

presence of vegetated field boundaries, but there is some intervisibility with the properties in Jubilee Meadow.

Viewpoint 40a

- 3.3.64 Viewpoint 40a shows a view across a small field between the south of Eight Ash Green and the railway. Views are enclosed due to the presence of densely vegetated field boundaries, though some glimpses of the railway infrastructure and the roofline of the adjacent hotel are possible.

Viewpoint 40b

- 3.3.65 Viewpoint 40b shows a view across properties to the south of Eight Ash Green. Views are very enclosed due to the presence of woodland and changing topography.

Viewpoint 41

- 3.3.66 Viewpoint 41 shows a view looking west across the large fields between the A12 and London Road. The views are open, but long distance views are limited by the changing topography and presence of densely vegetated field boundaries.

Viewpoint 42

- 3.3.67 Viewpoint 42 shows a glimpsed view between residential property and hedges, northwards across the fields looking towards the A12 from London Road. The views are open, but long distance views are limited by the changing topography and presence of trees and dense planting along the A12.

Viewpoint 43

- 3.3.68 Viewpoint 43 shows a long, open view from the new commercial development to the south of the A12 junction. The slight elevation gives a long distance view, but views are still limited by the high density of trees and vegetation in the landscape beyond the immediate, large field parcels.

Viewpoint 44a

- 3.3.69 Viewpoint 44a shows a view across field looking towards Maltbeggar's Farm, where some of the buildings are visible between the trees and hedgerows. Views to fieldparcels beyond are screened by the large amount of vegetation in the landscape.

Viewpoint 44b

- 3.3.70 Viewpoint 44b shows a long distance view across multiple field parcels towards the A120, where a cluster of properties are visible. The view shows a landscape that is well treed, with intermittent hedgerows. The long views are facilitated by gently falling topography to the south.

Viewpoint 45

- 3.3.71 Viewpoint 45 from the entrance to Maltbeggar's Farm, looks southeast across a large, open field, past the farm buildings. Some glimpsed views of the fields beyond are possible between the trees, and due to falling topography. Houchin's Farm (moated property) can be glimpsed behind the tall trees in the centre of the view.

Viewpoint 46

- 3.3.72 Viewpoint 46 shows a long, open view southwards from Buckley's Lane, across large arable fields, and topography that gradually falls towards the A120, before rising again in the far distance. The view shows visibility across the immediate large field parcel, which is then broken by vegetated field boundaries and scattered woodland, though which buildings along the A120 and beyond can be glimpsed.

Viewpoints 47 and 48

- 3.3.73 Viewpoints 47 and 48 are typical of views looking southwards from the plateau on which Buckley Lane runs, across relatively flat fields, with heavily vegetated field boundaries. Views beyond the immediate field parcel are very limited due to the screening hedgerows.

Viewpoints 49a and 49b

- 3.3.74 Viewpoints 49 a and 49b look west and east respectively from Houchin's Lane, across the medium to large scale arable fields that are typical of those lying to the north of the A120. There is little change in topography, and the predominantly well vegetated field boundaries and numerous trees in the landscape create screening, providing only glimpsed views of the field parcels beyond.

Viewpoint 50

- 3.3.75 Viewpoint 50 looks southeast from East Gores Road towards Trumpingtons Farm. Heavily vegetated field boundaries limit views, though it is possible to glimpse some of the properties at East Gores Farm between the trees.

Viewpoint 51a

- 3.3.76 Viewpoint 51a looks northwest from East Gores Road across the medium to large scale arable fields typical of this part of the Site. There is little change in topography, and the predominantly well vegetated field boundaries and numerous trees in the landscape create screening, providing glimpsed views of the field parcels beyond.

Viewpoint 51b

- 3.3.77 Viewpoint 51b looks southeast from the entrance to Trumpingtons Farm, across an arable field with densely vegetated boundaries, as is typical of much of the Site. Some of the buildings at the farm are visible above the hedgerows.

Viewpoint 52

- 3.3.78 Viewpoint 52 shows a view looking southwest along the Essex Way promoted route. The large arable field parcel is typical of those within this part of the Site, with relatively little change in topography, and heavily vegetated field boundaries. Views beyond the immediate field parcel are very limited due to the screening hedgerows.

Viewpoint 53a

- 3.3.79 Viewpoint 53a looks from the Essex Way promoted route across a field parcel that is smaller than those typical of much of the Site. The field boundaries are densely vegetated, giving only glimpsed views into adjacent fields.

Viewpoint 53b

- 3.3.80 Viewpoint 53b looks southeast from the Essex Way promoted route, across fields towards Upp Hall Farm, where large agricultural sheds and silos are visible. Vegetated field boundaries provide some screening.

Viewpoint 54

- 3.3.81 Viewpoint 54 shows a view looking west across a large arable field parcel. Views beyond the immediate field parcel are limited by relatively little change in topography, and heavily vegetated field boundaries.

Viewpoint 55

- 3.3.82 Viewpoint 55, on Coggeshall Road, demonstrates limited visibility looking southwards across the arable fields in this area, caused by the gently rising topography.

Viewpoint 56

- 3.3.83 Viewpoint 56 is a long, open view looking southwards from Coggeshall Road near Walcotts Farm. Beyond the immediate, open field parcel, there is a large amount of screening vegetation within the landscape, above which the large agricultural buildings at Upp Hall Farm are visible.

Viewpoint 57

- 3.3.84 Viewpoint 57 is a long, open view looking south-eastwards from Coggeshall Road near Brick Kiln Cottage. Long distance views across much of the width of the view are restricted by woodland beyond the immediate field parcel, but in the southern half of the view, glimpses of fields and properties are possible looking towards Little Tey.

Viewpoint 58

- 3.3.85 Viewpoint 58 looks south-eastwards across fields to the south of Great Tey. The view is across the immediate field parcel with glimpsed views of the field beyond. Long distance views are obscured by woodland and mature vegetated field boundaries, as well as limited change in topography.

Viewpoint 59

- 3.3.86 Viewpoint 58 looks southwest from the entrance to Warrens Farm, demonstrating intervisibility with properties on Coggeshall Road above and between the vegetated field boundaries, due to the gently undulating topography.

Viewpoint 60a

- 3.3.87 Viewpoint 60a is a short view across the field parcel to the north of the public footpath that runs between Great Tey and Hoe Farm. The view is across only the immediate field parcel, due to screening by densely vegetated field boundaries.

Viewpoints 60b, c and d

- 3.3.88 Viewpoints 60 b, c and d show views east, south and west respectively from the public footpath that runs between Great Tey and Hoe Farm. Views to the east and west (b and d) are predominantly limited to the immediate, albeit large field parcel, due to dense vegetation in the landscape and relatively limited change in topography, with some glimpsed views of adjacent fields, particularly to the east. To the south, the falling topography gives longer views towards the A120.

3.4 Constraints and Opportunities

Landscape/Townscape Character

- 3.4.1 The existing landscape character of the Marks Tey part of the Site is of medium to large scale, irregular shaped, intensive, arable farmland with mature hedgerows at field boundaries which is typical of the wider landscape identified by the national, county and borough landscape assessments discussed in Section 3.3. There are also large and small woods scattered within the Site. It is also covered by many small farmsteads, hamlets and villages. The Site has a strong pattern through the fields and the network of lanes and woodland and therefore an enclosed character. However a further detailed study would need to be undertaken to ensure that the landscape character has not changed since 2005.
- 3.4.2 The landscape of the eastern part of the Site, at Eight Ash Green, can be characterised as of a mix of small regular fields with mature hedgerows at field boundaries which is typical of the wider landscape identified by the national, county and borough landscape assessments discussed in Section 3.3. There is dense woodland situated on the northern boundary of the Site. It is also covered by many small farmsteads, hamlets and villages along the roads and lanes. The Site has a strong pattern through the fields and the network of lanes and woodland and therefore an intimate enclosed character.
- 3.4.3 The principal effect of the development of the Site would be a change from a rural arable to a residential character. The degree of this change would be related to the siting, design and size

of the Site and how many of the mature hedgerows and trees would form part of the landscaping for the proposed development

- 3.4.4 The townscape in the Marks Tey area and the eastern area of the Site, at Eight Ash Green, can be characterised as being structured by the rail and road infrastructure. There is a mix of residential, commercial, superstores and warehouses covering the Site, overall of mixed ages. Some townscape character areas are secluded, some open with views across adjacent landscapes, some even harsh (infrastructure and commercial related). The pattern of the townscape varies from regular to irregular, sometimes even chaotic.
- 3.4.5 Therefore development of the Site would be unlikely to have a significant effect on the overall townscape character within the Study Area. The residential properties adjacent to the Site are of mixed age. However the majority have been built recently and therefore depending on the design of the Site, development would potentially be complementary to the surrounding townscape.

Landscape Designations

- 3.4.6 There are no constraints on development of the Site from landscape designations within the Study Area.

Visual Amenity

- 3.4.7 As whole, the Site generally lies within a flat to gently undulating landform. The flat plateau of the Marks Tey area is raised slightly in the northern and western part of the Site. The lower lying land in the east and south of this area is associated with watercourses. Extensive views across the majority of the Site are limited due to intervening woodland and mature and dense vegetated field boundaries. Some long distance views are possible across the Site from the higher ground within the northern part of the Site (for example Viewpoints 44b and 60c).
- 3.4.8 The eastern part of the Site, at Eight Ash Green, is raised slightly in the north western part of the Site. The lower lying land in the south west of this area is associated with watercourses. Long distance views within and to the surrounding of the Site are rare due to intervening woodland and mature and dense vegetated field boundaries. There are no inter-visibilitys between Colchester town centre and the Site.
- 3.4.9 Views into the Site are short distance from the immediately adjacent houses of the urban edge of Marks Tey, even shorter in the eastern area of the Site, at Eight Ash Green, and from the smaller settlements within the Site. The immediately adjacent properties act as a screen

creating only intermittent glimpsed views for other houses further from the Site. In addition, the majority of views within the Site are partially screened by the hedgerows and trees at the end of gardens and along field boundaries and adjacent woodland. Some isolated properties on higher ground to the north of the Site, such as those on the northern side of Coggeshall Road and Buckley Lane, may have glimpsed, long views across the Site where not screened by intervening vegetation or built structures.

- 3.4.10 To the centre of the Sites, views from and towards the A12 are very limited due to the presence of mature trees and shrubs along the trunk road. There are also some influences from the train lines which run through the site. But again, views from and towards them are very limited due to the presence of mature trees and shrubs.
- 3.4.11 Listed Buildings which are located within the Site would potentially be directly affected by development. However the magnitude of this effect would be related to the final siting and design of the development and whether the tall mature vegetation surrounding the residential property would be retained.
- 3.4.12 In addition, within the Site is a comprehensive network of Public Rights of Way and recreation grounds which provide public access to a large part of the area, including the Essex Way long distance route, which passes through fields to the north of the A120. The visual amenity of these areas would potentially be affected. However the magnitude of this effect would be related to the final siting and design of the development and whether the tall mature vegetation surrounding the footpaths and recreation grounds would be retained.

Landscape Capacity

- 3.4.13 The Study into the Landscape Capacity of Settlement Fringes in Colchester Borough¹¹ assessed the land in the Marks Tey Fringes as having a moderate landscape value and moderate sensitivity. As a result, its capacity was assessed as limited. The Study concluded that this part of the Study Area has limited ability to be able to accommodate development without degradation of landscape characteristics that are of local value. The Study noted that mitigation and enhancement measures would be required in cases where some limited change is possible.
- 3.4.14 The Study also identified the land in the eastern area of the Site, at Eight Ash Green, as having a high (in the northern part) to moderate landscape value and moderate (in the northern part) to low sensitivity. As a result, its capacity was assessed as limited (in the northern part) and has

¹¹ Landscape Capacity of Settlement Fringes in Colchester Borough (Chris Blandford Associates, 2005)

some potential in the rest of the area. The Study concluded that the northern part of this area has limited ability to be able to accommodate development without degradation of landscape characteristics that are of local value. The Study also concluded that the rest of the area has capacity to accommodate development, subject to appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures.

- 3.4.15 The Braintree District Settlement Fringe Landscape Capacity Analysis for Braintree and Environs¹² identifies the landscape capacity of the area around Coggeshall within the western boundary of the Site. The Study identifies the area east of Coggeshall and north of the B1024 as medium capacity, and the area east of Coggeshall and south of the B1024 is assessed as low landscape capacity to accommodate development. The Study concluded that:

'Areas with low to medium landscape capacity or above could, in landscape and visual terms, accommodate some level of new development without significant adverse effects on the character of the landscape, providing that appropriate design and mitigation measures are put in place. Any such new development would need to be in scale with the existing settlement. This new development would need to respect the character and sensitivities of adjacent landscapes as well as the character, setting and form of the existing settlement fringe.'

- 3.4.16 It is therefore considered desirable to safeguard this part of the Site from inappropriate development.

Green Gaps

- 3.4.17 The Assessment of Open Countryside between Settlements in the Borough of Colchester¹³ identifies the contribution provided by open countryside in maintaining the physical and visual separation (referred to informally as 'green gaps') between Colchester and adjacent settlements, including Mark's Tey and Eight Ash Green within the Study Area. The overall findings of the Study confirmed that:

'The open countryside between settlements generally provides a high contribution to the separation of settlements. The limitations on inter-visibility (i.e. visibility between settlements) and intra-visibility (i.e. the ability to see the edges of two or more settlements from a single point in the intervening landscape) resulting from visual enclosure by landform and vegetation in the open countryside, and the strength of rural character provide a significant contribution to the actual and perceived separation of settlements in many instances. On the basis of the work carried out for this study, areas that provide a high contribution to the separation of settlements are considered to be essential in helping retain the character and identity of the Borough's key settlements, and should be safeguarded from inappropriate development. Any new built

¹² Braintree District Settlement Fringe Landscape Capacity Analysis: for Braintree and Environs (Chris Blandford Associates, November 2007)

¹³ The Assessment of Open Countryside between Settlements in the Borough of Colchester (Chris Blandford Associates, 2009)

development on this land is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the strong rural character of the land.'

- 3.4.18 With regards to the assessment of the open countryside between Colchester and Eight Ash Green specifically, the Study concluded that:

'Any new built development between Eight Ash Green and Colchester is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the rural character of the intervening land, as perceived by people moving along the A1124 or along public rights of way between Eight Ash Green and Colchester. Any such development is likely to result in visual coalescence with Colchester and/or Eight Ash Green and also visual coalescence with either the existing houses located on the northern edge of Halstead Road or the hotel and housing to the west of the A1124. This visual coalescence is likely to seriously undermine the already precarious sense of settlement separation and the predominantly rural character of this land. The sense of leaving one settlement and entering another would also be significantly diminished.'

- 3.4.19 On the basis of this Study, all of the land assessed between Eight Ash Green and Colchester, including areas north-west of Eight Ash Green, is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements. The sense of separation between the settlements is achieved primarily by the visual enclosure provided by hedgerows and woodland cover and by the strength of the rural character of fields, which is essential in helping retain the character and identity of these settlements. It is therefore considered desirable to safeguard this part of the Site from inappropriate development.

- 3.4.20 With regards to the assessment of the open countryside between Copford and Mark's Tey specifically, the Study concluded that:

'Any new built development between Copford and Mark's Tey is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the rural character of the intervening land, as perceived by people moving along the B1408. Any such development is likely to result in visual coalescence with Copford and/or Mark's Tey and also visual coalescence with either the existing houses located alongside the B1408. This visual coalescence is likely to seriously undermine the already precarious sense of settlement separation and the predominantly rural character of this land. The sense of leaving one settlement and entering another would also be significantly diminished.'

- 3.4.21 On the basis of this Study, the arable fields between Copford and Mark's Tey along the B1408 are considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements. Further south, where the distance between Copford and Mark's Tey widens, the sense of separation between the settlements is achieved primarily by the visual enclosure provided by hedgerows and woodland cover and by the strength of the rural character of fields, which prevent inter-visibility and intra-visibility between the two settlements and which is essential in helping retain the character and identity of these settlements. It is therefore considered desirable to safeguard this part of the Site from inappropriate development.

3.4.22 Adjacent to the north-western edge of Copford, there is a narrow field that has a closer visual and physical relationship with the built-up edge of Copford than with the countryside to its west. The field abuts residential properties on its eastern side, a business property on its south side, a woodland block on its north side and is divided from the arable land to the west by a hedge with occasional trees. This field provides a low contribution to settlement separation.

3.4.23 With regards to the assessment of the open countryside between Mark's Tey and Little Tey specifically, the Study concluded that:

'There is a large amount of existing roadside development in the relatively narrow belt of land between Mark's Tey and Little Tey. As a result, this land is highly sensitive to changes that might diminish the sense of separation between settlements. Any new built development between Little Tey and Mark's Tey is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the rural character of the intervening land, as perceived by people moving along the A120. Any such development is likely to result in visual coalescence with Little Tey and/or Mark's Tey and also visual coalescence with either the existing buildings located alongside the A120. This visual coalescence is likely to seriously undermine the already precarious sense of settlement separation and the predominantly rural character of this land. The sense of leaving one settlement and entering another would also be significantly diminished.'

3.4.24 On the basis of this Study, most of the land between Mark's Tey and Little Tey is considered to provide a high contribution to the physical and visual separation between the settlements. The sense of separation between the settlements is achieved primarily by the visual enclosure provided by hedgerows and woodland cover (with an exemption along the A120) and by the strength of the rural character of fields, which is essential in helping retain the character and identity of these settlements. It is therefore considered desirable to safeguard this part of the Site from inappropriate development.

3.4.25 One field on the south-western edge of Mark's Tey is considered to provide a low contribution to the physical and visual separation of settlements, having no inter-visibility with Little Tey and being bounded by residential development on two sides.

3.4.26 With regards to the assessment of the open countryside between Mark's Tey and Easthorpe specifically, the Study concluded that:

'Any new built development, as defined, on the land identified as providing a high contribution to the separation of settlements is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the strong rural character of this farmland. In spite of the visual enclosure provided by field boundary hedgerows and blocks of woodland, new development would result in a reduction in rural character of the land and a diminished sense of leaving one settlement and entering another for people travelling along the public footpaths between the settlements.'

'One parcel of land between the southern edge of Mark's Tey and the A12, identified as providing a medium contribution to the separation of settlements, has some potential to