increase connectivity to the station and to support its role as a Gateway to the Garden Community.

**3.1.16** There is a significant opportunity for the creation of a new station within the centre of the new Garden Community, which would act as the main railway station, a key all-mode transport interchange and would help anchor the town centre and embed town centre uses.

**3.1.17** The North Essex Authorities could consider commissioning a feasibility study to assess the potential for a relocated station within the heart of the new community. As well as technical feasibility, any such assessment should include a comprehensive cost-benefit appraisal, which should also acknowledge the wider economic benefits that could be realised by such an investment.

**3.1.18** Opportunities to engage with a programme of Great Eastern Mainline Railway upgrades – track, capacity and rolling-stock and a new railway station, should also be maximised.

**3.1.19** There is a significant opportunity for the incremental implementation of a North Essex Mass Rapid Transit system. This urban-area project would support MRT opportunities along the Stane Street Spine from the North Essex coast and the Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders, Essex University, Colchester and the Garden Community at Colchester Braintree Borders, and potentially linking up to Braintree and Stansted Airport. This network can connect the existing and new towns, villages and centres of employment with fast, frequent and reliable public transport services. Together these could transform mobility across North Essex.

## Cycle of Investment and Infrastructure

**3.1.20** The ambitious scale and complexity of these proposals means that a new model of investment is required to secure physical, social and mobility infrastructure in parallel with or better in advance of development. All involved in the planning process – councils, consultants and existing communities – are clear that the conventional model where supporting infrastructure is often inadequate or late and reliant on developer funding alone will not deliver the quality of place and community that is desired and that is sustainable long-term. Developers and landowners do not have the same long-term interest in the establishment of communities as the local council, and the planning process alone is too crude a management tool to achieve quality and sustainable development across the board.

**3.1.21** Rather, the creation of the Garden Community requires timely investment from the public purse in return for participation as a full development partner. Such investment ensures that:

- The development is well and sustainably connected to existing places;
- The new community has resources and efforts targeted at building its economic base to attract and to secure jobs and economic sustainability; and
- It has health, social and educational services and facilities in place as early as possible to create a focus to the community, to establish sustainable travel habits and patterns, and to minimise the impact on existing communities.

**3.1.22** The model for this is well documented and was established by the new town development corporations. They were never reliant on public subsidy but instead had access to long-term loans as patient money secured against control of land and participation in the uplift in value that comes from the process of change from greenfields to development. Experience from the last new towns to be designated in the UK is that, once past the halfway mark toward development targets, early and substantial investment costs can be covered by further development that makes a net positive contribution to the repayment of public debt, provided that appropriate participation in the uplift of land value is secured from the outset. NEGC Ltd and the local development vehicles are key to this role for the public sector.

**3.1.23** In this way, investment by the public sector can be recycled to ensure that infrastructure is delivered in a timely manner and with appropriate capacity, both to support community development and to mitigate potential adverse wider impacts on existing places, services and facilities. This is part of the Garden Community pact with local people.

## KEY THEMES AND PRINCIPLES



North Essex Garden Communities | 1

## 3.2 MONITORING PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE GARDEN COMMUNITIES CHARTER CRITERIA

- 3.2.1 The Councils in North Essex have adopted a Garden Communities Charter to establish principles for the development of three new Garden Communities. Below is a table that summarises how the proposed approach to the development of Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community addresses these principles.
- 3.2.2 Development performance against these Criteria should be kept under review, and should be used as part of a continuing dialogue between the North Essex Authorities and respective developers and stakeholders.

Source: Aecom North Essex Garden Communities Charter Report



North Essex Garden Communities Charter	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Response to the Charter
<b>THEME 1: PLACE AND INTEGRATION</b>	
<b>Principle 1 - Green Infrastructure:</b>	
<p>“The garden communities will provide a generous amount of green space. They will be set within a multi-functional and integrated natural environment; providing space for nature, making the communities more resilient to climate change; promoting healthy lifestyles, and creating beautiful places to live and work.”</p>	<p>Around 40-50% of the land within the new Garden Community would be green space of one sort or another, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play areas</li> <li>• Playing fields</li> <li>• Formal parks and gardens</li> <li>• Community orchards and allotments</li> <li>• Retained woodland blocks and belts</li> <li>• Wildlife areas</li> <li>• Storm water storage areas</li> <li>• Retained pasture land with enhanced public access</li> <li>• Other natural greenspaces</li> </ul> <p>Green space should be readily accessible from every home, with natural green space never more than 10 minutes’ walk away.</p>
North Essex Garden Communities Charter	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Response to the Charter
<b>Principle 2 - Integrated and Sustainable Transport:</b>	
<p>“The garden communities will be planned around a step change in integrated and sustainable transport system for the North Essex area, which will put walking, cycling and public transit systems at the heart of the development, and be delivered in a timely way to support the communities as they grow.”</p>	<p>CBBGC should be a key hub on the North Essex Metro mass rapid transit system, a spine of high quality, frequent and reliable public transport connecting across North Essex.</p> <p>This spine could be integrated with feeder routes within the new Garden Community that serve all communities as they grow, with priority to provide a high-quality service available to all. A key interchange point would be at a new central station in the heart of the new community.</p> <p>At the neighbourhood level, walking will be a key factor in the design of the street and open space networks making local trips easy and attractive on foot. This will be complemented by a Garden Community-wide network of cycle routes to make any journey within the new Garden Community feasible and attractive by bike. The active and public travel networks will be capable of being delivered incrementally to grow as the town grows, but to make sustainable travel available from the earliest days of development.</p>

North Essex Garden Communities Charter	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Response to the Charter
<b>Principle 3 - Employment Opportunity:</b>	
<p>“The garden communities will seek to provide access to one job per household within the new community or within a short distance by public transport. The employment function will be a key component of creating character and identity and sustainable communities.”</p>	<p>There should be a concerted and coordinated programme to grow job opportunities in parallel with new homes as part of the development of the new Garden Community. This approach will require a wide variety of sites and premises for businesses and other employers, and these will include investment opportunities not found in established centres, providing high quality modern accommodation.</p> <p>It is proposed to create:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business park sites adjacent to the new A120, and A12 and the railway in the heart of the new Garden Community,</li> <li>• Employment accommodation within each of the Neighbourhood Centres and the new Town Centre,</li> </ul>
<b>Principle 4 - Living Environment:</b>	
<p>“Community inclusiveness and walkable, sociable and vibrant neighbourhoods will be a defining characteristic of the garden communities. A diverse mix of homes responding to existing and future local needs will be provided alongside</p> <p>A range of community services, including health, education, leisure and recreation, culture and shopping.”</p>	<p>CBBGC will not be a single expanse of undifferentiated housing, but designed as distinctive neighbourhoods, each with a character derived from its location and setting, its density, morphology and relationship with other neighbourhoods and existing communities, its relationship to the town centre and to employment areas, and its relationship to strategic connections across the wider area.</p> <p>Each neighbourhood is planned to be a complete community in its own right, incorporating the day-to-day services that its residents and businesses will require.</p> <p>Each part of the new Garden Community will offer a full range of homes in terms of type, size, configuration and tenure.</p> <p>There could be five such neighbourhoods each with a choice of two primary schools and each with a local centre providing convenience shopping, healthcare facilities, social and community facilities, and specialised homes.</p>

## Principle 5 - Smart and Sustainable Living:

“Planned for the 21st century, the garden communities will secure a smart and sustainable approach that fosters resilient environments and communities; able to respond positively to changing circumstances. Innovation and technology will be embraced to achieve resource efficiency, higher quality of life and healthier lifestyles; creating the conditions for sustainable living.”

Sustainability must be built into each stage of the masterplanning and delivery of CBBGC.

The Concept Framework demonstrates an access and movement strategy that prioritises sustainable transport and identifies the significant investment required to deliver an effective and high quality public transport network that is supported by opportunities for active travel.

The Framework also demonstrates a sustainable landscape responsive to the historic landscape structure, to include retention of important natural features, provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems integrated into the landscape and opportunities for the creation of productive landscapes, such as orchards and allotments.

Social Sustainability is encouraged through co-location of facilities at the heart of new communities that are walkable in scale and provide amenity and health benefits.

Development at this scale provides opportunities to consider innovative energy solutions that could include combined energy sources such as district heating and renewable on-site generation.

## Principle 6 - Good Design:

“Through all stages of the planning, design and development of the garden communities the highest quality of design and management of the built and public realm will be promoted. Existing local assets will be capitalised to help create distinctive places.”

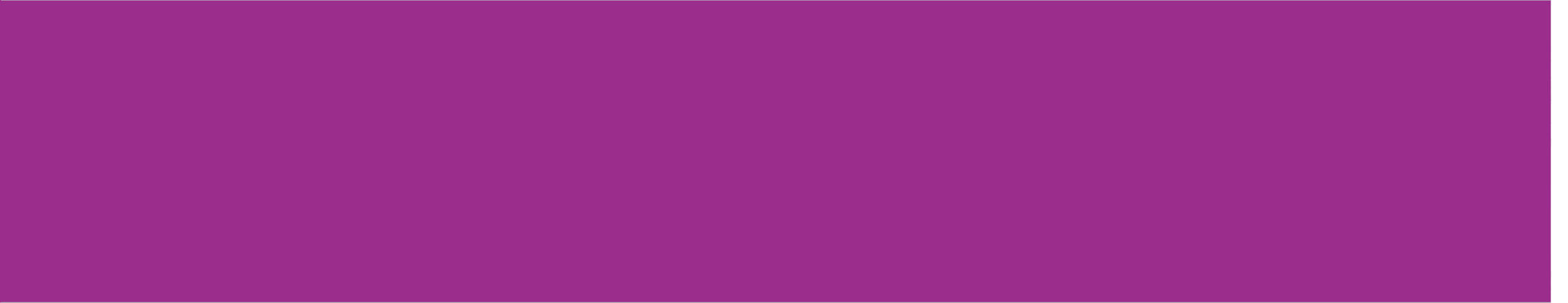
The key to success will be good design; good design at all levels of conception and implementation of the new Garden Community.

Structuring features have influenced the development form, these include:

- The strategic road network, now and in the future;
- The Great Eastern Main Line railway;
- Existing farmsteads, villages and hamlets, and their settings
- Existing Woodland;
- Existing hedgerows and lanes;
- Topography and geology
- The Essex Way; and
- The Roman River and other watercourses and natural drainage features

North Essex Garden Communities Charter	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Response to the Charter
THEME 2: COMMUNITY	
Principle 7 - Community Engagement:	
<p>“The garden communities are a locally-led initiative, and their development will be shaped through engaging existing communities and emerging new communities; residents will be empowered to contribute to shaping the future of North Essex.”</p>	<p>The Concept Frameworks have been informed by and have responded to stakeholder engagement with representatives from the local community.</p> <p>The North Essex Authorities are committed to long-term community engagement and will be considering opportunities to engage with the wider community to ensure residents and businesses continue to have an opportunity to help guide the developing concepts.</p>
Principle 8 - Active Local Stewardship:	
<p>“The garden communities will be developed and managed in perpetuity with the direct involvement of their residents and businesses; residents will be directly engaged in the long- term management and stewardship, fostering a shared sense of ownership and identity.”</p>	<p>The Vision for the CBBGC is that the growing community will have a real stake in its future ownership and management – genuine local stewardship. This will be particularly important for community assets – public open space, play areas, community meeting facilities, etc – and their future upkeep will be supported by the creation of a “community trust” of some kind, endowed with property with rental income to cover the costs of on-going stewardship.</p> <p>The new Garden Community should have a town council of local elected representatives who would population, and act as a strong voice in discussions with the local District/Borough Councils and other elected and statutory bodies.</p>
THEME 3: DELIVERY	
Principle 9 - Strong Corporate & Political Public Leadership:	
<p>“The councils of North Essex will collaborate to provide clear Vision for the garden communities and commitment to their long-term success. Central to this will be a commitment to high quality placemaking, timely infrastructure provision, and achieving a steady pace of housing and employment delivery.”</p>	<p>This is a long-term development project. Its evolution will stretch well beyond the time horizons of the elected Council cycle or the 15-year Local Plan cycle. The decision to pursue a new Garden Community in this location already shows strong and farsighted leadership. This will be reinforced by decisions that secure the future planning and delivery of the new Garden Community by whatever means are necessary. Leadership across the political spectrum will make the new Garden Community apolitical and will realise long-term commitment to its success. The partnership of Councils across North Essex is working to coordinate the delivery of key infrastructure in parallel with the evolution of the concept framework.</p> <p>To consolidate this process, the local planning authorities are actively investigating up-dated New Towns Act powers and a local Development Corporation to be the driver of development. Such a corporation will have the skills and resources to pursue the best standard of development possible.</p>

North Essex Garden Communities Charter	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community Response to the Charter
<b>Principle 10 - Innovative Delivery Structure:</b>	
<p>“The garden communities will be delivered through a genuine and pro-active partnership approach between the public and private sectors, where risk and reward is shared and community empowerment enabled.”</p>	<p>Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council along with the County Council, have joined forces to create an overarching body, now established as North Essex Garden Communities Limited (NEGC Ltd), which will coordinate the development of the new settlements, subject to local planning processes. The leadership of each of the four Councils is represented on the Board of the Company. This organisation will be responsible for the coordination and delivery of area wide strategies and investments necessary to make the Garden Communities a reality, and for the alignment of the planning regimes. NEGC will deliver the leadership described under Principle 9.</p>
	<p>Below this level, each of the new Garden Communities will have a Local Delivery Vehicle (or other delivery arrangement), that brings together the Councils, the landowners, developers and local communities to bring forward schemes that truly deliver on garden city principles and this Garden Communities Charter. The Councils have given in-principle agreement to provide and/or seek funding to address the challenges of early infrastructure delivery and the long-term nature of such schemes. Several sources of funding will be used to pay for delivery of infrastructure in a more timely and co-ordinated way than could be achieved via traditional development models.</p>



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