



Additional Sustainability Appraisal of North Essex Local Plan

Report on	Landscape Character Appraisal	Author	Catherine Bailey Planning Policy Officer Ext 2530
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report appraises the landscape character, sensitivity and recommended guidelines for the landscape settings of the preferred sites identified for the proposed Garden Communities within the Draft Publication Local Plan as well as additional sites identified through the original 'Call for Sites' to inform the draft Local Plan, and the Metro town sites identified by CAUSE (Campaign Against Urban Sprawl in Essex).

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The need for this work arose following the Examination of Draft Stage 1 of the emerging Plan in January to May 2018. Following the hearings, the Inspector concluded that the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Section 1 Local Plan had several short-comings relating to objectivity of the SA, clarity of the alternatives and reasons for selection and selection of the garden communities and combinations for assessment. The Inspector concluded that: "It has not been demonstrated that the chosen spatial strategy is the most appropriate one when considered against the reasonable alternatives...".
- 2.2 As a result, The North Essex Authorities commissioned LUC to carry out additional Sustainability Appraisal work with respect to Section 1. This landscape character study contributes to the baseline for the SA work.
- 2.3 In December 2018 LUC drew up an agreed set of SA Objectives and draft assessment criteria for an agreed set of alternative sites comprising non-Garden Community options that are strategic in scale, (i.e. with capacity for 2000 dwelling units or more), and already identified during the 'call for sites' processes as part of the local plan processes in each local planning authority. These alternative sites exclude those already allocated within the draft Section 2 of the emerging Local Plans and those that already have planning permission. It specifically includes CAUSE Metro Town alternatives.

3. Approach

- 3.1 In response to the Method Statement for the SA produced by LUC, the first stage SA Strategic Sites were listed and a desk-top analysis of the landscape baseline identified within the Local Plan evidence base carried out (Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2005), Braintree District Landscape Character Assessment (2005), and Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001) supplemented by information from the Growth Area Environmental Audits (2015) where appropriate and relevant. The landscape appraisal is detailed in the tables following.

Combined list of strategic sites to be tested in the Sustainability Appraisal – Landscape

Map Ref	Option Name	District(s)	Description	Area	Site ref and housing numbers	Landscape Character, Issues and Guidelines <i>Ref Colchester LCA (2005); Braintree LCA (2005); Tendring LCA (2001); Growth Area Environmental Audits (2015). Site reconnaissance except where noted</i>
Current Garden Community Proposals (Section 1 Local Plan)						
NEAGC 1	West of Braintree	Bra/Utt	As already proposed in the Local Plan to deliver between 7,000 and 10,000 homes.	1458ha	NEAGC1 7,000 to 10,000	<p><u>LCA Rayne Farmland Plateau</u></p> <p><u>Character:</u> Gently rolling hills with wide flat tops; bisected by Pods Brook valley with enclosed valley meadows with largely irregular field pattern of medium to large arable fields, some probably of medieval origin; small woods and copses. Some ancient; scattered settlement pattern; long narrow greens; isolated farmsteads; network of lanes, and PRoW; long views over open plateau including south and east over Andrews Field Airstrip (ex WW2); overwhelming sense of tranquillity away from A120 which forms the southern boundary; sense of historic integrity; Overall the character area has a moderate to high sensitivity to change.</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> long views over open plateau including south and east over Andrews Field Airstrip (ex WW2) vulnerable to large scale built form; lanes vulnerable to increased traffic flow, skyline of valley slopes vulnerable to development on skyline.</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve and enhance existing hedgerow pattern; Conserve and manage woodland and ecological features; Consider the visual impact of development on the farmland plateau and valley skyline; Ensure new development is small-scale responding to settlement pattern, landscape setting and building styles.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate- Strong landscape character, visually sensitive in flat plateau landscapes and skyline views from valley floor meriting conservation and enhancement.</p>
NEAGC 2	Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (Marks Tey)	Col/Bra	As already proposed in the Local Plan to deliver between 15,000 and 24,000 homes.	2324ha	NEAGC2 15,000 to 24,000	<p><u>LCA Easthorpe Farmland Plateau</u></p> <p><u>Character</u> Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east; mixed sized irregular, mainly arable fields; Mainly Grade 2 land. Small patches of woodland; several ponds/ reservoirs; network of narrow, sometimes winding lanes; Settlement pattern of small villages and hamlets with scattered farmsteads; medium range views across farmland; historic churches and other buildings Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI. Attractive cluster of buildings include Easthorpe church, the timber-framed house opposite and Hall create landmarks on approach to Easthorpe and along the Roman Easthorpe Road; The spire of Copford on the upper slopes of the Roman River is another landmark; evidence of medieval use of the landscape e.g. historic moats; network PROW</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Visual and auditory disturbance close to A120/A12 junction; pressure for further development at Mark's Tey into farmed landscape; risk</p>

						<p>to hedgerows and hedgerow pattern; risk to settings of traditional settlements; Loss of Best and Most Versatile land <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve rural character including the network of hedgerows. Conserve strategic green gaps, including views, between new development and existing settlements Minimise loss of Best and Most Versatile Land Ensure that any new development responds to landscape character, historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to setting Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/ mitigate the visual effects on the A12 / railway and settlement corridor.</p> <p>Summary: a strong landscape character away from the road/rail network meriting conservation and enhancement.</p> <p><u>LCA Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (B2a)</u> <u>Character</u> Linear settlement corridor delineated by main A12 and railway corridor; Visually dominant major road junctions/ roundabouts; disturbance by the movement and noise intrusion of cars on the A12/A120 and also by frequent trains on the main railway line. Remaining agricultural land is Grade 2. <u>Issues:</u> Visual and auditory disturbance close to A120/A12 junction; pressure for further development at Mark's Tey into farmed landscape; risk to hedgerows and hedgerow pattern; Loss of Best and Most Versatile land <u>Guidelines:</u> Ensure that new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, appropriate to landscape character. Conserve the remaining hedgerow pattern but consider also the introduction of new structure planting to shield/ mitigate the visual effects of the A12 / railway and settlement corridor.</p> <p>Summary: a moderate/weak landscape character close to the road/rail network needing restoration and enhancement with strong new elements.</p>
NEAGC 3	Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community	Col/Ten	As already proposed in the Local Plan to deliver between 7,000 and 9,000 homes.	1163ha	NEAGC3 7,000 to 9,000	<p><u>LCA Wivenhoe Farmland Plateau (ext into Bromley Heath Plateau (Tendring)</u> <u>Character</u> Small irregular woodlands; flat plateau landscape of medium, arable fields with gappy hedgerows; network of lanes and footpaths; some views of Colne River? <u>Issues:</u> Pressure from Colchester expansion; visual intrusion from railway corridor and pylons. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve landscape setting of Colchester; Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, which are appropriate to landscape character; conserve open views along Colne Valley; restore landscape structure</p> <p><u>Bromley Heath Plateau Landscape</u> <u>Character</u> Exposed, windswept, open in places, arable landscape; large fields with tall, bushy but gappy hedgerows with hedgerow oaks; deep</p>

						<p>loamy Grade 1 soils or poorer quality heathland remain as small-holdings; remnant oak/sweet chestnut coppice woodland; low density rural settlement patterns; network of narrow lanes; big skyscape.</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Loss of landscape features, including elm in 1970's; road improvements; expansion at edge of Colchester; communication masts; light pollution; the plateau is highly sensitive to visual intrusion</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Ancient rural settlement to be conserved and used to form the framework for proposed new development; siting and design of particular importance; rural setting of halls and churches to be conserved as landmarks where appropriate; scale and colour important and mitigation required in open landscape; Minimise loss of Best and Most Versatile Land</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, vulnerable to large new development especially along Salary Brook, close to traditional settlements and in open landscapes.</p>
Alternative Garden Community Proposals						
ALTGC 1	Land at Wethersfield Airfield	Bra	Site currently in use by the MOD as barracks and MOD Police HQ but the department have announced intention to sell and vacate. Variation of Garden Villages up to 2000 dwellings have been proposed. Site is remote and would need significant infrastructure works to access the strategic road network.	326ha	ALTGC 1a 2000 ALTGC 1b 5000	NOT APPLICABLE
ALTGC 2	Land east of Silver End	Bra	Proposal reliant on construction of the new A120 between Braintree and Kelvedon South (option E or D). Development would infill the gap between the A120 alignment and existing Silver End village but proposes a new grade separated junction for Silver End which is not confirmed. Options would be constrained by noise and air pollution buffer for new A120. Assume A120 constructed and new junction. Site must include a stop on interurban	165ha	ALTGC 2a 2500 ALTGC 2b	<p><u>LCA Silver End Farmland Plateau:</u> Undulating farmland, irregular large fields, sinuous hedgerows, many small woods and copses, scattered settlement with small villages, narrow winding lanes, largely tranquil character. Strong sense of historic integrity. Silver End early C20th planned development with more recent suburbs. Mainly Grade 2 land.</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> generally open landscape allows long distance views; gravel pit extends over airfield is exposed to views, Potential for residential expansion to impact views and horizon line; Loss of Best and Most Versatile land Moderate to high sensitivity to change.</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> New development should be small scale. Maintain open views across landscape.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, vulnerable to large new development</p>

			Rapid Transit network			
ALTGC 3	North West Coggeshall (Monks Farm)	Bra	<p>To be based off combinations of the AECOM report for 5,151 (EB/010), the developer's 7,000 proposal plus incorporate options from the inspector's post-hearing letter.</p> <p>Site must include a stop on interurban Rapid Transit network between Colchester and Braintree.</p> <p>Assume A120 option A is not constructed</p>	534ha	<p>ALTGC 3a 2000</p> <p>ALTGC 3b 5500</p> <p>ALTGC 3c 8000</p>	<p><u>LCA High Garrett/Mark's Hall Wooded Farmland</u> <u>Character</u> Gentle, well-wooded between Colne and Blackwater; med-large arable/pastoral farmland; varied with nearby industrial estate. Strong ancient, woodland structure, low trimmed hedges, hedgerow trees; strong sense of enclosure, pre-C18th; Some open views; settlement pattern is scattered farmsteads and large halls/estates, quiet lanes and PROW, Stane Street runs along south of the site. Sense of tranquillity away from A120.. <u>Issues:</u> Intrusion of new development on skyline; impact on tranquillity of development; impact on LOWs; overall high sensitivity to change. <u>Guidelines:</u> conserve and enhance integrity of landscape inc woodlands and hedgerows; ensure development is small scale; and responds to settlement pattern, setting, building styles and materials</p> <p>Summary: Moderate-strong character with high sensitivity to change.</p>
C c ALTGC 4	Land at Marks Tey Option 1	Col/Bra	<p>The site is located directly to the north of Marks Tey. The site is known to have the constraint of the brick works and therefore could not be developed in full. Assuming that 145.6 hectares of the site (70%) could be developed to accommodate 5,096 dwellings Size: 208 hectares. It is noted much of the site would be suited to densities closer to 50dph due to the proximity to the main line station. The land is available for development now and predominantly promoted by the Gateway 120 consortium</p>	211ha	<p>ALTGC 4a 2000</p> <p>ALTGC 4b 5500</p>	<p><u>LCA Easthorpe Farmland Plateau</u> <u>Character:</u> Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east; mixed sized irregular, mainly arable fields; Mainly Grade 2 land. Small patches of woodland; several ponds/ reservoirs; medium range open views across farmland; historic churches and other buildings; network of lanes; Marks Tey Brickpit SSSI <u>Issues:</u> Visual and auditory disturbance close to A120/A12 junction; impact on moderately open landscape; impact on Roman River and ditch network and functional floodplain at WST17; Loss of Best and Most Versatile land; potential loss of hedgerow and lanes network; impact on traditional settlement patterns; impact on SSSI. <u>Guidelines:</u> Ensure that any new development avoids functional floodplain, provides generous buffer to Roman River, minimises impact on SSSI, responds to historic settlement pattern, landscape character and local materials. Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/mitigate the visual effects of the A12 / railway and settlement corridor. Conserve and strengthen existing hedgerow network as part of broad green infrastructure links.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate strength character with locally high sensitivity to change along river valley and away from A12</p>
ALTGC 5	Land at Marks Tey Option Two	Col/Bra	<p>The site lies directly to the Southwest of Marks Tey Village. The land is available for development now and promoted by the Gateway 120 consortium</p>	139ha	<p>ALTGC 5a 2000</p> <p>ALTGC 5b 3500</p>	<p><u>LCA Easthorpe Farmland Plateau(B2a)</u> <u>Character</u> Linear settlement corridor delineated by main A12 and railway corridor; Visually dominant major road junctions/ roundabouts; disturbance by the movement and noise intrusion of cars on the A12/A120 and also by frequent trains on the main railway line. Remaining agricultural land is Grade 2 with locally intimate landscape pattern intact .</p>

						<p><u>Issues:</u> Visual and auditory disturbance close to A120/A12 junction; pressure for further development at Mark's Tey into farmed landscape; risk to hedgerows and hedgerow pattern. Loss of Best and Most Versatile land</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Ensure that any development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, which are appropriate to landscape character. Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/ mitigate the visual effects on the A12 / railway and settlement corridor.</p> <p>Summary: Weak- Moderate strength character with locally moderate sensitivity to change away from A12 and A120</p>
ALTGC 6	Land at Marks Tey Option Three	Col/Bra	The site is in single ownership and forms part WST08.	246ha	ALTGC 6a 2000 ALTGC 6b 5000	<p><u>LCA Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (B2)</u></p> <p><u>Character</u> Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east; mixed sized irregular, mainly arable fields; Some Grade 2 land south of A12; Small patches of woodland; several ponds/ reservoirs; network of narrow, sometimes winding lanes; Settlement pattern of small villages and hamlets with scattered farmsteads; medium range views across farmland; attractive cluster of buildings include Easthorpe church, the timber-framed house opposite and Hall create landmarks on approach to Easthorpe and along the Roman Easthorpe Road; the spire of Copford Church on the upper slopes of the Roman River is another landmark; evidence of medieval use of the landscape e.g. historic moats</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Visual and auditory disturbance close to A120/A12 junction; pressure for further development at Mark's Tey into farmed landscape. Some loss of Best and Most Versatile land</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve essentially rural character; Any new development should be in keeping with landscape character and respond to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, which are appropriate to landscape character. Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/ mitigate the visual effects on the A12 / railway and settlement corridor.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate strength character away from A12 with locally high sensitivity to change along Domsey Brook and close to Easthorpe and towards Copford Green</p>
ALTGC 7	Land at East of Colchester Option One	Col/Ten	Description: The site is partially within the Colchester Borough.	124ha	ALTGC 7a 2000 ALTGC 7b 3000	<p><u>LCA Bromley Heath</u></p> <p><u>Character</u> Exposed, windswept, open, arable landscape; large fields with gappy hedgerows with hedgerow oaks; deep loamy Grade 1 soils or poorer quality heathland remain as small-holdings; remnant oak/sweet chestnut coppice woodland; low density rural settlement patterns; network of narrow lanes; big skyline. Overall the character strength is moderate. The plateau is highly sensitive to visual intrusion</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Loss of landscape features, including elm in 1970's; road improvements; expansion at edge of Colchester; communication masts; light pollution</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Ancient rural settlement to be conserved and used to form the framework for proposed new development; siting and design of particular</p>

						importance; rural setting of halls and churches conserved and conserved as landmarks where appropriate; scale and colour and mitigation issue in open landscape. Summary: Moderate strength character highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to wide views
ALTGC 8	Land at East of Colchester Option Two	Col/Ten	The site is partially within the Colchester Borough.	151ha	ALTGC 8a 2000 ALTGC 8b 3500	LCA Bromley Heath (as above) Recommendations: (as above) Summary: Moderate strength character highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to wide views
ALTGC 9	Land at East of Colchester Option Three	Col/Ten	The site is partially within the Colchester Borough.		ALTGC 9a 2000	LCA Bromley Heath (as above) LCA Wivenhoe Farmland Plateau Small irregular woodlands; flat plateau landscape of medium, arable fields with gappy hedgerows; network of lanes and footpaths; views of Colne River. <u>Issues:</u> Pressure from Colchester expansion; visual intrusion from railway corridor and pylons. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve landscape setting of Colchester; Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, which are appropriate to landscape character; restore landscape structure Summary: Moderate character strength, highly sensitive to large new development in open landscapes on the plateau. LCA Ardleigh Valley System <u>Character</u> Steep sided wooded valley; ancient deciduous woodland; leafy lanes; Typified by low density, scattered settlement of small hamlets along minor lanes; large halls on valley sides; more recent buildings in valleys. Sense of remoteness remains in places; Strong landscape character but in decline and moderately sensitive to change. <u>Issues:</u> pressure for built development The A120 and railway intrude visually and obstruct links up valley. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve remoteness where still exists; conserve and enhance pedestrian access to/ up river; conserve lane network and character; restore existing woodlands Summary: Moderate character strength, highly sensitive to large new development especially on Roman River slopes, and in open landscapes on the plateau.
ALTGC 10	Land at East of Colchester Option Four	Col/Ten	The site is partially within the Colchester Borough.		ALTGC 10a 2000	LCA Bromley Heath <u>Character</u> Exposed, windswept, open, arable landscape; large fields with gappy hedgerows with hedgerow oaks; deep loamy Grade 1 soils or poorer quality heathland remain as small-holdings; remnant oak/sweet chestnut coppice woodland; low density rural settlement patterns; network of narrow

						<p>lanes; big skyscape. Overall the character strength is moderate. The plateau is highly sensitive to visual intrusion</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Loss of landscape features, including elm in 1970's; road improvements; expansion at edge of Colchester; communication masts; light pollution</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Ancient rural settlement to be conserved and used to form the framework for proposed new development; siting and design of particular importance; rural setting of halls and churches conserved and conserved as landmarks where appropriate; scale and colour and mitigation issue in open landscape.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate strength character highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to wide views</p> <p><u>LCA Wivenhoe Farmland Plateau</u> Small irregular woodlands; flat plateau landscape of medium, arable fields with gappy hedgerows; network of lanes and footpaths; views of Colne River. <u>Issues:</u> Pressure from Colchester expansion; visual intrusion from railway corridor and pylons. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve landscape setting of Colchester; Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials, which are appropriate to landscape character; restore landscape structure</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, highly sensitive to large new development in open landscapes on the plateau.</p> <p><u>LCA Ardleigh Valley System</u> <u>Character</u> Steep sided wooded valley; ancient deciduous woodland; leafy lanes; Typified by low density, scattered settlement of small hamlets along minor lanes; large halls on valley sides; more recent buildings in valleys. Sense of remoteness remains in places; Strong landscape character but in decline and moderately sensitive to change. <u>Issues:</u> pressure for built development The A120 and railway intrude visually and obstruct links up valley. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve remoteness where still exists; conserve and enhance pedestrian access to/ up river; conserve lane network and character; restore existing woodlands</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, highly sensitive to large new development especially in Roman River valley and slopes, and in open landscapes on the plateau.</p>
ALTGC 11	Langham Garden Village	Col	The site was scoped in the AECOM studies however dropped by Planning Committee. It is suggested	347ha	ALTGC11a 2000	<p><u>LCA Langham Farmland Plateau</u> <u>Character</u> Large scale arable fields, remnant orchards and boundaries; paddocks; small scale field pattern near small settlements; small farmsteads; often open landscapes with wide skies including around old</p>

			that the site is scoped at different scales.		ALTGC11b 5000	airfield; views to and from Salary Brook; traditional settlement is scattered; C20th settlement linear. <u>Issues:</u> pressure for built development; pressure on lane network <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve mostly rural character; any new development to respond to local settlement pattern, materials etc.; conserve views from valleys; conserve/enhance hedgerows and woodlands Summary: Moderate strength character, locally weak, highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to wide views
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Alternative Sustainable Urban Extensions (>2000 dwellings)

SUE 1	Land at Halstead	Bra	Proposal for 3500 dwellings should include a new bypass for Halstead town centre linking the A131 with A1124 Colchester Road. A northern bypass for Halstead Town Centre would need to include neighbouring landowners to link A131 Sudbury Road with A1124 Colchester Road. Site in multiple ownership (3) although Ptarmigan land is by far the largest. Northern portion of site is in flood zone 2/3 and not assumed to be developable. Assume Halstead bypass is part delivered as part of SUE1b 3500, but no bypass for SUE1a 2000 scheme.	164ha	SUE 1a 2000 SUE 1b 3500	<p><u>LCA Wickham Farmland Plateau</u> <u>Character:</u> rolling landscape, large scale arable field pattern, small blocks of woodland, mature trees in hedgerows, remainder windbreaks, ditches marking field boundaries, small lanes, wide views (including to and from Halstead), big skies, historic village buildings and isolated halls, strong sense of tranquillity; High sensitivity to change <u>Issues:</u> Open hilltops and tranquillity sensitive to development; landscape features sensitive to land management change. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve and enhance existing landscape features; maintain characteristic views; consider effect of development on views, traffic and tranquillity; proposed development to be small-scale.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate strength character, highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to wide views</p> <p><u>LCA Colne River Valley (and sub-unit Bourne Brook)</u> <u>Character:</u> Shallow river valley with fairly steep valley sides, broad floodplain, views along the valley, pasture adjoins river, arable on sloped, views enclosed by trees, hedgerows or settlement from outside the valley, ancient woodland on valley sides; Bourne Brook small and meandering with narrow valley, steep sides; small to medium scale; features of ecological value; very tranquil in Bourn Brook; high sensitivity to change. <u>Issues:</u> potential visual impact of development on valley sides and functioning floodplain; impact of large e.g. commercial buildings; impact of traffic on small lanes. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve and enhance existing landscape features; maintain characteristic views; consider effect of development on views traffic and tranquillity, proposed development to be small-scale and fit settlement pattern; maintain landscape setting of settlement.</p> <p>Summary: Strong landscape character, highly sensitive to visual intrusion and loss of landscape integrity. Note: Desktop assessment only</p>
SUE 2	Land East of Braintree	Bra	Sustainable urban extension could potentially have to	199ha	SUE 2a 2000	<u>LCA Silver End Farmland Plateau:</u>

	(including Temple Border)		account for the route of the new A120. Assume new junctions for the A120 Dual Carriageway are required on site. Pedestrian, cycle and PT Links to Freeport transit hub.		SUE2b 4500	<p>Character: Undulating farmland, irregular large fields, sinuous hedgerows, many small woods and copses, sinuous watercourses general character of scattered settlement with small villages, winding lanes, largely tranquil character. PRoW cross area; General sense of historic integrity. Mainly Grade 2 land.</p> <p>Issues: generally open landscape allows long distance views; Potential for residential expansion to impact views and horizon line; Loss of Best and Most Versatile land; Moderate to high sensitivity to change.</p> <p>Guidelines: New development should be small scale and in keeping with landscape character; maintain landscape setting of settlements; . Maintain open views across landscape.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, locally weak, visually sensitive to large new development due to open landscape</p>
SUE 3	Land south east of Braintree	Bra	<p>Sustainable urban extension with access to the strategic highway at Galley's Corner. Proposals may need to bridge the railway line and A120 but scheme could accommodate a new or relocated station on Braintree branch line.</p> <p>Transit hub at either Freeport of Black Notley rail. Assume new pedestrian and cycle links across A120 and railway are required. Development could support new passing loops on Braintree branch line.</p>	166ha	SUE 3a 2000 SUE 3b 5000	<p>LCA Silver End Farmland Plateau:</p> <p>Character: Undulating farmland, irregular large fields, sinuous, generally bushy hedgerows, many small woods and copses, sinuous watercourses, general character of scattered settlement with small villages, Tye Green Largely C20th; winding lanes, largely tranquil character. PRoW cross area; General sense of historic integrity. Mainly Grade 2 land.</p> <p>Issues: generally open landscape allows long distance views; Potential for residential expansion to impact views and horizon line; Loss of Best and Most Versatile land; Moderate to high sensitivity to change.</p> <p>Guidelines: New development should be small scale and in keeping with landscape character; maintain landscape setting of settlements;. Maintain open views across landscape.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, locally weak, visually sensitive to large new development due to open landscape</p> <p>LCA Brain River Valley</p> <p>Character: Shallow narrow valley with undulating sides; pastoral farming with some arable; settlement on valley sides and tops; small to medium sized field pattern; scrubby hedgerows with trees; willow and poplar plantations or wet alder/willow woodland; one crossing point at Cressing. Overall moderate to high sensitivity to change.</p> <p>Issues: Skyline of the valley slopes are visually sensitive to development; loss of functional floodplain; further loss of tranquillity through development, traffic and associated infrastructure Guidelines: New development should be small scale and in keeping with landscape character; maintain landscape setting of settlements; Maintain cross valley and long valley views; maintain integrity of landscape pattern and features</p> <p>Summary: Moderate-Strong character, locally weak, visually sensitive to large new development in small-scale valley landscape</p>

Note: Desktop assessment only						
SUE 4	Land North West of Wivenhoe	Col		175ha	SUE 4a 2000 SUE 4b 3500	NOT APPLCABLE
Alternative Garden Villages and Other Options (>2000 dwellings)						
VE 1	Land at Kelvedon	Bra	A somewhat disjointed expansion of Kelvedon in north, west and south directions onto land in 4 or 5 different land ownerships. Site is close to Mainline rail station and the A12 Kelvedon south junction which would have to be upgraded to all a directions junction. Existing local centre at Kelvedon village would provide some services. Assume new A12 junction all directions south of Kelvedon	146ha	VE 1a 2000 VE1b 3000	<p>LCA Blackwater River Valley</p> <p><u>Character</u> Shallow valley sides; predominantly arable farmland with irregular possible medieval field boundaries, some lost. Mainly Grade 2 land. Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from A120. Areas of woodland. Dispersed, sometimes moated farmsteads and small linear villages screened by deciduous trees. A number of brick with timber frame halls and large dwellings. Historic core to Kelvedon. Sense of historic integrity.</p> <p><u>Issues</u> New development in the open landscape, including visibility from river floor, and increased traffic on lanes. Loss of Best and Most Versatile land</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> New development should be in keeping with landscape character. Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, their ecological structure and ditches within the character area. Promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/ landscape character.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate character strength, highly sensitive to large new development especially in Blackwater River valley, and in open landscapes beyond.</p>
VE 2	Land at Coggeshall	Bra	Residential expansion of Coggeshall to the north, west and east to make Coggeshall Garden Village. Assume no new 120 bypass is necessary to facilitate this development. Site is an agglomeration of multiple smaller site with 7 or 8 different parcels and land ownerships. New junctions on the existing A120 needed.	91ha	VE 2a 2000	<p>LCA Blackwater River Valley</p> <p><u>Character</u> Shallow valley sides; predominantly arable farmland with irregular possible medieval field boundaries, some lost. Mainly Grade 2 land. Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from A120. Areas of woodland. Dispersed, sometimes moated farmsteads and small linear villages screened by deciduous trees. A number of brick with timber frame halls and large dwellings. Historic core to Coggeshall. Sense of historic integrity.</p> <p><u>Issues</u> New development in the open landscape, including visibility from river floor, and increased traffic on lanes. Loss of Best and Most Versatile land</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> New development should be in keeping with landscape character. Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, their ecological structure and ditches within the character area. Promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</p>

						Summary: Moderate character strength, locally weak. Sensitive to large new development above Colchester River valley and in open landscapes at perimeter of town.
VE 3	Metro Town	Ten	This is an alternative proposal put forward by campaigners CAUSE which proposes growth around railway stations along the Colchester to Clacton/Walton line and their corresponding villages. The relevant villages are Alresford, Great Bentley, Weeley and Thorpe le Soken. It has been suggested that CAUSE are consulted in order to ascertain a better understanding of how the proposal is envisaged to work. It should be noted that planning permissions are already in place to deliver 249 homes at Alresford, 274 at Great Bentley and 187 at Thorpe. At Weeley, 14 homes have permission but a further 304 are already proposed in the Section 2 Local Plan with part of that land (east of the village) subject of a current planning application for 280 homes. Therefore, these four villages are together already expecting to deliver 1,028 homes in the plan period to 2033. Whilst CAUSE will advise on the detail of the metro-town proposal, to deliver a further 2,000 homes would require an additional 500 at each village with a minimum land-take of around 20 hectares in each village or around each station. To deliver an alternative of Garden Community size (i.e. 5,000), one would be looking at 1,250 homes or 50 hectares per village. It is		VE 3a 2000 Possible further option following meeting with CAUSE	<p><u>Thorpe-Le-Soken</u> <u>LCA Holland Brook</u> <u>Character</u> Lower reaches of Holland Brook and floodplain; pastoral landscape with cattle; damp grasslands high wildlife value SSSI; improved and semi-improved; hedges or ditches; wet valley emergent veg and bankside willows; valley woodland; London clay and alluvial overlay gives waterlogged soils; historic crossings; limited settlement; Strong landscape character in good condition; highly sensitive to change. <u>Issues:</u> lack of pedestrian access; sensitivity to change. <u>Guidelines:</u> Built development and infrastructure should be kept out of the floodplain meadows; sensitive features should be conserved; sense of tranquillity to be retained.</p> <p>Summary: Strong landscape character highly sensitive to change. Note: Desktop assessment only</p> <p><u>LCA Holland Valley System</u> <u>Character</u> Steep sided valley; contrast with Tendring Plain; seasonally waterlogged; mixed woodland and pastoral; sparse settlement; landscape pattern largely intact from 1777. Strong landscape character in declining condition; <u>Issues:</u> encroachment of development; loss of management of landscape and heritage features; loss of lane character; declining tranquillity. Sensitivity is moderate. <u>Guidelines:</u> Resist development in valley; conserve woodlands; restore landscape structure; enhance public access; conserve historic features; resist 'improvements' to unspoiled rural lanes; bridge not embankments for new river crossings.</p> <p>Summary: Strong landscape character moderately sensitive to change. Note: Desktop assessment only</p> <p><u>LCA Clacton and the Sokens Clay Plateau</u> <u>Character</u> Gently undulating plateau; London clay; seasonally waterlogged soils; Grade 3 land; low, gappy hedgerows with trees; oak and chestnut coppice; good road network; urban fringe character; Thorpe has important historic buildings; overall landscape character strength is weak/poor depending on location and of declining condition. <u>Issues:</u> Loss of elms in past; loss and neglect of woodland, village greens, pasture, historic buildings etc.; ribbon development; urban fringe uses; light pollution; visually sensitive. <u>Guidelines:</u> strengthen and enhance landscape structure; consider impact of vertical structures, lighting etc.; create new features as part of village development to strengthen character of setting</p>

			<p>suggested that the lower scale of development is more realistic than the higher level.</p>		<p>Summary: weak/poor landscape character strength highly sensitive to visual intrusion by large-scale new development and vertical structures.</p> <p>Note: Desktop assessment only</p> <p><u>Weeley</u> <u>LCA Holland Valley System</u> (as above) <u>LCA Clacton and the Sokens Clay Plateau</u> (as above)</p> <p><u>Great Bentley</u> <u>LCA St. Osyth/Great Bentley Heaths</u> <u>Character:</u> extension of Bromley Heaths; productive, arable land; low gappy, regular hedgerows with oaks; ancient woodlands; sandy acid soils; ancient settlement pattern (scattered development around green or heath); narrow lanes; church towers as landmarks; circular crop marks; sky dominates views. Character strength is moderate but in decline. <u>Issues:</u> Loss of woodland and other landscape features; neglect/loss of management; road improvements; light pollution; plateau is visually sensitive due to its openness <u>Guidelines:</u> Conservation and recreation of woodland, heathland, greens; restore hedgerows; ensure development uses local materials and planting; ensure development does not extend to crests of valleys; siting and treatment of masts and lighting sensitively; conserve important views.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate landscape character strength moderately sensitive to change.</p> <p>Note: Desktop assessment only</p> <p><u>LCA Alresford Valley System:</u> <u>Character:</u> steep side valley to Bentley Brook; fast-flowing but limited flood extent; intimate and leafy compared to plateau; areas deciduous woodland; old coppice stools inc willow by streams; historic lanes; sparse settlement above valley floors; some C19th/20th intrusion e.g. railway embankments, sand and gravel extraction, sewage works, caravan sites; overall tranquil; character strength is strong but in decline. <u>Issues:</u> Reduction in woodland management; coniferous planting; development encroaching; gravel extraction; little pedestrian access to riverside; valleys are sensitive to character change but not so visually sensitive due to hidden, woody character; overall sensitivity is moderate. <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve rural character; manage ancient woodlands, pollards, coppice and hedgerows; enhance public access; restrict ribbon development and road enhancements; use bridge not embankments; restore gravel pits</p>
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						<p>Summary: Strong landscape character strength moderately sensitive to change of character. Note: Desktop assessment only</p> <p><u>Alresford</u> <u>LCA Bromley Heath</u> <u>Character</u> Exposed, windswept, open, arable landscape; large fields with gappy hedgerows with hedgerow oaks; deep loamy Grade 1 soils or poorer quality heathland remain as small-holdings; remnant oak/sweet chestnut coppice woodland; low density rural ancient settlement patterns; network of narrow, largely ancient lanes; big skyscape. Overall the character strength is moderate but in decline. The plateau is highly sensitive to visual intrusion <u>Issues:</u> Loss of landscape features, including elm in 1970's, heaths, acid grasslands etc.; road improvements; conifer shelter belts; pressure for large expansion at edge of Colchester; communication masts; light pollution causing urbanisations; visual sensitivity especially at valley edges <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve, enhance and manage existing landscape features, views, historic lanes, settlement patterns and historic buildings; careful siting of vertical structures; conserve important views Summary: Moderate strength character highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to wide views Note: Desktop assessment only</p>
VE 4	Weeley Garden Village	Ten	At Issues and Options and Preferred Options stages, the Council put forward proposals for major expansion at Weeley given its strategic location in the centre of the district, on the A133 and on the railway line. The proposal at that time was for around 1,400 homes and associated facilities and job opportunities. The proposal was highly unpopular and was deleted from the Local Plan at publication stage on confirmation that it wouldn't be required to meet objectively assessed housing needs in this plan period. In the Section 2 Local Plan, Weeley is already expected to accommodate 318 dwellings from existing	72ha	VE 4a 2000	<p><u>LCA Clacton and the Sokens Clay Plateau</u> <u>Character</u> Gently undulating plateau; London clay; seasonally waterlogged soils; Grade 3 land; low, gappy hedgerows with trees; oak and chestnut coppice; good road network; urban fringe character; overall landscape character strength is weak/poor depending on location and of declining condition. <u>Issues:</u> Loss of elms in past; loss and neglect of field boundaries and woodland, village greens, pasture, historic buildings etc.; ribbon development; urban fringe uses; light pollution; visually sensitive. <u>Guidelines:</u> strengthen and enhance landscape structure; consider impact of vertical structures, lighting etc.; create new features as part of village development to strengthen character of setting Summary: weak/poor landscape character strength highly sensitive to visual intrusion by large-scale new development and vertical structures.</p>

			<p>planning permissions and allocated sites. There are however greenfield sites that either are or have been promoted for inclusion in the Local Plan which, together, could deliver upwards of 2,000 homes. These include land off Crow Lane (19 hectares), land north of Colchester Road near Hawk Farm (25 hectares and subject of refused planning application from Taylor Wimpey for 380 homes, employment land and community facilities) and land between Tendring Park Services and Weeley Bridge caravan park (53 ha). Together, these additional 97 hectares could deliver 2,000 homes plus employment land and facilities.</p>			
VE 5	Tendring Central Garden Village	Ten	<p>A proposal for strategic growth at Frating, comprising land between Frating, Hare Green and Balls Green was considered by the Council at Issues and Options stage but was not carried forward over sustainability concerns. The proposal has been promoted for inclusion in the Local Plan in recognition of the location's strategic position at the junction of the A120 and the A133 and the cluster of businesses around Manheim Auctions and the Book Service.</p>	221ha	VE 5a 2000 VE5b 4500	<p><u>LCA Bromley Heath</u> <u>Character</u> Exposed, windswept, generally open, arable landscape; large fields with gappy hedgerows with hedgerow oaks; deep loamy Grade 1 soils or poorer quality heathland remain as small-holdings; remnant oak/sweet chestnut coppice woodland; low density rural settlement patterns combined with linear C20th; network of narrow, largely ancient lanes; big skyscape that is highly sensitive to visual intrusion; Limited visual impact of A120 to north and east with large warehouse-style buildings along A133 disrupting character locally. Overall the character strength of the area is moderate but locally it is weak and in decline. <u>Issues:</u> Loss of landscape features and Best and Most Versatile Land; loss of elm in 1970's, heaths, acid grasslands etc. out of character shelter belts; light pollution causing urbanisation; impact of large buildings and road improvements; visual sensitivity of open landscape <u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve, enhance and manage existing landscape features, views, historic lanes, settlement patterns and historic buildings; careful siting of vertical structures; conserve important views; create new landscape structure to mitigate existing impacts and incorporate future built form.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate strength character but locally weak and highly sensitive to visual intrusion due to open landscape and wide views</p>

Additional strategic sites to be tested in the Sustainability Appraisal – Landscape June 2019

Map Ref	Option Name	District	Description	Area	Site ref and housing numbers (Developers preferred option underlined)	Landscape Character, Issues and Guidelines <i>Braintree LCA (2005); Growth Area Environmental Audits (2015) and Site reconnaissance except where noted</i>
ALTGC03	The Pattiswick Estate (Monks Farm)	Braintree	<p>The Inspector requested in his post hearing letter that this site is appraised for 5,000 dwellings and commented that the promoters of the site state that the maximum capacity of the site is 7,000 dwellings.</p> <p>The site promoters submitted a Site Promotion document to the NEAs in August 2018, promoting the site for 5,500 dwellings. The site options for Monks Wood therefore represent: the minimum of 2,000, 5,500 as promoted by the site promoter and 13,500 which is the figure from the site capacity calculation to ensure consistency with all site options.</p> <p>Site is >5km from a railway station and town centre.</p>	909 ha	<p>ALTGC 3a 2,000</p> <p><u>ALTGC 3b 5,500</u></p> <p>ALTGC 3c 13,500</p>	<p><u>LCA High Garrett/Mark's Hall Wooded Farmland and Blackwater River Valley</u></p> <p><u>Character River Valley</u> - Site lies substantially within the valley landscape with gently sloping sides; predominantly arable farmland with irregular possible medieval field boundaries, and mainly Grade 2 land, but with areas of some ancient woodland LoWS; traditional settlement pattern of dispersed, sometimes moated farmsteads and small hamlets; sparse narrow lanes and PRoW network away from A120; open views away from woodland and where hedgerows removed; Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from A120.</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> New development highly visible in the open landscapes away from the river, including visibility from river floor, impact on historic settlement pattern and integrity; increased traffic on lanes. Loss of Best and Most Versatile land.</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve the landscape setting of settlements; any new development should be in keeping with landscape character; Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, their ecological structure and ditches within the character area. Promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/ landscape character.</p> <p>Summary: Strong sense of character, highly sensitive to large new development in open landscapes.</p> <p><u>Character Wooded Farmland</u> - Flat to gently undulating landform; strong pattern of woodland (including ancient); regular medium to large arable fields; thick hedgerows with hedgerow trees; varied open or enclosed character depending on tree cover; small farmsteads, halls and estates, such as Mark's Hall beyond the boundary</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Potential intrusion of new development on skyline; impact on tranquillity of development; impact on LOWs; overall high sensitivity to change.</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> conserve and enhance integrity of landscape including woodlands and hedgerows; ensure development is small scale; and responds to settlement pattern, setting, building styles and materials</p>

Summary: Moderate-strong character with high sensitivity to change.					
SUE4	Land South of Haverhill	Braintree	Part of a larger SUE with direct access from Haverhill bypass	149ha	<p>SUE 4a 2,000 SUE 4b 3,500</p> <p><u>LCA Bumpstead Farmland Plateau</u> Medium to large scale arable fields bounded by hedges with trees and ditches; sparse woodland copses including Garland's Wood on periphery; rolling topography; scattered farmsteads and dwellings; sparse narrow rural lanes and multiple PRoW; route of old branch line railway visible in landscape; panoramic views in all directions; tranquil away from A1017.</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> Potential intrusion of new development on skyline due to openness across the plateau; impact on tranquillity of new development; loss of historic integrity of traditional dispersed settlement pattern. Overall the area has moderate- high sensitivity to change.</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve panoramic views; ensure new development is in keeping with landscape character; protect and enhance positive landscape features; improve the integrity of the landscape through restoring lost features.</p> <p>Summary: Moderate-strong character with moderate -high sensitivity to change.</p>
VE1	Land at Kelvedon	Braintree	Expansion of Kelvedon in north and west with three different land ownerships. Site is close to mainline rail station and the A12. Kelvedon south junction. Requirement to deliver a link road between A12 and Coggeshall Road.	495ha	<p>VE 1a 2000 VE 1b 5000 VE 1c 17000</p> <p><u>LCA Blackwater River Valley</u> Character Site lies substantially within the valley landscape with gently sloping sides; predominantly arable farmland with irregular possible medieval field boundaries, and mainly Grade 2 land, but with areas of woodland, some ancient woodland LoWS; traditional settlement pattern of dispersed, sometimes moated farmsteads and linear villages (Kelvedon, Feering) screened by deciduous trees; sparse narrow lanes away from main roads and PRoW network; open views away from the valley corridor; Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from A12 and railway. Strong sense of historic integrity of historic Kelvedon (runs along Stane Street) within the landscape.</p> <p><u>Issues:</u> New development in the open landscapes away from the river, including visibility from river floor and historic Kelvedon, impact on historic settlement pattern and integrity; increased traffic on lanes and Stane Street. Loss of Best and Most Versatile land.</p> <p><u>Guidelines:</u> Conserve the landscape setting of settlements; any new development should be in keeping with landscape character; Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, their ecological structure and ditches within the character area. Promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/ landscape character.</p> <p>Summary: Strong sense of character, highly sensitive to large new development especially in Blackwater River valley, and in open landscapes beyond.</p>

