



CASTLE POINT PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS ENGAGEMENT

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek authority to undertake engagement and consultation on the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options document and the scoping reports for the associated statutory assessments that must accompany the Castle Point Plan when it is finalised and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.

2 LINKS TO COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The Castle Point Plan cuts across the priorities of the Council, having the potential to address matters related to people, place and the environment. Engagement helps to ensure that the approach established through the Plan achieves the outcomes local people are seeking under these priorities.

3 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

- (1) That a period of community and stakeholder engagement be authorised, pursuant to Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England Regulations 2012 as amended, on the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document provided at **Appendix 1**. The engagement will commence on 22 July and last for a period of 8 weeks in line with the commitment for engagement set out in the Local Development Scheme agreed by Council at its meeting on 31 January 2024.
- (2) That the Assistant Director Climate and Growth, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, be authorised to make any amendments to the documents set out at **Appendix 1** resulting from the Council meeting and to correct any minor typographical or publishing errors prior to consultation commencing.
- (3) That an 8-week period of consultation be authorised commencing on 22 July on the statutory documents that accompany the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document, namely:

-
- a) The Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report and Initial Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives provided at **Appendix 2**;
 - b) The Habitats Regulations Scoping Report provided at **Appendix 3**; and
 - c) The Equality Impact Assessment Scoping Report provided at **Appendix 4**.
- (4) That it be noted that the supporting evidence listed in section 7 of this report will be available to view during the consultation period.
 - (5) That it be noted that the Call for Sites will be reopened alongside the engagement on the Castle Point Issues and Options Document, as set out in section 8 of this report.
 - (6) That the approach that will be taken to communication and engagement, as set out in section 11 of this report, be noted.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At the Council meeting on 30 November 2022 the Council approved the preparation of a new Local Plan – the Castle Point Plan. The Council also approved the Local Development Scheme for the preparation of the Plan (see 4.4 below); the establishment of the Castle Point Plan Board, the disbanding of the Local Plan Delivery Board; and the budget (Minute Number: 2022/37).
- 4.2 The decision on 30 November 2022 followed the decision of the Council to withdraw the Castle Point Local Plan 2018-2023. At a special meeting of Council on 15 June 2022, the Council considered and agreed the following motion (Minute Number: 2022/15):

‘The Local Plan examination has now been completed and in the event of the Local Plan not being adopted we call on the Council to start work immediately on a new Local Plan that reflects the central government stated aim to protect and preserve the precious green belt in our local area. A priority of this new Local Plan would be to produce a target housing number that genuinely reflects local need. As this housing target will be lower than previous proposals this must be supported by robust evidence. All housing developments should prioritize brownfield development. We hope that in the interests of our borough this motion is supported on a cross party basis.’
- 4.3 This motion formed the basis for the work that is now being undertaken to deliver the Castle Point Plan.
- 4.4 The Local Development Scheme setting out the programme for the preparation of the Castle Point Plan was initially agreed at the meeting of Council on 30 November 2022. Following correspondence from the Secretary of State in December 2023, a slight revision to the Local Development

Scheme was agreed by Council at its meeting on 31 January 2024. The current programme the Council is working to is set out below.

Castle Point Plan Timetable		
Stage	Time Period	Engagement Activity
Issues Identification	January 2023 - August 2023	4 - 6 months engagement on issues with partners, the community, local businesses and other stakeholders.
Options Development	September 2023 - June 2024	Feedback on how the Council is addressing the issues raised. Some informal engagement may occur.
Developing the Plan	June 2024 – December 2024	2- 3 months Options Engagement with partners, the community, local businesses and other stakeholders. (Formal regulation 18)
Publication	January 2025 – March 2025	Formal consultation with partners, the community, local businesses and other stakeholders (Formal regulation 19)
Submission	April 2025	
Examination	June 2025 – December 2025 (Estimated, dependent on Examiner)	
Adoption	March 2026 (Estimated, dependent on Examiner)	

- 4.5 It should be noted that due to the pre-election period associated with the General Election 2024 this report was not presented to Council in June as originally intended and there has been a small slippage in the programme. However, Officers remain confident that the Castle Point Plan can still progress to submission before the end of June 2025.

5 THE CASTLE POINT PLAN BOARD

- 5.1 At the Council meeting of November 2022, the Castle Point Plan Board was established to give Members the opportunity to shape the Castle Point Plan. The board has met twice monthly, and on occasions more frequently, to progress the Castle Point Plan. The board has had direct input into the approach taken to engagement and the specifications for key pieces of evidence. It has reviewed and scrutinised the outcomes of evidence base work and the drafting of the Issues and Options Consultation Document. It has been pivotal in getting to the position to present this report to Council for consideration and remains committed to presenting a draft Plan to Council in early 2025 for publication and submission.

6 INITIAL ISSUES ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 A key lesson arising from the work on the withdrawn Plan was the need to ensure that residents and other stakeholders were engaged early in the plan-making process to ensure that their views and their needs and aspirations informed the preparation of the Castle Point Plan. For that purpose, the report

to Council on 30 November 2022 made a clear commitment to early engagement with residents, businesses, community groups and partners.

- 6.2 The Castle Point Plan Board approved an engagement plan and developed consultation questions that enabled a period of Initial Issues Engagement to take place from March to August 2023. During this period all households were contacted, and responses were received from around 1,500 residents. Around 200 residents also attended workshops held around the borough to explore local issues in more depth.
- 6.3 The outcomes of this engagement are set out in the Initial Issues Engagement Report which has been considered by the Castle Point Plan Board. Since that time ongoing engagement has occurred to address gaps in the responses from key groups in the community and key organisations. This is reported in the associated Addendum with elements ongoing as part of the Engagement Through Art project.
- 6.4 As a high-level summary, the following key issues came through the Initial Engagement:
- Residents told us that they value the community and green spaces in the borough but would like to see transport improved and congestion reduced.
 - Residents were concerned about the impact that new development would have on infrastructure, including drainage infrastructure.
 - The partners across the various public and charitable organisations that we work with told us they wanted to see improved health outcomes for residents and improved opportunities for all our residents to access education, training, jobs and good quality housing. Partners also told us it was important to address the challenges arising from climate change.
 - Local businesses told us that they need skilled local employees for their businesses and good quality affordable business premises and the transport and communications infrastructure necessary to access wider economic opportunities.
- 6.5 The outcomes of this engagement to date have informed the evidence base work we have commissioned and how we go about developing the Castle Point Plan. They will continue to help to steer the content of the Plan as it is developed.
- 6.6 Further details of the engagement planned for the Issues and Options stage are set out in Section 11 of this report.

7 EVIDENCE BASE WORK

- 7.1 As part of the scoping for the Castle Point Plan undertaken to inform the programme agreed in November 2022, the need for new evidence was identified.

7.2 The Council has produced the following new evidence base work to inform the Issues and Options document:

- Local Housing Needs Assessment, which challenges the standard methodology set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and identifies an appropriate housing need figure for Castle Point. This responds to the motion of 15 June 2022. As well as interrogating the sources of data forming the basis of the housing needs calculation, this work also included a statistically robust telephone survey with over 500 residents. This concluded that by using more up to date household projection data than the 2014 data used for the Government's Standard Methodology, the annual target is reduced from 355 to 255, or by 2,000 homes over the plan period 2023 – 2043.
- Housing Options Technical Paper, setting out how the urban capacity assessment has been undertaken to date and how the housing options presented in the Issues and Options document have been arrived at. This responds to the motion of Council from 15 June 2022, by seeking to ensure that all sources of brownfield land supply have been explored. Further details are set out in section 8 of the report below.
- Reflecting the importance local people place on green spaces, an Open Spaces Assessment has been prepared which identifies how local spaces contribute to local communities and meeting local needs. This work included a statistically robust survey completed by over 600 residents.
- Again, reflecting the importance local people place on green spaces, a Local Wildlife Site Assessment Review has been prepared, assessing the contribution local wildlife sites make to the local environment and the network of priority habitats in Essex. Residents and wildlife groups were invited to nominate additional sites that should be considered.
- Having seen the importance some members of the community place on heritage, a Local List of Heritage Assets Review has been prepared, assessing the contribution non designated heritage makes to the quality of the local environment. Residents and community heritage groups were invited to nominate additional assets that should be considered.
- Given the concerns residents have around transport conditions, a Transport Assessment baseline has been prepared, assessing the current state of the transport network in Castle Point, the measures needed to improve that network and the contribution urban development could make to delivering those measures.
- Recognising the need for community infrastructure such as schools and health facilities, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan baseline has been prepared setting out the current provision of infrastructure and providing the foundation for assessing future need.

-
- Employment Sites Review considers the contribution potential development sites could make to employment floor space provision.
- 7.3 Other work underway or planned which will inform the final Castle Point Plan that the Council will consider in early 2025 will include:
- Update to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (underway)
 - Transport Modelling (extends on the baseline listed above)
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan (extends on the baseline listed above)
 - Strategic Land Availability Assessment (extends on the housing options technical paper and employment sites review listed above)
 - Design coding (underway)
 - Viability Assessment (planned)
 - Playing Pitch Assessment (annual updates completed, full review planned)
 - Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (planned)
- 7.4 Depending on the strategic approach to development ultimately taken by the Council it may also be necessary to undertake a Green Belt Review. The Part 1 Green Belt Review undertaken in 2018 remains valid, as the Green Belt has not been significantly impacted by development since that time, and therefore the contribution different parts of the Green Belt make to its purpose remain unchanged. However, if the Council was to seek to review the Green Belt it would need to undertake a Part 2 Green Belt Review which looks at the harm development in particular locations may cause and the ability for that harm to be mitigated, or not. This work will be necessary to bring forward the most appropriate Green Belt sites, if that is the strategic approach to development the Council chooses to pursue.
- 7.5 Evidence base work is also being undertaken by other organisations which will inform the Plan. For example, the Essex Planning Officers Association has worked across Essex to prepare evidence around parking requirements and the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The Essex Climate Action Commission meanwhile has produced evidence to inform policies around net zero requirements. As appropriate, we will make use of this evidence to support the Castle Point Plan to make effective use of resources.

8 IDENTIFICATION OF SITES

- 8.1 A methodology for identifying suitable sites for inclusion in the Castle Point Plan was agreed by the Castle Point Plan Board in January 2023. The agreed approach makes use of AI software and land registry data to identify as many sites in the existing urban area as possible for development. Combined with a call for sites and a search for suitable sites by Officers, this approach has identified 111 urban sites with the potential for development.

-
- 8.2 However, not all these sites will be available for development and therefore risk based reductions have been applied to identify a realistic urban capacity from the identified sites. This risk based capacity therefore sits at 2,204 new homes on brownfield or unused urban land. A further call for sites will take place alongside the Issues and Options engagement to identify any additional sites and to firm up the availability of the existing sites with the potential for development.
- 8.3 The identified sites only make up a portion of the urban capacity because sites which can accommodate less than 5 homes have been excluded. An assessment of past delivery on small sites has been undertaken and a 'windfall allowance' of 47 homes per annum has been identified to account for the future supply from such sites. When the risk based capacity from the identified sites is combined with the windfall allowance and extant planning consents waiting to be built, the urban capacity is of the order of 3,727 homes.
- 8.5 The capacity of the urban area at 3,727 homes, is the equivalent of 14.6 years' land supply when assessed against the local housing need of 255 homes per annum. This is broadly compliant with the need to identify a 15-year housing land supply through a Plan.
- 8.6 The identified urban capacity is significantly higher than is currently identified on the Brownfield Land Register, which sits at 774 homes. The combined capacity currently identified through the Brownfield Land Register, extant consents and windfall is of the order of 2,300 homes. This demonstrates that the urban capacity work undertaken to date has identified significant additional potential capacity in the urban area. The acceptability of these sites and the assumptions made around density will be tested through the Issues and Options consultation.
- 8.7 In determining the potential for housing delivery, an allowance has been made for the accommodation of business, commercial and community premises at ground floor level, or otherwise within the mix of development. An Employment Site Review has been undertaken to help inform where this allowance should most appropriately be made when progressing the final Castle Point Plan.
- 8.8 It should be noted that through the Call for Sites process, Green Belt sites were promoted to the Council by landowners/developers. 16 site options have been promoted to the Council which are contiguous with the existing urban area and have the capacity for 100 homes or more. At this time only limited work has been undertaken to assess the suitability of these sites, as no decision has been taken as to whether such sites should be considered for inclusion in the Castle Point Plan. The outcomes of the Issues and Options engagement will help to shape decision making in this regard.

9 THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS DOCUMENT

- 9.1 The Issues and Options Document sets out, based on the engagement to date and the evidence base work to date, the issues that need to be

addressed through the Castle Point Plan and as appropriate options for addressing those issues.

- 9.2 A draft of the Document was reported to the Castle Point Plan Board in May 2024 and agreed for reporting to Council for consultation at its meeting in June 2024, subject to amendments which have been implemented by Officers.
- 9.3 The document takes a place based approach, setting out the issues for each town of the borough and the opportunities for addressing those issues.
- 9.4 It also sets out the thematic issues which stretch across the borough such as climate change, nature conservation, heritage and the need for different types and tenures of housing.
- 9.5 The document sets out the overarching options around growth, and how they relate to the identified need for housing and growth. Overall, there are six options, as summarised below.

	Urban Area	Employment Land	Outside Urban Area	Total
1a - Limit new development to the Urban Area	3,727	-	-	3,727
1b – Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area	3,727	1,373	-	5,100
1c – Increase density in the urban area	5,100			5,100
2a – Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need	3,727	-	1,373	5,100
2b – Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley	3,727		1,373	5,100
3 – Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology need	3,727	-	3,373	7,100

- 9.6 Options 1a, 1b and 1c consider development just in the urban area. Option 1a does not meet the locally assessed housing need of 255 homes per annum over a 20-year period. Options 1b and 1c meet this need through either the loss of employment space or through a significant intensification of development densities in new builds beyond that seen to date in the borough.
- 9.7 Options 2a and 2b also seek to meet the locally assessed housing need, using the urban capacity as a baseline, but look to consider land outside the existing urban area i.e. in the Green Belt.

-
- 9.8 Option 3 seeks to meet the Government's standard methodology, delivering an additional 2,000 homes over the Plan period. Again, the urban capacity provides a baseline position, but this option requires the consideration of land outside the urban area, i.e. in the Green Belt, to be achieved.
- 9.9 In setting out all these options, residents and other stakeholders can comment on them through the Issues and Options Engagement. Doing this is critical to ensuring that the final Plan is sound, as we will have presented all reasonable alternatives for consultation and will have feedback on them to inform our decision making process.

10 STATUTORY ASSESSMENTS

- 10.1 The Council is required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the Castle Point Plan to ensure it achieves the objectives of sustainable development. Additionally, it is required to meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which specifically identify the environmental matters that should be considered when preparing plans or programmes which affect the use of land.
- 10.2 The Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) meets this requirement. The regulations require that this assessment is prepared in an iterative way alongside the Plan, starting with a scoping report which identifies the issues that should be considered in relation to sustainability in the local area and establishes an assessment framework based on those issues.
- 10.3 An SA/SEA Scoping Report has been prepared and this has been used to undertake an initial assessment of the potential borough wide development options set out in the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document. It is a legal requirement under the regulations that this document is made available for consultation so that key organisations can advise on whether the scoping and assessment framework is appropriate and capture all the relevant matters.
- 10.4 Separately, the Council is also required to assess the Plan to meet the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations and to ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act have been met in line with the public sector equality duty. At this stage full assessments cannot be undertaken in either case, as a draft Plan is required. However, scoping and an assessment framework has been developed for each to enable stakeholders to shape these assessments and ensure that they capture key issues, so the final assessments are robust.
- 10.5 These documents are provided at Appendices 2, 3, and 4 respectively and it is recommended that they are subject to consultation alongside engagement on the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document.

11 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- 11.1 Whilst the Council is committed to ensuring that residents are fully engaged in the preparation of the Castle Point Plan, it should be noted that consultation is also a requirement of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended. These regulations require that the Council notifies specified consultation bodies and other general consultation bodies, residents and businesses as the Council considers appropriate. The period for consultation under the regulations needs to be a minimum of six weeks.
- 11.2 The Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) reiterates the requirements of the regulations and explains generally how the Council will undertake consultation exercises in relation to planning matters and how residents and other stakeholders can participate.
- 11.3 The proposed approach to communication and engagement for the Issues and Options document extends beyond simply ensuring that specific consultation bodies and other general consultation bodies, residents and businesses in the area have been notified. It ensures that there are multiple opportunities to find out about the engagement and various routes for participation.
- 11.4 The communications plan includes:
- Consistent branding across promotional activities;
 - Email notification to existing mailing list, including specific consultation bodies and general consultation bodies;
 - Four page insert in the *Castle Point Together* Magazine to be delivered to all households;
 - Postcard invite to engage to all households and businesses;
 - Additional promotion across a range of media based on local demographics, with monitoring to adjust for uptake;
 - Posters on community notice boards; and
 - Members' briefing packs to enable Members to direct constituents who contact them.
- 11.5 The routes to participation include:
- Online survey;
 - Documentation and survey available in local libraries;
 - Community engagement workshops;

-
- Business engagement workshops; and
 - Stakeholder engagement sessions for service providers and other interest groups such as SME builders.
- 11.5 Opportunities will also be taken to promote and engage with stakeholders at relevant third party events.

12 NEXT STEPS

- 12.1 Upon conclusion of the engagement the outcomes will be reported to the Castle Point Plan Board and used to inform decision making around the policies and site allocations that should be included in the Castle Point Plan.
- 12.2 Whilst a considerable amount of evidence base work has been completed already, there is evidence base work that can only be undertaken once site allocations have been identified. This work, together with the statutory assessments (Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment), will be undertaken enabling a draft Plan to be prepared for consideration by the board in the first instance and then by Council in the early part of 2025.
- 12.3 At that stage the Council will be asked to publish and submit the Plan for examination in public.
- 12.4 To publish a Plan means making the Plan available for consultation in line with regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended. Consultation at this stage follows a set form and the comments received are packaged for consideration by the planning inspector appointed to examine the Plan.
- 12.5 To submit a Plan means to provide the Plan to the Secretary of State for examination in public. This is done by sending the Plan to the Planning Inspectorate with all those comments received to the publication consultation.
- 12.6 Due to changes made to planning powers through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, it is no longer possible to withdraw a Plan once it has been submitted for the Secretary of State for examination in public.

13 OPTIONS

- 13.1 **Option 1:** Undertake engagement on the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document and undertake consultation on the associated statutory assessment documents, commencing on 22 July 2024.
- 13.2 **Option 2:** Do not undertake engagement on the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document and associated statutory assessment documents.
- 13.3 **Preferred Option:** In order to stay broadly in line with the timetable to produce the Castle Point Plan, as set out in the Local Development Scheme,

and ensure we remain in the position to be able to submit a Plan for examination before the 30 June 2025 deadline, it is essential to undertake engagement on the Issues and Options Document as soon as possible.

Option 1 is therefore the preferred option. Failure to do so would delay the production of the Castle Point Plan, introducing the risks set out in the following section of this report. These risks are significant to the Council's reputation and financial standing.

14 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 The main risk associated with undertaking the recommendation as proposed is associated with the reputation of the Council. By their nature local plans are controversial as they are about change. There is a risk that poor communication around the Plan could affect the reputation of the Council and the progress and outcomes around the Castle Point Plan. However, the regular and ongoing involvement of Members in the preparation of the Plan through the Castle Point Plan Board and the strong programme of communication and engagement that is planned for the Issues and Options Document both ensure that this risk is mitigated and managed as far as possible.
- 14.2 More significant risks are associated with not undertaking the recommendation as proposed. The Issues and Options engagement is a key milestone on the path to getting a Local Plan in place for Castle Point. A Local Plan is necessary in terms of staving off intervention from the Secretary of State in relation to our plan making powers. It is also an important tool in managing development in the local area and enabling us to resist inappropriate development including inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Having our plan making powers removed and/or finding our planning application decisions regularly overturned on appeal presents a significant reputational risk. It also comes with financial implications for the Council, as detailed in the financial section which follows.
- 14.3 If the Secretary of State does not intervene, a delay at this stage would still be a risk for the Council as the Castle Point Plan is being prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Plans being submitted under this Act must be submitted for examination to the Planning Inspectorate by 30 June 2025. Plans submitted after that date will be examined under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which sets out different rules for plan making, some of which are still to be detailed through regulation. Consequently, a failure to submit by the end of June 2025 risks significant further delay and cost to the process, the full details of which are not yet known.

15 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no environmental implications associated with the recommendations of this report, as we are simply seeking agreement to engage with the community and stakeholders at this stage.

-
- 15.2 There will be environmental implications associated with the Castle Point Plan itself when it is prepared. These implications will be set out in the final Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Report prepared to accompany the Draft Castle Point Plan when it is put before Council early in 2025.
- 15.3 Similarly, it is likely that the Plan will have the potential to impact on Habitats Sites (Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation) as defined by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. A Habitats Regulations Assessment will therefore also be prepared to accompany the Draft Castle Point Plan for early 2025.

16 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 This engagement was included within the programme of work for the Castle Point Plan agreed by Council in November 2022 and is being resourced from the budget for the Plan agreed at that time. There are no additional financial implications associated with progressing with the recommendations of this report.
- 16.2 Failing to progress the recommendations of this report would introduce a delay to the preparation of the Castle Point Plan which would see submission extend beyond 30 June 2025. Plans submitted beyond June 2025 would need to meet new requirements set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. This would result in the Council incurring additional costs in the preparation of its Plan which are not fully known at this time and have not been budgeted for.
- 16.3 As the risk of Government intervention also remains, it should be recognised that failing to progress the recommendations of this report could also result in additional costs to the authority from the appointment of an outside body to deliver the Castle Point Plan which the Council is legally obliged to cover. The Council would not have control over the costs associated with that action being taken by the Government, and the costs may be significant.

17 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 The Council is legally obliged in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended, to undertake consultation on the issues it wishes to address in its Local Plan. The proposals for engagement set out in section 11 of this report exceed the minimum requirements for consultation detailed in that legislation.
- 17.2 The Council is legally required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 to undertake consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. The proposals for consultation on the assessment documents set out at section 11 of this report exceed this minimum requirement, as detailed in the legislation.

-
- 17.3 There are no legal requirements to consult on the Habitats Regulations Scope or the Equality Impact Assessment Scope at this stage in the process; however, it is appropriate to seek the views of relevant organisations at this stage as this will negate delays where there are legal requirements for consultation later in the process for both assessments.

18 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 18.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany this report and is included as **Appendix 5**. It assesses the equality and diversity implications of the decision being sought to undertake engagement on the Issues and Options document for the Castle Point Plan. It concludes that consideration has been given to ensuring that eliminating discrimination and promoting equality are embedded in the engagement on the Issues and Options for the Castle Point Plan. There are therefore no equality risks associated with the decision to undertake engagement.
- 18.2 It should be noted that part of the engagement is on the scope for the Equality Impact Assessment for the Castle Point Plan itself. The Castle Point Plan itself is likely to have equality and diversity implications which an Equality Impact Assessment will help to draw out and eliminate. The Equality Impact Assessment for the Castle Point Plan will be reported alongside the Plan presented to the Council for authority to publish and submit in early 2025.



Angela Hutchings

Chief Executive

Background Papers:-

[Local Development Scheme January 2024](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement November 2020](#)

For further information please contact Amanda Parrott on:-

Phone: 01268 882432

Email: aparrott@castlepoint.gov.uk



The Castle Point Plan 2023-2043

Issues & Options Consultation

July-September 2024

Your Community. Your Views



Contents

Introduction	3
Context	6
Castle Point Plan Vision	9
Area Based Policy Options	10
Canvey Island	12
Benfleet	24
Hadleigh	31
Daws Heath	37
Thundersley	39
Borough-Wide Development Strategy Options	43
Developing Castle's Point's Economy	60
Ensuring the vibrancy of the Borough's town centres	66
Creating Well Designed Development and Protecting the Borough's Character	70
Creating Environmentally Sustainable New Development	75
Protecting & Enhancing Green & Blue Infrastructure	78
Providing the Services Local Residents and Businesses Need	85
Improving Accessibility for all in Castle Point	89
Appendix A – Schedule of Urban Sites with Gross and Probability-Applied Capacities	93

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Introduction

What is the Castle Point Plan?

A local plan is a long-term plan which sets out a positive vision for the area and identifies where and how development should take place in the future.

This local plan - the Castle Point Plan - will set out all the planning policies and proposals for Castle Point. It will include what kind of development can go where to ensure the right number and types of homes, space for businesses and the infrastructure, such as schools and health facilities, needed to support our growing population. It will also contain policies to safeguard the environment, enable climate change mitigation, and secure high quality design.

The Castle Point Plan is proposed to cover the period 2023-2043.

The current local plan dates from 1998. While some issues will be the same, some have changed, as has the national planning framework, and approaches to addressing them. It is therefore proposed that the Castle Point Plan will replace the current Castle Point Local Plan in its entirety.

Previous attempts at updating the local plan for Castle Point have been made, but no new plan has been adopted. This consultation document represents a fresh attempt to consult on the options for what is included in the new Castle Point Plan.

The Government expects each area to have an up-to-date local plan which it reviews every five years. Having an up-to-date local plan is important for ensuring that infrastructure provision aligns with new development and that the borough's character and environment are protected from harm. Without a plan there is a significant risk that speculative development which causes harm to infrastructure capacity and to important parts of the borough's environment such as the Green Belt. It is therefore essential that a plan is developed locally to address these risks.



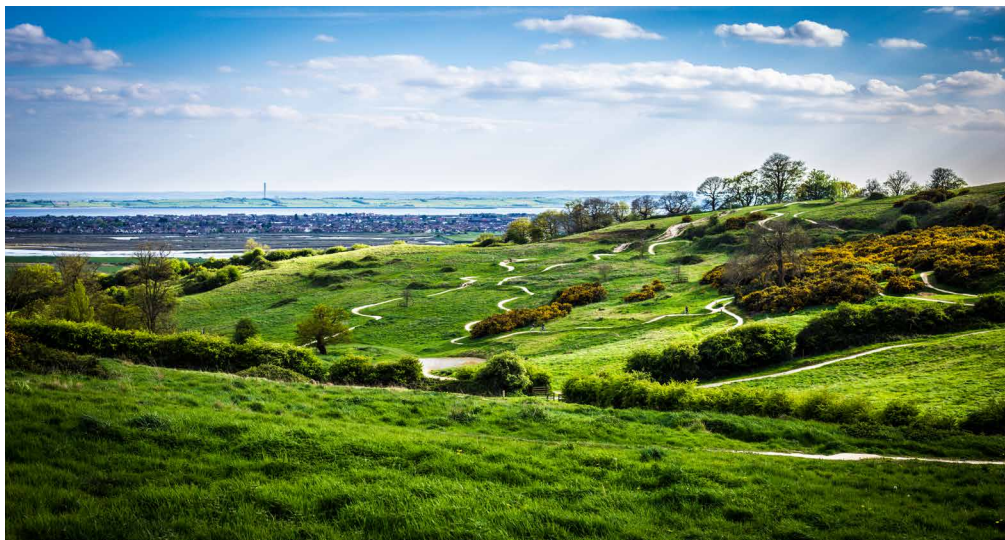
Photography: Tessa Hallmann

Why is the Council Consulting?

There are some difficult decisions to be made when it comes to balancing the need for economic growth and increased demand for housing with other important issues, such as protecting the environment and improving essential infrastructure. Understanding the views of local residents and other organisations is key to establishing a positive approach to making these decisions.

You have told us that you value the special qualities of the borough, including its diverse and attractive countryside, coastline and historic features. There is also a requirement to provide for the future needs of a growing population, including young people and older households, to ensure everyone has access to good quality homes and for local businesses to be able to thrive and prosper. Meeting these varied needs involves making choices about how to make that best use of land, where future development takes place, how buildings are designed, and how the Council supports healthy, sustainable communities. This consultation provides an opportunity to have your say on the future of Castle Point.

What you tell the Council during this consultation will help the Council decide on the best strategy and ways of meeting future development needs in the period up to 2043.



How to have your say

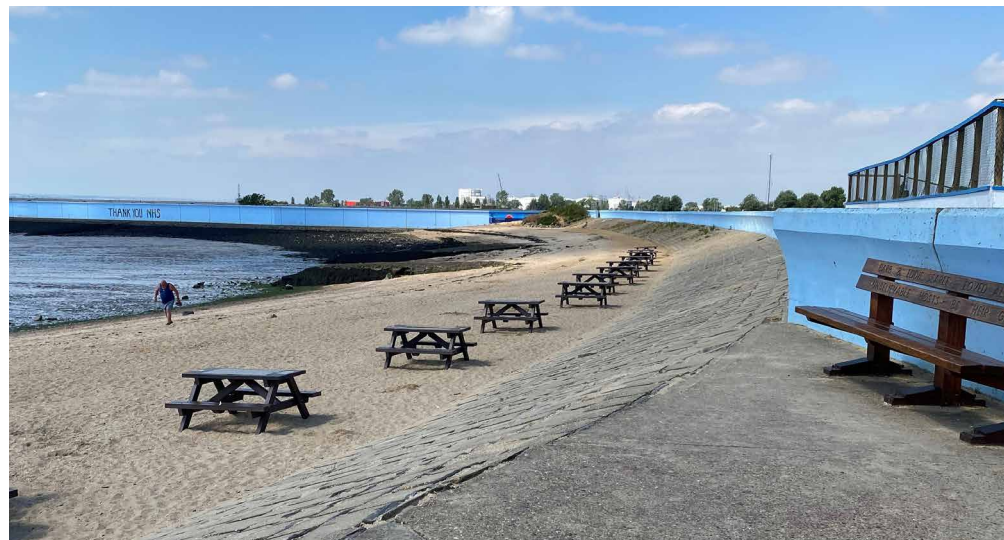
This document summarises the key issues that will be covered in the new Castle Point Plan and invites your views on how these issues should be addressed by asking a series of questions. We realise this is a big consultation, and you may not wish to answer every question. We value you taking the time to answer as many as you wish. The more you answer the more of your views can be taken into consideration.

You are encouraged to answer the questions within the Issues and Options document directly on-line via the Council's consultation portal, which can be accessed via [here](#).

You can also submit representations by email to:
CPPlan@castlepoint.gov.uk

or by post to: CP Plan, Council Offices, Kiln Road, Benfleet, SS7 1TF

If emailing or sending postal responses, please remember to indicate which questions you are answering.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

What Happens Next?

This is an important stage of consultation on the Castle Point Plan. The Council will review all the comments received and publish a summary report on the Council’s website. The comments, along with technical evidence the Council is preparing, will help to prepare a draft Castle Point Plan, which will be published for further consultation following a meeting of the Full Council in January 2025.

The next stage will be the Publication of the Castle Point Plan prior to its Submission to Government, who will arrange for an independent Planning Inspector to be appointed to conduct an Examination in Public. Publication is scheduled to be in January 2025, and Submission in April 2025. The duration of the examination period is difficult to estimate as the programme is determined by the Planning Inspector, but it is anticipated that the new Castle Point Plan will be in place by March 2026.

Stage	Estimated date
Issues & Options Consultation (Regulation 18)	Jul-Sept 2024
Publication of the Castle Point Plan (Regulation 19)	Jan-Mar 2025
Submission of the Castle Point Plan	April 2025
Examination in Public of the Castle Point Plan	Jun-Dec 2025
Adoption of the Castle Point Plan	March 2026

If you make a response to this consultation we will automatically keep you informed as the next steps as the preparation of the Castle Point Plan take place, including notifying you of opportunities to make representations on the draft plan in early 2025. If you don’t wish to make a representation, but do wish to be added to the Council’s database to be kept informed about the progress of the new Castle Point Plan, you can register your contact details at CPPlan@castlepoint.gov.uk.

We will treat any contact details you provide us in accordance with our privacy policy - [Privacy - Castle Point Borough Council - Citizen Space](#)



Photography: Tessa Hallmann

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Context

The Starting Point

In 2022, the Council agreed to commence the production of the Castle Point Plan based on the principles that it would engage broadly with residents, and that it would seek, as a starting point to:

- **Identify the locally assessed housing need for the borough;**
- **Prioritise brownfield land for housing development; and**
- **Protect and preserve the Green Belt.**

This document establishes choices for residents and other stakeholders to consider in the context of this starting position.

You have told us – Initial Engagement

In 2023 an early public engagement consultation was carried out to understand the key issues that the Castle Point Plan should address. The main issues raised were:

- The protection of the borough's green spaces is a key priority for local residents. There is support for increasing and improving green spaces by adding trees and plantation to improve air quality and their overall quality.
- There is a preference for new development to be on existing brownfield sites, and a support for improved industrial sites for economic development.
- There is concern over the impact of new development on the already congested roads, as well as increased parking issues. A proactive approach is required to prevent adding congestion. An additional 'third road' to improve Canvey Island's access/egress was strongly supported, and other transport improvements are supported including junction improvements, a better, more affordable bus service to help reduce car use, and cheaper parking in town centres for residents and workers. Better road and pathway maintenance is needed to ensure that people are able to move around safely and comfortably, especially those with mobility issues. Opportunities to reduce rat-running are supported.

- The provision of social housing and housing that buyers can afford to buy or rent, is important for local residents.
- Respondents stated that new infrastructure was needed before new development is commenced. This is because of the perception that current infrastructure is insufficient, with health and education highlighted the most due to the increasing population. Community Hubs containing various services and additional accessible toilets were suggested.
- It is commonly felt that the borough looks run-down and untidy. Parks and open spaces should be well maintained with additional litter and dog litter bins. Local town centres are in need of improvement, with some support for pedestrianising parts of local centres.
- Water infrastructure and wastewater management are specific issues requiring attention due to increased flooding.
- Leisure and entertainment activities (particularly for young people) are required to support the health and well-being of the growing population and prevent/reduce antisocial behaviour.



Wider Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Local plans need to be prepared in accordance with national regulations. The Government's expectations about what a local plan should contain are set out principally in the **NPPF**, with additional guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Guidance (**NPPG**). The NPPF sets out (Para 8) that the planning system should achieve sustainable development by achieving three overarching objectives:

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

Castle Point Corporate Plan

The Council is in the process of producing a new Corporate Plan. As the new Corporate Plan is developed, it will be important to ensure that there is alignment between the corporate plan and the emerging castle point plan.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Challenges & Issues

This plan is being prepared at a time of significant investment in the borough. This investment from both the government and private sector, will create opportunities to tackle many of the issues that local people have told us need tackling.

This Plan, therefore, does not act in isolation and will form part of a series of key plans for the borough that will be bound in a Community Plan.

The Community Plan will be our contract with local residents on what can be achieved by working together. It will bind together a Place Narrative (how the borough will be to live and work in); the Council's Corporate Plan (what the Council will do to support the needs of the borough); and the Council's Commercial Strategy (how we will use, for example, land and buildings to support the needs of the borough).

We are doing this with or partners at Essex County Council, the NHS, Police and Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, the government, the voluntary sector, businesses and local communities.

This fresh approach, and the partnership working, is leading to investment, including the Long-Term Plan for Towns; the Sport England / Active Essex Place Partnership; investment in the arts and health.

Through this Plan the Council will co-ordinate the delivery of new infrastructure. The Council will prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, setting out the costs and funding sources for new and improved services. This will be secured through, amongst other ways, CIL and S106 payments from new developments.

Evidence Base

Local plans must be based on evidence to satisfy the Tests of Soundness requirements as set out in the NPPF (Paragraph 35). The Council is assembling the evidence in line with Government requirements and that evidence base will continue to be updated as the Castle Point Plan is prepared, it can be found [here](#).

Sustainability Assessment

The new Castle Point Plan is required to be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that the potential environmental, economic, and social effects of the Castle Point Plan are understood, and where necessary, mitigated. The Sustainability Appraisal is an iterative process that evolves alongside the preparation of the plan.

At this consultation stage a scoping report which assesses the potential impacts of each borough-wide development option has been prepared.

This is available [here](#) and provides a useful additional resource to read alongside this document. Comments are invited on this document as part of this consultation.

Equalities Impact Assessment

A separate Equalities Impact Assessment has also been produced, and this is available [here](#).

Habitats Regulations Assessment

A Habitats Regulation Assessment has also been produced, and this is available [here](#).



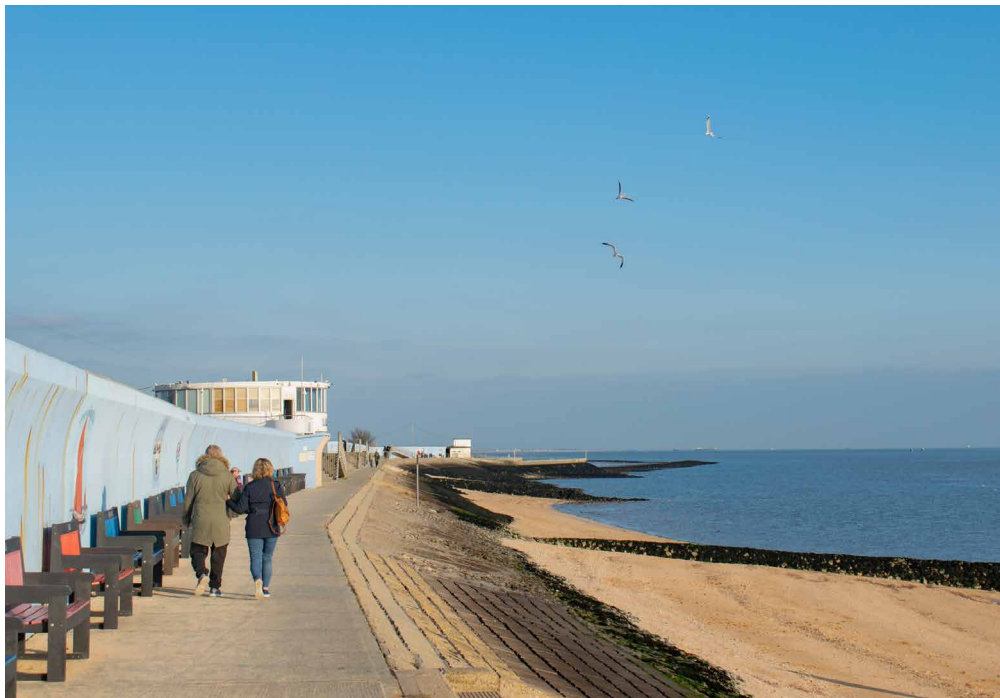
Castle Point Plan Vision

You told us that you value the community and green spaces in the borough but would like to see transport improved and congestion reduced.

You said you were concerned about the impact that new development would have on infrastructure including drainage infrastructure.

The partners across the various public and charitable organisations that we work with told us they wanted to see improved health outcomes for residents and improved opportunities for all our residents to access education, training, jobs and good quality housing. Partners also told us it was important to address the challenges arising from climate change.

Local businesses told us that they need skilled local employees for their businesses and good quality affordable business premises and the transport and communications infrastructure necessary to access wider economic opportunities.



It is our ambition to make Castle Point will be a place where:

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

Tell us what you think:

Q1. What are your views on the draft Vision for the Castle Point Plan?

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Area-Based Policy Options

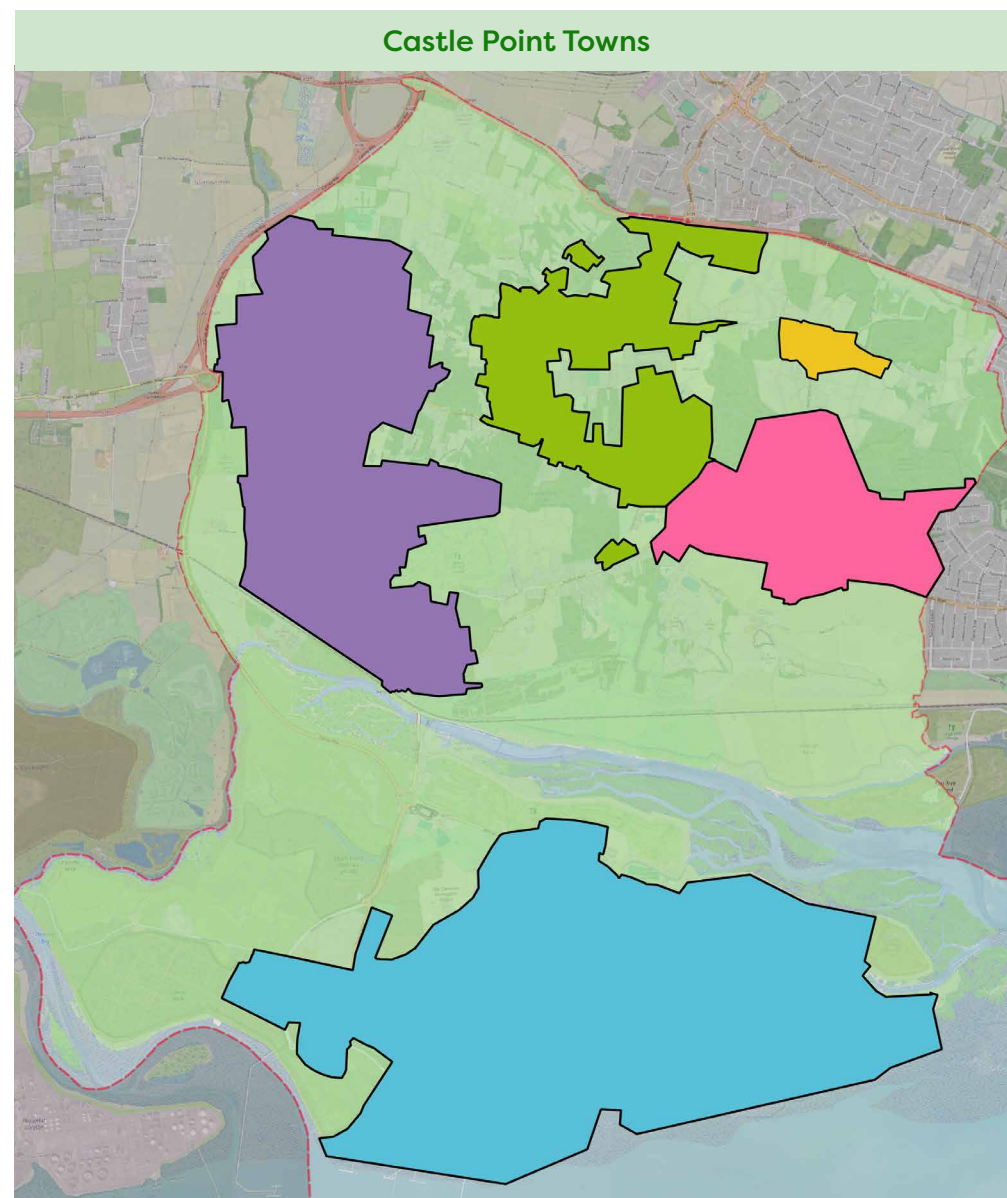
Castle Point is formed of four towns: **Canvey**, **Benfleet**, **Hadleigh** and **Thundersley**, as well as the village of **Daws Heath**. Each of these areas are distinct from each other, and generally surrounded by Green Belt. The exception to this is Hadleigh, which is contiguous with Thundersley and the Southend conurbation to the east.

The Council is seeking to produce a plan which delivers the vision for the borough but is rooted in the unique characteristics of the individual towns and village that make up the borough. This means that the approach to development and change in the Castle Point Plan will be one of place-making and may well vary by area as it responds to each area's unique characteristics, challenges and opportunities.

The Council is pursuing an urban-first approach to allocating possible development sites in the Castle Point Plan. This means prioritising the development of brownfield sites to protect, so far as possible, the borough's green spaces for their rich biodiversity, habitat, and leisure value for future generations to enjoy.

This means directing development into the borough's urban areas. The benefits of regenerating land in urban areas extends far beyond simply providing new homes for local residents. Urban developments offer opportunities to produce new and improved spaces for local businesses, and service providers, improve the co-location of important facilities to make it easier to complete multiple jobs on a single visit to a local town centre, and fund improvements to the town centre's streets and spaces.

This chapter introduces the issues relevant to each area, and discusses how they may be addressed through the Castle Point Plan. It is these area-based sections that will form the basis of the draft Castle Point Plan, and will form the basis of the overall Development Strategy for the borough.



Map Key:

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

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Potential Development Sites within the Area-Based Approaches

The following sections include potential development sites that may have capacity to accommodate growth in the plan period (2023 – 2043). These sites are set out by town (and village), with most being within “clusters” which may have the opportunity to act together to produce shared local benefits.

The sites identified are at present generally low-density brownfield sites, which could be extended or redeveloped to bring investment into the borough, creating new homes alongside improved services and employment opportunities.

The sites listed below have been identified through the Call for Sites process, and in a Draft Urban Capacity Study.

- **The Call for Sites invited landowners to submit sites for consideration in the preparation of the Castle Point Plan.**
- **The Urban Capacity Study sought to identify any additional under-utilised sites that may be suitable for development within the urban area.**

Together these processes establish what land may be available for future development in the borough. The Council has sought to ensure that “no stone is left unturned”, in exploring opportunities to accommodate as much of the borough’s development need as possible within the existing urban area.

It is important to understand that at this time these sites are identified as potential sources of urban development only. They are not allocations for development at this stage. They are identified to clearly set out the types of choices that need to be made, and so that these choices can be considered alongside options for growth outside of the urban area. Put simply, the more development opportunities that are identified on urban sites, the lower the risk is to our borough’s precious Green Belt areas.

All the sites identified are considered to have the potential to be more intensively used, but the Council has not at this point determined which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan. These choices will be

taken once consultation feedback has been received and analysed. **It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.** This means sites will very likely be added to or excluded from the draft Castle Point Plan following consultation.

As a part of this consultation, the Council is re-opening the Call for Sites process so that additional land can be promoted for development, with the aim of understanding as fully as possible what land is available, and appropriate for inclusion in the draft Castle Point Plan.

It is important that we establish as fully as possible what land is available for development, in order to demonstrate to the Government that we have considered all reasonable choices available to us in arriving at a draft Castle Point Plan in January 2025.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Canvey Island

Canvey Island is located in the south of the borough and is the largest town in Castle Point with around 40,000 residents.

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

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

Canvey is well located in terms of employment opportunities, residents are located near to major regional employment sites such as the Freeport in Thurrock, and Southend Airport and Business Park in Southend.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- Improved and alternative access route(s) to and from Canvey Island was the most common request from Canvey residents. In particular, the addition or completion of a third road off the island is desired. This request arises both in respect of concerns over traffic congestion but also in respect of concerns regarding evacuation in the event of flooding.
- Accessibility is very important, including mobility scooters for the ageing population. Routes to and around the town centre need to be improved for this mode, the condition of pathways are currently poor.
- The bus routes serving the business parks, particularly West Canvey need to be improved.

- The seafront and beach are key features, which need maintaining and improving to cater for tourism and boost the local economy.
- The town centre including the Knightswick Centre is run-down and needs improving. Adequate parking is needed to support town centre businesses.
- There is a perception that there has been a lack of investment in the Island, and that there is little in the way of places to go and things to do for children and families. Better parks are required.
- There is a noticeable lack of social housing and homes that young people can afford on the Island. There is a perception that new retirement homes do not help to meet local housing need.
- A large portion of the population of Canvey Island comprises of elderly people with a significant number of retirement homes. Services and leisure uses cater for older people, but not so much for younger residents.
- A community hub incorporating important services is a popular suggestion with much frustration around The Paddocks site not being utilised to its full potential.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Challenges & Opportunities on Canvey

Following the Great Flood in 1953 which claimed the lives of 59 residents, Canvey has seen substantial upgrades to its sea defences and now benefits from some of the best protection in the country. The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan seeks to ensure that these defences are maintained and improved in line with climate change predictions. However, there remains a residual risk of flooding from the sea, and there remains a risk of flooding from surface water due to the low-lying, flat nature of Canvey which means excessive rainwater cannot drain away quickly. Canvey Lake acts as a key water retention asset on the Island and needs maintaining to continue to serve that purpose.

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

Compared to Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley, both house prices and land values on Canvey are relatively low. This means Canvey is popular with both first-time buyers and those looking to release equity. It is however challenging to secure money from new development to deliver significant community benefits.

Due to its coastal position, there is an opportunity to explore how Canvey can better use the Thames in terms of a tourism asset and a transport asset. While there have been considerable improvements to Canvey's seafront already, there is the opportunity to secure significant economic benefits by making better use of the river.

Due to changing trends around holidaying, the seafront area on Canvey now comprises just a small area on Eastern Esplanade. There is however a strong business community in this location and the opportunity to grow the tourism sector in this area through appropriate investment in infrastructure and curation of an appropriate mix of businesses.

Charfleets Industrial Estate is the large employment area to the west of the borough. The estate is well occupied, and vacancies are low, however there are opportunities to improve land use efficiency within the estate through regeneration and redevelopment of underutilised land. This can be facilitated through the planned growth of new employment areas to the south and west of the estate.

There are two port facilities on Canvey receiving fuel imports. These are connected into the national pipeline network. Whilst contributing to the national economy these sites are categorised as hazardous installations and there is a need to manage the relationship between these facilities and the surrounding residential and industrial developments.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Due to the challenges the Island faces, it has been recognised for investment by the Government. This presents a huge opportunity to deliver transformational change. In March 2024 the government announced that £20 million has been allocated to Canvey Island through the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund to deliver projects which improve community safety; regeneration, town centres, arts and heritage; and improving local connectivity over the next 10 years. How the money is used will be defined by an independent board of community leaders.

The town is also a priority area for Sport England funding through their place partnership initiative which aims to encourage greater participation in sport and physical activity. The Gunny is an important local space with the potential to be improved for greater community facilities. In March 2012 the project was successful in securing £1m in Lottery funding, and after comprehensive local consultation a plan has been prepared for the delivery of a new multifunctional community facility. The various parts of the project include Historic England's Ancient Monument consent in 2021, and planning approval in February 2022.

Other opportunities for the Island come from the investment in reducing the risk of tidal flooding, with the revetment works due to be completed in 2024; a priority area for the Arts Council; roll out of full fibre to all homes; and the Estuary Festival 2025, which will leave a huge legacy for the whole borough.

Q2. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed on Canvey Island within the Castle Point Plan?

Improved Access to and around Canvey Island

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

Improved access on and off Canvey Island is linked to the economic outcomes of the Island and its residents in terms of access to education, training, and employment.

There is a strong desire for the improved access to be in the form of a new road. Due to nature conservation considerations this new road would most likely be to the west of Canvey Island providing connection to the job opportunities at the ports in Thurrock. However, this route would also run through an area where the harm to nature is still likely to be significant. The cost of providing such a road is estimated to exceed £100m and may see traffic from the ports coming through Canvey to access the strategic road network.

There are alternatives to a new road which would be less harmful to the natural environment and be more deliverable in terms of cost. These include capacity improvements to Canvey Way, the provision of a multi-user off-road route to Thurrock utilising existing infrastructure, and improvements to cycling and public transport provision, including better access to rail services at Benfleet station. There may also be scope to utilise the Thames for travel, for example by using the jetty at Canvey Seafront for a river bus.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Other transport improvements could include:

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

Q3. Do you have any comments on how we should improve access to and through Canvey?

Canvey Town Centre

Canvey has the largest town centre in the borough comprising a range of national and local retailers. There is limited office provision within the town centre and a very small night-time economy.

Canvey town centre is well occupied with low vacancy rates. However, there is considerable scope to make better use of land and buildings to create a more vibrant and economically productive centre.

There are opportunities to improve the public realm and enhance the existing market provision to support regeneration of the town centre. However, these need to be accompanied by improvements to existing buildings.

There are significant opportunities to bring about new development on vacant and underutilised land in Canvey town centre to create new business space, new community and leisure facilities, and new homes. Three potential development clusters have been identified in and around the town centre recognising this opportunity.

Q4. What changes or improvements would you like to see in Canvey Town Centre?



Canvey Town Centre East Development Cluster

The town centre currently extends eastwards along the High Street. There are several blocks of single and two storey commercial buildings with substantial vacant areas that are outside the core of the town centre, and do not contribute to the vibrancy of the town. The extent of the town centre could be reduced, and these blocks could be redeveloped to provide new homes in an edge of centre location.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
101	West of Venebles Close	Potential for 22 new homes, and improved town centre services.
102	Stafford Court Care Home, Venables Close	Potential for 25 new homes, and improved town centre services.
103	56-65 High Street, (KFC and Dominos)	Potential for 16 new homes, and improved town centre services.
104	Parade on the corner of Venables and High Street	Potential for 5 new homes, and improved town centre services.
105	92-98 High Street (Hook and Partners)	Potential for 11 new home, and improved town centre services.
106	Corner of Florence Road and High St, 112 High St (Car dealership)	Potential for 6 new homes, and improved town centre services.
107	High Street between Florence Road & Oxford Road	Potential for 8 new homes, and improved town centre services.
108	Canvey Island War Memorial Hall	Potential for 14 new homes, and improved town centre services.
109	129 High Street (Esso, Londis and NTS)	Potential for 14 new homes, and improved town centre services.
110	149-151 and rear of High St (Corner Club et al)	Potential for 22 new homes, and improved town centre services.

Q5. What type of development would you support within the Canvey Town Centre East development cluster?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Canvey Town Centre West Development Cluster

The Knightswick Centre and Furtherwick Road comprise the main town centre and there are significant opportunities to deliver the regeneration of buildings and underutilised land in this area to deliver additional business space and additional homes. This development would enable the public realm and market improvements to be delivered, with the creation of a new market square.



Q6. What type of development would you support within the Canvey Town Centre West development cluster?

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
111	Job Centre, 140 Furtherwick Road	Potential for 11 new homes, and improved town centre services.
112	Oak Road Car Park and adjoining land	Potential for 27 new homes, and improved town centre parking.
113	Knightswick Shopping Centre	Potential for 140 new homes, improved town centre parking, improved town centre services, and improved local services.
114	Canvey Library, High Street	Potential for 5 new homes, and improved town centre services.
115	Corner of Knightswick Road and High Street (Barclays)	Potential for 7 new home, and improved town centre services.
116	88-94 Furtherwick Road (Iceland)	Potential for 18 new homes, and improved town centre services.
117	Land on the corner of Furtherwick Road and Waarden Road	Potential for 7 new homes, and improved town centre services.
118	11-15 Knightswick Road, Canvey Island (Roland Hall accountants)	Potential for 13 new homes, and improved town centre services.
119	14-18 Furtherwick Road and land to the rear (Halifax, Royal Mail)	Potential for 20 new homes, and improved town centre services.
120	59 Furtherwick Road (Kush)	Potential for 6 new homes, and improved town centre services.
121	Knightswick clinic, Foksville Road	Potential for 8 new homes, and improved town centre services.
122	Corner of High Street and Foksville Road (Sainsburys petrol station)	Potential for 12 new homes, and improved town centre services.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Long Road Development Cluster

Long Road is an important road on Canvey connecting the town centre with residential areas and the employment area in the west of the Island. There are several community and commercial buildings along this route which do not make efficient use of the land they sit on, and which are in a highly sustainable location, with good bus service provision and access to services in the town centre and on local shopping parades.

There is scope to deliver redevelopment on these sites, securing the delivery of new homes alongside the improved provision of modern community facilities that meet the needs of residents for years to come. The Paddocks in particular has the potential to deliver a community hub with a children's play area, new water park and open spaces, alongside residential development.



Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
123	Jones Corner, 169-179 Long Road	Potential for 13 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
124	Telephone exchange, Kittkatts Road	Redevelopment of existing industrial area for 18 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
125	Outpatients centre, Long Road	Potential for 24 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
126	The former King Canute Public House, Long Road	Potential for 22 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
127	Land adjacent to the Paddocks	Potential for 201 new homes, and improved town centre services.
128	Conservative Club, 59-63 Long Road	Potential for 29 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
129	353-365 Long Road (Cosmos Pizza)	Potential for 12 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
130	Fire Station, 131-139 Long Road	Potential for 17 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
131	Police Station, 161-167 Long Road	Potential for 14 new homes and, the retention space for commercial/community uses.

Q7. What type of development would you support within the Long Rd development cluster?

South & Eastern Canvey Development Cluster

There are a significant number of small-scale development sites in east and south Canvey. These include land at The Point in northeast Canvey. Development here has the potential to transform current industrial uses into riverside mixed use development which builds on the areas maritime history. The esplanade also has several sites which offer opportunities to create new homes in a pleasant riverside location.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
132	Canvey Island Football Club, Leigh Beck Road	Potential for 113 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
133	Land on the corner of Station Road and High Street (GMD Mowers)	Redevelopment of existing shopping parade for 9 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
134	Land at The Point	Potential for 168 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
135	Former Admiral Jellicoe, High Street	Potential for 7 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
136	Ozonia Gardens, Eastern Esplanade	Potential for 11 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
137	Land between Station Rd and Seaview Road	Potential for 12 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
138	Land off Beveland Road	Potential for 37 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q8. What types of development could be considered as appropriate within the South & East parts of Canvey Island?

Seafront Entertainment Area

The seafront entertainment area on Canvey sits about 1km south of Canvey town centre at the southern end of Furtherwick Road. The principal businesses are located on and around Eastern Esplanade and comprise a mix of leisure, food and drink, and retail. This area of the Island is highly popular and vibrant in the peak summer months and on the occasion of big events, particularly among local families.

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

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

There is limited public transport access to the area, with buses only running hourly on Sundays. This limits accessibility and increases reliance on the car, and may be a limitation to trade. There is however substantial existing parking provision on land adjacent to the defences, which cannot be used for other forms of development.

Q9. What improvements to the Seafront Entertainment Area would you like to see?



Canvey Port Facilities

The Calor Gas and Oikos facilities sites lie in the South of Canvey, and receive LPG and oil-based fuel products respectively. There is a national pipeline serving the Oikos facility which pipes the fuels off the Island. However, some of the products received by these sites is still moved off the Island by road. Both facilities are connected to the road network from Haven Road and Roscommon Way.

The location of these facilities within the Thames, and the connection into the pipeline network means that these are nationally important facilities. Whilst it is expected that a shift to renewable energies will see the import of fossil fuels decline, it is expected that these facilities will continue to operate as they switch to new renewable fuels and due to the ports strategic position.

Both facilities are identified as Hazardous Sites under health and safety regulations. It is important that new development is not located near these facilities to help manage risk to life and property. The Health and Safety Executive provide maps showing the risk and which are used to guide development away from these facilities.

Similarly, whilst there is land and scope within these sites to accommodate additional port related development, it is important that development of these facilities does not increase the level of risk to those who already live or work nearby.

Q10. Do you have any comments on Canvey's port infrastructure?



S & W Canvey Wildlife Corridor

To the north of the Calor Gas and Oikos facilities is an area of open land which provides a buffer with the nearby residential areas. This has developed as an important area for nature and is identified as a Local Wildlife Site.

To the west of this is the additional open land connecting to the Canvey Wick SSSI and the West Canvey Marshes. Land in this area is part of the wider south Essex marshlands extending into Basildon and Thurrock. It is functionally linked to the Thames Estuary Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA).

The King Charles III England Coast Path passes through the western portion of this area providing opportunities to experience and connect with wildlife and the landscape.

There is scope through the Castle Point Plan to work with landowners to continue to enhance wildlife provision in this area, whilst also providing appropriate levels of recreational access for local residents and visitors.

Q11. What improvements should be made to the South & West Canvey Wildlife Corridor?



Photography: Jack Delmonte

West Canvey Employment Area

The west of Canvey is a significant location for commercial and industrial development both within the borough and on the Island, providing many local jobs across a range of sectors. This new employment area has also contributed to bringing in better quality jobs to the Island. Despite this, there is limited bus service provision to this area resulting in high car dependency and parking stress. Improved public transport is therefore an important consideration for this area.

Charfleets Industrial Estate is the Island's main employment area. It originally developed in the 1950's and is in a mix of different private ownerships. The building stock is dated, and the layout of the estate is difficult to navigate. It is however home to a range of businesses, with very limited vacancies. There are areas of vacant and underutilised land throughout and adjacent to the estate, providing the opportunity to secure redevelopment of sites for new business space and for improved parking provision.

To support regeneration of Charfleets a new employment area is currently being developed to the south. This is close to completion and has allowed inward investment onto Canvey and for local businesses to relocate, and in some cases upscale, thereby freeing up regeneration opportunities. There remains 7.5 Ha of land with permission to the South of Northwick Road to enable this to continue. There is scope for further open land to be used for this purpose to the south of Roscommon Way.

The retail area to the west of Charfleets has grown considerably in the last five years, and now comprises several convenience retailers alongside some chain food and drink provision. Whilst this has potentially impacted on the productivity of the town centre, it provides a range of retail options which reduces the need to travel off the Island. This balance needs to be considered when determining if further retail growth is appropriate in this location.

Q12. What approach to development in the West Canvey Employment Area (Charfleets Industrial Estate and the Canvey Retail Park) would you support?

Unclustered Sites in Canvey

In addition to the sites within the development clusters of Canvey, the following sites on the table opposite, may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

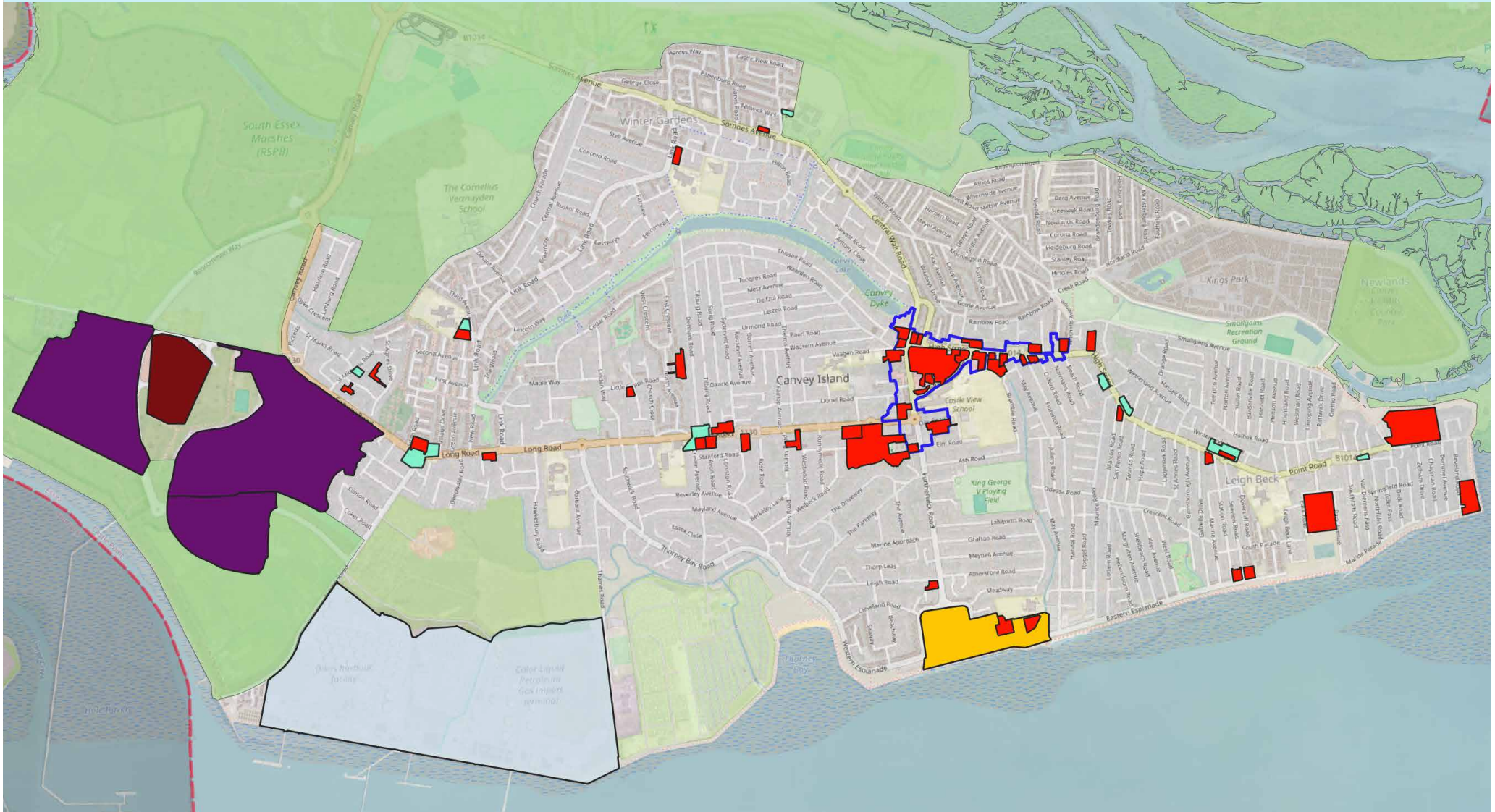
Q13. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Canvey?











Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
139	Health Centre, Third Avenue	Potential for 19 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
140	Essex Coachworks, 218 High Street	Redevelopment of existing auto use for 11 new homes and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
141	27-37 Eastern Esplanade (Parks Pallidum - Brunos)	Redevelopment of existing shopping shopping parade for 34 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
142	Briar Cottage, Leige Ave	Potential for 7 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
143	Garages off St Johns Crescent	Potential for 10 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
144	Garages site off St Agnes Drive	Potential for 15 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
145	258 Furtherwick Road	Potential for 12 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
146	Land on the corner of Little Gypps Road & Willow Close	Potential for 10 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
147	Lubbins Car Park, Eastern Esplanade	Potential for 19 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
148	Land to the rear of North Avenue	Potential for 36 new homes. and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
149	Morrisons, Link Road	Potential for 16 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Canvey Island



Map Key:

	Designated Employment Sites		Retail Parks		Town Centre		Seafront Entertainment
	Port Related Facilities		Shopping Parades		Urban Sites		Green Belt

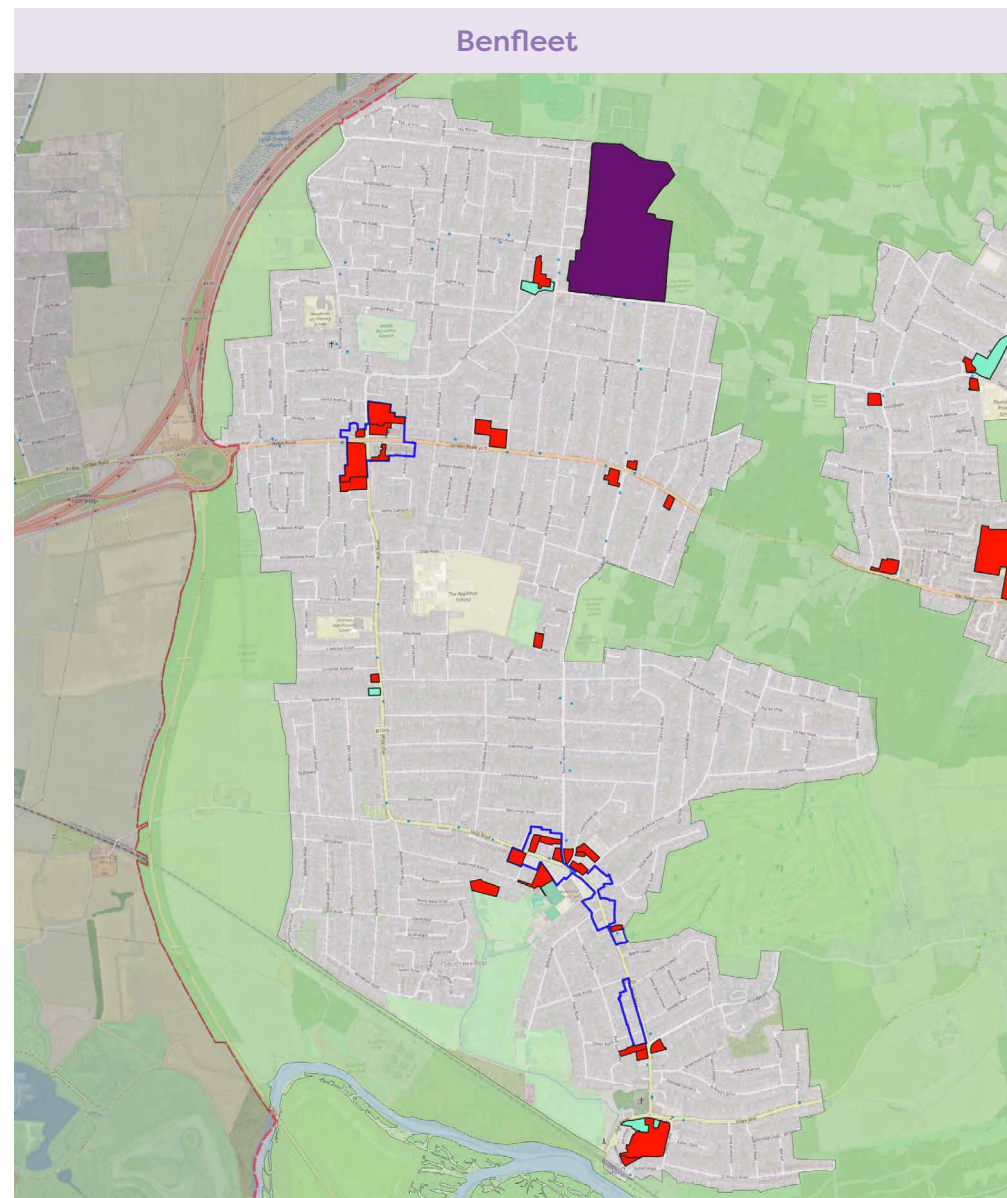
PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Benfleet







Benfleet is located in the west of the borough on the mainland, and extends almost all of the way from the East Haven Creek to the Rayleigh Spur roundabout. The original village was located in the south, with gradual northern expansion throughout the 20th Century. It is well connected, with access via road via the Sadlers Farm roundabout, and rail to Southend and London.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- Many respondents in the area stated that the green spaces needed to be protected as they are an important local facility and a haven for wildlife.
- There is a lack of activities to do within local parks, and increased funding is required to provide upgraded facilities for young people.
- Managing road infrastructure was a key theme, including managing congestion on the A13, supporting pedestrians around the Tarpots area, improving bus services, and reducing rat running.
- Local town centres need improvement, with increased convenience retail uses in preference to non-core retail. The look and feel of local centres should be improved.
- A number of respondents raised concerns around heavy vehicle traffic accessing Manor Trading Estates. There were suggestions that this estate may be better relocated.



Map Key:

	Designated Employment Sites		Retail Parks		Urban Sites
	Shopping Parades		Town Centre		Green Belt

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Challenges & Opportunities in Benfleet

Benfleet has the borough's only train station, but there are opportunities to enhance its functionality and the role it plays in connecting the borough, and supporting the local economy. The station sits within Benfleet Conservation Area which has a collection of popular pubs and restaurants. There is scope to enhance the conservation area as a leisure destination alongside its key role in the local transport network.

Benfleet is located in a valley, and consequentially there is flood risk in the south Benfleet area which needs to be carefully managed. This topography also creates a barrier to active travel to/from Benfleet station for areas to the east.

To the very south of Benfleet is Richmond Park and South Benfleet Playing Fields. These provide a key opportunity for recreation in an area that also fulfils a flood management function as a designated reservoir. There are opportunities to improve recreation provision in this area, and also enhance its role in providing active travel access to Benfleet Station.

Both South Benfleet and Tarpots local centres are well occupied with shops and services. However, both are in need of localised improvements.

South Benfleet local centre is spread along the High Road and does not have a distinct core, although the area to the west of the Kents Hill Road junction is the main area. This dispersed shopping provision means there are issues with on-street parking across the centre which impact on nearby residential streets and general traffic flows through Benfleet.

Tarpots local centre is a small centre located at the cross junction of the A13 with High Road and Rushbottom Lane. It is dominated by the road junction, and it is difficult for pedestrians to cross between the four parts of the centre.

Due to the importance of the junction there is limited scope to improve pedestrian accessibility, although there is potentially scope to improve the quality of pedestrian areas to the south of the junction.

These challenges and opportunities provide the basis for the following strategic policy areas in Benfleet.

There are potential development clusters at:

- South Benfleet Town Centre
- Tarpots Local Centre
- South Benfleet Station
- A13 Corridor
- Manor Trading Estate

Transport improvements in Benfleet could include:

- Improved pedestrian crossings along Essex Way
- Smoothing and widening footpaths of residential roads in the Tarpots area and to the north
- Introduce a further cycle route running east-west along Church Road
- Improved cycle link along Vicarage Hill & Benfleet Road
- Improved cycle facilities at Benfleet station
- Improved north-south cycle route along Kents Hill Road
- Improvements to the shared use cycle route along London Road
- Improved bus frequency (10-15 minute service) of the 22 bus route
- Re-route 28 bus along Church Road and Kenneth Road
- Potential for interventions to improve bus reliability along the A13, this could include selective detection on the bus fleet so that buses get priority at junctions
- Junction improvements in the Essex Way/High Road/ School Lane area
- Potential junction improvement at the London Road/ Rushbottom Lane junction

Q14. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed in Benfleet within the Castle Point Plan?

South Benfleet Town Centre

Located along Benfleet High Rd, there are a good range of local services, but there is a need for improvement. It is on the key north-south bus route linking Benfleet and Canvey.

There are a number of underutilised land parcels within and around the centre which offer potential to increase the immediate population, and to provide updated premises for businesses to operate in.

The focus of redevelopment here should be on creating a more pleasant environment, with a range of uses that extend into the evening to create a safer and more welcoming place for residents to visit and spend time.



Q15. What changes or improvements would you like to see in South Benfleet Local Centre?

Q16. What type of development would you support within the South Benfleet development cluster?

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
203	Benfleet Methodist Church, High Road	Redevelopment of existing community building for 19 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
204	Benfleet Tavern Public House, High Road	Potential for 25 new homes and improved town centre services.
205	Richmond Avenue Car Park 2	Potential for 38 new homes, and retention of local parking space.
206	61 High Road (T Cribb funeral directors)	Potential for 13 new homes, and improved local services.
207	Shell garage, Kents Hill Road	Potential for 12 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.
208	Benfleet Baptist Church, Kents Hill Road and Constitution Hill	Potential for 13 new homes, and improved town centre services.
209	Land between Constitution Hill and Thundersley Park Rd (South Benfleet Library and Dental Care Group)	Potential for 16 new homes, and improved town centre services.
210	Telephone Exchange, Thundersley Park Road	Potential for 21 new homes, and improved town centre services.
211	Benfleet Surgery, Constitution Hill	Potential for 5 new homes, and improved town centre services.
212	188-190 High Road	Potential for 7 new homes, and improved town centre services.
213	Sainsburys, High Road	Potential for 15 new homes, and improved town centre services.
214	Stellisons, High Road	Potential for 15 new homes, and improved town centre services.
215	South Benfleet Social Club, 6 Vicarage Hill	Potential for 16 new homes, and improved town centre services.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

South Benfleet Station & Conservation Area

Benfleet is the borough's only station on the rail network and represents a key route into and out of the borough to Southend and on routes into London. As such it represents the key gateway into the borough for visitation, both for tourism and employment.

The environment around the station is currently functional, but there are significant opportunities for improvement. Improvements could focus on enhancing onward movements by all modes of transport, by offering seamless sustainable travel modes. This could include improvement of cycling facilities, including a rental offer.

The environment around the station could also be improved to offer a more welcoming setting when entering/exiting the station, and facilities within the station could be improved to enhance the customer experience. There are underutilised sites across the High Street which offer the opportunity to provide complementary development, including development that could help to fund improvements.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
201	School Lane Car Park and 1-5 High Street	Potential redevelopment of existing shopping parade for 144 new homes and local services.
202	87-97 High Street	Potential for 13 new homes, improved commuter parking, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q17. What type of development would you support within the Benfleet Station development cluster?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

South Benfleet Conservation Area

Benfleet station is located within the South Benfleet Conservation Area. Key listed buildings include the Church of St Mary the Virgin, and the Hoy & Helmet, Anchor, and Half Crown pubs, but there are also a number of locally designated heritage assets.

The recorded history of the area dates back to the 890s and the battles between the Saxons and the Danes, and this is shaped by South Benfleet's defensible location at the intersection of the Benfleet and East Haven Creeks. There may be significant archaeological heritage in this area relating to the battle of Benfleet.

It will be important when seeking to maximise the utility of Benfleet station area that this local heritage is respected, and opportunities to celebrate and enhance the local character should be identified.

The old centre of South Benfleet comprises several pubs and retail units around the High Street area, close to the railway station. The three pubs in this area have been successful in adapting to a changing market. The retail units within this area have over time been adapted with a significant proportion of them now operating as restaurants and a bar.

A South Benfleet Conservation Area Design Code is being prepared to help guide development in the area.

Q18. What approach should be taken to development in and around the South Benfleet Conservation Area?

Tarpots Local Centre

Tarpots is a local centre focused on the intersection of the A13 and Benfleet High Rd/ Rushbottom Lane. It has good connectivity, being in close proximity to the Sadlers Farm roundabout, and has regular buses both east-west and north-south. As well as providing good connectivity, the junction is also a key congestion hotspot.

The centre provides an important range of local services, but there are significant areas of land which have potential to be used more intensively. Doing this has the potential to add value to the local centre by increasing the working and residential population, as well as create opportunities for new services, and replace uses which rely on large vehicle movements.

The Shafer centre at Great Tarpots is a small, facilitated retail centre with a diverse offering of mixed retail units and popular with new start-ups in the retail sector.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
216	Land on the north east corner of London Road and Rushbottom Lane	Potential for 17 new homes, and improved town centre services.
217	Land on the south east corner of London Road and High Road	Redevelopment of existing car park for 10 new homes the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
218	Land in the south west corner of London Road and High Road (Tarpots town centre)	Potential for 61 new homes, and improved town centre services.
219	Holy Family Church, High Road	Potential for 26 new homes, and improved town centre services.
220	Land on the north west corner of London Road and Rushbottom Lane (Tarpots town centre)	Potential for 6 new homes, and improved town centre services.
221	Aldi, off Rushbottom Lane	Potential for 49 new homes and improved town centre services.

Q19. What changes or improvements would you like to see in Tarpots Local Centre?

Q20. What type of development would you support within the Tarpots development cluster?

Manor Trading Estate Regeneration

Manor Trading Estate is one of the largest employment sites in the Borough, and as such is one of the largest sources of employment locally. It is located close to, and accessed via, residential areas, which creates conflict with local traffic, and residential amenity.

Despite being a well-occupied industrial estate, it is in a very poor condition, particularly its roads which has affected trade for many of the businesses on the estate. There is an issue with there being separate ownership of the roads in this estate and lack of maintenance. As such the estate is in need of investment if it is to be retained and grow as an employment location into the future.

Q21. What types of development could be considered as appropriate within the Manor Trading Estate?

A13 Corridor

There are a number of sites in Benfleet that are situated on the A13, which has particularly good public transport access. Development sites along this corridor may be able to deliver knowledge-based employment or infrastructural uses alongside new residential uses.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
227	312-320 London Road (Queen Bee's Nursery)	Potential for 19 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
228	Canvey Supply, 223 London Road and Linden Road	Potential for 55 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
229	Land on the northeast corner of London Road/ Kents Hill Road junction, 323-329 London Road	Potential for 8 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
230	Maharaja Restaurant, 358 London Road	Potential for 10 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.

Q22. What opportunities for improvements and development within the A13 corridor in Benfleet are there?

South Benfleet Playing Fields

The open spaces in this area provide a dual purpose, providing important local sports and leisure facilities, but also flood water storage. These uses should be enhanced where possible, particularly by improving the range of facilities associated with leisure use.

Q23. What improvements should be made to the South Benfleet Playing Fields area?

Unclustered Sites in Benfleet

In addition to the sites within the development clusters of Benfleet, the following sites may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
222	Richmond Car Park 1 off Richmond Avenue	Potential for 27 new homes, and and the retention of local parking capacity.
223	159-169 Church Road and land to the rear	Potential for 32 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
224	Benfleet Clinic, High Road	Potential for 7 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
225	Rear of 179-181 Church Road	Potential for 28 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
226	Land adjacent to Villa Park, Tarmarisk	Potential for 13 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/ community uses.

Q24. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Benfleet?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Hadleigh

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

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

During the initial engagement you told us:

- Respondents feel that Hadleigh's history and architectural interest are often overlooked, and new development need to be designed to be in keeping with the Hadleigh area.
- The green spaces surrounding Hadleigh are a valuable green buffer which ensures Hadleigh's identity is protected.
- Residents value local open spaces provide such as Hadleigh Country Park, John Burrows Park, Hadleigh Castle, West Wood, Pound Wood, Tile Wood as well as local allotment sites. Better signage should be put in place to highlight and promote Hadleigh Castle and the Olympic mountain bike track.
- There is concern about the impact of building significant numbers of flats in a relatively small area to the south of London Road.
- There is concern that Hadleigh is viewed as a thoroughfare to and from Southend, with the dual carriageway on the A13 not being beneficial to Hadleigh's Town centre. Pedestrianising part of the town centre to make it more customer friendly was suggested by some residents and stakeholders.
- There were concerns expressed about the level of on-street parking in and around Hadleigh Town Centre.

- Residents are concerned about decline in Hadleigh's town centre, and in particular the long-term vacant former Crown Pub site.
- New uses in the centre that would support a more vibrant local economy are supported, including a banking hub, community hub, public realm improvements, and leisure and entertainment uses. A suitably sited weekly market in the town centre was also suggested.



Photography: Tessa Hallmann

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Challenges & Opportunities in Hadleigh

The town centre environment could be improved to reinforce Hadleigh's importance as a place to visit rather than pass through. Traffic flow on the A13, and the dominance of the road within the centre could be reduced to help achieve this.

High frequency bus connections create potential for growth in both town centre and employment uses in the town centre. Employment uses could include office, working near home and/or creative enterprises/ workspace.

There are significant opportunities to optimise land use in and around the town centre, including on existing car parks, parcels of derelict land, and underutilised sites.

Improved environmental conditions within the town centre could help to create an enhanced town centre offer, including an improved evening and leisure offer.

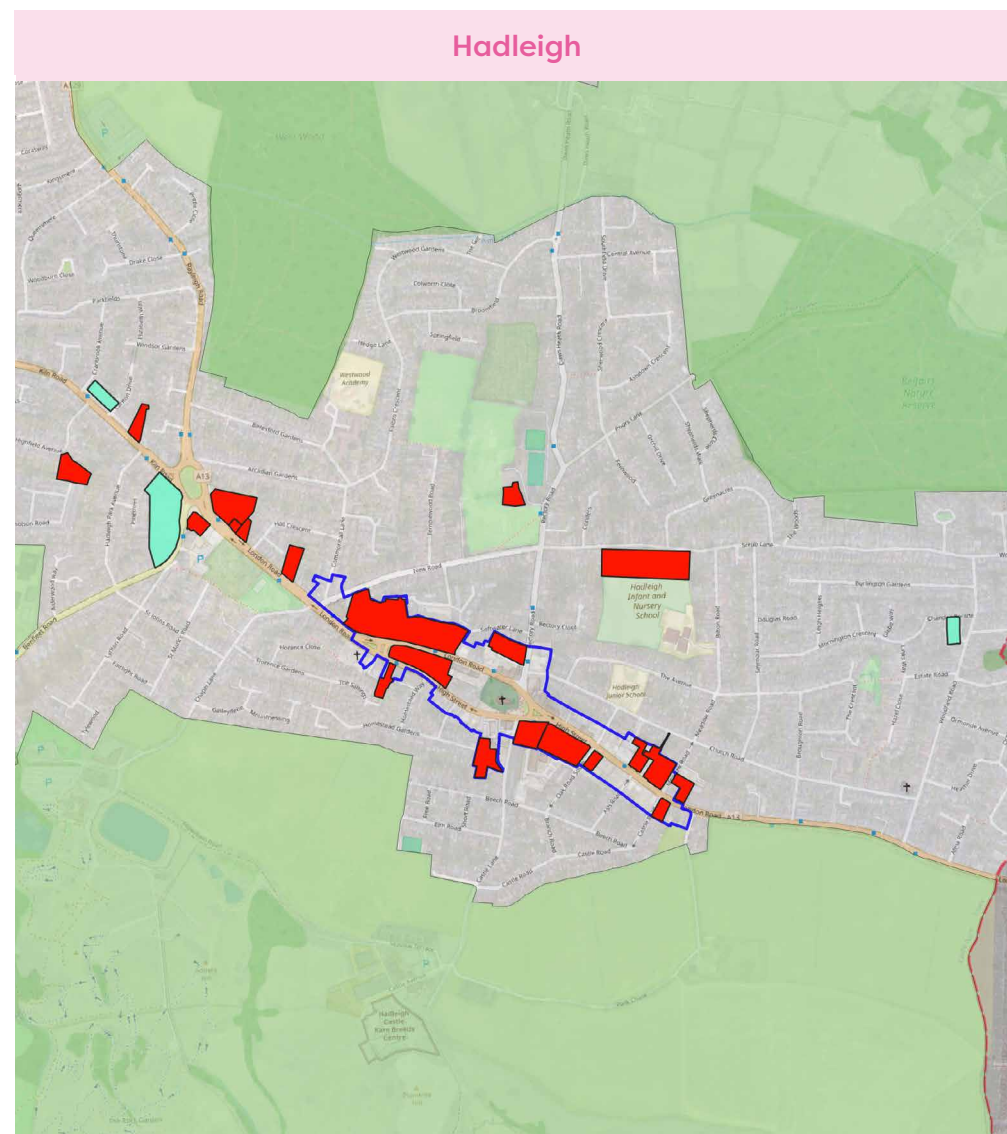
Hadleigh has a large catchment, and is rich in facilities. Improving access to and between green spaces, the town centre, the high-quality landscapes in the south and other surrounding centres will increase overall ability to access these assets.

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

Transport improvements in Hadleigh and Daws Heath could include:

- Additional pedestrian crossings of Rayleigh Road
- Add on-road cycle infrastructure along New Road and Scrub Lane and potential for cycle routes on Woodfield Rd and Church Rd
- Increased frequency of the number 3 bus from 120 minutes to 60 minutes
- Possible junction improvements at in the Rectory Road/ A13 area
- Possible improvements to the A129 (Rayleigh Rd)/ A13 junction

These challenges and opportunities provide the basis for the following strategic policy areas in Hadleigh.



Map Key:



Q25. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed in Hadleigh within the Castle Point Plan?

Benfleet and Southend Marshes

The marshes hold a significant landscape value, both in terms of views from and to it, and as a living landscape. Significant areas of the marshland and creek in this location are designated due to its nature conservation value. Benfleet and Southend Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) covers an extensive area of the marshland and Hadleigh Ray creek, with a smaller area of this designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) due to its importance as a habitat for birds. It is designated under International law as a Ramsar site due to the number of migratory birds present.

Q26. How should the management of Benfleet and Southend Marshes be approached in the Plan?



Hadleigh Castle Country Park and The Salvation Army Farm

Hadleigh Castle Country Park and The Salvation Army Farm located to the south of Hadleigh offers a range leisure and tourism activities, sitting within the overall Benfleet & Southend living landscape.

These include the rare breeds centre, glamping, Olympic legacy mountain biking trails and important historical features. There is scope to improve this offer and improve the linkages between the Country Park and Farm and the town centre.

The Salvation Army Farm, established in the late 1800s, provides training and social enterprise opportunities for local people and people with a range of needs principally in the green economy sector. Due to the quality of the arable land across the farm, which has declined over the years, the farm is diversifying and taking advantage of the opportunity under biodiversity net gain to offer 250 hectares of new grassland and coastal grazing marsh habitat.

Q27. What improvements should be made to the Hadleigh Castle Country Park area?

Hadleigh Town Centre

Hadleigh has the borough's second largest town centre, comprising a mixture of national and local retailers, cafés, restaurants and a growing cultural provision. However, the town centre is dominated by car movements on the A13, which forms a gyratory in the centre.

There are a number of potential development sites in and around the centre, which have the potential to deliver significant uplift in the number and range of facilities in the centre, as well as providing local population to sustain them.

If linked to appropriate environmental improvements, including a more town centre appropriate road layout, the town centre's prospects could be significantly improved.

There are potential development clusters at:

- Hadleigh Island Area
- Vic House Corner Roundabout
- Hadleigh Town Centre East
- A13 Corridor

Q28. What changes or improvements would you like to see in Hadleigh Town Centre?

Hadleigh Island Area

The Hadleigh “Island” area represents a significant opportunity to regenerate the centre of Hadleigh. The former Crown public house site has remained vacant for a significant period of time, and needs both a short-term and permanent future use. There is also significant potential for development on the Hadleigh library and old fire station site.

Presently the uses on the island site accumulate to a significant cultural offer in the borough. Cultural and community uses should be appropriately rehoused as part of any redevelopment. A masterplan that sets out how the site can deliver the re-provision of community and cultural uses, improves the local urban environment, and delivers new mixed use development should be prepared.

Across the A13, the Morrison’s supermarket offers a significant opportunity to make better use of the large car parking area. There are also potential development sites at Rectory Road car park and on the site of Hadleigh Conservative Club.

Q29. What type of development would you support within the Hadleigh Central development cluster?

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
302	The Island Site, High Street / London Road	Potential for 61 new homes and improved/retained cultural and community facilities.
303	Rectory Road Car Park	Potential for 32 new homes and improved town centre parking.
304	Morrisons, 175 London Road	Potential for 187 new homes, improved town centre parking, and improved town centre services.
305	24 High Street (Conservative Club)	Potential for 15 new homes, and improved town centre services.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Vic House Corner Roundabout

Vic House Corner roundabout is a key junction in the borough, linking routes along the A13 with South Benfleet and Rayleigh. There is scope to improve the functionality of this junction alongside the redevelopment of sites on its periphery.

There are uses on around the roundabout that would be more appropriately located on the borough's stock of industrial land. These include Magnet and the First Bus depot. Redevelopment of these sites offers an opportunity to provide much needed residential accommodation, complementary town centre uses, and potentially increased job numbers in line with a wider A13 economic development strategy.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
314	Hadleigh Clinic, 49 London Road	Potential for 11 new homes, and improved town centre services.
315	Magnet, London Road	Potential for 19 new homes, and improved town centre services.
316	Bus Depot, London Road	Potential for 66 new homes, and improved town centre services.
317	39-45 London Road (Brooms Prof. Services)	Potential for 6 new homes, and improved town centre services.

Q30. What type of development would you support within the Vic House Corner Roundabout development cluster?

Hadleigh Town Centre East

London Road in the east of Hadleigh town centre is home to many light industrial uses on tight plots. These sites are important source of employment locally, but also generate unsustainable transport patterns by bringing larger vehicles into the centre.

Other sites in this area include automotive uses such as garages and car sales, which would also be more suitable on employment land with good quality

strategic road access, and present opportunities for intensification in a sustainable location, which being within easy walking distance of Hadleigh town centre offer opportunities to support town centre revitalisation.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
306	351-359 London Road	Potential for 17 new homes, and improved town centre services.
307	Rear of 244-258 London Rd	Potential for 33 new homes, and improved town centre services.
308	Land on the corner of Castle Road and London Road (364-370 London Road),	Potential for 12 new homes, and improved town centre services.
309	Castle Lane Car Park	Potential for 32 new homes, and improved town centre parking.
310	Johnsons Factory, London Rd	Potential for 39 new homes, and improved town centre services.
311	Lidl, London Road	Potential for 58 new homes, and improved town centre services.
312	Corner of Oak Road South and London Road	Potential for 10 new homes, and improved town centre services.
313	Telephone exchange, London Road	Potential for 17 new homes, and improved town centre services.

Q31. What type of development would you support within the Hadleigh East development cluster?

A13 Corridor

There are a number of sites in Hadleigh that are situated on the A13, which has good public transport access. Development sites along this corridor may be able to deliver knowledge-based employment or infrastructural uses alongside new residential uses.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
301	Sandcastles Nursery, Kiln Road	Potential for 19 new homes, and the retention of local service capacity.

Q32. What opportunities for improvements and development within the A13 corridor in Hadleigh are there?

Unclustered Sites in Hadleigh

In addition to the sites within the development clusters of Hadleigh, the following sites may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
318	Land South of Scrub Lane, Hadleigh	Potential for 107 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
319	Solbys House, Rectory Road, Hadleigh	Potential for 16 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q33. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Hadleigh?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Daws Heath

Key points that came out from the initial engagement on Daws Heath were:

- Residents consider Daws Heath to be a semi-rural village. Respondents feel it is vitally important that the green spaces and ancient woodland remain, as they provide a natural green ring that protects Daws Heath's character.
- The ancient woodland in this area acts as an important green lung and contributes to mitigating air quality impacts stemming from the A127 corridor.
- The woodland and green open spaces house an abundance of varying wildlife, and a continuous wildlife corridor between Belfairs Great Wood and West Wood was suggested to create and connect habitats and development should be steered away from this area.
- Local roads are used as a cut through to and from the A127, linked to congestion at the Woodmans Arms junction.
- The Deanes School is at capacity and cannot extend further for its catchment area.
- The shop in Daws Heath Road near the junction with Western Road is very valuable to local residents.

Challenges & Opportunities in Daws Heath

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

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

Transport improvements within Daws Heath could include:

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

Q34. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed in Daws Heath within the Castle Point Plan?



Photography: Tessa Hallmann

Unclustered Sites in Daws Heath

The following sites may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
320	20 Haresland Close, Daws Heath	Potential for 25 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q35. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Daws Heath?



Map Key:

- Urban Sites
- Green Belt

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Thundersley

Thundersley is situated primarily to the north of the A13 between Benfleet and Hadleigh. It is surrounded to the north, south, west and northeast by Green Belt, but the urban area converges with Hadleigh along the A13 in the south east of Thundersley. There is also a section of Green Belt that Thundersley in effect abounds between Hart Road, Rayleigh Road & the A13.

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

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

During the initial engagement you told us:

- The most important asset for Thundersley residents is the area's open spaces and woodland which form part of the Green Belt.
- Residents consider that the area has a village identity and feel. There is however potential for Thundersley Village to be re-imagined and its reputation improved.
- Due to Thundersley's position between the A127 and A13, various residential roads experience high volumes of traffic using them as rat-runs.
- Improving the bus services in the Thundersley area, including to Benfleet station, could help to reduce car usage and alleviate some congestion.
- Pavements and roads in Thundersley need improving.



Challenges & Opportunities in Thundersley

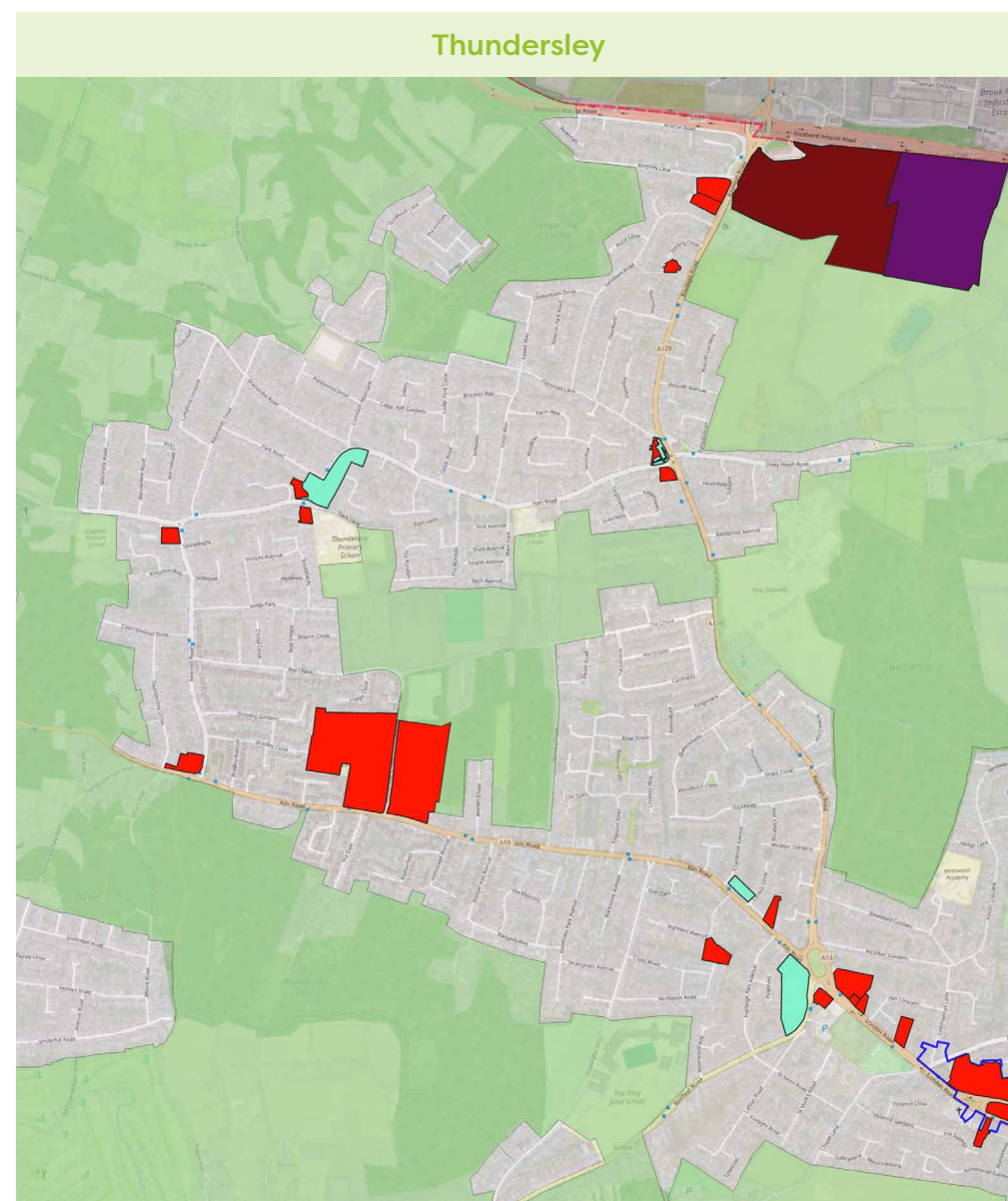
Whilst there are no designated local centres in Thundersley, meaning that residents have to travel for a full range of services, Thundersley village plays a strong role in local community life, and there may be scope to consider policies which support its growth and development as a local centre.

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







Transport improvements in Thundersley could include:

- Addition of demarcated pedestrian crossings along Hart Road.
- Improved cycle accessibility east-west along Common Lane/ Triton Approach/ Hart Road.
- Add an on-road cycle route along Vicarage Road/ Benfleet Road.
- Potential improvements to cycling access along Shipwrights Drive and The Chase.
- Increase the frequency of the number 27 bus to every 10 minutes.
- Possible improvements to the A13/ Kenneth Road junction.
- Possible improvements to the A127/A129 (Rayleigh Rd) junction.
- Possible improvements to the Hart Rd/A129 (Rayleigh Rd) junction.

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



Map Key:

	Designated Employment Sites		Retail Parks		Urban Sites
	Shopping Parades		Town Centre		Green Belt

Q36. What are your views on the issues that need to be addressed in Thundersley within the Castle Point Plan?

Kiln Road

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

Due to the site’s good access from the A13, an element of new employment could be sought on this site. As per other community facilities in the borough, the need to provide for the ongoing provision of existing services will need to be established before any redevelopment of their existing buildings will be acceptable.

A master plan for the site will be developed with the engagement of the local community and key partners and providers of public and voluntary services.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
403	Council Offices, Kiln Road	Potential for 271 new homes and improved local services.
404	USP College, Kiln Road	Potential for 374 new homes and improved local services.



Q37. What type of development would you support within the Kiln Rd development cluster?

A13 Corridor

There are a number of sites in Thundersley that are situated on the A13, which has particularly good public transport access. Development sites along this corridor may be able to deliver knowledge-based employment or infrastructural uses alongside new residential uses.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
401	Thames Loose Leaf, 289 Kiln Road	Potential for 15 new homes and improved local services.
402	Land on the corner of London Road and Kenneth Road (Thundersley Congregational Church and The Beacon)	Potential for 28 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q38. What opportunities for improvements and development within the A13 corridor in Thundersley are there?

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Rayleigh Road

Rayleigh Road is a key route through the borough, with good bus connectivity linking Rayleigh with Hadleigh. There is a small shopping parade at the junction of Rayleigh Road and Hart Road, with capacity on a neighbouring site to enhance overall service provision in the area.

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
405	343 Rayleigh Road	Potential for 12 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
406	Rayleigh Road Parade, Rayleigh Road	Potential for 9 new homes, and improved town centre services.

Q39. What types of development could be considered as appropriate within the Rayleigh Weir retail park and Stadium Way employment area?



Unclustered Sites in Thundersley

In addition to the sites within the development clusters of Thundersley, the following sites may have potential to deliver development to help meet local needs:

Ref	Site Name	Potential Development
407	Halfords, 543-557 Rayleigh Road	Potential for 38 new homes, and improved town centre services.
408	61-69 Hart Road	Potential for 12 new homes, and improved town centre services.
409	Land between Starling Close and Hacks Drive	Potential for 9 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
410	Land between Highfield Avenue and Nicholson Road	Potential for 28 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.
411	Dark Lane Car Park	Potential for 11 new homes, and the retention of local parking capacity.
412	Thundersley Clinic, Kenneth Road	Potential for 17 new homes, and the retention of space for commercial/community uses.

Q40. Do you have any views about the potential Site Allocations in Thundersley?

Borough-Wide Development Strategy Options

Overview

Castle Point's population is growing, which is in line with population growth across the south east of England. This stems from the high number and quality of jobs available in the region, and strong access to services in London, as well as to other locations across the UK and internationally, making it an attractive place to live and work.

The Castle Point Plan will seek to meet a range of development needs, this includes housing, but it also includes employment opportunities, leisure provision, and the day-to-day shopping, education and health facilities that serve a growing population.

The previous sections have outlined how the existing towns in Castle Point can grow and change to respond to this demand for development space. This provides the baseline for the borough-wide development strategy.

How many homes do we need?

Ensuring that there is an appropriate supply of homes is an important aspect of the Castle Point Plan. Doing this ensures that the borough's younger residents can afford to buy or rent properties, and that an appropriate stock of homes is available for residents as they move through life.

The Government has a Standard Methodology which acts as the starting point for setting a housing requirement for local areas. This incorporates local population growth rates, house prices, and income levels to produce a local housing need figure. Using the Standard Methodology, and without having specific regard to local circumstances, Castle Point's housing requirement would be 355 dwellings per annum between 2023-2043 (7,100 total). This figure represents a significant uplift on the number of homes that have been built locally in recent years.

When added together, the Government's aim is that the combined local targets will deliver in the order of 300k new houses per year to address the

nation's housing shortage. When considering the housing requirement to be included within the Castle Point Plan, it is important to recognise that the plan is required to contribute to this national objective. It will do this by listening to local residents, having regard to local housing needs, land availability, and the character of the local area. The Castle Point Plan is seeking to maximise the local benefits and minimise the local impacts of new development.

The Council commissioned a Local Housing Needs Assessment to better understand local housing need, and what type of new homes need to be built. The Local Housing Needs Assessment shows that there are exceptional circumstances which justify moving away from the Standard Methodology housing requirement. Specifically, the assessment identifies that there has been a significant over-estimation within the Standard Methodology regarding migration into the borough which has artificially inflated the overall housing requirement.

Having comprehensively updated the data informing the Standard Methodology, including revising the migration figure, the recommendation from the Local Housing Needs Assessment is that there is a need for 255 new homes p.a. between 2023-2043 (5,100 total). A household telephone survey that was conducted as part of the local housing needs assessment and alongside the analysis of statistical data confirmed that this would meet the needs identified by local people.



What are the constraints to development?

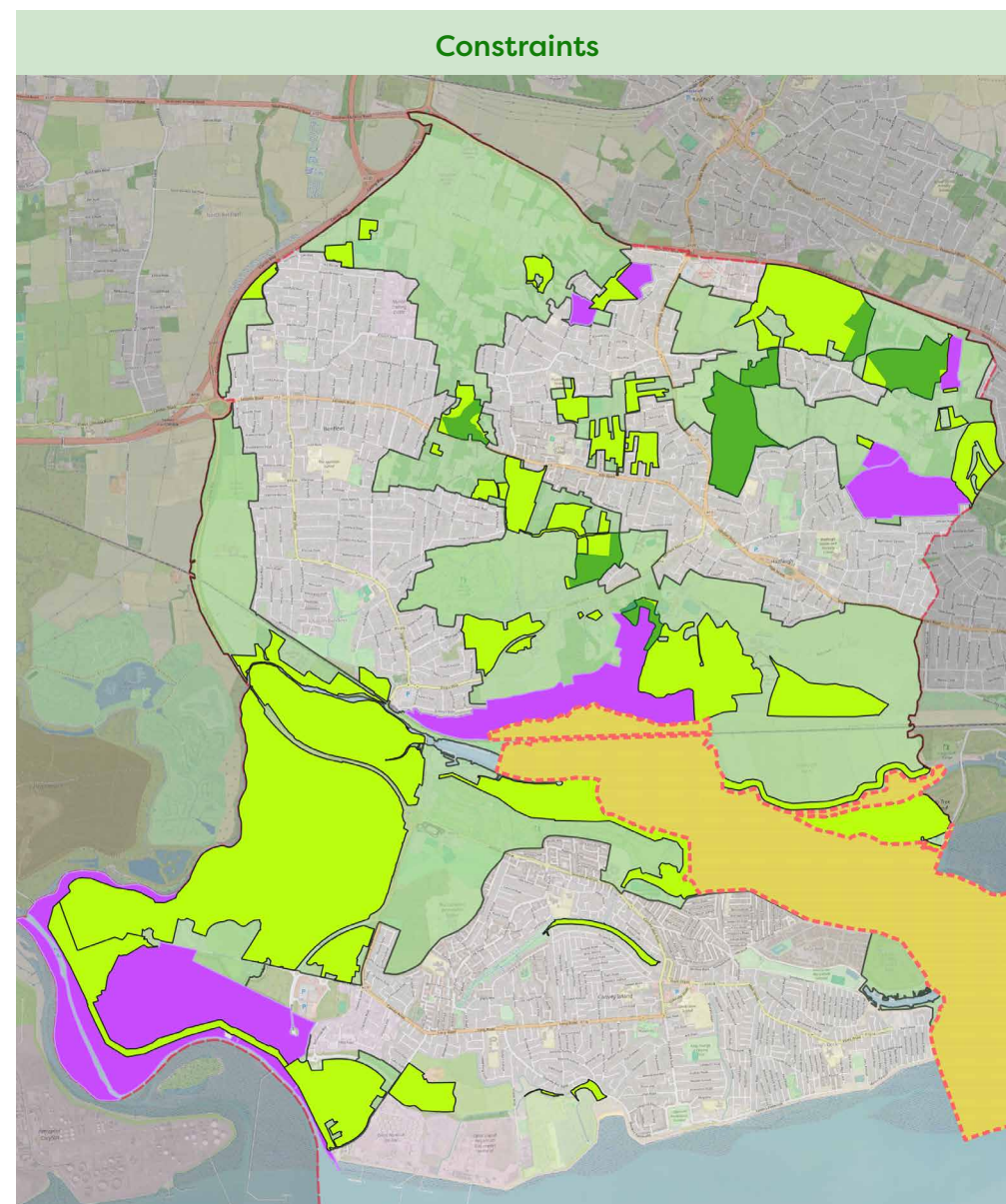
Castle Point is not a large borough, and developable land is limited. The borough is within the Green Belt, which principally acts to restrict the outward expansion of existing settlements, but also provides an abundance of open space and nature habitats. The capacity of the urban area is also limited by flood risk, and existing urban character, which needs to be reflected when considering growth options within the existing urban areas of the borough.

The capacity of local infrastructure may also be a constraint on future development. Local roads already suffer from congestion at key junctions, which means that they may be unable to accommodate the additional traffic demands arising from significant new housing growth.






Additionally, there are concerns around the provision of infrastructure locally, including the provision of good quality health and education facilities, in increased pressure on parks and open spaces.

Borough-wide Development Options

There are choices about how development needs can be met in the Castle Point Plan, and a range of Options are set out below. These cater for different overall amounts of growth, and frame the choices that can be made in the Development Strategy. The Options are not exhaustive, they provide a basis for consultation on the choices between locations that need to be made.



Map Key:

 Green Belt	 Local Wildlife Sites	 Site of Special Scientific Interest
 Ancient Woodland	 Special Protection Area and Ramsar	

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Extant Permissions & Completions.

As the Plan period has already started (1st April 2023), some development has started, some has planning permission, and some has been completed. This is “known growth”, and forms the starting point for the housing growth that will happen over the Plan period.

In the 2023/24 monitoring year, year 1 of the Plan, traditionally built housing completions contributed 77 net additional dwellings to the stock of housing in the borough.

An element of this known growth is the replacement of old style holiday caravans at Thorney Bay Park with new style park homes. As the site is a caravan park, the siting of the park homes do not need planning consent but do contribute to housing supply. Over the period from 2023 to 2028 it is anticipated that 565 park homes will be sited replacing 426 caravans. In 2023/24 151 old style caravans were removed, and not replaced with new-style park homes.

There remains space for the provision of 139 additional park homes to be provided at Thorney Bay Park, which is included in the overall housing capacity of the borough.

Accounting for both traditional housing completions and changes in the number of caravans at Thorney Bay Park, there was a net loss of 58 homes in 2023/24.

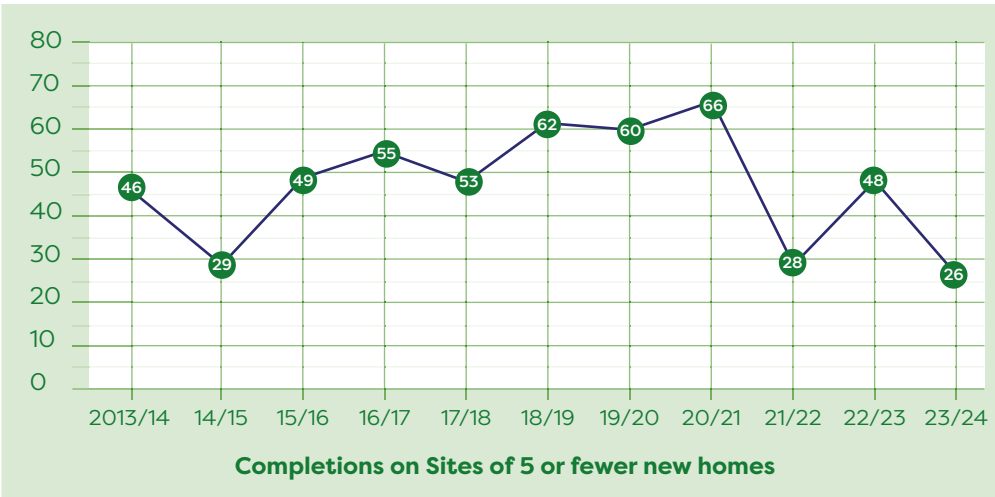
As of 1st April 2024, development totalling 706 new homes had planning permission. A further 61 homes (net) have determined consent, subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement. Combined, the total supply of extant consents is 767 new homes.

Based on an expectation that 10% of planning permissions do not progress into new development completions, 690 new homes are forecast to be delivered. These are expected to be delivered in years 2-4 of the Plan period (2024/25-2026/27), reflect the three-year period for a planning permission.

Windfall

Windfall development can be defined as when a site which is not specifically allocated for development in a local plan, becomes available for development during the lifetime of that plan. Most windfall sites are for one or a small number of homes.

The Council has recorded the number of housing completions on sites of five or fewer new homes for the last 10 years. It is considered that this provides a robust dataset for the estimating of future development on sites of five or fewer new homes. The 10-year average is 47 new homes per year.



Windfall is expected to come forward at a rate of 47 new homes per year for each of years 5-20 of the plan period (2027/28-2042/43) (16 years), totalling 752 new homes.

Combined, completions, extant permissions, park home capacity, and windfall development together account for 1,523 new homes over the duration of the Castle Point Plan. This development will be included in every development option presented in this document.

Option 1 – Deliver growth within the existing urban area

It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.

The Council, in line with the NPPF, is pursuing a brownfield-first approach to development in the borough. This means a primary focus on meeting

development needs within existing urban areas where possible. The Council has so far undertaken a Call for Sites, to understand what land is available for development, and a draft Urban Capacity Study, to proactively seek urban capacity in the borough.

Call for Sites 2023

In order to understand the options for meeting local development needs the Council opened a Call for Sites window between January and February 2024.

The Call for Sites was undertaken to understand what land is available to inform the production of the Castle Point Plan. 271 sites were received, and these have been assessed by the Council for developability. A summary of all sites received in the Call for Sites is included as part of the Development Options Technical Paper which is available [here](#).

Urban Capacity

The Council has undertaken a Draft Urban Capacity Assessment as part of the emerging Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA). In addition to sites received during the Call for Sites process, the Council has identified additional sites that have development capacity, and these are also included in the draft Urban Capacity Assessment.

The Council is continuing to work on the SLAA, which will be completed in time for the Publication of the Castle Point Plan. As the SLAA is completed, the urban capacity will be confirmed, but it is important for the basis of consultation, that the Council is clear on which sites have been included in the draft Urban Capacity Assessment.

The potential capacity of each potential development site is quoted in the area based tables set out earlier in this document, but the overall urban capacity quoted is a reduced figure, to account for uncertainty around

availability of some sites. Details of each site's capacity and estimated urban capacity of the borough are set out at **Appendix A** of this document. All urban sites are in sustainable locations, with good access to services, often in and around town or local centres, or on bus routes. Most of the urban sites have existing uses, which in many cases will need to be replaced. Some uses are not suitable for their current location, and should be rehoused in a more suitable location. For example, industrial uses may be more appropriate on industrial estates.

It has been assumed at this stage that all urban sites will include an active ground floor use. This could be a new or replacement shop or service, an opportunity to provide community infrastructure, or a new location for a local business.

Development within the urban area is relatively clustered, with sites with capacity generally being in and around town centres, and on bus routes. The list of sites has been broken down into clusters:

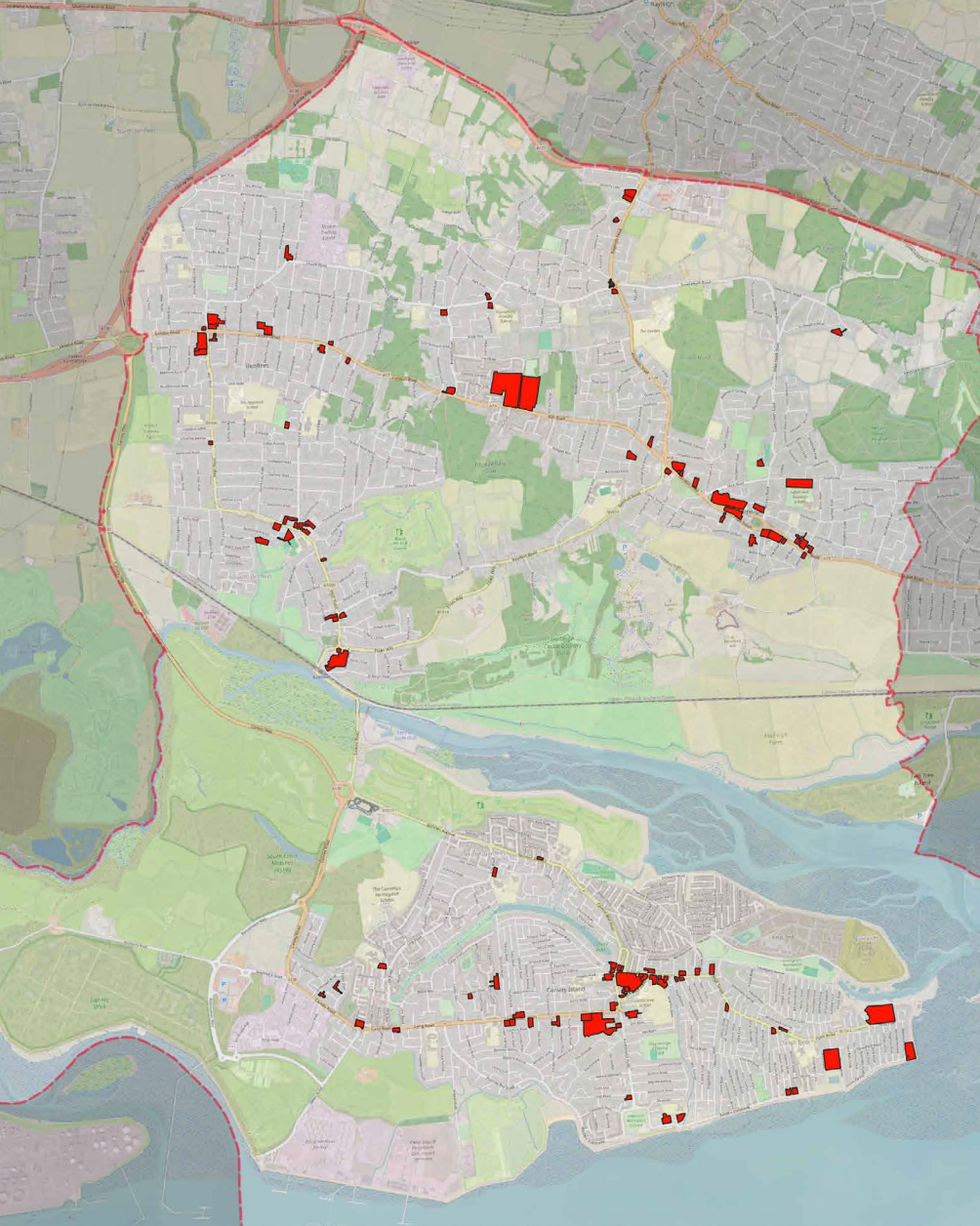
Development Clusters

Development densities have been modelled on recent developments in clusters around the borough. This means that while the density of site allocations will increase from their existing use, developments will be in keeping with the character of the existing area.

This process has identified that there is a capacity of 2,204 units on sites within the urban area. This is a modelled figure to reflect that some of the identified sites may not come forward for development.

Combined, extant permissions & completions, windfall development, and urban capacity gives a total of 3,727 new homes 2023-2043. As the Council is proposing a brownfield-first local plan, the urban area is the preferred location for new development in the borough.

Potential Urban Capacity Sites



Map Key:  Urban Sites

Option 1a - Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area

In this development option, development will be limited to sites within the existing urban area. This will mean a significant redevelopment of existing brownfield sites for new, more intense development. This would generally be multi-storey development in sustainable locations, principally in and around town centres and along bus routes.

There is considerable scope for mixed use development in this option, generally at ground floor level where new employment, new and improved town centre floorspace, including community services could be provided.

It is these development opportunities that were presented in the town based sections previously, and provide the baseline for any potential plan. This option is the foundation for all other options, and delivers the urban first approach.

Pros of Option 1a	Cons of Option 1a
Green Belt and open spaces sending opportunities.	Local housing need is not fully met, exacerbating housing need and homelessness and reducing affordability further.
Growth is targeted around existing infrastructure presenting opportunities for existing infrastructure to be improved.	Reduced development contributions available to fund new infrastructure.
	Housing growth may be insufficient to support the supply of labour needed for local businesses to grow and thrive.

Option 1b – Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area

There are three allocated employment areas in the borough; at Manor Trading Estate Benfleet, Stadium way at Rayleigh Weir, and Charfleets on Canvey. These sites are within the urban area, and represent significant brownfield areas with the potential to accommodate new development. Due to the relative capital values of residential (high) and commercial (low) land, the redevelopment of employment land for residential may be a viable developable option.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

This option is the same as option 1a with the additional redevelopment of a portion of the borough’s Designated Employment Areas to deliver the balance of new homes (1,373) to meet local housing needs. The specific amount of land has not been identified, but would include some or all of Manor Trading Estate, Stadium Way, and/or Charfleets industrial estates. In this option, new land is not identified for replacement employment uses, but there may be some scope for mixed use development on some sites to replace employment floorspace as part of any employment land regeneration.

The most significant impact of regenerating employment areas for new housing would be the loss of local industrial land, which could negatively reinforce the existing commuting outflow position.

Depending on the mix of new uses, there is some potential to further strengthen the co-location of homes and services, as well as create space within new development for new jobs, although these would likely be office-based rather than industrial.

Pros of Option 1b	Cons of Option 1b
<p>Green Belt and open spaces are protected.</p> <p>Local housing need would be met.</p> <p>Growth is targeted around existing infrastructure presenting opportunities for existing infrastructure to be improved.</p>	<p>Loss of employment land and consequential loss of access to local jobs.</p> <p>Housing provision largely on small brownfield sites, limiting the provision of affordable housing.</p>

Option 1c – Increase density in the urban area

This option has the same sites as Option 1a. The difference is that in this option, higher densities would be sought, thereby meeting local development needs on the same amount of land. This would mean new development being above recent development densities, and an evolution of local character in some areas.

In order to meet local housing need on the same land area as option 1a, the density (for example through increased height or a proportionate increase in intensity by building on a larger proportion of a site or reducing parking requirements) would need to be increased by approximately one-third. This may, alongside increasing local residential density, create increased opportunities for new and replacement town centre visitation due to the relatively high numbers of people living adjacent to town centre areas.

This option has the potential to create larger regenerative benefits as increasing density further increases the co-location benefits of new homes and existing services by building more in town centres and along bus routes. This comes at the potential expense of impact on local character from larger and taller new developments. It protects existing employment and environmental assets.

Pros of Option 1c	Cons of Option 1c
<p>Green belt and open spaces are protected.</p> <p>Local housing need would be met Growth is targeted around existing infrastructure presenting opportunities for existing infrastructure to be improved.</p> <p>Town Centre regeneration stimulated to a more significant degree than under other options.</p>	<p>Potential impact on local character from taller and bigger buildings.</p> <p>Housing provision largely on brownfield sites, limiting the provision of affordable housing.</p> <p>Growth may be too significant for those parts of infrastructure that are already at capacity and cannot be improved.</p> <p>Reduced parking in new developments and within town centres, causing on-street parking issues.</p>

Summary – Option 1

It is evident that meeting local housing need in full, within the urban area is very challenging. There is considerable risk in preparing a plan that does not meet local housing needs, as it may not be found sound at Examination.

Equally, there are considerable impacts to “cramming” development into the urban area at the expense of local character or long-term economic potential if provided at the expense of employment land.

The impacts of Options 1a, 1b and 1c suggest that it is appropriate to consider further options for how to meet housing needs. This means considering Options that include Green Belt land.

Option 2 – Limited use of Green Belt land to meet local housing needs

It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.

There are 2,750ha of land designated as Green Belt in Castle Point. This is the equivalent of 3,928 Wembley football pitches.

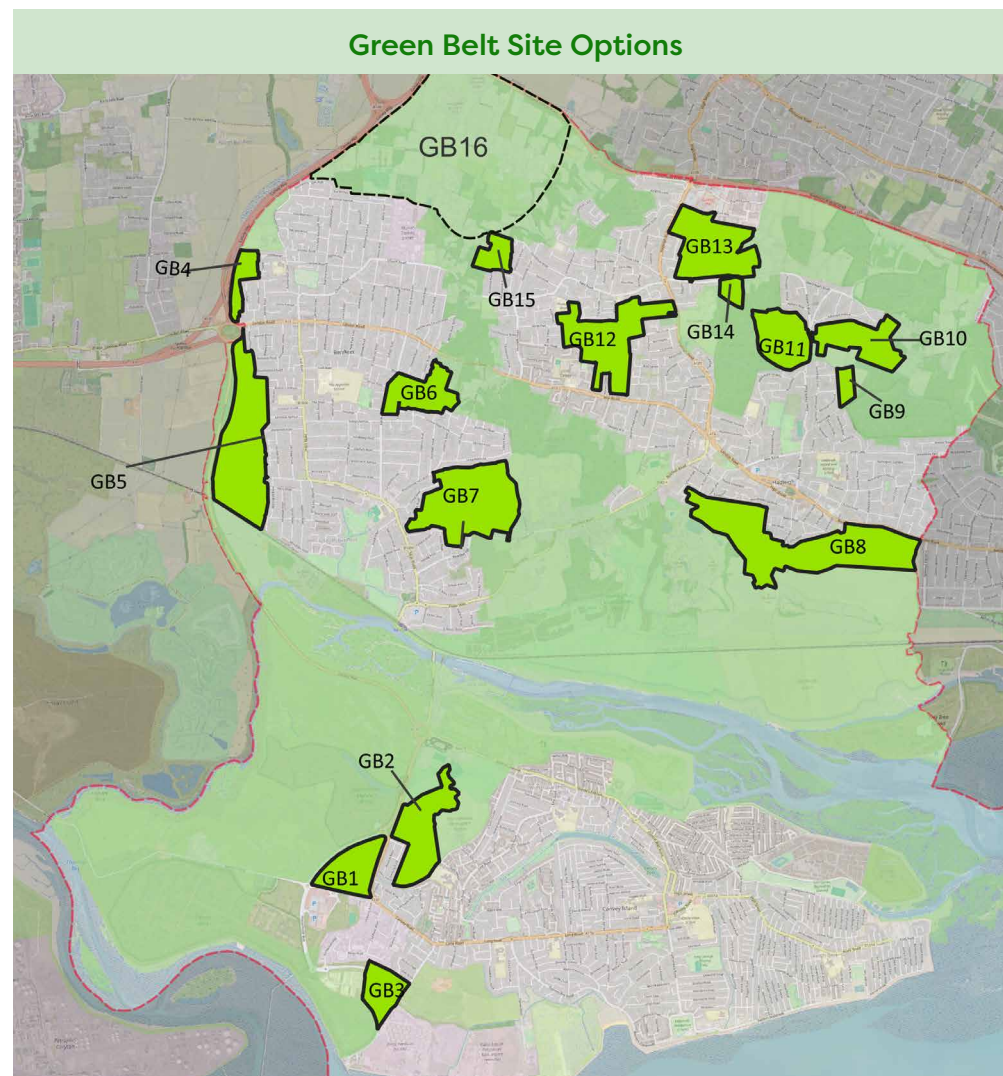
Green Belt land is significantly protected from new development, and can only be released in a Local Plan Review that is supported by a Green Belt review. The Council has not yet decided whether or not it will undertake a Green Belt review. The outcomes of this engagement will inform whether a Green Belt review should be undertaken.

There are different levels of potential Green Belt release. This is in part based on the housing requirement we choose to meet. The Standard Methodology requirement is higher than the Local Assessed Housing Need, so meeting the Standard Methodology requirement would require more land to accommodate the higher number of homes (See Option 3).

There is also the option to release Green Belt land for a use other than housing. For example, if a significant new employment facility was created in the Green Belt, there would be potential to release existing designated employment areas for new housing development.

A range of sites within the Green Belt were submitted through the Call for Sites. The Council has grouped these into 16 site options for the purpose of

consultation in this document. This ensures that the site options identified would not leave “gaps” between the existing and any future green belt boundary. The site options have not considered the existing uses within their boundary, but it should be noted that where valuable uses, such as parks and allotments are located within these options, there is scope for their retention as part of any future development.



Map Key: Green Belt Green Belt Site Options North West Thundersley Option

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

List and summary of GB Site Options

Ref	Site Name	Description of Site Option
GB1	Land to the west of Canvey Road	16 Ha area comprising fields with limited employment activity to the west of Canvey, bounded by Roscommon Way.
GB2	Land to the east of Canvey Road	27 Ha area comprising fields and marshland protruding north from the western flank of Canvey's urban area.
GB3	Land south of Charfleets	8 Ha open area to the south of Canvey urban area, in between Charfleets industrial estate and the Oikos storage facility.
GB4	Land off Glebelands	8 Ha grassland between the western edge of Benfleet urban area and the A130, north of the Sadlers Farm roundabout.
GB5	Land west of Benfleet	39 Ha grassland with some wooded areas and limited industrial activity between the western edge of Benfleet urban area and the A130, south of the Sadlers Farm roundabout.
GB6	Land between Felstead Road and Catherine Road	13 Ha largely wooded site adjacent to the eastern edge of Benfleet urban area just south of the A13.
GB7	Boyce Hill Golf Course	42 Ha golf course to the east of the southern portion of Benfleet urban area, north of the rail station.
GB8	Land south of Hadleigh	64 Ha of agricultural fields adjoining almost all of the southern edge of Hadleigh urban area.

GB9	Oak Tree Farm	4 Ha of fields east of the northern part of Hadleigh, to the east of Daws Heath Rd.
GB10	Land south east of Daws Heath	19 Ha collection of large fields attached to the south western part of Daws Heath Village.
GB11	Land south west of Daws Heath	17 Ha collection of large fields attached to the southern flank of Daws Heath Village, east of Daws Heath Rd.
GB12	The Chase	27 Ha collection of land parcels around the Chase in a semi-enclosed Green Belt enclave within Thundersley.
GB13	East of Rayleigh Road	28 Ha of land bounded to the north by Rayleigh Weir retail park, and Thundersley across Rayleigh Rd to the south and west.
GB14	South of Daws Heath Road	4 Ha collection of fields to the east of the Thundersley urban area on Daws Heath Road.
GB15	Land north of Grasmere Road and Borrowdale Road	8 Ha collection of fields and woodland adjacent to the northwest of Thundersley west of Langford Crescent.
GB16	North West of Thundersley	160 Ha collection of "plotlands" north of the Benfleet urban area on the junction of A127/ A130/ A1245. There are existing low density industrial units and homes within this area.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Option 2a – Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need

This option includes the urban sites identified in Option 1a, but would also include Green Belt sites to deliver the local development needs in the borough. The amount of Green Belt land required to meet local housing needs is estimated at 50Ha, in order to develop 1,373 additional new homes. This is the equivalent of approximately 70 Wembley football pitches.

Land would only be identified following a Green Belt review, which would test the relative contribution that all parts of the Green Belt make to the purposes of the Green Belt. Any substantial Green Belt sites would include proportionate infrastructure and services to balance the increase in new homes.

Pros of Option 2a	Cons of Option 2a
Local housing need is met in full, including the need for affordable homes. Relatively higher infrastructure contributions.	Loss of Green Belt. Environmental impacts arising from the development of greenfield land.

Option 2b – Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley

In this option, in addition to the sites identified in Option 1a, a comprehensive regeneration of the “plotlands” area in the north of the borough to deliver mixed use development comprising space for both homes and jobs. In terms of meeting local housing needs, as in Option 2a, approximately 50 Hectares of Green Belt land would be required during the period to 2043.

The “plotlands” area to the north west of Thundersley forms a significant area of land that is in highly fragmented ownership, and although within the Green Belt, contains a wide range of build development, from small leisure buildings,

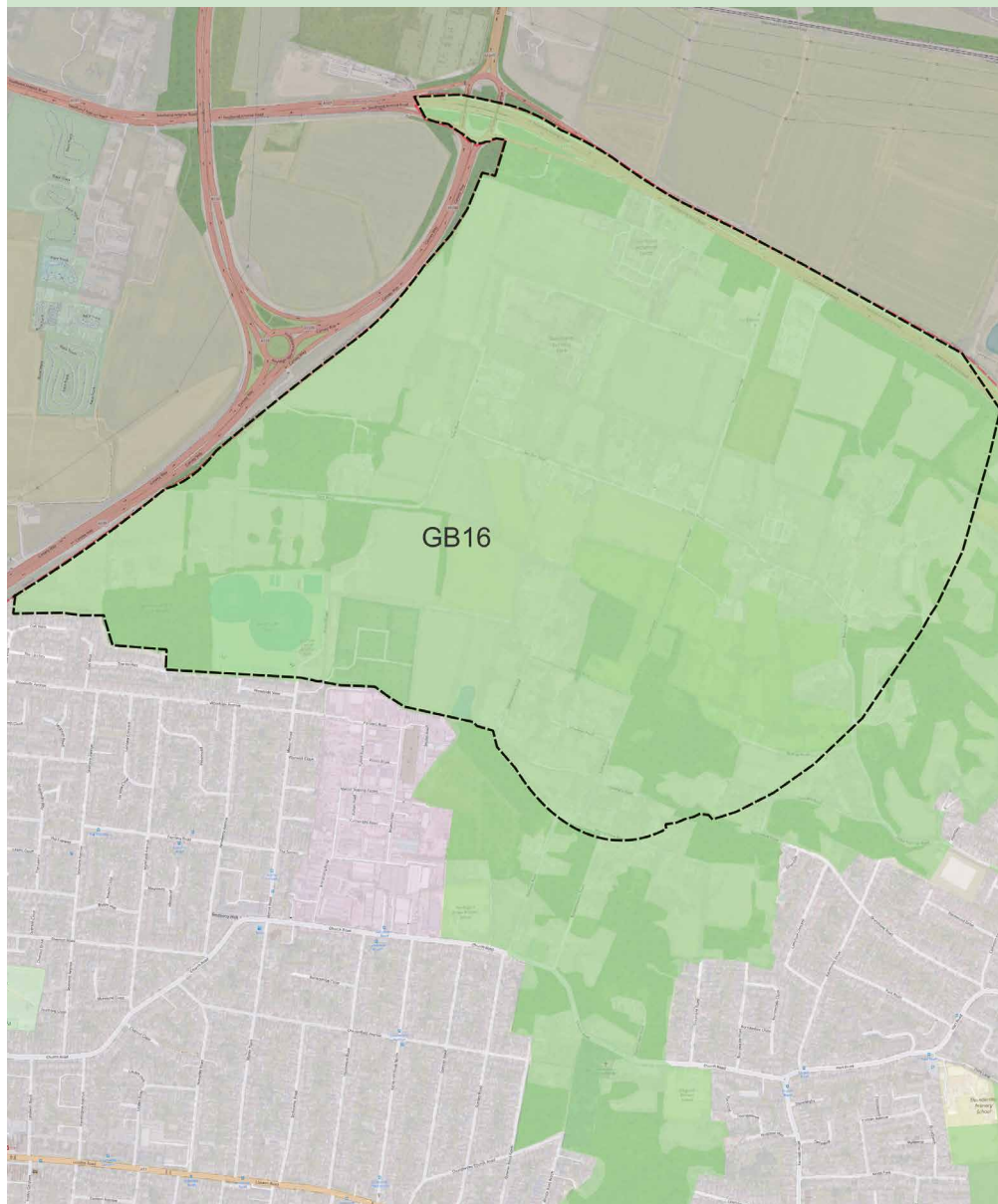
through houses, to industrial uses. This is currently the borough’s fourth largest employment area, although it is highly fragmented and comprises a poor quality stock of premises.


A significant amount of land was submitted in this area through the Call for Sites exercise. At present there are not suitable accesses into these sites to consider them developable in planning terms, in addition to their Green Belt designation. The Council considers that a comprehensive approach would be required in order to enable all land parcels to contribute to a masterplan which sets out the business case for new access from the A127/ A130.

Given the above, it is anticipated that should this area be allocated, that the area remains in the Green Belt until a master plan has been prepared and the area allocated in a review of this Plan. In the north west of Thundersley area, any development would need to not only be large enough to meet local development needs, but would also need to generate sufficient value to deliver a new access from A127/ A130. This could, subject to agreement from other neighbouring authorities be in combination with other sites in Basildon and Rochford that could help to build the business case for a future junction improvement.

Pros of Option 2b	Cons of Option 2b
Local housing need is met in full, including the need for affordable homes. Scope to deliver employment growth alongside new homes. Scale of opportunity may enable infrastructure needs to be met on-site limiting impact on existing provision.	Loss of Green Belt. Environmental impacts arising from the development of greenfield land. Relatively high cost of new infrastructure required to support new development.

North West Thundersley Option



Map Key:  Green Belt  North West Thundersley Option

Option 3 – Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need

It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.

The Council could aim to achieve the amount of housing set out in the Government's standard methodology (7,100 new homes 2023-2043). Of this 3,727 would be in the urban area as per Option 1, leaving 3,373 that would have to be met in the Green Belt. This is 2,000 more in total than in Option 2a, and would require approximately 70 additional hectares of land (120 Hectares in total) in order to be delivered. This is equivalent to 170 Wembley football pitches.

In this option, a Green Belt review would inform a more substantial release of Green Belt to deliver sites that would meet development needs as defined by the Government's standard methodology for housing need in the Borough. Land would be identified following a Green Belt review, and any substantial Green Belt sites would include proportionate employment, infrastructure, and services to balance the increase in new homes. This would be in addition to the sites identified in Option 1a.

By meeting the Government's standard methodology housing target, this option would provide significant opportunity for choice in the housing market. The release of Green Belt sites is considered to have significant environmental impacts.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Summary of Growth Options

Options	Urban Area	Employment Land	Green Belt	Total
1a - Limit new development to the Urban Area	3,727	-	-	3,727
1b - Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area	3,727,	1,373	-	5,100
1c - Increase density in the urban area		5,100	-	5,100
2a - Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need	3,727	-	1,373	5,100
2b - Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley	3,727	-	1,373	5,100
3 - Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology need	3,727	-	3,373	7,100

About the Options

These options are not mutually exclusive; each has a range of potential sites associated with them, and as the Plan progresses, more information on each of the sites will influence the eventual spatial strategy.

Similarly, the total amount of development, which varies by option, can and will change. The Council, in determining a preferred development strategy for the Castle Point Plan, is seeking to develop sites that make a positive contribution to the borough's local areas.

As such, you may have comments about potential sites, areas, patterns of development, densities of development, and/or uses on individual or clusters of sites.

These Options have been provided to illustrate the choices available for the location of development in the Castle Point Plan. We have presented them in this way to enable consultation feedback to be given clearly. It is important to note that it is possible to combine parts of the different options together.



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Tell us what you think:

Q41. What do you think the Castle Point Plan housing requirement need figure should be? Please select your preferred choice from the options below:

Options for delivering the housing growth we need	Choice
Urban Area Capacity Only (c3,727)	
Local Housing Need (c5,100)	
Standard Methodology Housing Need (c7,100)	
Other (please state)	

Q42. Please rank the following options in your order of preference for delivering the housing growth we need:

Options for delivering the housing growth we need	Preference Ranking
1. Option 1a – Limit new development to the Urban Area	
2. Option 1b – Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area to meet local housing needs	
3. Option 1c – Increase density in the urban area to meet local housing needs	
4. Option 2a – Release c50 Ha of Green Belt to meet local housing needs	
5. Option 2b – Create a substantial new employment area in NW of Thundersley to release some existing employment land for new homes to meet local housing needs	
6. Option 3 – Release c120 Ha of Green Belt land to meet the Standard Methodology housing requirement	

Q43. Do you have any comments on the implications of the Options opposite?

Q44. Do you have another preferred option, which may include a combination of the above, or alternative land sources?

Q45. What do you think about the sources of urban land identified, and how should they be managed if they are redeveloped, for example, should existing service capacity be retained on site or within the borough?

Q46. What types of development could be considered as appropriate within the North West of Thundersley area?



Photography: Tessa Hallmann

Deciding the Council's priorities for developer contributions

It is important to have realistic expectations about what the Council can achieve via the planning system and prioritise what is necessary, both to ensure that new development can take place and to sustain that development in the longer term.

The Castle Point Plan will expect house builders to provide high quality developments with the necessary services and infrastructure to support the needs of the future occupiers. However, the amount of on-site infrastructure and contributions that the Council can require of new development is affected by financial viability – i.e., what the development can afford to provide.

The financial viability of development and the amount that it can afford to contribute towards infrastructure is affected by: the cost of construction; the type and number of specific on-site requirements for the development to meet; the value of land that is being developed; and the sale price of the development once it has been completed.

The Council's expectations in the Castle Point Plan must therefore be very clear, so that developers do not pay too much for a piece of land and then calculate that they cannot afford to meet our policy requirements. We will be commissioning viability assessments to help us set any new policy requirements at a level that is viable for development to go ahead.

Clearly, all the Council's planning policy requirements are important, but no requirement should be so high that it makes development unviable, and therefore the Castle Point Plan undeliverable, which will lead to more speculative development (including in the Green Belt) and loss of appeals.

Consequently, if one policy requirement is increased, another may need to be reduced. The Council wants to understand what you think is the most important.

Q48. Are there any other priorities not listed above which you feel should be delivered alongside new housing in the plan?

Q49. What benefits could justify increased density in new development in the borough?

Benefits afforded by increasing development density	Preference Ranking
1. Development should focus on being in keeping with existing character	
2. Some increased density could be acceptable if it delivers more affordable housing	
3. Some increased density could be acceptable if it safeguards the Green Belt	
4. Some increased density could be acceptable if it delivers more infrastructure	
5. Some increased density could be acceptable if it delivers town centre improvements	

Q50. Are there any other benefits that you think it would be appropriate for higher density development to deliver?

Q47. Please rank the following outcome options in your order of preference to show what you feel should be delivered alongside new housing in the Plan:

Outcome options you would like to see delivered with new development	Preference Ranking
1. Increase affordable housing contributions from new developments	
2. Emphasise design quality in new developments	
3. Focus on the delivery of new community infrastructure within new developments	
4. Focus on creating exemplary environmental sustainability in new developments	
5. Focus on improving the operation of the transport network	

- [Development Site Options Technical Paper 2024](#)
- [Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023](#)
- [Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Baseline Assessment 2024](#)

Providing the Right Types of New Homes

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

During the initial engagement you told us:

- More social housing and affordable housing is required, with private rental properties not being affordable to many in the borough.
- To help local people buy their first home, low-cost home ownership provision should be provided. There is support for giving local residents the first option on new affordable housing.
- New homes should be for a lifetime, so that they are suitable for families, the elderly and have disability compliant features.

Castle Point has a range of housing needs, and these have been identified through a Local Housing Needs Assessment. Housing need is sometimes seen simply as a Government requirement to build a certain number of houses in a particular area. While new homes are needed, what the Local Housing Needs Assessment does is look at the demographics of the borough and identify the types of people that could benefit from new homes being built. The total housing requirement is consulted on in the earlier chapters, this chapter focuses on the types and size of new homes that should be developed.

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

Affordable Housing

The Housing Needs Assessment identified an emerging affordable housing need of 1,387 new homes 2023-2043. This equates to 69 new homes p.a. There are different types of affordable housing, broadly split between low cost rental properties (social rent and affordable rent), and discounted first-time buyer homes (shared ownership or First Homes). The Local Housing Needs Assessment identified that affordable housing need is 72% social rent, 10% Affordable rent, 18% First Home type product.

Current Government policy requires that 25% of all new affordable housing provision comes forward in the form of First Homes. Based on First Homes being 25% of overall affordable housing need, this would be equivalent to 17 new homes per annum. This is higher than identified local need for this use (12 new homes per annum), so if First Homes are prioritised in the mix of affordable housing delivered, there may be a need to vary the rest of the affordable housing offer.

Social housing is by far the largest component of local affordable housing need. It is also the product which requires the greatest subsidy to be provided within new developments. A development site will generally be able to deliver a higher number of comparably-sized homes for affordable rent or First Homes than socially rented homes.

Public subsidy is sometimes available to aid delivery of new affordable housing. It is also possible to accrue money from developments to deliver affordable housing off-site. Due to the different management arrangements of social housing, it is sometimes beneficial to social housing providers to have dedicated sites or blocks within new developments.

Combining monies from several development sites has the potential to deliver increased numbers of affordable homes, in particular socially rented affordable homes. The disbenefit of pooling is that it can potentially dilute the mix of types of new homes on sites by separating out affordable and market houses into different blocks or sites.

The ability to deliver new affordable housing on development sites is constrained by the size, layout, and viability of development sites. In

particular, an outcome of an urban first approach is that average site size is relatively small, and as such may not be able to deliver the full suite of affordable products on-site. Some sites will be too small to be split into multiple tenures, and some sites will not have sufficient development value to provide tenure split that meets all housing needs.

Q51. Which type of affordable housing product do you want to see prioritised?

Type of product	Gov/Evidence benchmark	Higher	Just right	Lower
First Homes	17 p.a.			
Social Housing	50 p.a.			
Affordable Rent	7 p.a.			
Total Affordable Housing	69 p.a.			

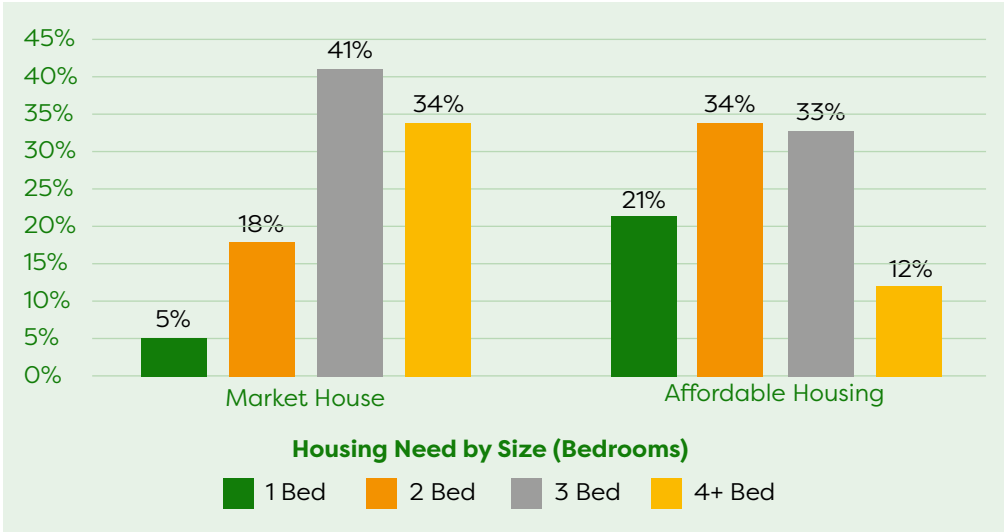
Please note, that the overall housing need is lower than the aggregate of different types of affordable product. This is because some products will be suitable for multiple households, it is expected that the Council will need to make choices within the overall housing need figure based on the types of need, viability, and responses to this consultation.

Housing Mix

Local planning policy needs to ensure that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community are reflected in planning policies, and that policies aim to meet as much of an area’s identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

From the Local Housing Needs Assessment, there is evidence that due to the relatively high house prices in the borough, many local people are living in housing that doesn’t appropriately meet their needs. To address this, it is

important that new homes are created that are the right size to meet local residents’ needs. The recommended mix from the Local Housing Needs Assessment is in the figure opposite:



Broadly for market housing, larger units are needed, with 75% of new homes needed to be 3+ bedrooms. Delivery of this type of new homes will allow residents to move up the housing ladder, and find the most suitable homes for their circumstances. By prioritising smaller home sizes in affordable housing, more young residents will be able to find a home that meets their need.

Q52. Do you think there should be a different split of housing unit sizes than identified in the Local Housing Needs Assessment for market housing?

Unit Size	Local Housing Need - Market	Higher	Just right	Lower
1 Bed	5%			
2 Bed	18%			
3 Bed	41%			
4+ Beds	34%			

Q53. Do you think there should be a different split of housing unit sizes than identified in the Local Housing Needs Assessment for affordable housing?

Unit Size	Local Housing Need - Market	Higher	Just right	Lower
1 Bed	21%			
2 Bed	34%			
3 Bed	33%			
4+ Beds	12%			

Evidence from the Local Housing Needs Assessment suggests that there is an existing need for 1,140 wheelchair adapted (M4(3)) homes in the borough, which will rise by 400 units 2023-2043. This would represent 8.1% of the Local Housing Need figure. To provide for choice within the market, it may be appropriate to provide more than the modelled amount of wheelchair accessible new homes.

Q54. What proportion of new housing stock should be built to enhanced accessibility standards?

Accessible Housing	Evidence benchmark	Higher	Just right	Lower
M4 (2) – Adaptable	100%			
M4 (3) – wheelchair adapted	8%.			

Specialist housing

Adapted/ Accessible Housing

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

The Housing Needs Assessment identifies that at present 8.8% of existing households have one or more person living in them that require some sort of adaptation. This is forecast to increase over the plan period to 29% of housing, and to match the increase, up to 4,018 new Accessible and adaptable (M4(2)) homes would need to be provided.

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

Caravan & Park Homes

The borough has a significant, and growing supply of Park Homes in the borough, there are over 800 at Kings Park Village, and there are expected to be over 800 at Sandy Bay by 2030. Smaller residential caravan sites are located at Haven Road on Canvey and on Hart Road in Thundersley.

Park Homes are typically prefabricated single-storey houses that are manufactured off-site and then installed on-site. Park Homes meet the definition of a caravan. To do so the home must be capable of being moved from one place to another, either on its own wheels or by being towed or transported by another vehicle. It must not be more than 20 metres in length, 6.8 metres in width, and 3.05 metres from floor to the ceiling internally.

Previously, caravans were rented to a range of users, including families on a permanent basis. This trend is phasing out, with the majority of caravans having been replaced with park homes now being sold to older (55+) residents as retirement accommodation. As of 1st April 2024 there was an estimated future supply of 139 additional park homes on Thorney Bay.

Q55. How do you feel about the supply of Caravan & Park Homes in the borough?

Older Persons Housing

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

Castle Point currently has a very low proportion of sheltered housing for older people (46 units per 1,000 people) compared to the national average (120 per 1,000). The Local Housing Needs Assessment suggests increasing older persons housing by the national average, rather than by existing provision levels. This would create a need for 423 new specialist homes for older people over the Plan period.

Q56. How do you feel about the provision of specialist housing (ie. homes for older people)?

Care Home & Hostel Accommodation

An estimate of emerging demand for care home bed spaces is made in the Local Housing Needs Assessment. It is estimated that 107 dwellings will be vacated by residents moving into care homes. Using a bed space to homes ratio of 1.8 beds/home, there is an emerging need for an additional 193 bed spaces in care homes over the plan period.

Q57. Question 57. How much of a priority do you consider the provision of care homes to have?

Gypsy & Traveller Housing

An Essex wide Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment is currently underway. The initial outputs from this assessment for Castle Point show that there are currently 15 gypsy and traveller pitches in the borough, of which four are vacant and two are unauthorised. There are no travelling Showpeople yards in the borough.

The emerging outcome of this work indicates that over the period to 2043 there will be a need for 15 additional pitches to address existing unmet need, overcrowding and future household growth. Considering the existing vacant pitches, there is a need for 13 additional pitches for gypsies and travellers to 2043.

Q58. How should we meet the needs for new Gypsy & Traveller homes?

Supporting Documents & Information

- [Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023](#)
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2024 - emerging



Developing Castle Point's Economy

Castle Point lies within a significant radial economic corridor centred on London, defined by the Thames Estuary to the south, and the A12/A127 to the North. The A127, A13/A130, and a regular rail link, connect the borough with the regional employment locations of Docklands, the City, the Thames Gateway, and Southend. There are also road links to important local employment locations in Basildon and Chelmsford.

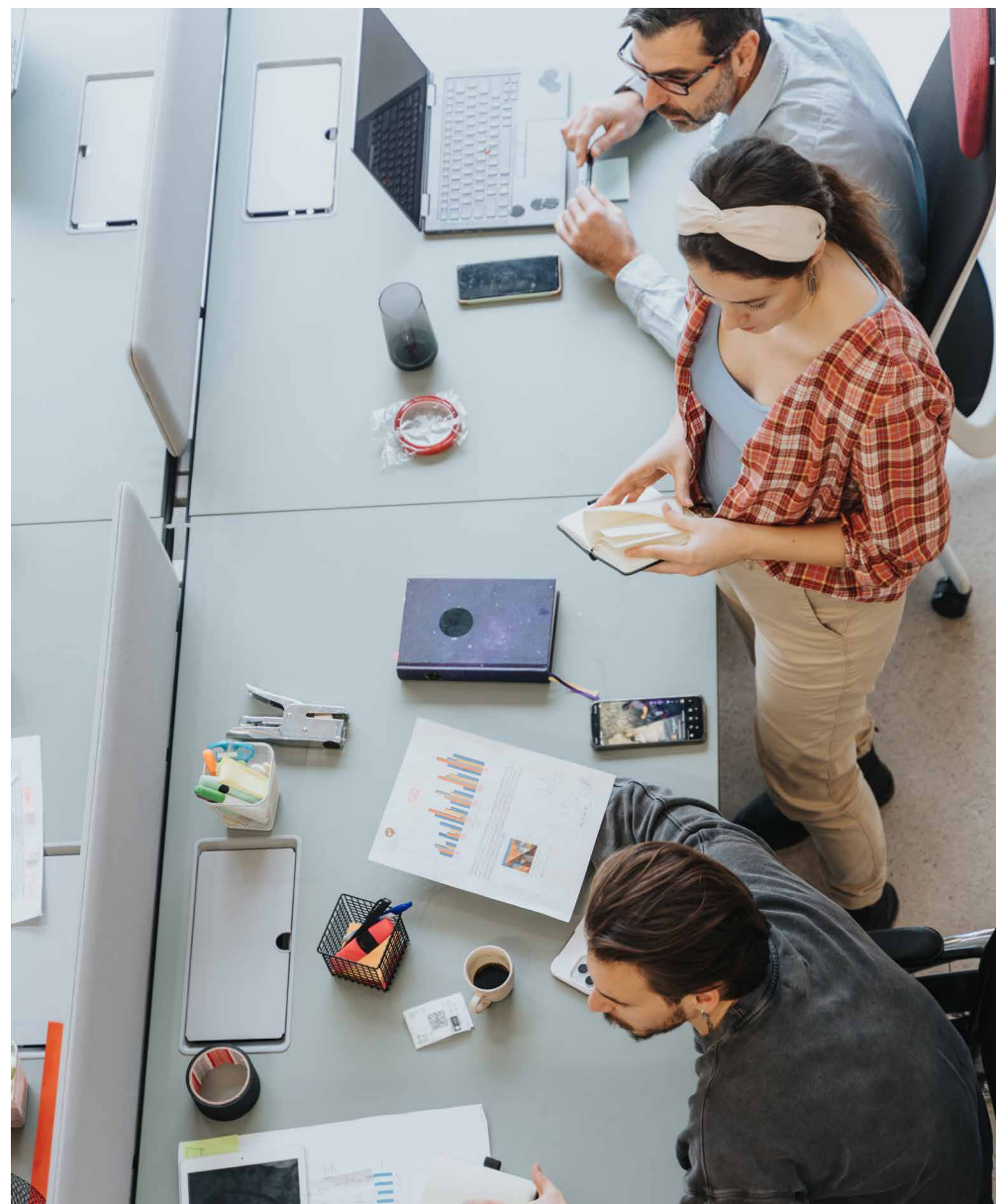
According to the 2021 census there are 26,000 jobs in Castle Point. They are primarily located in the major employment sites of Manor Trading Estate, Charfleets, and Stadium Way. Canvey has the highest existing employment density, and also has the most undeveloped industrial land, and therefore existing potential for growth.

Canvey is a port location, with gas and oil storage facilities. Port related development is an important and growing source of local employment, particularly in the Thurrock area as the Thames Freeport project develops. Castle Point, as a part of the A13/A127 corridor has an opportunity to capitalise on this by providing land for industries that operate within the supply chain of goods arriving and departing the UK by sea.

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

Castle Point has a high economic activity rate, with unemployment at 2.8% being below the national average of 3.8%. Qualification levels are generally lower in the borough than nationally, particularly in higher education, which is significantly below national average – 15.6% of residents have a degree or higher, compared to the national average of 33.9%. The number of people aged between 16 to 64 with a Level 3 qualification is also below the national average. There are currently no Higher Education Institutions in the borough, and no Adult Education provision on Canvey Island. This contributes to a “knowledge drain”, with young people often leaving the borough to pursue careers after completing their education (something seen across South Essex).

The borough's average income is below the national average salary. Presently fewer people work in Castle Point than commute out of the borough for employment. Principally, they commute to the larger economies of Thurrock, Basildon, London, and Southend.



During the initial engagement you told us:

- There is a desire to create more local jobs, and attract more businesses into the borough.
- Support small businesses to thrive and encourage local entrepreneurs to want to develop business here rather than going elsewhere.
- The local economy needs a boost in the right areas of the borough to attract more business and more customers for those businesses.
- Improve childcare options/initiatives to allow parents to get back to work.
- Ensure the borough's best assets are protected, improved, and advertised for better employment use.
- Invest in the borough's coastline to cater for tourism, which will provide an additional boost to the local economy.
- Manage employment areas to ensure they are not unoccupied, provide opportunities for local businesses to grow, and create more job opportunities for school and college leavers and give young people a chance to succeed.
- A new industrial area in north west of Thundersley would create much needed local jobs in the borough and provide an opportunity to move existing companies from the Manor Trading Estate to make way for much needed homes.
- Parking must be available for workers in town centres. Encourage car sharing by commuters by allowing free parking in local car parks.
- Encourage businesses working from residential premises, but deter the negative impact of parking commercial vehicles in residential areas.
- Improve the visual appeal of existing commercial premises by tidying them up and replacing derelict/disused buildings with new well-designed buildings.

Economic Strategy

Siting at the heart of South Essex, the economy of Castle Point is intrinsically linked to the economies of Basildon, Southend and Thurrock. There are significant opportunities for economic growth in those locations in the A127

Enterprise Corridor, at Southend Airport and at the ports in Thurrock.

Critical to the Castle Point economy is ensuring that there are strong relationships into this wider economy so that local businesses can benefit from supply chain opportunities, and so that residents can access the jobs available both in the borough and in this wider economy.

This means that within the borough there is a need for employment space and infrastructure to help attract investment, and to support the growth in the supply chain opportunities.

It also means that there is a need to ensure that our residents have access to the training they need to access jobs within the local and wider south Essex economy, and access to those jobs. Education, transport and digital infrastructure is therefore key to local economic growth and development.

Fundamentally, Castle Point is a place to live as part of the South Essex economy, and it is important that it is a good place to live so that skilled people who can support the economy and economic growth want to live here. It is therefore also important that we stimulate those sectors of the economy that improve place, such as retail and hospitality, environmental management, healthcare and the cultural and creative sectors.



The supply of Employment Land

Castle Point has a wide range of types of employment sites, ranging from large scale industrial estates at Charfleets, Manor Trading Estate, and Stadium Way, to businesses embedded within the residential and retail fabric of the borough. Vacancy rates are generally low at present, in line with much of the region.

The South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment identifies the number of jobs the borough is likely to need over the period 2016-2036, and translates that job number into floorspace need, and land need. The results of two scenarios (historical trend based, and what happens if some industrial demand relocates from London outwards to Essex) are set out below.

	Scenario	
	Trend-Based	London redistribution
Office	+3,500m2	+3,500m2
Industrial	-4 Ha	+2 Ha
Warehousing	-4 Ha	- 2 Ha

While there is a forecast loss of warehouse floorspace across the plan period, it does not necessarily mean that the Castle Point Plan should actively seek to decrease the borough’s stock of warehouse units. A small vacancy can assist businesses to find appropriate premises (this is called “frictional vacancy”), which helps them to expand their businesses when the time is right. It can also position the borough to respond positively to any upturn in the market.

Recent development trends suggest that there is a positive market for industrial land in Canvey, with the development at Roscommon Way being completed, and successfully let in recent years.

Development within Designated Employment Areas

The use of employment sites evolve over time as business needs change. Designated Employment Areas provide a reservoir of employment land, and a sufficiency of land should be provided to ensure price certainty for businesses.

There is often potential to intensify employment areas. This may be done to respond to changes in technology, or to increase the economic value of the site. Intensification could create jobs, for example if offices replace warehouses, but it could also come in the form of capital investments displacing labour operation (mechanisation). Some estates may be more suitable for certain intensifications, for example, sites with good connections to the strategic road network more suitable for intensified industrial or warehouse, with residential-linked designations more suitable for intensification of knowledge-oriented uses such as offices or creative workspace.

Certain uses are ancillary to the principal employment uses, actively complementing them and enabling them to be successful. An example of this might be a café or crèche on an industrial estate.

Q59. Do you have any comments on the continued safeguarding of the Council’s three principal employment areas for employment?

- a. Manor Trading Estate
- b. Charfleets
- c. Stadium Way, Rayleigh Weir

Q60. What additional uses should be introduced to help improve the operation of the borough’s employment sites?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Employment Uses outside Designated Employment Areas

Castle Point has hundreds of premises in employment use that are not on allocated employment land. These range from garages and workshops within the urban area, small office blocks, services above shops, to large, unallocated uses in the Green Belt.

Together these uses make a very significant contribution to Castle Point's economy, but their financial viability is coming under pressure from alternative (residential) land values. It is important that policy acts to ensure that a sufficient range and type of employment space exists to enable businesses to operate, grow, and when appropriate move on.

There are a number of undesigned sites across the borough. There may be a benefit in designating some of these as employment areas, and there may be value in having a differential approach to retention and intensification of employment assets in different parts of the borough.

The South Essex Employment Development Needs Assessment identifies 3 areas of employment in the borough:

- Canvey, which has a strong supply of designated employment land, strong local amenity assets, but limited connectivity to other parts of the regional economy.
- The A13 corridor, which has good labour supply, services, and public transport accessibility.
- The A127 corridor, which has a number of undesigned industrial sites, good road connectivity, but limited local amenities.

Q 61. How much protection do you feel undesigned smaller employment sites should be given?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Working From and Near Home

The Covid 19 pandemic radically increased rates of home working across the world, and especially in developed economies like the UK. Some recovery in commuting has happened, but it is becoming clear that levels will not return to pre-pandemic levels. This has implications for dedicated employment premises, and the amount of office that is needed. We have seen the need for this demonstrated locally, an example being International House Business Centre, which opened on Canvey Island just after the pandemic. Demand for the small, flexible offices spaces provided at the centre was very high, and the centre quickly became fully occupied.

It has also changed the way that residents use their homes, with a greater emphasis on finding space to work as well as live. This has seen bedrooms turned into workspace, and the creation of annexes and outbuildings for use as home offices.

Working near home is an emerging use that sits between working from home and traditional workplaces. It has the potential to offer some of the benefits of working from home in terms of reduced commuting distances, while also offering a separation between the domestic and employment setting. This use is already offered informally by some cafés and other spaces, and there are businesses that offer flexible rental workspace that also provide this type of offer.

Employment in and around town and local centres is crucial to supporting the local businesses that operate there. Working near home, if adequately provided for, has the potential to benefit local centres through drawing in a diverse range of workers at different times of the day. There is further opportunity to capitalise on this pattern by co-locating local services alongside flexible workspace in centres. The visitor to the centre then can combine doing work, obtaining local services, shopping and potentially leisure activities into a single trip.

Q62. Do you think that new development should be designed to support working from home?

Q63. Do you think new facilities that aid working near home should be supported?

Tourism

The borough has a number of tourist attractions including Canvey seafront and Hadleigh Castle and Country Park, including the 2012 Olympics Cycling track. Tourism is an excellent way of securing investment into the local economy to support local jobs and ensure that local assets remain viable into the future. In 2022 tourism accounted for a spend in the borough of approximately £26m, supporting an estimated 1,568 jobs.

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

Q64. How can the Castle Point Plan help to support the tourist economy of the borough?



Local Skills

Castle Point sits within an area of significant economic opportunity, but local workers are not earning either the regional or national average wage. It is very likely that the number and value, and hence range of skills required to match the jobs in the Thames Gateway area will continue to grow over the plan period. There is also the potential to grow the number and range of jobs in Castle Point.

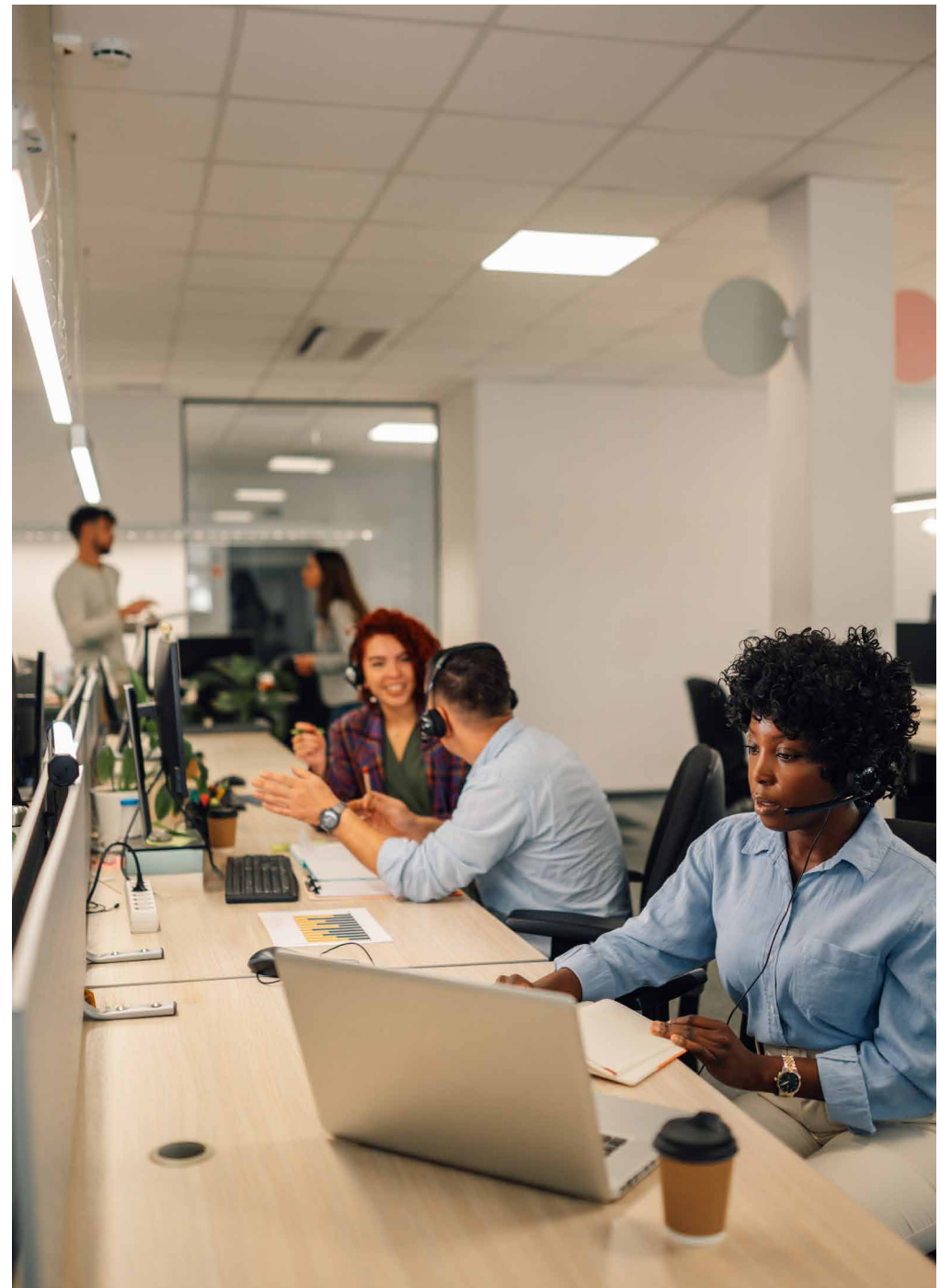
It is therefore appropriate that measures to support Castle Point residents' ability to access these jobs are brought forward. Guidance around securing Employment and Skills Plans to increase the volume and quality of employment opportunities in the construction and in the end use on the site are set out in the Essex County Council's Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

Q65. How can the plan support the development of skills within the borough's workforce?

Q66. Would you support the development of a new facility to help improve local skills, and the ability of residents to improve their opportunities to find work locally?

Supporting Documents & Information

- [Review of Economic Impact of Tourism, Castle Point Borough 2022 \(Destination Research\) Report](#)
- [South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment, 2017](#)
- [Economic Sites Review \(Dayton Bell\) 2024](#)



Ensuring the vibrancy of the borough's town centres

The borough has a network of centres which provide local services for residents, and which also support local businesses. The South Essex retail Study 2017 identifies Canvey and Hadleigh as existing town centres, and Tarpots and South Benfleet are identified as existing local centres.

Out of town shopping, such as at retail parks, represents a significant portion of provision in Castle Point. This is complemented by provision along the A127 corridor in Southend and Basildon. The borough leaks retail demand to Lakeside, and this would increase with expanded provision there.

The study identifies no net additional need for comparison retail space up to 2037. Indeed, the risk is of loss. There is an identified need for c1,400m2 net additional convenience retail up to 2037, however since the study three new supermarkets have opened on Canvey, which has most likely satisfied need.

There is also an unmet need for 3 cinema screens across the borough.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- Regeneration is overdue and urgently required, particularly for Hadleigh and Canvey Island town centres. Old, empty, and disused spaces should be redeveloped with town squares and modern, mixed-use buildings.
- Town centres need shops that provide key products, ie groceries. Some uses detract from the experience of town centres and should not be supported.
- Town centres require a more diverse variety of shops and services to attract people.
- More restaurants and bars for the night-time economy as well as facilities for families.
- To mitigate the closure of local bank branches, new banking 'hubs' are needed.
- Libraries should be retained.
- Spaces that enable markets are supported.

- Town centres need to be kept clean to ensure they remain high quality and to deter commercial units from becoming or remaining vacant.
- Parking plays a huge part in the success of town centres, and should be seen as supporting this success rather than something that should be charged for. Parking needs to also be provided for workers in the town centres to deter on-street parking in neighbouring residential roads.
- Access to town centres should be improved, with bus stops and taxi ranks being more suitably located.

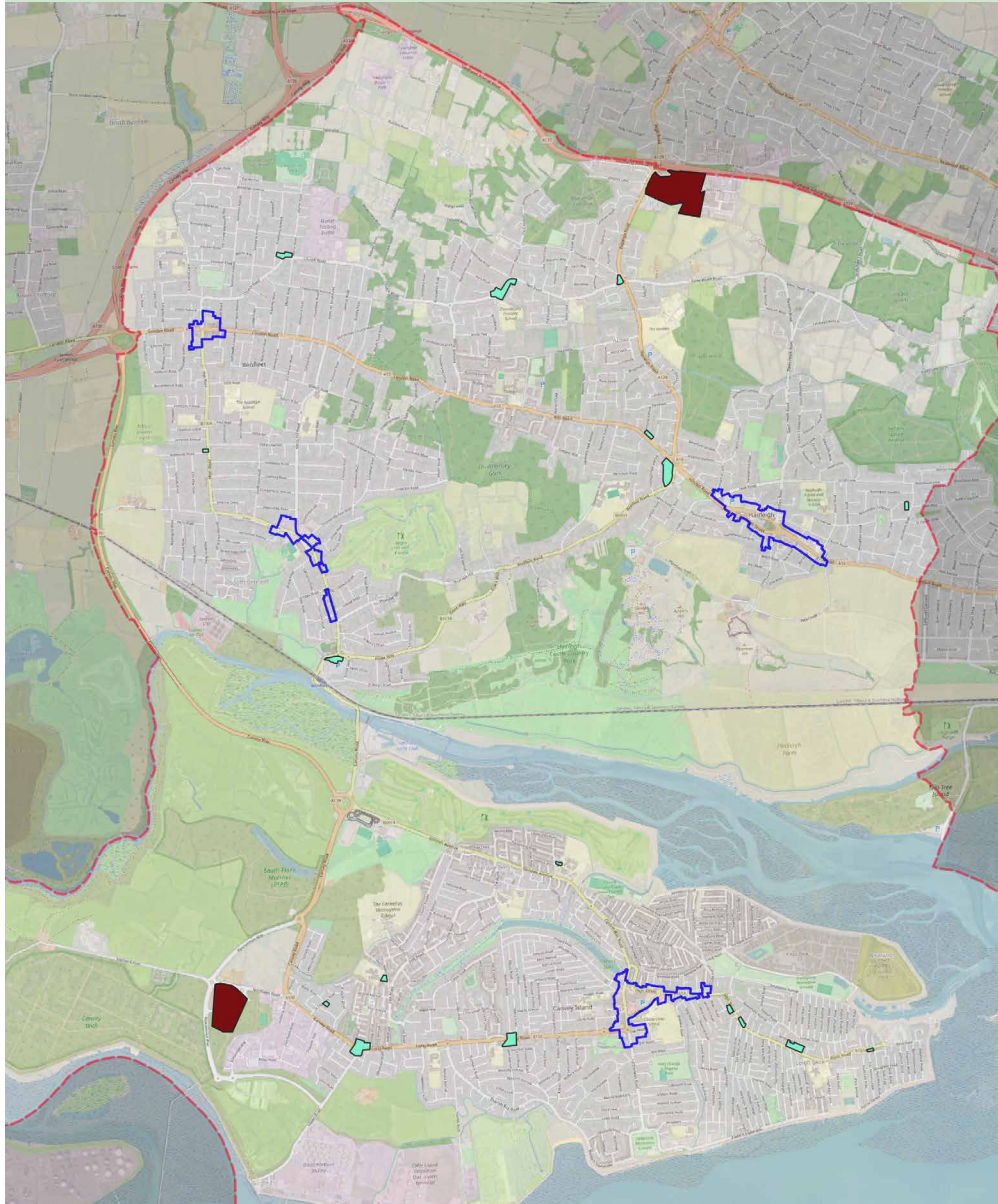
The Town Centre Hierarchy

There are currently two town centres in the borough, at Canvey and Hadleigh, and two local centres at South Benfleet, and Tarpots. There are 18 local parades, six in Thundersley, two in South Benfleet, one in Hadleigh, and nine in Canvey Island. Daws Heath doesn't have a parade, and there is no cluster suitable for designation within the village, with only a local shop present.

If brought forward, development at Kiln Road, Thundersley will likely create an opportunity for a new local centre. If School Lane car park in South Benfleet is redeveloped, there would be an expectation that a local centre is created as part of this. There is also the potential for a new type of centre at Rayleigh Weir, with a local centre replacing the retail warehousing uses if this area is redeveloped. Similarly, new local centres may be needed as part of any redevelopment of Charfleets or Manor Trading estates to serve the increased local population in these areas, if these areas are redeveloped or intensified.

Q67. Are there any changes you would propose to the borough's network of centres?

Town Centres



Map Key:



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Development within Town and Local Centres

Town centres provide key shopping and service facilities for local residents. In turn, these locations are also important employment and leisure locations.

Town and local centres have designated Primary Shopping Areas defined within them. The role of this designation is to ensure a critical mass of retail uses is retained in the centre, and thus ensure that the centres can fulfil their role of providing retail services to local residents.

At present there are limited evening/ night time activities within centres with most operating primarily during the daytime. This is potentially partially because of existing policy which focuses on retaining retail as the most highly protected use within centres. A lack of an evening economy can leave centres feeling less safe in the evening, and a wider range of leisure activities could help to strengthen the function of the borough's centres. The presence of nearby residential use to most of the local town centres means that some night time uses such as clubs are not suitable to be introduced into these areas, however family leisure, and enhanced food and drink opportunities that extend the active time the centres operate could be improved.

There are a range of land uses in and around the borough's centres that are either not making a full contribution to the centre, or are opportunities for relocation and replacement with more suitable uses. Sites that are generally single-storey, run down, or derelict, are opportunities to be replaced with uses which make new, and multiple (ie through a mix of uses) contributions to local economies. Other uses are not ideally suited to town centre locations; uses which create larger vehicle movements, such as car sales, garages, and industrial uses could be better located on industrial estates, creating new opportunities for town centre uses, including new employment and community uses as well as homes.

Focusing these locations for additional housing will support the continued success of local businesses, as well as providing a sustainable location for population growth. Development sites in town centres should be optimised in terms of capacity, while ensuring they provide active frontages where appropriate, including creating new or replacement town centre floorspace.

Q68. How important is the safeguarding of retail floorspace within the heart of local centres to you?

Development within Local Parades

Local shopping parades perform a vital role in providing local services. They are generally within walking distance of the residential areas which they serve. Currently policy exists to protect retail uses on the ground floor of local parades, to ensure that essential shopping needs are met within them.

Q69. Do you have any improvements that you would like to see in your local centre or shopping parade?

Shops outside of designated centres

Shops located outside of designated parades or centres can provide an important ultra local service for residents. These are different to shops that have become detached from centres, which may be appropriate for redevelopment, unless the centre is going to expand to bring them back within the centre's expanded boundary.

Local shops more than 1km from each other have restrictions on being able to be converted for other uses. The Council could seek to reduce this distance, thereby granting further protection to more individual local shops.

Q70. Do you support greater protection for individual shops outside of local centres and parades?

Town Centre Parking

Parking in town centres underpins residents' ability to access the services within them, which in turn supports the function of local centres. There are a number of surface car parks in town centres, these range from large car parks operated by supermarkets and other businesses to smaller Council-operated car parks.

There are many different users who visit town centres by car, from people doing their daily or weekly shop, through to workers who need to park for longer periods in order to work in the town centre. All of these users need to be catered for, in order to stop parking issues arising in residential streets surrounding town centres.

Surface car parking represents a poor use of land in some of the most sustainable areas of the borough. There is an opportunity to consolidate surface parking into multi-storey car parking to both optimise the parking offer within town centres, and free up land for development to deliver the homes and premises that would support the operation of local town centres.

Q 71. What should the Council's approach to provision of parking in town centres be?

Retail Warehouses

The borough has two retail parks: Stadium Way, Thundersley, and Canvey Retail Park, Northwick Road, Canvey Island. Alongside Lakeside in Thurrock, and other locations along the A127, these sites provide a major supplier of, and draw for, retail and leisure uses. There are benefits and costs to large-scale retail provision. They offer convenience, with a large range of services available, and due to the large scale, efficient pricing. They also increase trips by car, and draw spend away from local centres.

Rayleigh Weir has good access by car, and potentially by bus, to Rayleigh, including the rail station. This site is a potential opportunity for redevelopment over the plan period to help meet local housing need. Any redevelopment at this location would need to be replaced with a new local centre to provide services for local residents.

Q72. What is your opinion of retail parks?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

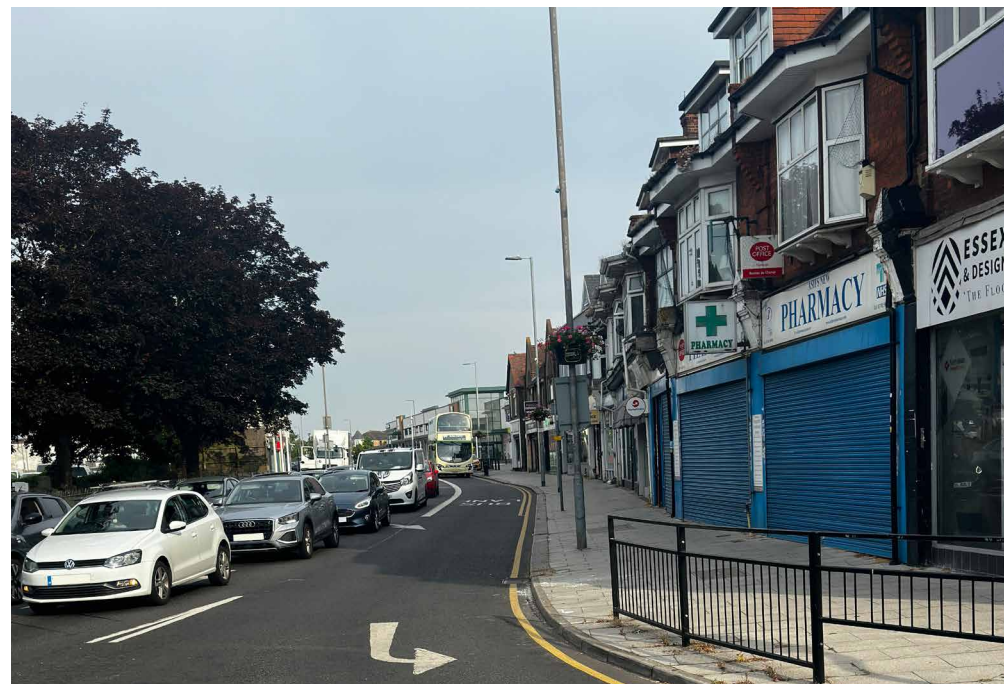
Hot Food Takeaways

Hot food takeaways are a common use within town centres and local parades across the borough, fulfilling demand for fast, affordable, and convenient meals.

The Council has completed a briefing note that suggests a link between a high level of hot food takeaways and higher than average levels of obesity in the borough. Public Health England has advised that increased exposure and opportunity to buy fast food can have negative effects on health. Not all takeaway food is unhealthy, but the necessity for high speed and low prices means health is not the main priority.

Castle Point has an above average obesity level, and as such there is an imperative to support residents moving to a healthier diet. This is true in children as well as adults, and there may be long-term benefits in ensuring children eat a healthy diet through, for example, restricting hot food takeaways within a certain distance of a school.

A recent increase in takeaway delivery is having an impact in terms of traffic impact, in particular close to hot food takeaway premises. There may be ways to address this by altering road layouts and providing designated pick-up areas in local centres.



Q73. How should hot food takeaways be managed in the borough?

Q74. Do you support a more diverse range of uses in town centres, for example offices which would support the daytime economy, and flats, restaurants, and bars that would support the evening economy?

Supporting Documents & Information

- [South Essex Retail Study Volume 1, 2017](#)
- [Castle Point Town Centre Shopping Frontages Assessment \(2019\)](#)
- [Fast food ECC briefing note](#)

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Creating Well Designed Development and Protecting the Borough's Character

The NPPF places great emphasis on the creation of beauty and beautifully designed places. Good design of new development goes beyond simply producing high quality buildings that sit within their local context, respect character, and are beautiful. Good design has a key role in supporting health and well-being of the community, for example through the creation of active environments and by designing development to encourage physical activity.

Castle Point is rich in heritage assets, with valuable historic buildings and landscapes protected by local policies. Whilst heritage assets are distributed throughout the borough, there is a large concentration of listed buildings in the High Street in South Benfleet. This area was designated as the South Benfleet Conservation Area in 1988, and benefits from a Conservation Area Management Plan. Florence Gardens has also been designated as a conservation area, taking into account the design, layout, and uniformity cottages in the area.

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

During the initial engagement you told us:

- The design of any new housing should be sympathetic to the surrounding Castle Point area. The character of the area should be retained as best as possible.
- New development should help to create a sense of space, rather than an overdeveloped/ cramped feel.
- Design new development to be peaceful, quiet, and attractive, allowing for wildlife to co-exist.

- The emphasis should be on quality over quantity. Some recent developments were not considered to be high quality. It is important that standards agreed at planning are carried through into construction.
- Flats may be required, but these should be well-designed and blend in with surrounding areas.
- New development should include well-designed sections of each residence to conceal wheelie bins.
- Integrate well-lit walking routes, to provide residents with a sense of well being. Residents should have close access to local services, and these should be incorporated into the design of new development.
- There should be consideration of how sites can be delivered and maintained with minimal disruption.
- The heritage of Castle Point is of the utmost importance to its residents, and its history should be protected and promoted for the future. The design of any new development should be in keeping with this.

Design Codes

Design Codes are a new type of planning document that set out the design requirements for the physical development of an area. Castle Point is currently producing a draft Design Code for the borough, which is expected to be published as an addendum to the Castle Point Plan. Guidance covering the suggested content of a Design Code can be found [here](#).

A further Design Code is being prepared specifically for the South Benfleet conservation area. The Castle Point Plan will provide a strategic policy hook that underpins the implementation of the Castle Point Design Code. Topics that the Design Code will cover include Movement, Heritage, Nature and public space, Uses, Homes and buildings, Resources, Lifespan, Built form, and Identity.

Q75. What issues do you think should be addressed through the borough-wide Design Code?

Residential Densities

There is considerable pressure for development, and constraints on developable land in the borough. The Castle Point Plan seeks to make the best use of existing urban land to meet local development needs, in order to protect the borough's green spaces. This "build up not out" approach means that it will be important that development sites optimise densities to ensure that the best use is made of the borough's developable land. To that end optimum densities will be proposed to ensure urban land is fulfilling its potential.

Increased density needs to be balanced against potential impact on the character of local areas. Balancing these matters through appropriate density of development is an important challenge in the Castle Point Plan. Recommended densities for different parts of the borough are set out in the draft Castle Point Design Code.

Q76. What issues do you think should inform the density of new development in the borough?

Masterplans for Larger Developments

Large sites, and clusters of sites offer opportunities to deliver benefit locally, beyond simply the new uses created. The benefits that development can make can be increased by co-ordinating the planning of sites within an area. Doing this ensures that sites work together to deliver positive outcomes, and opportunities are not missed by sites coming forward in a piecemeal fashion.

In addition to adjacent sites being designed together, there may be opportunities for groups of non-contiguous sites ("clusters") to share design outcomes that increase local benefits, and manage their design to complement the character of the local area.

Some sites may have a particularly high local importance, either in terms of impact within a local area, or the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Castle Point Plan. On such sites, there may be benefit in the Council providing site specific design guidance in the form of a Masterplan or Planning Brief for the site or area.

Q77. If a planning application for a large development (100+ homes) comes forward, should a master plan be created guiding how the development should take place?

Protecting Residential Amenity

The Castle Point Plan will include policies that ensure that future development protects existing amenity and offer opportunities to improve it wherever possible. This will include managing potential impacts ranging from the local, such as amenity considerations of immediate neighbours, to the impacts of a development on the wider landscape.

The range of amenity issues that development should address by virtue of its design, layout, and landscaping could include ensuring that the area remains safely and conveniently accessible by a range of modes of transport, ensuring that new development assists in managing crime, and is secure by design.

New development should not have an adverse visual impact on neighbouring properties, including by virtue of overlooking or other forms of disturbance. Additionally, development should not have a significant adverse visual impact on the surrounding landscape.

Q78. What amenity considerations should be applied when considering new developments adjacent to existing homes?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Residential Annexes

Residential annexes are a common type of development in the borough. Well-designed annexes can add valuable floorspace to properties that enable them to meet the needs of residents and their families for longer, thus reducing stress on specialist accommodation.

Annexes, like any other type of development has the potential to affect local character. Annexes to the rear of, and that are smaller than, existing properties have a generally lower impact than larger, street-facing ones.

Annexes should deliver new space that is related to the main house, and any additional space should provide room sizes and facilities consistent with the creation of good quality building decent home.

Q79. What are your feelings on the development of residential annexes within the curtilage of existing homes?

Public Art

Public art offers several potential benefits to local communities including reflecting and recognising local culture and history, enhancing and creating uniqueness in public spaces, humanising the built environment, assist in building community cohesion, and by connecting us to the past, present, and future.

The ongoing maintenance and ownership of local public art will need to be established to ensure that the asset does not fall into disrepair once it has been completed.

Q80. How do you feel about public art being incorporated in new development (i.e. sculptures or murals)?



Photography: Tessa Hallmann

Local Heritage Assets

Designated heritage assets benefit from nationally backed protection from impacts from new development. The designated heritage assets in the borough consist of Conservation Areas, listed buildings, and scheduled monuments. there are 43 sites on Historic England's National Heritage List.

There are two Conservation Areas and 36 listed buildings in the borough; 20 in Benfleet, five in Canvey, six in Hadleigh, and five in Thundersley. The Florence Gardens Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) is considered to be fulfilling its purpose, and is expected to remain unchanged, but there has been change in South Benfleet, and an update to the CAMP is expected to be consulted on in 2024. There are seven Scheduled Monuments in the borough; three on Canvey and four in Hadleigh.

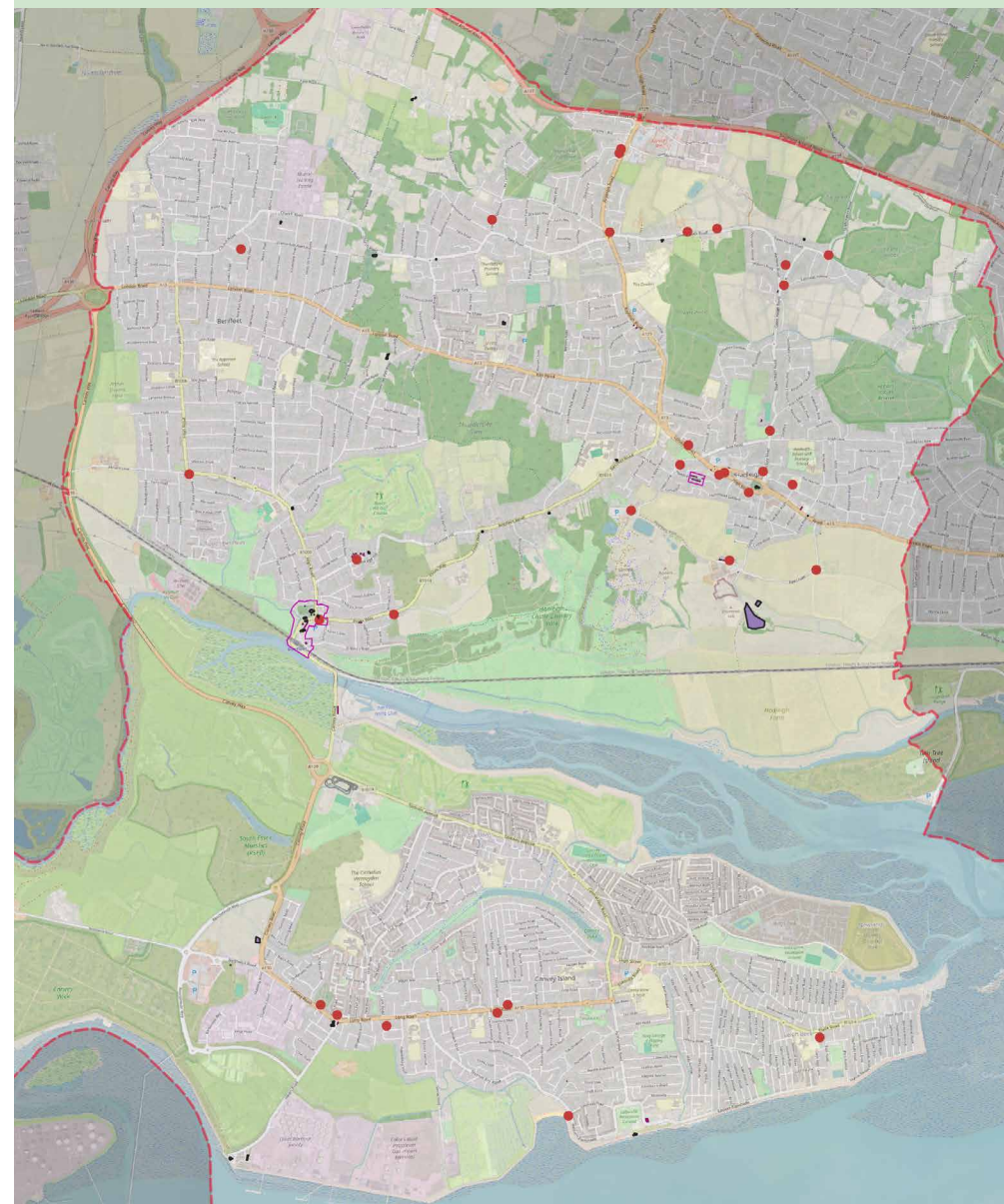
Local Heritage Assets are of significant local value, but do not benefit from national designation, and therefore have a lower level of protection, principally through the Castle Point Plan. There are 37 locally listed buildings in the borough. A new schedule is in the process of being produced following a review of heritage assets in the borough.

Development of Local Heritage Assets

Development in the future could place increased pressure on heritage assets and their wider settings. However, it also presents potential opportunities to reinforce and reveal the historic environment through incorporating it rather than isolating or losing it. Development will need to protect, and enhance the historic environment and manage new development in ways which will make a positive contribution to its character.

Q81. Do you have any views on protecting and enhancing the boroughs heritage assets as set out above?

Local Heritage Sites



Map Key:



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Supporting Documents & Information

- [South Benfleet Conservation Area Character Appraisal Management Plan 2024](#)
- [Castle Point Local List 2024 Update](#)
- [Florence Gardens Conservation Area Review and Management Plan](#)
- [Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003](#)
- [The Essex Historic Environment Record](#)
- [Essex Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation, ECC, 2005](#)
- [South Benfleet Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2005](#)
- [Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010](#)



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Creating Environmentally Sustainable New Development

In line with international agreements, the UK aims to remain consistent with the Paris agreement temperature goal to limit global warming to below 2°C and pursue efforts towards 1.5°C. The Climate Change Act commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (i.e. to a net zero level) by 2050. So far, the UK has cut its greenhouse gas emission by 50% between 1990 and 2022.

Average per capita carbon dioxide emissions with the UK stood at 4.95 tons in 2021, however in Castle Point the emissions per capita was 3.7 tons. This is potentially due to relatively low levels of industrial uses in the borough. To restrict global temperature increases to 1.5C, per capita global consumption needs to be around 2.3tonnes per capita per annum.

The climate is already changing. Hotter and wetter summers carry an increased flood risk due to more intense rainfall events. There is also risk from rising sea levels. Canvey Island and the southern part of Benfleet are substantially defended from tidal flooding, but at risk from surface water, and it will be important that this is factored into the design of future development.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- Support for improved rainwater collection systems and drainage infrastructure to help address local flooding and water pressure issues.
- There was also support for preventing sewage leaks into waterways and improved protection to reduce flood risk.
- Incorporate and incentivise renewable energy generation in new developments, and reduce the use of fossil fuels, thereby also improving Air Quality.
- There was support for increasing achieving biodiversity net gain, and ensuring ecological protection within new development.

Making energy efficient development

The Government's future buildings standard, which will be implemented through building regulations in 2025, will require all new buildings to be 75-80% more energy efficient than 1990 levels.

By 2050 the target is for the UK to become carbon neutral. Going beyond building regulations to accelerate the delivery of net zero dwellings in the borough needs to be secured through policy in this Plan, and it is important to note that there are increased building costs associated with doing so, which will need to be factored into viability considerations.

The ECC Climate Action Plan sets out a roadmap for how new development today can be designed to meet a net zero carbon standard and shows that the additional cost for making a new development net zero today is a 3-7% capital uplift, or c£2-3k per dwelling when compared to the requirements of the future homes standard 2025.

Q82. What are your views on building new homes to a net zero standard in advance of national policy time frames?

Q 83. What do you think about large scale renewable energy generation (i.e. a solar farm) in Green Belt locations?



Retrofitting

Retrofitting is the process of upgrading an existing building to make it more energy efficient. This is important as the existing buildings vastly outnumber the number of new buildings to be delivered over the Plan period, and as such it represents the largest opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of the borough's stock of buildings. This is recognised through the Essex Climate Action Commission work which seeks all existing homes to be retrofitted by 2040.

Retrofitting can include adding new, or improving existing insulation, upgrading existing heating systems/boilers, or improving the transfer of heat around a building. While a “full” retrofit is possible for a building to operate on a net neutral basis, sometimes it is appropriate to make short term improvements to a building in order to improve its energy efficiency. These short-term improvements may offer a significant carbon, and cost benefit for limited expense in terms of improving energy efficiency of existing stock.

Q84. Do you feel existing homes/buildings in the borough should be retrofitted to improve their energy efficiency?



Water Efficiency

The South East of England faces a potential shortfall of 1 billion litres of water a day, equivalent to about 20% of the water currently supplied to the region, unless action is taken to maintain supply. Action can include measures to increase water supply and reduce water usage. The South Essex Water Cycle Study 2012 suggests that by improving water efficiency, consumption levels could be reduced by up to 105 litres per person per day. A draft protocol for Local Authorities and water companies is being produced to help to address the sustainable use of water resources in the East of England region.

Part G of the Building Regulations sets a water efficiency requirement for new development to meet of 125l/person/day, and includes an optional target of 110l/person/day.

Essex County Council have produced a Water Strategy for Essex, which sets out 30 recommendations for how to manage water use in the County.

Q85. Should the plan apply the optional requirement for increased water efficiency in new development?

Sustainable Drainage Systems

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) act to slow the rate of water run-off from developments. When well-designed they can also be co-located to provide amenity and biodiversity benefits.

SuDS are already required in major developments. Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority, have responsibility for approving SuDS, and they have produced a Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex.

Q86. Do you feel that SuDS should be incorporated into smaller, as well as major developments?

Ensuring Healthy Design

New development should be designed in such a way as to encourage healthy lifestyles. This includes making them accessible by active travel modes, and through ensuring there is local access to spaces that local residents can use for daily exercise.

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process that identifies the health and well-being impacts of a plan or development project, and recommends measures to enhance positive impacts, minimise negative impacts, and reduce health inequalities.

HIAs can provide valuable evidence and recommendations to inform planning decisions, enhance the quality and design of plans and projects, and deliver co-benefits across a range of policy areas, such as climate change, biodiversity, and social justice. HIAs are not currently required as part of a planning application in Castle Point but are being used effectively elsewhere in Essex.

Q87. What do you think new development should be required to do in order to support a healthy design in new development?

Pollution Control

Light pollution from new developments can affect the night sky, and increased visitation to habitats from an increasing population can disrupt wildlife and erode habitats. Noise pollution also has the potential to disrupt local habitats.

Developments have the potential to add to land and water pollution through run-off if not appropriately designed. The management of SuDS infrastructure needs to be examined in order to ensure any pollutants do not contaminate local water courses.

Development can also contribute to worsening air quality through installation of heating systems and by generating additional car trips. Managing both will mitigate the effect that developments will have on air quality.

Q88. How do you feel the Plan should help to address existing and potential new pollution impacts?

Supporting Documents & Information

- [South Essex Outline Water Cycle Study 2011](#)
- [Essex Climate Action Commission Work](#)
- [The Water Strategy for Essex, 2024, ECC Water strategy for Essex 2024](#)
- [HIA Essex guidance, Health Impact Assessments | Essex Design Guide](#)



Photography: Jack Delmonte

Protecting & Enhancing Green & Blue Infrastructure

The high quality of the natural environment contributes to the quality of life for people living and working in the borough. It also helps to attract tourists and visitors who help to support the local economy. The varied landscapes, including grasslands, river floodplains, and ancient woodland, are also important in terms of maintaining biodiversity value.

The Council is part of the SEEPARK project, which seeks to link and nurture landscapes including woodland, parkland, wetland and marshland across the south Essex area, bringing the benefits of ecological diversity and carbon capture as well as opportunities for leisure, tourism and business.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- The protection of Castle Point Borough's Green Belt areas should be the main priority when considering any development in the new Castle Point Plan.
- Opportunities should be sought to increase and improve green spaces. There was a perception from some that the standard of maintenance of open spaces has declined in recent years.
- To prevent further erosion of green spaces more planting of trees is suggested.
- Fields and farmland form part of the rural backdrop to the borough. Urban sprawl threatens the beauty of our open spaces.
- The conservation of the countryside and woodland areas of the borough are essential to preserve and protect nature and habitats.
- Creating Green Corridors for the wildlife to thrive rather than just survive would be beneficial.
- The seafront is unique part of the Essex coastline that should be better advertised. Maintenance of the Seawall and the Beach for the safety of the Island and for people to enjoy is supported.
- More trees were recommended to improve air quality, and shrubs to provide habitats.

- Prevent building on flood plains due to the increasing risk of flooding from climate change.
- Accessibility to all our green and blue infrastructure sites is essential, and should be improved.

Acceptable uses in the Green Belt

Castle Point sits within the London Metropolitan Green Belt. Green Belt plays an active role in restricting development, ensuring that settlements do not merge into one another, that local landscape character is maintained, and that countryside is protected.

The Green Belt is a valuable asset for local communities, providing a reservoir of open space for leisure and recreation activity, as well as ecological habitat, and agricultural uses. There is, and there is the potential for Green Belt to be improved for this role to be strengthened.

In some circumstances, built development in the Green Belt can help to enhance the use of the Green Belt. Buildings related to agriculture, sports and leisure activities, and habitat maintenance for example may be appropriate.

All development in the Green Belt needs to be carefully designed to ensure that it does not adversely impact the character and function of the Green Belt. Acceptable uses need to be well designed to be complementary to their setting. Inappropriate uses in the Green Belt will continue to be restricted.

Q89. What new uses could be acceptable within the Green Belt area to support and enhance its use (i.e. cafés or sports infrastructure etc)?

Managing Flood Risk

The borough sits on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary, and there is a high risk from flooding. Significant flood defences exist on Canvey Island and along the northern banks of Benfleet Creek, and there is flood storage in place to manage tidal and fluvial inundation in South Benfleet. However, risk levels are measured before such measures are considered and therefore Canvey,

Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet carry a residual risk of tidal flooding and are in flood risk zone 3.

Additional mitigations that can reasonably be delivered are railway operation safeguarding between Benfleet and Leigh stations to ensure ongoing provision of service as the climate changes, and maintaining a 19m buffer inland of the existing defences on Canvey to enable future sea defence improvements later in the 21st Century.

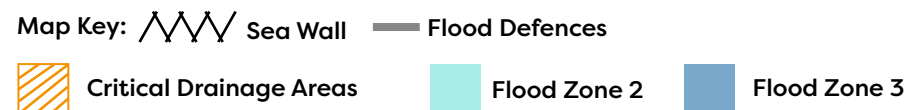
The sequential test steers development to areas with the lowest flood risk. Due to the constrained land supply due to Green Belt, the requirement to progress an urban-first approach, and existing flood protection levels in Canvey and South Benfleet, it is appropriate that the exceptions test is applied to ensure that new development in these areas is appropriately designed to manage flood risk.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out to guide design of new development within areas of flood risk. It recommends that ground floor habitation should not be permitted, with any ground floor user required to have safe refuge above ground floor built into the development. This restricts the development of new bungalows in Canvey, and puts additional design requirements on 2+storey development.

Surface water flood risk is also an issue in the borough. The risk of flooding from rainfall events will also need managing, particularly in the borough's Critical Drainage Areas. Rainfall can also be managed through the introduction of SuDS on new development, which will reduce the rate of rainfall runoff from new development

In order to minimise the land take associated with SuDS features in developments wherever possible, above ground storage should be integrated with public open space. The integration of above ground storage and open space does not always have to be in the form of an empty detention/infiltration basin. Where possible, basins and amenity features such as informal play areas can be merged to create multifunctional spaces. By doing so, the amenity of the basin is greatly enhanced whilst still providing its primary purpose.

Q90. How do you feel the risk of flooding should be managed in new development?



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Coastal Protection

The coast is one of the key landscapes in the borough, and of great importance to local residents. Key to local enjoyment of the coast is the retention and enhancement of the coastal path. Improvements to the accessibility of the coastal path would support greater use of this asset by a wider range of users.

The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan requires riverside strategies to be prepared in local areas to ensure that the riverside is protected from flood risk, but also that local communities remain connected with the riverside environment. A riverside strategy for the northern Thames estuary will be prepared alongside the Castle Point Plan.

Q91. What, beyond improved flood defences, do you want to see as part of the upgrades to coastal defences?



Open Spaces within the urban area

Open spaces play a valuable role in contributing to the delivery of national and local priorities and targets, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and health and well-being.

The Council has commissioned an Open Space Needs Assessment, which recommends standards and policies for ensuring the adequate provision of open space across the borough over the plan period, as well as a process for calculating developer contributions.

It establishes quality standards for a whole range of different types of open spaces, and quantity and accessibility standards for the most common types of open space.

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1,000 pop)	Access standard (walking time, straight line)	Additional open space to be delivered over the Plan period
Allotments	0.2	15 mins (720m)	2.45 Ha
Amenity Green Space (sites >0.1 ha)	0.6	10 mins (480m)	7.34 Ha
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.1	15 mins (720m)	13.46 Ha
Play Space (Children)	0.07	10 mins (480m)	0.87 Ha
Play Space (Youth)	0.07	15 mins (720m)	0.87 Ha
Accessible Natural Green Space	1.80	15 mins (720m)	22.03 Ha
Total for new provision	3.84	3.84	47.02 Ha

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

There is existing provision of most types of open space in the borough, but there is not always good access for all to each type of open space, and open spaces are of variable quality. This is especially true in relation to youth play space. As such it will be important to protect and improve existing open spaces, and where possible to improve access to them.

New developments sites, particularly large sites, present opportunities for new open spaces to be provided. Opportunities to create new open spaces should have regard to the current surplus or deficiency of open space typologies in the local area, and assist in addressing any shortfall. Where there is no deficit, an off-site contribution may be more appropriate to ensure ongoing access to good quality open space nearby.

Q92. How would you like the plan to protect and improve the borough's stock and network of open spaces?



Protecting valuable landscape features

Responding to a site's surrounding landscape enhances a development's design, and plays an important role in respecting the character of a local area. The Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation Study 2007 identified landscape features that might either be retained, or be input into the design of new development:

- Established field boundaries, hedgerows and tree lines;
- Established trees with a high visual amenity value;
- Established areas of woodland, including ancient woodland; and
- Topographical features including ridge lines, watercourses, ditch systems and bunds.

The benefits of retaining and enhancing landscape features could include an enhanced recreational offer for local people, opportunities for local food production, and the protection ecological assets, areas of nature conservation and valued landscapes.

Q93. What aspects of Castle Point's landscape should be protected and enhanced through new development?

Q94. Are there opportunities to improve areas of Castle Point's landscape?

Q95. Which landscape features should be protected in new development, and how?

Habitat & Wildlife Safeguarding

Castle Point contains a rich and varied network of habitats, some of which are designated for protection under national or international legislation. Proposals which are likely to cause adverse effects on the integrity of designated sites (either individually or in combination with other developments) must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified. Where appropriate, contributions from development could be secured towards mitigation measures to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts.

Similarly, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are designated for their protection, and development in close proximity will need to be carefully managed. The borough also includes irreplaceable Habitats such as Ancient Woodlands, which need to be protected.

The Council currently has 40 Local Wildlife Sites, and 5 Potential Wildlife Sites in the borough. These are locally designated sites recognised as comprising priority habitats or being home to priority species. It is important that these habitats are protected to ensure that endangered species are able to recover.



Photography: Dawn Thomas

Q96. What approach do you feel should be taken to protection of habitats and wildlife sites?



Photography: Jack Delmonte

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Biodiversity Net Gain

Government requires that all new developments seek to improve upon the existing biodiversity within an area by setting a target of 10% uplift in biodiversity value when development takes place. Delivering this on new development sites will create a patchwork of small biodiversity improvements that collectively will help nature recover within urban areas.

10% is a minimum figure which Local Plans can improve upon, and any increase in this amount would need to be balanced against competing priorities for developer contributions.

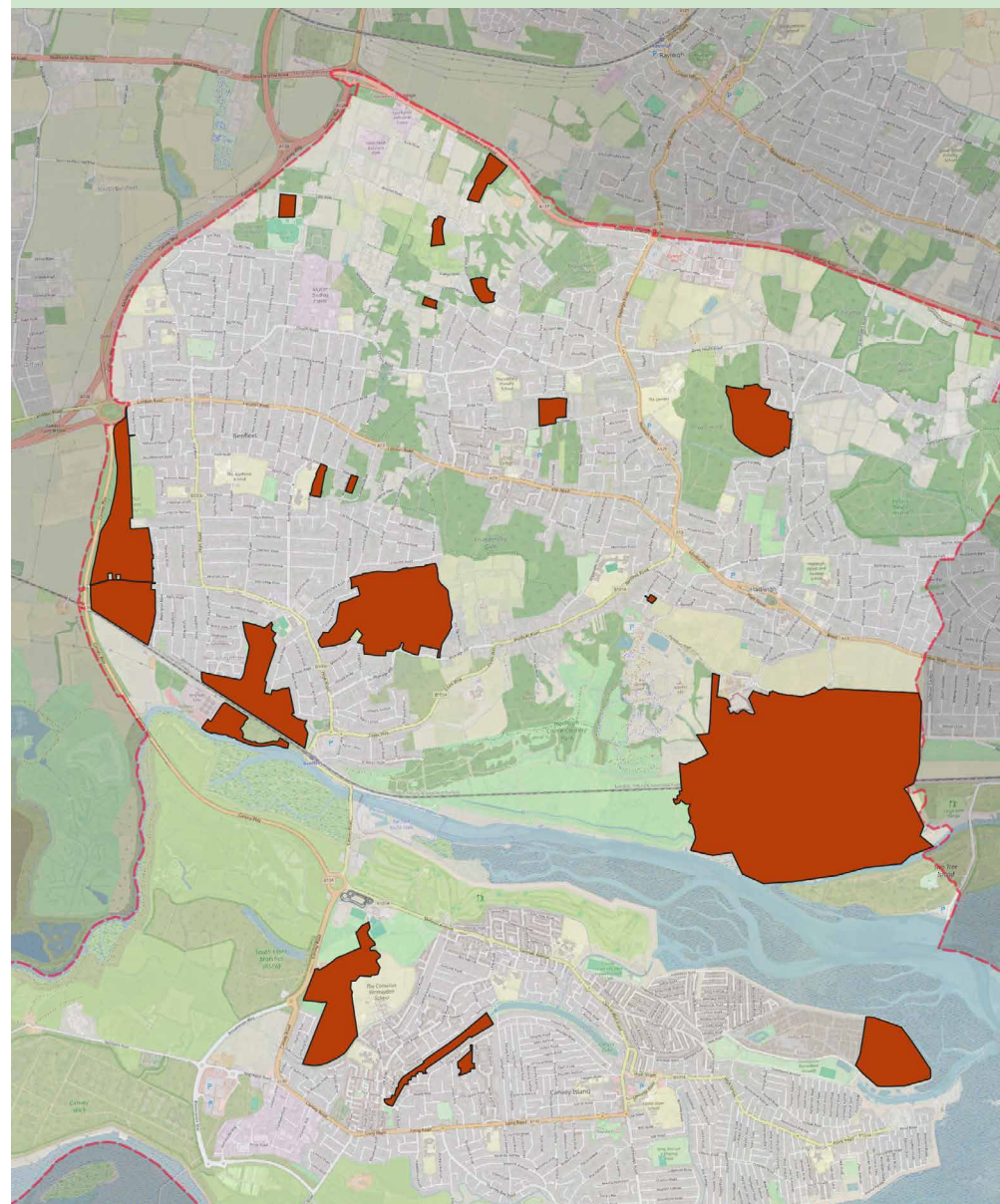
Several sites across the borough have been promoted as being suitable for use as biodiversity net gain sites which offer an opportunity to spend other site's off-site contributions locally. These have the potential to make an important contribution to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Urban sites can sometimes have low levels of, or no existing vegetation on them. In these cases, it is more appropriate to use an Urban Greening Factor to set a benchmark for the levels of biodiversity to be obtained on a site, instead of a 10% increase from a minimal starting benchmark.

Q97. Would you support seeking a higher than 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement?

Q98. Would you support the introduction of an Urban Greening Factor seeking to increase biodiversity in urban areas?

Biodiversity Site Options



Map Key:



Biodiversity Site Options

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

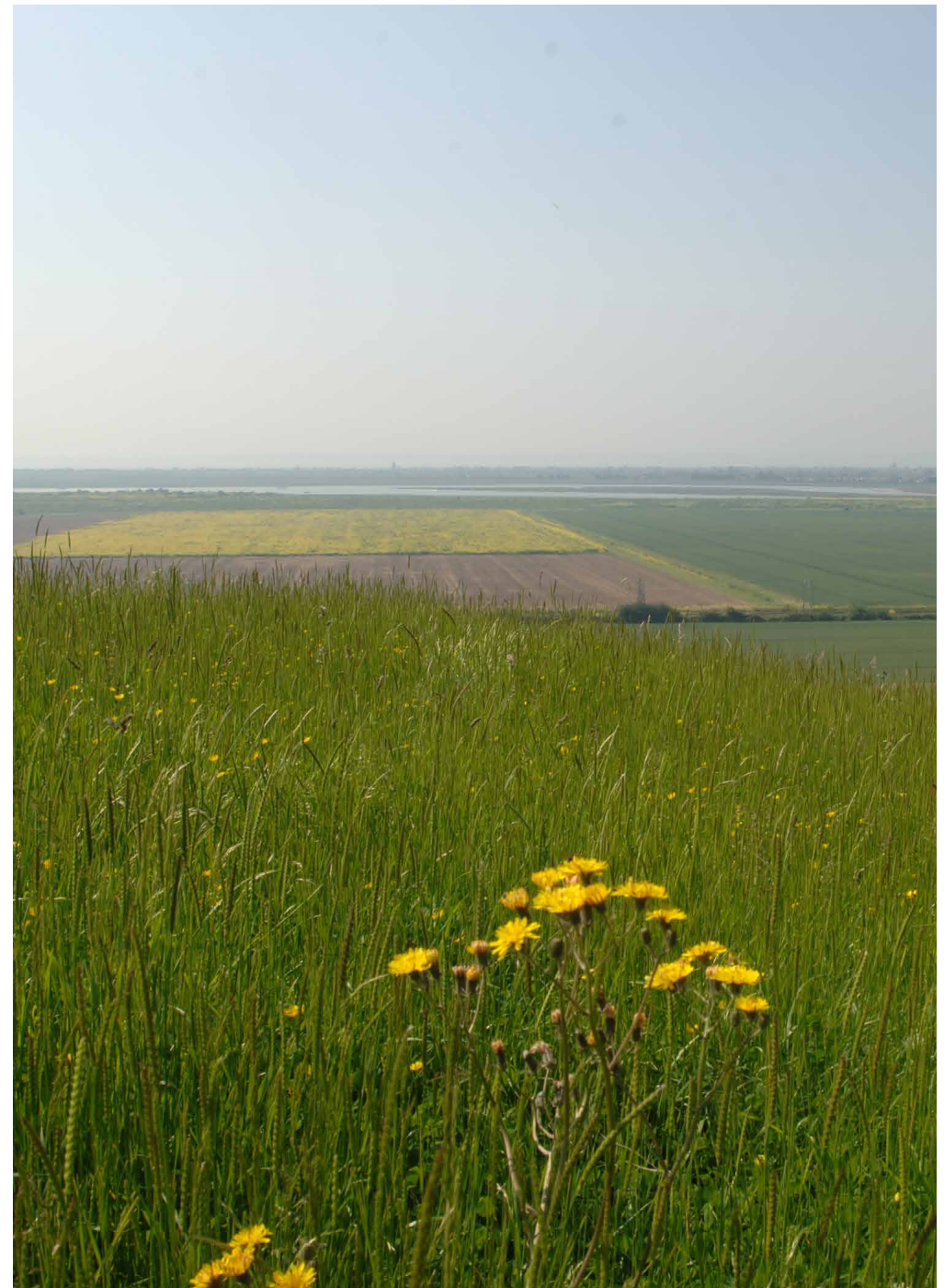
Agricultural Land

The retention and enhancement of the borough's stock of agricultural land is important as part of a nationwide responsibility to ensure food supply. As such high quality (grade 3 and above) agricultural land should generally be protected from development. Some development is required in order to enable agricultural operation.

Q99. What do you feel about the management of agricultural land?

Supporting Documents & Information

- [Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, ECC, 2020](#)
- [South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, ASELA, 2020](#)
- [Local Wildlife Site Review 2024](#)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level One 2024 - emerging
- [Critical Drainage Areas Essex County Council Surface Water Management Plans \(essex.gov.uk\) Open Space Assessment 023](#)
- [Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment, 2019](#)
- [Essex Coast Recreational Avoidance and Mitigations Supplementary Planning Document, 2020](#)
- [Draft Castle Point Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document, 2024](#)
- [South Essex Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, 2018](#)
- [Essex Climate Action Commission Action Plan, ECC, 2021](#)
- [Castle Point Air Quality Annual Status Report, 2023](#)
- [Thames Estuary 2100](#)



PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Providing the Services Local Residents and Businesses Need

The Council understands how important and necessary matching growth with improvements to infrastructure is to local residents and communities. The prospect of more housing or jobs can cause worries about traffic congestion, school places, loss of green spaces, difficulty getting a GP or hospital appointment, and other vital issues.

The Council also recognises that providing adequate services for transport, education, health, leisure and other community needs is a fundamental factor in achieving a high quality of life for residents. With a growing population, it is essential that these services are planned in a co-ordinated way in partnership with the relevant infrastructure providers.

Improvements to infrastructure assets will be co-ordinated through a document called the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which will set out the critical new or improved facilities and services that are necessary to support the growth proposed in the Castle Point Plan. The IDP will also identify the costs, funding sources, timescales, and who is responsible for providing any new or improved infrastructure.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- The current level of infrastructure is insufficient and there is a need for more health and education facilities to service the increasing population.
- New infrastructure should be delivered before any new intended development so that services are not overstretched.
- The supply of local services through multifunctional community hubs, comprising of various services in the one place such as the NHS, Police and Fire is supported.
- More publicly accessible toilets should be provided.
- Currently the appearance and feel of the borough is poor, and greater efforts should be made to keep streets and public places clean and in good condition. Particular focus should be given to ensuring parks and other open spaces are well maintained.

- Utilities, particularly water infrastructure, is struggling to cope with the needs of the growing population. Wastewater management and drainage are particular issues that residents want solutions to.
- There is support for increasing the range of entertainment and leisure venues in the borough. This should have a focus on providing and activities for young people are required in to prevent/reduce the possibility of anti-social behaviour and support the health and well-being of the growing population.

Funding for community services and infrastructure will come from a variety of sources, including financial contributions from developers and government grants. Developer contributions are paid in two ways: the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 legal agreements.

CIL is a fixed charge which is collected when development starts to be built. This money is then pooled by the Council and helps to fund the infrastructure – such as schools or transport improvements – that is needed to support new homes and businesses in the area.

Section 106 payments are made to fund specific types of infrastructure that are needed to make an individual development acceptable, e.g., affordable housing, access improvements, and children's play space. They are secured through a legal agreement and must be paid at a time specified in that agreement.



Protection of Community Buildings

Community buildings play a key role in providing local services within Castle Point. Education and health facilities are the most obvious services, but nurseries, community halls, sports pavilions, libraries, leisure facilities pubs, all provide important services, as well as spaces for residents to gather, share time, experiences and knowledge.

Community buildings come in many shapes and sizes and have been built in a range of different designs as local areas have grown. While they all provide services that are valuable locally, some buildings are aging, not of a sufficient size to meet emerging needs, or require renovation or replacement.

This provides a challenge, to ensure that an appropriate provision of good quality community space is provided, but also an opportunity to make the best use of sites. The Council's urban capacity analysis identifies community buildings as being an important potential source of developable land within the urban area. This is often a result of their location in sustainable areas in and around town centres, and their design as stand-alone single use buildings, often on generous plots of land. In pursuing an urban-first approach to new development, these sites represent a significant opportunity for intensification.

Intensification of these sites offers opportunities to improve facilities. The Council expects proposals that result in the loss of a community facility to be accompanied by a statement setting out how the existing community use will continue to be provided within the local area. A redevelopment that comes at the cost of a loss of a viable ongoing community use will not be acceptable. Community buildings should be within reach of local residents, with new facilities being located where there is a deficiency of services.

Q100. Would you like to see more community hubs which deliver a range of community facilities in one place as part of the plan?

Provision of health facilities

The provision of health and care facilities is a key concern of local residents. The Council will work with local care providers and the NHS to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided for as a part of new developments. This will

include looking at existing assets and understanding whether they need to move or expand in order to meet local needs more effectively.

Q101. How do you think new health infrastructure should be brought forward in the borough?

Sports buildings & pitches

Pitches for organised sports are an important part of the overall open space offer in the borough. All residents should live within a reasonable distance that allows access to a range of sports pitches. To improve accessibility, improvements to open spaces to provide pitches, and accessibility improvements to and from pitches will be supported.

The quality of sports pitch provision can also be improved by enhancing the pitches themselves, for example by installing all-weather pitches which are available for more time each week, by improving the standard of facilities that serve pitches. The creation of these facilities should be seen as development that deliver improvements to open spaces, and therefore complementary to open spaces, rather than development on open spaces, which is not generally acceptable.

Q102. What type of improvements to entertainment and leisure facilities would you like to see in your local area?



Provision of Education Facilities

The provision of education facilities is a key concern of local residents, and critical to the economic outcomes of the borough. The Council will work with the local education authority, local early years providers, local academy providers and local colleges to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided for as a part of new developments. This will include looking at existing assets and understanding whether they need to move or expand in order to meet local needs more effectively.

Q103. How do you think new education infrastructure should be brought forward in the borough?

Protection and enhancement of the Cultural Environment

Castle Point towns and countryside are places with significant cultural value, much of which is hidden and untapped. Through the Castle Point Plan there is the opportunity to ensure that cultural assets are protected and enhanced, and new places are created for creative practitioners to flourish and for communities to experience cultural opportunities. Creative Estuary have developed a toolkit to integrate culture into local plans and there is work underway within Essex to develop a cultural strategy that will guide development in this sector.

Q104. How do you feel the cultural environment can be improved in the borough?

Pub protection

Public Houses are important community facilities, but there is a continuing trend of pub closures across the UK. The Council could seek to recognise the community value that pubs offer and restrict their change of use or demolition. The Localism Act significantly increased local communities' powers to resist the loss of pubs, by listing them as Assets of Community Value, and by encouraging community ownership.

Q105. What do you feel about the protection of public houses from speculative development?



Photography: Jack Delmonte

Communications Infrastructure

Improving digital connectivity is a national and a local priority and is particularly important to rural communities. It can also contribute towards reducing the need to travel. The Government has set a target of achieving 5G coverage for most people by 2027 and full fibre connectivity across the whole country by 2033. This will require the construction of new infrastructure in order to be delivered, sometimes in the form of new masts, for example, to provide 5G connectivity.

Part R of the building regulations require all new homes to be connected to megabit broadband. Given the critical importance of internet access to local businesses, there may be a justification for requiring all non-residential developments.

Q106. How would you like new communications infrastructure to be provided as a part of new developments?

Utilities Capacity

New development needs to be adequately planned for in terms of being served by utilities. All new development must be connected appropriately and must not have an adverse impact on the provision of services to existing homes and business spaces. Water quality, provision, and run-off management are all key issues locally.

Q107. What do you feel about the provision of utilities to new developments?

Off-site Renewables

The challenge of meeting ever-increasing demand of energy is being met in part through the allocation of land for renewable energy generation in the form of solar panels and wind turbines. 6 sites were nominated as having the potential to be used for this use in the Call for Sites process.

Capacity and demand management is also important in this regard. Renewable energy generation and energy consumption are both “lumpy”, and the lumps do not match. By having local renewable energy battery facilities, it means that the energy generated locally can be used locally.

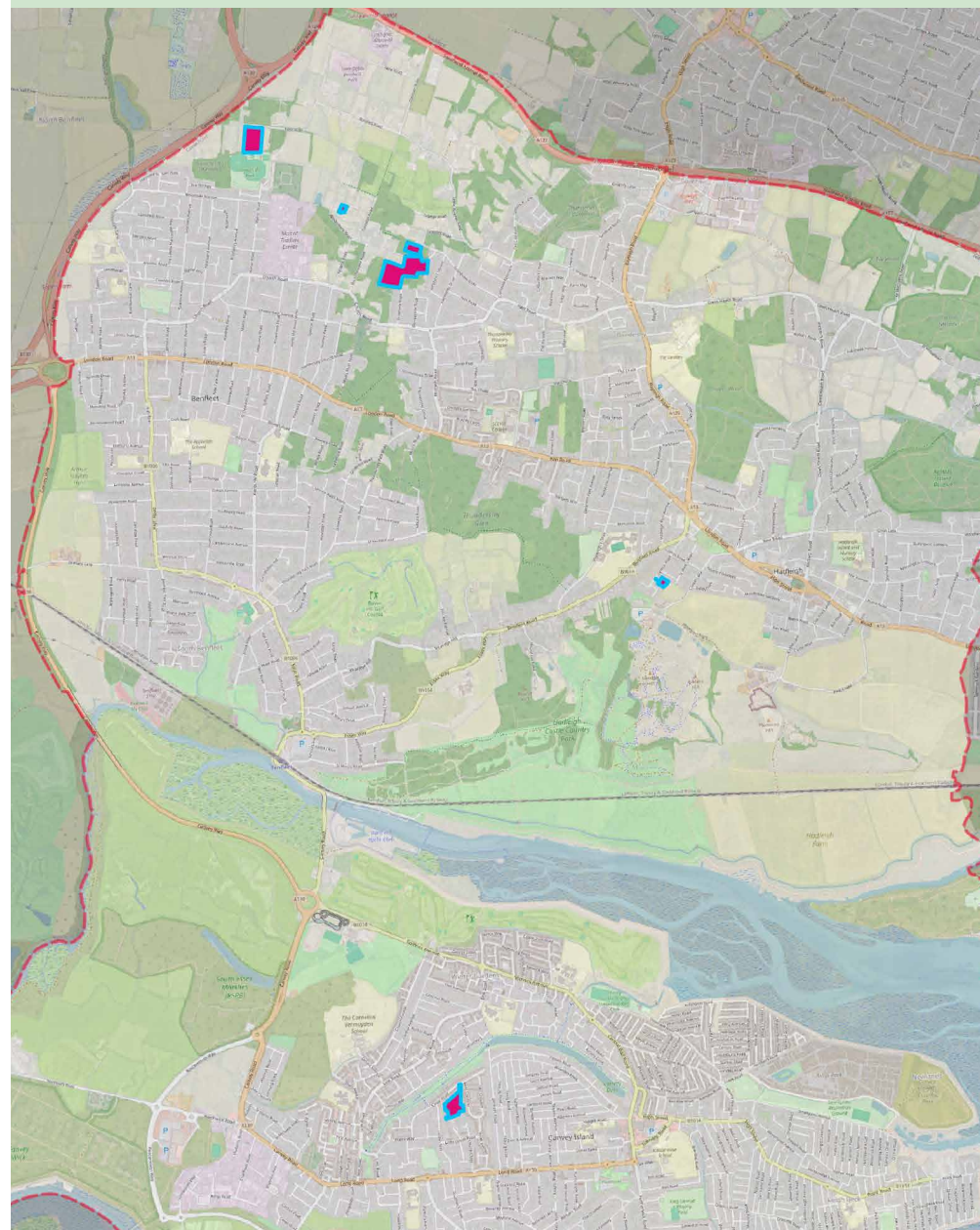
Q108. Should land be allocated for large scale renewable energy generation?

Q107. How should waste management and refuse storage be designed into new developments?

Supporting Documents & Information

- [Cultural Strategy for Essex, 2023](#)
- [10 year Plan – Meeting the demand for mainstream school places in Essex, 2024, ECC](#)
- [Open Space Assessment 2023](#)
- [Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, ECC, 2022](#)
- [Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Baseline Assessment 2024](#)
- [Essex Water Strategy, ECC, 2024](#)

Renewable Energy Site Options



Map Key:  Renewable Energy Site Options

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Improving Accessibility for all in Castle Point

Castle Point has excellent connectivity to surrounding areas via the A13, A127, A130, and the Southend to London rail line. These routes are often congested during peak times, and the delays and environmental impacts this causes are impactful on both residents and businesses.

New development will create new trips on the local transport network. The number of these will be dependent on the use, but also the travel patterns of new occupants. The redevelopment of existing uses will also have an impact, and there may be scope for moving uses with high transport impacts, such as HGV movements, to more appropriate locations.

Most trips within Castle Point do not start or end here. There is limited scope to change this due to the size of surrounding settlements, but opportunities to shorten trips within the borough should be explored, alongside where possible smoothing the flow of trips through the borough.

The largest opportunity to change local travel patterns lies with the travel behaviours of existing residents. Reducing stress on the network will principally be achieved by reducing private car use. This can be achieved by reducing the number of trips, changing the time they take place away from peak hours, shortening them, or by switching to non-car mode.

By co-locating uses in the borough, residents and workers will be able to perform more uses in fewer trips, thereby creating capacity on the network.

Increasing trips made by sustainable and active modes will also reduce congestion. This includes using public transport, walking, cycling, and reducing single person car trips by sharing cars or rides.

During the initial engagement you told us:

- There is strong support for a third road linking Canvey Island and the mainland.

- Transport capacity should be delivered in advance of increases in population so that the network does not become more congested. Certain junctions need to be improved as they are already over capacity.
- Deteriorating roads are an issue, and better maintenance is required. Pathway maintenance and improvements are vital for pedestrian safety particularly for the elderly and those with mobility issues. Improved bridleway provisions also had some support.
- Encourage people to use their cars less and thus reduce traffic. Bus services should be improved, with more routes, a higher frequency, and affordable pricing. The use of other transport alternatives should also be promoted, such as scooters, electric and non-electric bicycles, with better infrastructure to support their use. Other interventions to reduce air pollution should be considered including electric vehicle charging/ parking.
- Improved access to Benfleet Station by all modes of transport is supported.
- Better off street parking should be incorporated into new development to prevent obstructions on and off the road for drivers and pedestrians. Introduce residents parking permits to allow parking adjacent to own homes.
- Reduce the cost of parking in town centres for residents, and introduce free parking for business employees to promote the use of these areas.
- Improved traffic calming measures should be put in place to reduce speed in rat-run hot spots.

Local Transport Plan

Essex County Council has commenced the development of a new fourth Local Transport Plan, LTP4, that will replace the current Essex Transport Strategy. The new LTP will be evidence-led and focussed upon the delivery of ECC's wider outcomes, addressing both the important role transport plays in enabling the movement of people and goods and the impacts that transport has on the places where people live and our environment. LTP4 will be focussed on understanding the travel needs of people and businesses in Essex to raise awareness of the travel options people have and to enable more sustainable choices and journeys to be made. LTP4 is expected to be adopted in 2024.

Transport Improvements

An initial set of transport improvements that could be provided alongside each of the spatial options has been identified. To accommodate an urban first approach to new development we need to accommodate more movements on the existing transport networks.

Transport Assessments, Statements & Travel Plans

The highway network in Castle Point already experiences congestion on key routes and at key junctions during peak periods. It is therefore necessary that the Council requires developers to identify impacts of development on highway infrastructure in terms of capacity and safety when assessing planning applications to ensure that necessary mitigation measures are provided and funded.

Site Access

All new developments need to be safely accessed by all types of users including cars, bicycles and pedestrians in order to prevent road traffic accidents. The Essex Design Guide seeks to encourage active design in new developments through a range of measures including establishing walkable communities, connected walking and cycling routes, co-location of community facilities and establishing multi-functional spaces, all of which encourage the use of sustainable modes and promote healthier lifestyles.

Access for Servicing

Most roads in Castle Point are single carriageway, and this presents a problem for those developments which require regular servicing by HGVs. HGVs find it difficult to turn into inappropriately designed servicing areas and present a concern for congestion and for highway safety.

The waste collection authority requires all new developments to have safe and convenient access for collection vehicles, or suitable on road stopping, with the access roads and highways being constructed of materials able to withstand the weight of the collection vehicles.

Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicles are expected to become increasingly common over the plan period, with the sale of internal combustion engine vehicles expected to end in 2035. This will bring benefits in terms of cleaner air and reduced carbon emissions, but also challenges as charging infrastructure needs to be planned for.

Currently most charging locations are in people's homes, with limited supply at public locations such as a specialist charging point at work. The rate of evolution of battery and charging technology is very high at present, and it is not straightforward to predict how electric vehicles will be charged in the future. While it is sensible to ensure that all new off-street parking spaces should be future-proofed to be able to accommodate charging infrastructure, it is not clear whether, or how on-street charging infrastructure will be delivered.



Parking

An Essex wide review of parking standards has been undertaken. Consultation on this took place in the winter of 2023/24, with 23 residents from the borough responding and showing some support for the proposals. The review was underpinned by an assessment of parking demand across different types development and in different types of urban area within Essex.

For housing development, it has identified the potential to establish different levels of parking requirements within urban areas accounting for access to public transport provision and local services. This is known as a zonal approach and would see less car parking provision where there is good access to public transport and local services, and more where there is a greater need for a car to meet day to day needs. This approach tends to align with the urban first approach especially for those clusters in town centre locations, on key transport corridors such as the A13 and Long Road.

For non-residential development, some small changes are proposed but these remain largely unchanged compared to previous 2009 standards.

Requirements for disabled parking, cycle parking and EV charging have also been identified.



Q110. Which of the following active travel infrastructure improvements would you be in favour of?

Active travel infrastructure	Preference Ranking
Improved pedestrian paths and walkways	
Improved road crossings	
Improved off-road cycling infrastructure	
Improved on-road cycling infrastructure	
Improved at-destination cycling infrastructure, such as more and better (ie undercover) cycle parking?	

Q111. What issues do you think should be identified in Transport Assessments, and managed through Travel Plans?

Q112. What type of road infrastructure needs to be improved over the Plan period?

Benefits afforded by increasing development density	Preference Ranking
Road maintenance including addressing potholes	
Additional road capacity	
Junction improvements	
Pedestrian interfaces such as crossings	
Active travel improvements	
Additional public transport capacity	

Q113. Which parts of the highway network should be prioritised for improvement?

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Q114. Are there any new transport routes that you feel should be introduced to provide better/quicker routes to ease congestion?

Q115. What would you like the Plan to do to assist the use of modes other than the private car?

Q116. Rank these bus improvements in order of preference:

Active travel infrastructure	Rank
Improved bus frequency	
More space dedicated to buses on the highway (faster buses)	
Wider network of routes/ destinations	
Starting earlier and ending later	
Improved bus waiting facilities	

Q117. What approaches to improving pedestrian movement in and around centre in the borough would you like to see?

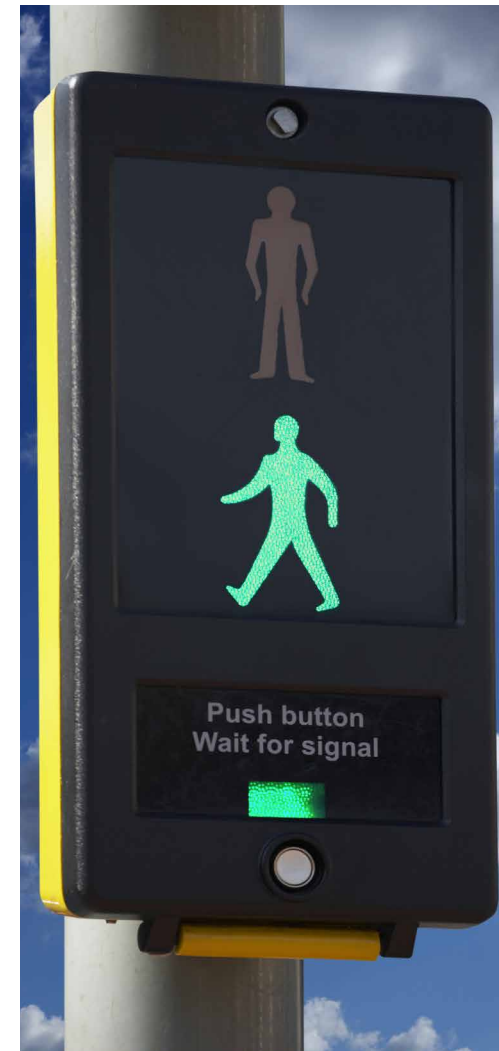
Q118. What do you think about the proposed parking standards?

Q119. What measures would help to reduce the impacts of rat-running on unsuitable routes in the borough?

Benefits afforded by increasing development density	Preference Ranking
Block through-routes	
Reduce speed limits	
Road calming measures	
One-way streets	

Supporting Documents & Information

- [Castle Point Issues & Options Transport Assessment, Systra, 2024](#)
- [Essex Local Transport Plan \(LTP3\), 2011](#)
- Castle Point Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, 2024 - emerging



Appendix A – Schedule of Urban Sites with Gross and Probability-Applied Capacities

Sites have a gross capacity which is based on recent completed developments within the local area.

A 20% deduction to this has then been applied to allow for non-residential uses at the ground floor level. This could be a replacement business or service use, or a new use. These are the capacities quoted in the area chapters of this document.

The 80% capacity has then had a reduction based on the uncertainty that the type of existing use will come forward over the Plan period (i.e. by 2043). This is principally due to unknown availability of some sites. A 50% deduction has been applied to community buildings, supermarkets, car parks and retail warehouse sites. A 25% deduction has been applied to auto sties, underutilised grass, industrial sites, and garage sites. This reflects the likelihood that, for example, a supermarket is less likely to come forward for development in the next 20 year than a town centre industrial site.

The output (a double-reduced capacity) is the net capacity.

All of the net capacities add up to the Draft Urban Capacity of Castle Point: 2,204 new homes.

It is important to understand that at this time these sites are identified as potential sources of urban development only. They are not allocations for development at this stage. They are identified to clearly set out the types of choices that need to be made, and so that these choices can be considered alongside options for growth outside of the urban area. Put simply, the more development opportunities that are identified on urban sites, the lower the risk is to our borough's precious Green Belt areas.

All the sites identified are considered to have the potential to be more intensively used, but the Council has not at this point determined which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan. These choices will be taken once consultation feedback has been received and analysed. It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan. This means sites will very likely be added to or excluded from the draft Castle Point Plan following consultation.

Site Ref	Site Name	Cluster / Area	Capacity				Source
			Gross	-20%	Prob	Net	
101	West of Venables CI	Canvey TC E	101	122	25%	16	BFR 2024
102	Stafford Court Care Home, Venables CI	Canvey TC E	102	25	50%	12	BFR 2024
103	56-65 High Street, (KFC & Dominos)	Canvey TC E	103	16	25%	12	Site search 2024
104	Corner of Venables & High St	Canvey TC E	104	5	25%	4	Site search 2024
105	92-98 High St (Hook & Partners)	Canvey TC E	105	11	25%	8	Site search 2024
106	Corner of Florence Rd & High St	Canvey TC E	106	6	25%	5	Site search 2024
107	High St between Florence Rd & Oxford Rd	Canvey TC E	107	8	25%	6	Site search 2024
108	Canvey Island War Memorial Hall	Canvey TC E	108	14	50%	7	Site search 2024
109	129 High St (Esso, Londis and NTS)	Canvey TC E	109	14	25%	11	Site search 2024
110	149-151 & R/o High Street	Canvey TC E	110	22	50%	11	CFS 2024 & site search 2024

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Site Ref	Site Name	Cluster / Area	Capacity				Source
			Gross	-20%	Prob	Net	
111	Job Centre, 140 Furtherwick Rd	Canvey TC W	14	11	50%	6	BFR 2024
112	Oak Road Car Park and adjoining land	Canvey TC W	34	27	50%	14	CFS 2024 & site search 2024
113	Knightswick Shopping Centre	Canvey TC W	175	140	25%	105	CFS 2024
114	Canvey Library, High Street	Canvey TC W	6	5	50%	2	Site search 2024
115	Corner Knightswick Rd & High St	Canvey TC W	9	7	25%	5	Site search 2024
116	88-94 Furtherwick Road (Iceland)	Canvey TC W	23	18	25%	14	Site search 2024
117	Corner Furtherwick Rd & Waarden Rd	Canvey TC W	9	7	25%	5	Site search 2024
118	11-15 Knightswick Road	Canvey TC W	17	13	25%	10	Site search 2024
119	14-18 Furtherwick Road	Canvey TC W	25	20	25%	15	CFS 2024 & site search 2024
120	59 Furtherwick Road (Kush)	Canvey TC W	8	6	25%	5	Site search 2024
121	Knightswick clinic, Foksville Road	Canvey TC W	10	8	50%	4	Site search 2024
122	Corner of High St and Foksville Rd	Canvey TC W	15	12	25%	9	Site search 2024
123	Jones Corner, 169-179 Long Road	Long Road	17	13	25%	10	Site search 2024
124	Telephone exchange, Kittkatts Road	Long Road	23	18	25%	14	Site search 2024
125	Outpatients centre, Long Rd	Long Road	30	24	50%	12	BFR 2024
126	The former King Canute Pub, Long Rd	Long Road	28	22	25%	17	2018 SHLAA
127	L/a The Paddocks	Long Road	251	201	50%	101	CFS 2024
128	Conservative Club, 59-63 Long Road	Long Road	36	29	50%	14	Site search 2024
129	353-365 Long Road (Cosmos Pizza)	Long Road	15	12	25%	9	Site search 2024
130	Fire Station, 131-139 Long Road	Long Road	22	17	50%	9	Site search 2024
131	Police Station, 161-167 Long Road	Long Road	18	14	50%	7	Site search 2024
132	Canvey Island FC, Leigh Beck Rd	S&E Canvey	141	113	50%	57	Site search 2024
133	Corner of Station Rd and High St	S&E Canvey	11	9	25%	6	Site search 2024
134	Land at The Point	S&E Canvey	210	168	25%	126	1998 Local Plan
135	Former Admiral Jellicoe, High Street	S&E Canvey	9	7	50%	3	CFS 2024

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Site Ref	Site Name	Cluster / Area	Capacity				Source
			Gross	-20%	Prob	Net	
136	Ozonias Gardens, Eastern Esplanade	S&E Canvey	14	11	25%	8	CFS 2024
137	Land between Station Rd & Seaview rd	S&E Canvey	16	12	25%	9	CFS 2024
138	Land off Beveland Road	S&E Canvey	46	37	25%	28	CFS 2024
139	Health Centre, Third Avenue	Canvey	23	19	50%	9	Site search 2024
140	Essex Coachworks, 218 High Street	Canvey	14	11	25%	8	Site search 2024
141	27-37 Eastern Esplanade	Canvey	43	34	25%	26	Site search 2024
142	Briar Cottage, Leige Avenue	Canvey	9	7	25%	5	BFR 2024
143	Garages off St Johns Crescent	Canvey	12	10	25%	7	2018 SHLAA
144	Garages site off St Agnes Drive	Canvey	19	15	25%	11	2018 SHLAA
145	258 Furtherwick Road	Canvey	15	12	25%	9	2018 SHLAA
146	Corner of Little Gypps Rd & Willow Cl	Canvey	12	10	25%	7	CFS 2024
147	Lubbins Car Park, Eastern Esplanade	Canvey	23	19	50%	9	CFS 2024
148	Land to the rear of North Avenue	Canvey	45	36	25%	27	CFS 2024
149	Morrisons, Link Road	Canvey	20	16	50%	8	Site search 2024
201	School Lane Car Park & 1-5 High St	S Benfleet	180	144	50%	72	CFS 2024
202	87-97 High Street	S Benfleet	16	13	25%	9	BFR 2024
203	Benfleet Methodist Church, High Rd	S Benfleet TC	24	19	50%	9	Site search 2024
204	Benfleet Tavern Pub, High Rd	S Benfleet TC	31	25	50%	13	BFR 2024
205	Richmond Avenue Car Park 2	S Benfleet TC	48	38	50%	19	CFS 2024
206	61 High Road (T Cribb)	S Benfleet TC	17	13	25%	10	Site search 2024
207	Shell garage, Kents Hill Road	S Benfleet TC	15	12	25%	9	Site search 2024
208	Benfleet Baptist Church, Kents Hill Rd	S Benfleet TC	16	13	50%	6	Site search 2024
209	S Benfleet Library & Dentists	S Benfleet TC	19	16	50%	8	Site search 2024
210	Phone Exchange, Thundersley Park Rd	S Benfleet TC	27	21	25%	16	Site search 2024
211	Benfleet Surgery, Constitution Hill	S Benfleet TC	6	5	50%	2	Site search 2024

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Site Ref	Site Name	Cluster / Area	Capacity				Source
			Gross	-20%	Prob	Net	
212	188-190 High Road	S Benfleet TC	9	7	25%	5	Site search 2024
213	Sainsburys, High Road	S Benfleet TC	19	15	25%	11	Site search 2024
214	Stellisons, High Road	S Benfleet TC	19	15	25%	12	Site search 2024
215	S Benfleet Social Club, 6 Vicarage Hill	S Benfleet TC	20	16	50%	8	Site search 2024
216	NE corner London Rd & Rushbottom Ln	Tarpots	21	17	25%	13	Site search 2024
217	SE corner London Road & High Rd	Tarpots	13	10	50%	5	Site search 2024
218	SW corner London Rd & High Rd	Tarpots	77	61	25%	46	Site search 2024
219	Holy Family Church, High Rd	Tarpots	32	26	50%	13	Site search 2024
220	NW corner London Rd & Rushbottom Ln	Tarpots	7	6	25%	4	Site search 2024
221	Aldi, Rushbottom Lane	Tarpots	61	49	50%	24	Site search 2024
222	Richmond Car Park 1 (Richmond Ave)	Benfleet	34	27	50%	13	CFS 2024
223	159-169 Church Road	Benfleet	40	32	25%	24	Site search 2024
224	Benfleet Clinic, High Road	Benfleet	9	7	50%	4	Site search 2024
225	Rear of 179-181 Church Road	Benfleet	35	28	25%	21	BFR 2024
226	L/a Villa Park, Tarmarisk	Benfleet	16	13	25%	10	CFS 2024
227	312-320 London Rd (Queen Bee's)	A13 Corridor	24	19	25%	14	CFS 2024
228	Canvey Supply, 223 London Road	A13 Corridor	69	55	25%	41	CFS 2024
229	NE corner London Rd & Kents Hill Rd	A13 Corridor	10	8	25%	6	Site search 2024
230	Maharaja Restaurant, London Rd	A13 Corridor	12	10	25%	7	BFR 2024
301	Sandcastles Nursery, Kiln Road	A13 Corridor	24	19	50%	10	2018 SHLAA
302	The Island Site, High St / London Rd	Hadleigh C	76	61	50%	30	BFR 2024
303	Rectory Road Car Park	Hadleigh C	40	32	50%	16	CFS 2024
304	Morrisons, 175 London Road	Hadleigh C	234	187	50%	94	Site search 2024
305	24 High Street (Conservative Club)	Hadleigh C	19	15	50%	8	Site search 2024
306	351-359 London Road	Hadleigh E	21	17	25%	13	BFR 2024

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

Site Ref	Site Name	Cluster / Area	Capacity				Source
			Gross	-20%	Prob	Net	
307	Rear of 244-258 London Road	Hadleigh E	41	11	25%	25	BFR 2024
308	Corner of Castle Rd & London Rd	Hadleigh E	15	33	25%	9	Site search 2024
309	Castle Lane Car Park	Hadleigh E	40	12	50%	16	CFS 2024
310	Johnsons Factory, London Road	Hadleigh E	48	32	25%	29	CFS 2024
311	Lidl, London Road	Hadleigh E	72	39	50%	29	Site search 2024
312	Corner of Oak Rd & London Rd	Hadleigh E	12	58	25%	7	Site search 2024
313	Telephone exchange, London Road	Hadleigh E	21	10	25%	13	Site search 2024
314	Hadleigh Clinic, 49 London Road	Hadleigh W	14	17	50%	6	Site search 2024
315	Magnet, London Road	Hadleigh W	23	11	50%	9	Site search 2024
316	Bus Depot, London Road	Hadleigh W	82	19	25%	49	Site search 2024
317	39-45 London Road (Brooms)	Hadleigh W	7	66	25%	4	Site search 2024
318	Land South of Scrub Lane	Hadleigh	133	6	25%	80	1998 Local Plan
319	Solbys House, Rectory Road	Hadleigh	21	107	50%	8	CFS 2024
320	20 Haresland Close, Hadleigh	Daws Heath	31	16	25%	19	BFR 2024
401	Thames Loose Leaf, 289 Kiln Road	A13 Corridor	19	25	25%	11	BFR 2024
402	Corner of London Rd & Kenneth Rd	A13 Corridor	35	15	50%	14	Site search 2024
403	Council Offices, Kiln Road	Kiln Road	338	28	50%	135	CFS 2024
404	USP College, Kiln Road	Kiln Road	468	271	50%	187	Site search 2024
405	343 Rayleigh Road	Rayleigh Rd	15	374	25%	9	BFR 2024
406	Rayleigh Road Parade, Rayleigh Rd	Rayleigh Rd	11	12	25%	7	CFS 2024
407	Halfords, 543-557 Rayleigh Road	Thundersley	48	9	50%	19	BFR 2024
408	61-69 Hart Road	Thundersley	15	38	25%	9	BFR 2024
409	Land between Starling Cl & Hacks Dr	Thundersley	11	12	25%	7	2018 SHLAA
410	Land between Highfield Ave & Nicholson Rd	Thundersley	36	9	25%	21	2018 SHLAA
411	Dark Lane Car Park	Thundersley	14	28	50%	6	CFS 2024
412	Thundersley clinic, Kenneth Road	Thundersley	21	11	50%	9	Site search 2024

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL SITES SHOWN ARE IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL SOURCES OF DEVELOPMENT ONLY, THEY ARE NOT ALLOCATIONS AT THIS STAGE

THE CASTLE POINT PLAN



Your Community. Your Views



Castle Point Borough Council
Kiln Road, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 1TF

E: CPPlan@castlepoint.gov.uk

T: 01268 882200

© Copyright Castle Point Borough Council 2024

www.castlepoint.gov.uk/castle-point-plan

Castle Point Borough Council Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Initial Assessment of Strategic Options 2024

Castle Point Borough Council

Castle Point Plan

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Scoping Report, Draft Framework, and Initial Assessment of Strategic Options

June 2024

Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 The Castle Point Plan	3
2. Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment	4
2.1 The Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal	4
2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Process	5
2.3 The Aim and Structure of this Report	7
3. Castle Point Plan Progress to Date	8
3.1 Castle Point Plan Initial Community and Stakeholder Engagement 2023 (Regulation 18 Consultation)	8
4. Sustainability Context, Baseline and Objectives	9
4.1 Introduction	9
4.2 Plans and Programmes (Stage A1)	9
4.3 Baseline Information (Stage A2)	16
4.4 Data Limitations	26
4.5 Key Sustainability Issues and Problems, and Sustainability Objectives (Stage 3)	26
4.6 The Compatibility of the SA Objectives	40
4.7 The Approach to Assessing the Castle Point Plan's Policy Content	42
4.8 Assumptions Made in the Assessment of the Plan's Content	46
5. Sustainability Frameworks	47
5.1 The Appraisal of Policies (SA Framework)	47
5.2 The Appraisal of Sites	72
6. Interim Appraisal of the Castle Point Plan on the Reasonable Alternatives	102
6.1 Introduction	102
7. Cumulative, Synergistic and Transboundary Effects	155
7.1 Introduction	155
7.2 Cumulative, Synergistic and Transboundary Effects	155
10 Next Steps (Task A5)	159
10.1 Consultation on this Scoping Report	159
10.2 Appraisal of the Regulation 19 Castle Point Plan	159

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This document forms a Scoping Report, Sustainability Framework, and Initial Assessment of Strategic Options, as a part of the production of a Castle Point Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). It supports the consultation of the Issues & Options consultation version of the Castle Point Plan.

An SA/SEA forms part of an assessment process designed to consider and report upon the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives. Such an assessment informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of such documents, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects.

The purpose of this Report is to provide the context for, and determine the scope of, the SA/SEA of the emerging Castle Point Plan, setting out the assessment framework, and reporting upon the potential impacts of the strategic growth options being consulted on in the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document.

This report forms part of an iterative approach to the new emerging Castle Point Plan with a further draft of the Interim SA/SEA to be prepared alongside the preparation of the Regulation 19 Castle Point Plan.

1.2 The Castle Point Plan

The Castle Point Plan (referred to hereafter as the Plan) responds to a national requirement that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must set planning policies in a local authority area. Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In line with the NPPF 2023, the Plan should be clear in setting out the strategic priorities for the area and the policies that address these, and which also provide the strategic framework within which any neighbourhood plans may be prepared to shape development at the community level.

2. Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 The Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal

The requirement for an SA/SEA emanates from national and international commitments to deliver sustainable development. The most used definition of sustainable development is that drawn up by the World Trade Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 which states that sustainable development is:

'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

This definition is consistent with the themes of the NPPF, which draws upon The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future's five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy, and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

SEA is also a statutory process, originally required under the European SEA Directive 2001/42/EC, transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations, and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments, they are necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA Regulations remain in force, and it is a legal requirement for the Castle Point Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

The aim of the SEA is to identify potentially significant environmental effects created as a result of the implementation of the Plan or programme on issues such as:

'biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors' as specified in Annex 1(f) of the Directive.

The SA examines the effects of proposed plans and programmes in a wider context, considering economic, social, and environmental considerations to promote sustainable development. It is mandatory for Local Plans to undergo a Sustainability Appraisal in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended by the Planning Act 2008, and in accordance with paragraph 32 of the NPPF (December 2023).

Whilst the requirements to produce a SA and SEA are distinct, Government guidance considers that it is possible to satisfy the two requirements through a

single approach providing that the requirements of the SEA Directive are met. This integrated appraisal process will hereafter be referred to as SA.

2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Process

The methodology for the SA of the Castle Point Plan at this stage follows that of the Sustainability Appraisal process as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Stages in the Sustainability Appraisal Process and Local Plan Preparation¹

Castle Point Plan	Sustainability Appraisal
Evidence gathering and options development September 2023 - June 2024	Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline, deciding on the scope, developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives 2. Collect baseline information 3. Identify sustainability issues and problems 4. Develop the sustainability appraisal framework 5. Test Local Plan objectives against the sustainability appraisal framework 6. Develop the Local Plan options including reasonable alternatives 7. Evaluate the likely effects of the Local Plan alternatives 8. Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects 9. Propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan 10. Consult the consultation bodies on the scope and content of the sustainability appraisal report
Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) Summer 2024	
Developing the Plan September 2024 - December 2024	Stage B: Update and refine the scope or content of the sustainability appraisal post consultation, where necessary. Reconsult consultation bodies following changes, if necessary.
Publication of the Plan (Regulation 19) January 2025 - March 2025	Stage C: Prepare the sustainability appraisal report Stage D: Seek representations on the sustainability appraisal report from consultation bodies and the public
Submission April 2025 Examination June 2025 - December 2025	Stage E: Submit sustainability appraisal alongside the Castle Point Plan to be examined and where necessary update to reflect any proposed modifications

¹ Source: Planning Practice Guidance – Sustainability appraisal requirements for local plans (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 11-013-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014)

↓	Adoption March 2026	<p>Stage F: Post adoption reporting and monitoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare and publish post-adoption statement 2. Monitor significant effects of implementing the Local Plan 3. Respond to adverse effects 	↓
---	-------------------------------	---	---

The relationship between the Castle Point Plan and other relevant planning policy and supporting documents is shown below in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Relationship between the Castle Point Plan and other planning documents

NATIONAL	National Planning Statements	National Policy National Planning Policy Framework and PPG		
LOCAL	Statement of Community Involvement	Local Plan		Minerals Plan Waste Plan
	Local Development Scheme	Strategic policies Spatial strategy Strategic allocations	Non-strategic policies Other site allocations Development management policies	Authority Monitoring Report
NEIGHBOURHOOD	Neighbourhood plans Non-strategic policies			
PLANNING POLICY DOCUMENTS	Supplementary Planning Documents	Design Codes	Master Plans / development briefs	Areas of major change or conservation

On 26 October 2023, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent and became an Act of Parliament². The Act sets out the Government's proposals for reforming the planning system. Amongst other things, the Act sets the stage for the reform of current system for strategic environmental assessments by providing instead for "Environmental Outcome Reports" (EORs) designed to streamline the process for identifying and assessing the environmental impact of plans and projects. The specific requirements will be set out in forthcoming legislation, along with information about transition arrangements but for now, the requirement for SEA remains, as set out in existing legislation. Any changes to the legal framework for carrying out SA/SEA will be addressed as appropriate as the Castle Point Plan is prepared.

² Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

2.3 The Aim and Structure of this Report

This Report responds to Stage A in the SA process above.

The production of a SA Scoping Report has been produced to outline the methodology that will be used in the appraisal of the Plan at the Regulation 19 stage, culminating in a SA Environmental Report.

This report is accompanied by two Annexes. These are:

- Annex A – Plans and Programmes
- Annex B – Baseline Information

Following the finalisation of this Report, a process of consultation will be undertaken. The focus of this consultation will be to seek comments from the three statutory consultees or 'environmental authorities' that are required to be consulted for all Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment documents. These are:

- The Environment Agency
- Natural England, and
- Historic England.

In addition to these, the consultation will seek to engage the wider community to encompass comprehensive public engagement.

3. Castle Point Plan Progress to Date

3.1 Castle Point Plan Initial Community and Stakeholder Engagement 2023 (Regulation 18 Consultation)

Between March 2023 and September 2023, the Council undertook an initial round of engagement which focused on determining the scope of issues to be addressed through the Castle Point Plan by engaging residents, key service providers, local businesses and other stakeholders on the key things that need to be addressed to deliver sustainable growth and improve the quality of places in Castle Point.

The engagement represented the first stage of the Plan-making process and helped to identify the issues for which policy options will be created to address.

Initial Community and Stakeholder Engagement 2023 Survey Questions

The survey questions were designed to elicit what the recipient's felt were most important to them about where they lived. The questions were:

- Choose up to five words that describe the area in which you live.
- What is most important to you about the area in which you live?
- If you could change any aspect of the local area in which you live, what would it be?
- Is there anything else you want to tell us about the local area in which you live?

As the initial engagement on the Castle Point Plan did not seek to make any policy choices, no SA was produced to accompany the Initial Community and Stakeholder Engagement consultation.

The Issues and Options are being presented as a formal 'Regulation 18' stage consultation of the Castle Point Plan, where the Council publishes an Options Engagement consultation with partners, the community, local businesses, and other stakeholders, and supporting evidence base.

The Publication of the Plan (Regulation 19) is scheduled for early 2025.

4. Sustainability Context, Baseline and Objectives

4.1 Introduction

The following section outlines the key findings of the SA Scoping Exercise which has been undertaken to inform this report. This includes an outline of the plans and programmes and the baseline information profile for the area.

4.2 Plans and Programmes (Stage A1)

Local Plans must have regard to existing policies, plans and programmes at national and regional levels and strengthen and support other local plans and strategies. It is therefore important to identify and review those policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives which are likely to influence the Plan at an early stage. The content of these plans and programmes can also assist in the identification of any conflicting content of plans and programmes in accumulation with the Plan. Local supporting documents have also been included within this list as they will significantly shape policies and decisions in the area.

Brexit

Whilst the SEA statutory process was originally required under the European SEA Directive, the Directive became transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments, necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA Regulations remain in force, and it is a legal requirement for the Castle Point Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

It is recognised that no list of plans or programmes can be definitive and as a result this report describes only the key documents which influence the Plan. Table 1 outlines the key documents, whilst a comprehensive description of these documents together with their relevance to the Plan is provided within Annex A.

Table 1: Key Documents

International Plans and Programmes
European Commission (EC) (2011) / Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. (Transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232)

European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2002)
International Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations (1992)
International Convention on Wetlands, UNESCO (1976)
United Nations Kyoto Protocol 1997 (UN Framework for Climate Change)
World Commission on Environment and Development 'Our Common Future' 1987
The World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg Summit 2002
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015). 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
United Nations Paris Climate Change Agreement (2015)
UNESCO World Heritage Convention, UNESCO (1972)
European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, Council of Europe (1985)
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta Treaty (1992)
Declaration on Forests and Land Use, United Nations (2021)
National Plans and Programmes
National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (updated)
The Localism Act 2011
National Planning Policy Framework, DLUHC (December 2023)
National Design Guide MHCLG (2021)
Nationally Described Space Standards Report (2015)
Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth, HM Treasury (2021)
Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England, DEFRA (2009)
Agricultural Act 2020, UK Parliament (2020)
Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024, DEFRA (2020)
UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future, HM Government (2018)
Developing a sustainable framework for UK aviation - Scoping document (March 2011)
Transport Investment Strategy, DfT (2017)
Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan, Highways England (2017)
The Road to Zero, DfT (2018)
Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain, DCLG (2021)

Future of Transport: Supporting Rural Transport Innovation, DfT (2023)
Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge, DEFRA (2023)
The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy report to Parliament, Secretary for Transport (2022)
Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement (July 2007)
The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2023)
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, DEFRA (2022)
The British energy security strategy, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street (2022)
The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2021)
The Environment Act 2021, HM Government (2021)
The Water Environment Regulations, HM Government (2017)
Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England, HM Government (2008)
The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations, HM Government (2016)
UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations, DEFRA and DfT (2017)
Clean Air Strategy 2019, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2019)
The Air Quality Strategy for England, DEFRA (2023)
National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW), DCLG (2014)
The Waste Prevention programme for England: Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste, DEFRA (2023)
Waste Management Plan for England, DEFRA (2021)
The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations, HM Government (2020)
The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2021)
The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations, HM Government (2021)
The 25 Year Environment Plan, HM Government (2018)
Green Infrastructure Framework, Natural England (2023)
Flood and Water Management Act, HM Government (2010)
The UK Renewable Energy Strategy, HM Government (2009)
Climate Change Act 2008
Planning and Energy Act 2008

Community Infrastructure Levy An Overview, DCLG (9th May 2011)
Underground, Under Threat - Groundwater protection: policy and practice (GP3)
Land contamination risk management (LCRM), EA (2020, and subsequent updates)
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2010
National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010)
The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations, HM Government (2019)
Biodiversity Offsetting In England Green Paper, DEFRA (2013)
England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles, DEFRA (2008)
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010, HM Government (2010)
Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Historic England Advice Note 8, Historic England (2016)
The Heritage Statement of 2017, HM Government (2017)
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (December 2023)
Sub-national Plans and Programmes
Essex Local Transport Plan 2011 (LTP3)
South Essex Transport Study, Jacobs, 2024 (LTP4) (underway to be completed by June 2024)
ECC Development Management Policies (February 2011)
ECC Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice 2009 Adopted by CPBC (June 2010) (to be updated once work completed)
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Statements / Plans
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes A Vision for the Future of Essex
Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, ECC (2020)
Water Strategy for Essex, 2023, ECC

Essex Sector Development Strategy Targeting a stronger, more inclusive, and more sustainable future economy, ECC (2022)
The Essex Sector Development Report: Autumn 2023, ECC (2023)
The Essex Design Guide – Ecology and Biodiversity (updated 2023) Live Document
Essex County council 10 Year Plan Meeting the demand for school places in Essex 2019-2028 (ECC)
School Organisation 10-year plan for Essex school places 2024 – 2033 (ECC)
The Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (Revised Edition 2023)
River Basin Management Plan Thames River Basin District 2022
Essex Rural Strategy: 2020 Vision for Rural Essex 2010 (under review to be launched 2024) Essex Rural Partnership
The Essex Design Guide – Health and Wellbeing (live document
Essex Design Guide – Health Impact Assessments (live document)
Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, ECC, 2022
Essex Healthy Places – Advice Notes for Planners, Developers and Designers (EPOA)
Everyone's Essex: Our Plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025 (ECC)
Essex Climate Action Plan (2021 – 2025), ECC (2023)
Essex County Council Environmental Statement - Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral Essex Climate Action Commission (2023)
ECC Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007-2032
ECC Draft Waste Strategy for Essex 2024 - 2054
The Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex 2020
Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
Essex Design Guide – Minerals and Waste Policy S8 – Safeguarding Mineral Resources (live document)
Essex Design Guide (2024) Live Document
Heritage at Risk- East of England Register 2022, Historic England
Local Plan and Programmes
Castle Point Local Plan 2014 (withdrawn)
Castle Point Local Plan 2016 (withdrawn)
Castle Point Local Plan 2018 (withdrawn)
Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)
South Essex Joint Strategic Plan Statement of Common Ground (June 2018)

South Essex Strategic Infrastructure Position Statement Stage A Report: Baseline Study, ASELA (2019)
Essex Minerals Local Plan Review 2025 - 2040
Castle Point Engagement Through Art (underway)
Local Reports and Assessments (Evidence Base)
Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) (2018)
Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation SPD (2020) Adopted
Local Wildlife Site Review (underway / to be completed Spring 2024)
Essex Wildlife Trust – Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, 2010
Essex Wildlife Trust – South Essex Marshes Living Landscape Vision, 2010
Castle Point Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2020) to be updated (completion 2024)
Green Belt Review – Part 1 (2018)
Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, ECC, 2020
South Essex Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy and Appendices (2020)
Castle Point Open Space Assessment (2023) (Final April 2024)
Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment (2018) to be updated
Playing Pitch Strategy 2018 (updated 2022)
South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 1) (2018)
Castle Point Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 1) to be completed 2024
Castle Point Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 2) (completion due Autumn 2024)
Castle Point Transport Evidence Refresh, Mott Macdonald (2018)
Transport Assessment Update (to be completed June 2024)
Castle Point Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plan Stage 1 and Stage 2 Analysis (2023)
Castle Point Bus Network Review (2023)
Castle Point Plan Viability Assessment (to be updated Autumn 2024)
Castle Point demographic projections 2023 – 2033, ONS
Essex & District Population Projections 2020 All Ages
Essex Area Profiles – Essex Open Data
South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (November 2017)
Essex Sector Development Strategy (Essex County Council 2022)

Economic Development Strategy (underway / to be completed Summer 2024)
South Essex Retail Study Volume 1 (May 2017)
Castle Point Town centre Shopping frontages Assessment (2019)
Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment (2023)
Castle Point Borough Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (2017) (to be updated / completed March 2024)
Greater Essex Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2016 - 2033 (2018)
South Essex Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Update 2016 - 2038 (2019) (to be updated by the Castle Point Borough Council Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2024 for Castle Point)
South Essex Employment Land Availability Assessment Site Assessment Report (2022)
Castle Point Economic Development Site Review (Completion due May 2024)
Urban Capacity Assessment Stage 1 / Stage 2 (underway to be completed March 2024)
Castle Point Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (in progress)
Extract from the Essex Historic Environment Record – Castle Point Records (2013)
Castle Point Borough Urban Design Characterisation Report (2013)
Castle Point Design Code (in progress / to be completed Summer 2024)
Castle Point Appendix Five: Designated Historic Assets (2022) (to be reviewed)
Essex Air Quality Live Map (for Castle Point)
Castle Point Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023)
Essex Thames Gateway Historic Landscape Characterisation (2007)
Greater Essex Growth and Infrastructure Framework 2016 - 2036 (2016)
Essex Design Guide – South Essex Surface Water Management Plan (2022)
Essex County Council Interactive Flood Risk Map
Canvey Island 6 Point Plan (2015)
Canvey Island IUD Model (2015) (to be updated through SFRA to incorporate up to date climate change allowances – completion due Summer 2024)
Estuary 2021 report on Activity and Reach, Estuary-based arts organisations (2022)
Essex Open Data Census 2021 – initial release (Castle Point population data)
Subnational estimates of dwellings and households by tenure, England:2021 (Castle Point data)

Land Registry Data: UK House Price Index (Castle Point data)
ONS Data: Housing affordability in England and Wales: 2022 (Castle Point data)
Castle Point Authority Monitoring Reports
Castle Point Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024
Sport England Active Lives Surveys (Castle Point data)
Castle Point Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supplementary Planning Document, January 2024, Version for Consultation
Castle Point Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report 2023 - for the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document
Castle Point developers Contributions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document, March 2023
Castle Point Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, May 2023
Castle Point Habitats Regulations Assessment and Appropriate Assessment, November 2021 (for withdrawn plan)
Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping for Castle Point Plan (completion due Summer 2024.)
Habitats Regulations Assessment for Castle Point Plan (completion due Autumn 2024)

4.3 Baseline Information (Stage A2)

Annex B details the complete Baseline Information profile for the strategic area relevant to the content of the Plan.

The following section outlines a summary of the key baseline information and therefore the current economic, social, and environmental situation in the Borough.

Table 2: Economic Baseline Summary

Economic Baseline		
Economy and Employment		
Baseline Summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic activity within the borough is greater than average (90.2%) Proportion of micro-businesses greater than average Construction companies make up over a quarter of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure may not have capacity to support future business growth. Without employment land allocations, development could be sporadic and/or unsustainable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes following Brexit Investment decisions may falter or be sporadic

Economic Baseline		
<p>total businesses in the borough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment is lower than average • Residents receive less than average gross pay and there is inequality in pay between men and women 		
Transport and Connectivity		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents have higher than average ownership of cars and vans • Train commuters are greater on average, compared to the national and regional statistics • Residents commuting to work by car is greater than regional and national averages • Greatest outflow of population for work is generally to London • Greatest inflow of population for work is from Southend • The borough has second lowest number of road accidents, leading to death or serious injury in the county 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing population requires an adaptable approach to new transportation options • Population increase could encourage private car ownership, leading to congestion and pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must adapt as is an area to vehicle improvements, electric and autonomous etc.

Table 3: Environmental Baseline Summary

Environmental Baseline		
Biodiversity and Nature Conservation		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway south Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan area contains an SPA and is within the zone of influence for others along the Essex Coast • From the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (EBAP) there 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for recreation • Contribution to Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Strategy • Link to London National Park City

Environmental Baseline		
<p>are 25 species, and 10 habitat action plans covering Essex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 6 SSSIs in Canvey Island. • 5 of these 6 are meeting quality target of 100% favourable or unfavourable recovering condition • There is an Essex Coastal Recreational Avoidance, Disturbance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and adopted SPD • There are 43 Local Wildlife Sites • A BNG SPD has been prepared and positively screened and consulted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for biodiversity net gain via statutory protections • Potential for declining biodiversity in Castle Point due to need for growth in the Borough aligned development without action, as well as climate change • Without a new Castle Point Plan, it is possible that development could be sited inappropriately and adversely impact biodiversity sites. • A new castle Point Plan will provide opportunities to incorporate updated policy to support the management, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in connection with new development in Castle Point. New policy also provides an opportunity to manage the sensitivities of biodiversity sites and networks, e.g., locating development away from the most sensitive locations and providing for new green and blue infrastructure. • There will also be opportunities for policy to support the achievement of biodiversity net gain at new development in line with the national policy approach and to support the achievement of the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy 	

Environmental Baseline		
Water and Flood Risk		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased demand on water resources and sustainability of water supply Increased requirement for wastewater treatment Negative impacts on water quality through inappropriate development Climatic change and more extreme weather events leading to potential flood risk and coastal change Deterioration of wildlife in estuaries/rivers Changes in leisure activities affecting coasts/estuaries Impact of increased tourism including the England Coastal Path, free swimming, kayaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development must not give rise to a deterioration in water quality The new Castle Point Plan will provide the opportunity to ensure that development is located and designed to take into account the sensitivity of the water environment The new Castle Point Plan will need to ensure that new development should be planned to ensure appropriate adaptation measures (e.g., SuDS and flood resilient design) are included to mitigate flood risk (including green infrastructure) as a result of climate change New development over the plan period will also need to be considerate of existing pressures on wastewater infrastructure and the potential for supporting any new infrastructure needed Associated with water quality and biodiversity, that a suitable amount of recreational land must be incorporated into development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development must not give rise to a deterioration in water quality Associated with water quality and biodiversity, that a suitable amount of recreational land must be incorporated into development
Climate and Energy		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Castle Point has a low percentage of total energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure more energy efficient homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure more energy efficient homes

Environmental Baseline		
<p>consumption from renewable bioenergy and waste sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Castle Point domestic practices produce the most carbon dioxide (46.36%) – a percentage lower than the county average 	<p>Without the new Castle Point Plan, sustainable design and construction techniques may not be adopted in new build development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is potential for the Borough to be subject to more frequent extreme weather events as well as increasing potential for flood risk as a result of climate change. A new Castle Point Plan could support the incorporation of appropriate adaptation measures through design. This may include tree planting and shelter in the public realm to allow people to take refuge from the effects of extreme weather events Without the new Castle Point Plan, sites for development may be located in areas that are prone to the effects of climate change, such as in areas with a higher chance of flooding The Council will continue to have an obligation to reduce carbon emissions with or without the new Castle Point Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is potential for the TGSE area to be subject to more frequent extreme weather events as well as increasing potential for flood risk as a result of climate change.
Air and Noise		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex

Environmental Baseline		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main source of air pollution in the Borough relates to road traffic emissions, particularly from the principal roads in the Borough, the A13, A127, and A130. There is also pollution from commercial, industrial and domestic sources, and potential transboundary pollution sources, such as the power stations along the Thames Estuary and the oil refinery in Thurrock Large areas of land around the Borough's strategic roads have noise impacts at 55-75 dB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development should strike a balance between connectivity and potential noise and air quality impacts through effective mitigation Recent national policies and emergence of new technologies are likely to improve air pollution, e.g., through cleaner fuels/energy sources The new Castle Point Plan provides an opportunity to contribute to improved air quality in the Borough through the sustainable siting of development and the promotion of alternative travel modes to the motorised vehicle, in line with national policy aspirations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development should strike a balance between connectivity and potential noise and air quality impacts through effective mitigation Recent national policies and emergence of new technologies are likely to improve air pollution, e.g., through cleaner fuels/energy sources
Material Assets (including Minerals, Soil and Waste)		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway south Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Castle Point recycles / composts less of its waste than the WCA and Essex averages There are no extraction sites or mineral deposits safeguarded by the MPA within Castle Point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in development and greater CD&E waste arisings Increasing population generating more waste Any large regeneration and infrastructure projects will generate more waste. New Castle Point Plan will provide an opportunity to ensure sufficient land is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in development and greater CD&E waste arisings Increasing population generating more waste Any large regeneration and infrastructure projects will generate more waste Recycling trends since 2018/19 suggest the recycling rates will continue to increase

Environmental Baseline		
	<p>available in appropriate locations for waste management facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycling trends since 2018/19 suggest the recycling rates will continue to increase 	
Landscape		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway south Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Castle Point falls into two character areas, the Thames Estuary and South Essex Coastal Towns There are 5 Living Landscape area identified within the Borough There are 53 brownfield sites on the Brownfield Register with 824 minimum net dwellings Very little agricultural land is used for farming There are no protected lanes in the Borough There is limited ancient woodland in the Borough. Daws Heath in particular contains a number of ancient woodlands connected by a network of hedgerows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities to use the brownfield sites ahead of any sites in the Green Belt Contribution to Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy Recreational pressure - increased use of coastal pathways Pressure from development – including new housing and infrastructure developments such as transport improvements Harm to trees The new Castle Point Plan provides opportunities to ensure that the variation in landscape character is taken into account in the design and siting of development to support its long term protection and enhancement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Infrastructure Strategy Link to London National Park Recreational pressure - increased use of coastal pathways Pressure from development – including new housing and infrastructure developments such as transport improvements Harm to trees
Cultural Heritage		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Shames Gateway south Essex

Environmental Baseline		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 7 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Castle Point • There are 37 locally listed buildings records on the Local List • Most designated heritage assets would be protected without the Plan • Proposed East Coast Flyway as a Natural World Heritage Site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing heritage assets back into optimum use from being assets 'at risk' and ensuring other heritage assets do not become 'at risk' • Inappropriate development may harm the setting of such assets • The new Castle Point Plan provides an opportunity to update planning policy in the Borough to reflect changes in local circumstance and ensure the protection and enhancement of the Borough's historic assets (including their settings) from inappropriate development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Strategy • Link to London National Park City

Table 4: Social Baseline Summary

Social Baseline		
Population and Society		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway south Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population change within the borough was 2% in a 10 year period. Considerably lower than the national and regional averages (2011-2021) • The population within Castle Point is ageing and will continue to increase in age • Predicted population change within Castle Point is lower than national predictions, but higher than the Essex predictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Point must adapt to having a greater than average percentage of ageing populous • Population change within the Borough is considerably lower than average, possibly causing further problems with the ageing population. • Likely evolution of the Baseline without the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wider area must adapt to having a greater than average proportion of old aged population

Social Baseline		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a surplus of school places at primary and secondary schools • Out of seven secondary schools, two are rated below good • Castle Point has a lower skilled workforce in comparison to the borough and region <p>Future Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing demographics and planning for suitable services • Change to migration trends • Inequality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity to plan positively to reduce deprivation and improve social inclusion • No opportunities to address ageing population and meet the needs of a changing population • Population growth and demographic change is likely to place additional demand on key services and facilities such as health, education and social care. Services are less likely to be delivered without a new Castle Point Plan in appropriate locations, or of sufficient quality and quantity 	
Housing		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standard methodology indicates that over a ten year period, Castle Point's housing need is 355 dwellings per annum using 2023 as a base date. • Castle Point's local housing Needs Assessment indicates that over a ten-year period Castle Point Housing need is 255 dwelling using 2023 as a base date • Housing supply is currently below the annual requirement • The percentage of privately owned dwellings is greater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness rates could continue to increase in future years • House prices could continue to increase, due to proximity to London • Homes could be constructed at a lesser standard due to constraints <p>Without the new Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not planning positively for an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures and locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TGSE may not meet objectively assessed needs

Social Baseline		
<p>than the national average at 95%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean house prices are greater than national average, but lower than county average • Housing price to income ratio is higher than average at 11.2 • Homelessness is increasing at a higher rate 20/21; 232 21/22; 241 22/23; 248 • The borough requires 15 gypsy/traveller pitches as of 2043 <p>Future Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land availability • Tenure models • London effect • Homelessness • Good quality homes, in all tenures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stalling delivery of homes • Not meeting local housing need 	
Health and Wellbeing		
Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Life expectancy within the borough is greater than England averages, but lower than the Essex average • Adult activity has increased in the period 2022-2023, at present; it is slightly lower to the county, regional and national averages <p>Future Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing lifestyles and the rise in lifestyle related illnesses – sedentary lifestyles, lack of time spent outdoors etc • Changes to health and social care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifestyle changes to more sedentary practices • Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Plan • Not designing to encourage physical activity, safe neighbourhoods and with the needs of an ageing population in mind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New developments not being designed to appropriately reflect the need to shift to more active lifestyles

4.4 Data Limitations

Not all the information available for the authority was quantifiable; as a result, there are some gaps within the data set and a degree of reliance on qualitative assumptions for certain topics. It is believed however that the available information shows a comprehensive view on sustainability within the Plan Area. New data that becomes available will be incorporated within the SA at each stage of its development.

The information outlined within this Report represents a snapshot of the information available at the May 2024.

4.5 Key Sustainability Issues and Problems, and Sustainability Objectives (Stage 3)

The outcome of Stages A1 – A2 in the SA Process is the identification of key sustainability issues and problems facing the Plan Area which assist in the finalisation of a set of relevant Sustainability Objectives which can also provide a consistent approach between strategic level policies and site/area specific policies. Issues are also identified from the review of plans and programmes and a strategic analysis of the baseline information.

The appraisal of the Plan will be able to evaluate, in a clear and consistent manner, the nature and degree of impact and whether significant effects are likely to emerge from the Plan's proposed content.

The following table outlines the key sustainability issues and considerations for the Plan Area.

Table 5: Key Sustainability Issues and problems, and the state of the environment in the absence of the Castle Point Plan

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
Biodiversity	<p>From the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan³ (EBAP) there are 25 species, and 10 habitat action plans covering Essex</p> <p>A Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared,</p>	Although biodiversity and ecological designations are protected internationally and nationally, allocating sites and devising policy criteria in a locally relevant planned system enables specialist input on a site-

³ Integrating Biodiversity into Development, ECC (2007)

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
	<p>and positively screened and consulted upon.</p> <p>A Local Wildlife Site Review for Castle Point is due for completion Spring 2024</p>	<p>by-site basis and the best outcomes considering all alternatives. Without such a plan-led approach, sites may be developed without relevant policy criteria which could have cumulative negative impacts on habitats and designations.</p>
Designated Sites	<p>Castle Point has one European designated site – the Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar. Nationally designated sites include 6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). There are also 43 locally important nature conservation areas which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs).</p> <p>There is a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target of at least 95% of all nationally important wildlife sites being brought into favourable condition. 5 of the 6 sites in Castle Point are meeting this target. Benfleet and Southend Marshes has 8% of its area which is not meeting this quality benchmark.</p>	<p>The Essex coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) aims to protect and enhance the Essex coast. It protects and enhances the Essex coastline from residential development that is anticipated across Essex in current Local Plans. It fulfils the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 which provides statutory protection for European Sites this includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar Sites.</p>
<p>Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services</p> <p>There are 5 Living Landscape areas identified</p>	<p>The parks, river corridors, open spaces, playing fields, nature reserves and woodlands, as well as allotments, street trees and private gardens in Castle Point provide opportunity for outdoor activities, benefit to wildlife, flood regulation and many other benefits.</p>	<p>A Green Infrastructure Strategy has been prepared and published Essex to fully understand and maximise the benefits of GI in the County. Devising policy criteria in a locally relevant plan-led system to reflect this enables specialist input on a site-by-site basis and the best outcomes considering all alternatives. Without such a plan-led approach, sites may be developed without relevant policy</p>

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
<p>within the Borough.</p> <p>There is ancient woodland in the northern part of the Borough.</p>		<p>criteria which could have cumulative negative impacts on the integrity of GI and maintaining ecosystem services.</p>
<p>Water Environment</p>	<p>Each River Basin District across England has a management plan, which has been formed to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Castle Point falls into the Thames District. Under the Directive, the UK must ensure that there is no deterioration in the quality of its water bodies, and that all water bodies improve to reach 'good ecological status' as soon as possible. The management plan details the issues relating to water quality and how to address them.</p> <p>Beneath the River Basin district, catchment management plans are produced. In Essex, the Essex Rivers Hub works with partners and communities to protect and enhance rivers and watercourses. There are currently no catchment plans or projects for the rivers in Castle Point.</p>	<p>Without the Plan's policy direction, it is possible that permissions are granted without suitable planning conditions. Water quality issues such as these are often tackled through initiatives on sustainable drainage systems.</p>
<p>Landscape Features</p> <p>There are 5 Living Landscape areas identified within the Borough.</p>	<p>A landscape character assessment was undertaken of Essex in 2003. Castle Point falls into two character areas, the Thames Estuary and South Essex Coastal Towns.</p> <p>There are 53 brownfield sites on the Brownfield Register⁴.</p>	<p>Allocating sites and devising policy criteria in a locally relevant plan-led system enables input by landscape specialists on a site-by-site basis and the best outcomes considering all alternatives. Without such a plan-led approach, sites may be developed without relevant policy</p>

⁴ Castle point Brownfield Register (2024)

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
There is limited ancient woodland in the Borough.		criteria which could have cumulative negative impacts on landscapes.
<p>Minerals</p> <p>There are no extraction sites or mineral deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan within Castle Point.</p>	<p>The majority of the sand and gravel produced in Essex (about 78%) is used within the County itself. This position looks unlikely to change over the long-term. Consequently, the main factor influencing production of sand and gravel in the future will be the need to meet the minerals demand for the whole of Essex created by major development and new infrastructure projects within Essex itself.</p>	<p>Allocating sites and devising policy criteria in a locally relevant plan-led system enables mineral deposits to be specifically safeguarded in line with Essex County Council input as the relevant Minerals Planning Authority. The absence of a plan could see a number of a planning applications come forward that are not aware of designated and safeguarded mineral extraction sites and their protection. Local Planning Authorities are required to map such sites within their local Plan for this purpose.</p>
Soil	<p>Agricultural land is very rarely associated with farming in the Borough. The costs associated with yields have reduced the number of arable farms in the Borough. Limited cropping occurs in the east of the Borough, most goes unused or is used for grazing. Much of the farmland is being promoted for housing developments.</p>	<p>Without a plan-led system, applications could come forward and be granted that do not consider the best and most versatile agricultural land in the borough. Although not a significant barrier to development, since much of the land is not used for agriculture, the plan has the potential to direct development, through allocations, to land that is of a worse quality in the first instance.</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>The proposed Local List comprises now of 58 records, 13 in Benfleet, 12 on Canvey Island, including the relocated Stepping Stones as a separate record, 29 in Hadleigh and 4 in Thundersley. 28 remain from the existing Local List.</p>	<p>Although heritage and historic designations are protected nationally, allocating sites, and devising policy criteria in a locally relevant plan-led system enables input by historic environment specialists on a site-by-site</p>

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
	<p>Castle Point has 38 listed buildings and churches within the Borough. This includes 3 grade I listed and 2 grade II* listed. Additionally the Borough features two designated Conservation Areas.</p> <p>There are 7 Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Borough.</p> <p>There is a proposed East Coast Flyway as a proposed natural World Heritage Site to UNESCO</p>	<p>basis and the best outcomes all alternatives. It also takes account of local assets of historic and cultural interest that may not be designated. An absence of relevant policy criteria within a Local Plan may see applications come forward for development that conflict with the significance of such assets and their settings.</p>
Air Quality	<p>The main source of air pollution in the Borough relates to road traffic emissions, particularly from the principal roads in the Borough, the A13, A127 and A130. There is also pollution from commercial, industrial, and domestic sources, and potential transboundary pollution sources, such as the power stations along the Thames Estuary and the oil refinery in Thurrock.</p> <p>Large areas of land around the Borough's strategic roads have noise impacts at 55-75 dB.</p>	<p>Without the Plan's policy direction, it is possible that permissions are granted without suitable planning conditions which would maintain or enhance air quality and/or that development would be located in areas with poorer air quality.</p>
Energy consumption	<p>Just under half the Borough's 747.7GWh total energy consumption is from natural gas largely associated with domestic energy use⁵. In contrast it can be assumed that a much smaller use of energy is consumed from bioenergy and waste products, although national data shows that the UK's renewable energy</p>	<p>The Plan has the scope to allocate sites that are located in close proximity to sustainable transportation means and also promote their inclusion as part of site policy. An absence of a plan-led approach may see development arise that does not factor in such requirements, as well as</p>

⁵ National Government Statistics, Regional and Local Authority Electric and Gas Statistics, 2022

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
	consumption has increased between 2002 and 2022 ⁶ .	the potential for renewable energy means and energy efficiency measures.
Climate change	<p>Mean summer precipitation has a 67% likelihood of decreasing by up to 10% across the whole region by 2020 and by 2050 the south of the East of England will see decreases by up to 20%.</p> <p>By 2050 much of the region is expected to see a mean winter precipitation increase of between 10% and 20%.</p>	An absence of a plan-led approach to development needs could see a larger number of sites not factoring in the cumulative impacts of water availability and infrastructure, as well as sustainable drainage systems.
Carbon Dioxide Emissions	<p>The transport industry is responsible for 34% of CO2 emissions within Castle Point, industry and commercial consumption totals 15% and the majority of emissions are associated with domestic energy use (48.5%)⁷.</p> <p>Castle Point is ranked as the tenth place district / borough in Essex for per capita Reductions (-2 tCO2e) in CO2 emissions with 40%, which is higher than the county percentage of 38%. Uttlesford ranked best with a 42.0% reduction⁸.</p>	<p>The Plan has the scope to allocate sites that are located in close proximity to sustainable transportation means and also promote their inclusion as part of site policy. An absence of a plan-led approach may see development arise that does not factor in such requirements, as well as the potential for renewable energy means and energy efficiency measures.</p> <p>An absence of the Plan could see less strategic commitment to minimise carbon emissions which would have increased effects on pollution output.</p>
Fluvial and tidal flood risk	In 2024 a SFRA is to be undertaken to accompany the Borough's development of the new Castle Point Plan. The SFRA is a planning tool that enables the council to	Site selection criteria, as well as a Flood Risk Assessment, are used to identify whether broad potential future locations for development represent the

⁶ UK renewable energy statistics 2023, Uswitch

⁷ 2005 to 2021 UK local and regional greenhouse gas emissions: statistical release (updated 6 July 2023), National Statistics

⁸ ibid

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
	select and develop sustainable site allocations away from vulnerable flood risk areas. The SFRA will assist the council to make the spatial planning decisions required to inform the Castle Point Plan and recommendations.	most appropriate choices in terms of flood risk. Without the Plan, the level of detail used to inform decisions of a strategic nature may not be as robust, especially regarding cumulative impacts. In addition, policy content can be used to set conditions on developments or determine their refusal in areas of flood risk.
Surface water flood risk	Canvey Island is at the highest risk of surface water flooding, with a high probability of surface water flooding across the Borough as a whole.	
Transport	<p>85% of households in Castle Point own one or more vehicles, a higher percentage than for the East of England (83%) and far higher for England and Wales (77%)⁹.</p> <p>Castle Point has a lower proportion of residents driving to work by either car or van (40.83%) when compared to regional levels¹⁰. There is a higher usage of trains (8.89%) as a mode of transport within the Borough compared to the national trend (3.46%)¹¹. The proportion of residents who walk to work is lower than the regional and national levels¹². It is important that with the evolution of the plan further consideration is given to how future growth may be delivered to facilitate uplift in active and sustainable travel.</p> <p>The work destinations attracting the highest proportion of Castle Point</p>	The Plan should seek the correct allocations to reduce emissions resulting from commuting miles whilst also exploring the validity of sustainable transportation: neither of which could be managed on a strategic scale without the Plan.

⁹ Nomis official census and labour market statistics, Car or van availability by household composition (Census 2021 statistics), 2024

¹⁰ Census data (2011) from ONS (updated Jan 2013)

¹¹ ibid

¹² ibid

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
	residents are neighbouring Basildon (21.56%) and Southend-on-Sea (20.65%). The next most popular destinations for employment are City of London (10.93%), followed by Thurrock (6.94%) ¹³ .	
Accessibility	Residents of Castle Point are mainly commuting outside of the borough for work (23,573). With the largest outflow being neighbouring Basildon at 5,083 (21.6%), the greatest inflow to the borough is from Southend at 2,577 just smaller than half of the greatest outgoing commuters ¹⁴ .	If the plan did not factor in accessibility as a criterion for sustainable development, large proportions of the population would be without access to vital services, such as GPs. This could result in serious adverse impacts on residents of Castle Point. With the plan, it is simple to include considerations for accessibility to services from the onset and attain a more holistic approach.
Life expectancy	Life expectancy of residents within Castle Point Borough is a little lower than the regional average, and higher than the national average at 80.5 years for men and 84.4 years for women ¹⁵ . Castle Point has a higher percentage of people aged 45-65+ (63%) than the county average (59.8%) ¹⁶ .	The implications of increased life expectancy will mean increased pressure on services for the elderly, especially regarding care and suitable health services. These are key considerations in a plan-led system; the absence of which could see a less joined up approach between development across the Borough and sufficient care and health service requirements.
Greenspace	There is around 677ha out of 4,481ha of Accessible Natural	The absence of a plan-led approach may see

¹³ Nomis official census and labour market statistics, Location of usual residence and place of work (inflow/outflow for Castle Point and Southend-on-Sea), (Census 2011 statistics)

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ Essex data – Essex JSNA 2022 Life Expectancy at birth, Essex County Council

¹⁶ Nomis, 2021 Census Profile for areas (ONS 2021 data)

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
Sport participation	<p>Green Space in the Borough, with generally good access across the Borough apart from the southern part of Canvey Island¹⁷.</p> <p>The proportion of adults participating between 30 – 149 minutes a week of moderate physical sport activity has decreased at the sub-national (11.6% from 13.6%) and national levels (11.1% from 12.4%). However, in the Borough, activity levels have increased to 10.1% in 2021-2022 from 8.5% in the 2015 – 2016 Active Lives Survey¹⁸.</p>	cumulative developments arise that do factor in the need for strategic open space, opportunities for active travel and recreational requirements.
Housing delivery	<p>The NPPF's requirement for housing targets to be determined objectively at the Borough level (OAN) will ensure a higher dwellings per annum target than previously.</p> <p>The absence of an adopted Plan post- NPPF in which to determine housing targets and broad locations for growth.</p>	Housing will largely be delivered through 'planning by appeal' with a lack of evidence provided by a plan-led approach. This may see housing delivered contrary to local needs.
House ownership and need	<p>There are 38,977¹⁹ dwellings within Castle Point Borough, 94.7²⁰% of which are privately owned.</p> <p>Over the period 2023-2043, there is an overall affordable housing need of 4,208 dwellings in the Borough. This equates to an average of 210 overall affordable housing dwellings per annum²¹.</p>	A plan-led system allows specific developments to be come forward in line with tenure and housing mix requirements as specified in relevant policy. Then absence of a Plan and the relevant evidence base is unlikely to see such needs delivered.
Gypsy and Traveller sites	There is likely to be a future demand for more Gypsy and Traveller sites in Castle Point.	The absence of pitch provision in a plan-led system is likely to see an

¹⁷ Castle Point Open Space Assessment, 2023

¹⁸ Sport England Active Lives Survey 2021 -2022

¹⁹ Table 100: Number of dwellings by tenure and district, England, DLUHC (Dec 2023)

²⁰ ibid

²¹ Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023, Opinion Research Services

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
		increase in unauthorised sites.
School Capacity	School age population numbers are projected to grow relatively slowly and school capacity within Castle Point is expected to be sufficient to accommodate children in the Borough up until 2033. There are no deficits of school places reported in the 10-year Plan for the Castle Point Borough, and there are no expansion projects currently in the pipeline.	Without factoring in school capacity within a plan-led system, cumulative pressure would be put on existing educational facilities.
Utilities and internet	The projected housing increases facing the wider County will put pressures on utility suppliers.	Without a plan-led system the cumulative and holistic approach to house building is unlikely to be evidenced, making it difficult to plan suitable infrastructure.
Transport	The projected housing increases facing the wider County will put pressures on road and rail infrastructure.	Without a plan-led system the cumulative and holistic approach to house building is unlikely to be evidenced, making it difficult to plan suitable infrastructure.
Qualifications	<p>The population of Castle Point has in general fewer qualifications than the overall national population. 76.2% of residents aged 16+ of the population of the Borough for 56,659 people are qualified to at least level 1 or higher compared to 81.9% in England. Level 1 represents foundation GNVQ, NVQ 1 or up to 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C.</p> <p>The most significant difference is that Castle Point has comparatively lower proportions of the population qualified at Level 4 and above. Castle Point has a lower skilled</p>	Without a plan-led system the cumulative and holistic approach to house building is unlikely to be evidenced. This has implications for school capacities and the potential need for new educational facilities to be developed to support the future population.

Key Issues	Description / Supporting Evidence	What would happen without the Castle Point Plan
	workforce in comparison to the county ²² and nationally ²³ .	
Job density Employment	<p>Job density in Castle Point (0.64) is lower than across the county (0.80), region (0.84) and nation (0.88)²⁴.</p> <p>The proportion of the Borough's working population who are economically active but unemployed is 2.2% which is below sub-national (2.5%) and national (2.9) unemployment figures²⁵.</p>	<p>The plan has the scope for a holistic approach to development to ensure that housing and employment development are allocated in support of one another. The plan can also safeguard sites for future employment use. The absence of a plan would likely see a less joined-up approach to housing and employment needs which could result in greater flows of commuters into and out of the Borough with may exacerbate pressure on the roads.</p>

The above highlighted key sustainability issues have been used to form SA Objectives for the Plan. These are detailed in the following table alongside their relevance to the environmental, social, or economic themes of sustainable development and the corresponding topic in the SEA Directive.

Table 6: The SA Objectives

SA Objective	Environmental	Social	Economic	Corresponding topic in the SEA Directive
1) To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species, and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biodiversity - Climatic factors - Soil - Flora - Fauna - Water
2) To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water - Biodiversity - Human Health - Population

²²Skill levels distribution across the UK (2019 estimates), 2022

²³ Education, England and Wales: Census 2021, ONS

²⁴ Nomis official census and labour market statistics – jobs density (2022)

²⁵ Nomis official census and labour market statistics – Economic activity status (2022)

SA Objective	Environmental	Social	Economic	Corresponding topic in the SEA Directive
ensure sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth				- Climatic Factors
3) To maintain, conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	✓	✓		- Landscape - Cultural Heritage - Historic environment
4) To protect, conserve and enhance land and soils and mineral resources, minimise the loss of agricultural land, whilst reducing land contamination	✓		✓	- Soil - Material Assets - Climatic factors - Water - Biodiversity - Landscape
5) To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	✓	✓	✓	- Landscape - Material Assets - Soil
6) To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings	✓	✓		- Cultural Heritage - Historic environment - Landscape
7) To reduce contributions to climatic change by adapting and responding to the implications of a changing climate	✓	✓		- Climatic Factors - Water - Air - Soil - Population - Human Health - Biodiversity - Flora - Fauna
8) To adapt and respond to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events	✓	✓	✓	- Climatic Factors - Water - Air - Soil - Population - Human Health

SA Objective	Environmental	Social	Economic	Corresponding topic in the SEA Directive
and flooding which may be caused by climate change				
9) To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough, reducing contributions to climate change, and reduce noise pollution.	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climatic Factors - Water - Air - Human Health - Population - Material assets - Biodiversity
10) To reduce the need to travel and promote and encourage the use of sustainable and active alternative methods of travel to motorised vehicles to reduce road traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climatic Factors - Air - Water - Human Health - Population
11) To improve the quality, range and accessibility to essential services, facilities, green infrastructure and open space		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population - Air - Climatic Factors - Human health
12) To reduce levels of deprivation and disparity, and social exclusion		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population - Human Health
13) To improve the population's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population - Human Health
14) To provide appropriate, affordable and decent housing and accommodation to meet existing and		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Population - Material Assets - Human health

SA Objective	Environmental	Social	Economic	Corresponding topic in the SEA Directive
future needs of the whole community, and reducing disparity				
15) To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development		✓	✓	- Population - Human Health - Material Assets - Soil - Landscape
16) To improve the education and skills of the population		✓	✓	- Population
17) To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth by improving efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy and help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence		✓	✓	- Population - Human health - Material Assets
18) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres		✓	✓	- Population - Material Assets - Human health
19) To promote the sustainable management of waste	✓	✓	✓	- Population - Human Health - Material Assets
20) To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.		✓	✓	- Population - Material Assets

4.6 The Compatibility of the SA Objectives

A total of 20 SA Objectives have been derived for the appraisal of the Plan. They are based on the scope of the document, policy advice and guidance and to the assessment of the current state of the environment.

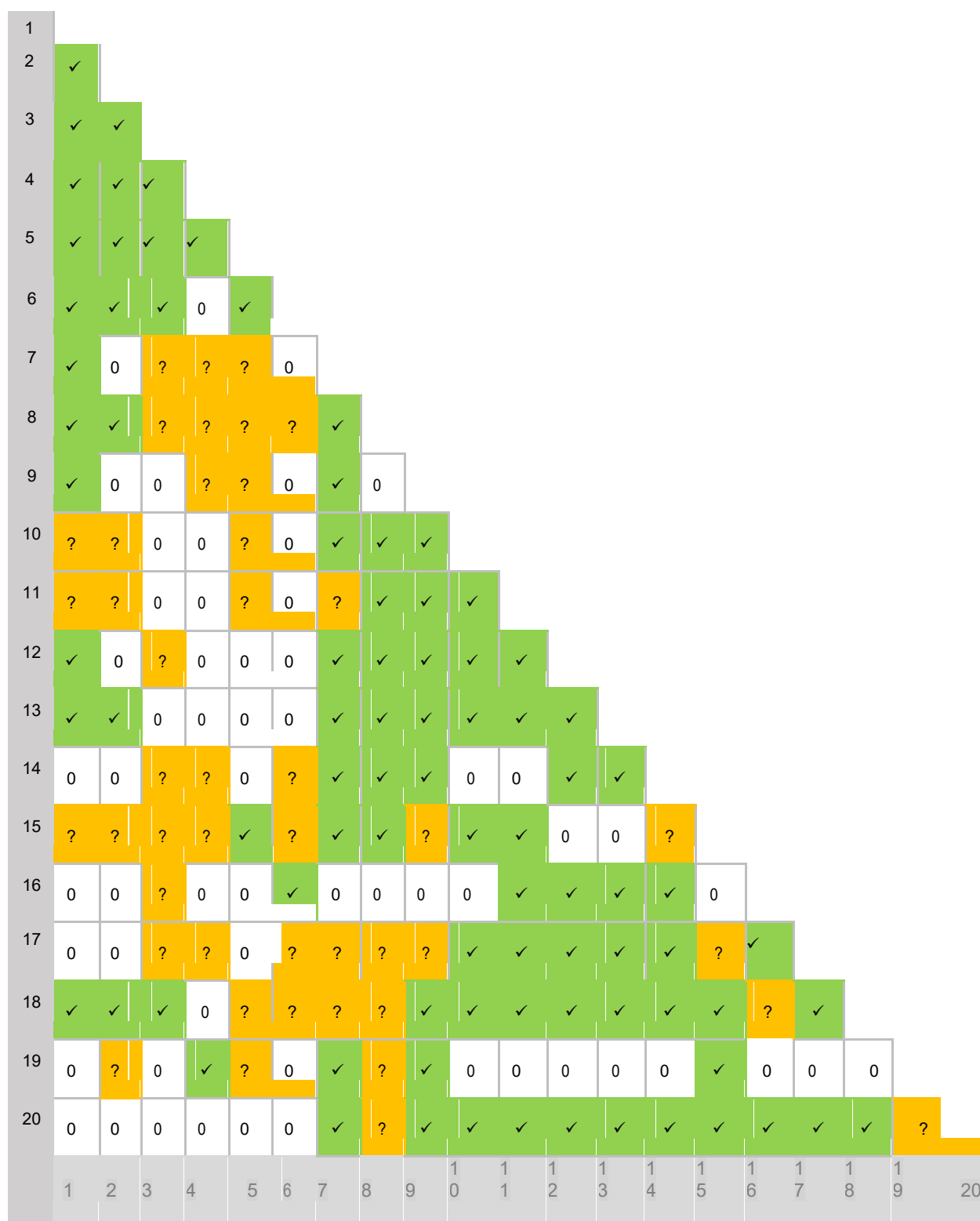
It is useful to test the compatibility of SA Objectives against one another in order to highlight any areas where potential conflict or tensions may arise. The result of this internal compatibility of the SA Objectives is shown in the figure below. In the compatibility matrix the 20 SA objectives are numbered in sequence along each axis, and they represent a balance of economic, social, and environmental factors.

The following key has been used to illustrate their compatibility:

✓	Where the objectives are compatible
?	Where it is uncertain the objectives are related
0	Where the objectives are not related
X	Where the objectives are incompatible

The matrix below illustrates the compatibility of the SA Objectives.

Figure 2: Compatibility Matrix of the SA Objectives



It is to be expected that some objectives are not compatible with other objectives thereby indicating that tensions could occur. Objectives which are based around

environmental issues sometimes conflict with economic and social objectives, and vice versa.

The compatibility of the objectives relevant to the Plan is shown in the compatibility matrix above. Instances of uncertainty between objectives are explained further:

- **Objectives 1, 2 and 9 with Objectives 14, 15, & 17:** SA Objectives 1, 2 and 9, which seek to retain, enhance and conserve biodiversity, the water environment and air quality, may conflict with the general principles of delivering housing, infrastructure and employment development as specified in SA Objectives 14, 15 and 17. This potential incompatibility does not mean that these objectives are not achievable in unison however; development in appropriate and less locations and / or with suitable mitigation measures would be considered compatible.
- **Objectives 3 and 4 with Objectives 7, 14, 15 & 17:** SA Objectives 3 and 4, regarding retaining and enhancing landscapes and soil quality may not always be compatible with the development requirements of housing, employment and infrastructure and also reducing the contributions to climate change in some renewable energy schemes (SA Objective 7). This is location specific however and related predominantly to allocating development sites in suitable locations and with mitigation where necessary and viable.
- **Objective 6 with Objectives 8, 14, 15 & 17:** SA Objective 6, regarding maintaining and enhancing cultural heritage assets and their settings may not be compatible with development requirements (SA Objectives 14, 15 and 17). In addition, potential incompatibility exists with SA Objective 7 and 8 where some energy efficiency and renewable energy measures and also flood alleviation schemes or systems may not be compatible with the historic environment.

4.7 The Approach to Assessing the Castle Point Plan's Policy Content

The SA of the Plan appraises the document's policies against the Sustainability Objectives (SOs) outlined in the above framework. The aim is to assess the sustainability effects of the document following implementation. The appraisal will look at the secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium, and long-term permanent and temporary effects in accordance with Annex 1 of the SEA Directive, as well as assess alternatives and suggest mitigation measures where appropriate. The findings will be accompanied by an appraisal matrix which will document the effects over time.

For clarity, within the SA, appraisals will be set out in the same format as shown in the following table.

Table 7: Impact on Sustainability Objectives

Sustainability Objective		Temporal Effect		
		Short term	Medium term	Long term
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough			
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.			
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes			
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.			
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.			
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.			
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.			
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.			
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.			
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.			
11	To ensure accessibility to services.			
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.			
13	To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.			
14	To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community.			
15	To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.			
16	To improve the education and skills of the population.			
17	To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth.			
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.			

Sustainability Objective		Temporal Effect		
		Short term	Medium term	Long term
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste.			
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.			

The content to be included within the table responds to those ‘significant effects’ of the policy or element of the Plan subject to appraisal. Appraisals will also look at the following:

- Temporal effects.
- Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic effects.
- The appraisal of Alternatives.
- Impacts on indicators, and
- Proposed mitigation measures / recommendations

These, and ‘significant effects’ are further described in the following sub-sections.

4.7.1 Description of ‘Significant Effects’

The strength of impacts can vary dependant on the relevance of the policy content to certain sustainability objectives or themes. Where the policies have been appraised against the Sustainability Objectives the basis for making judgements within the assessment is identified within the following key:

Possible impact	Basis for judgement
++	Strong prospect of there being significant positive impacts
+	Strong prospect of there being minor positive impacts
?	Possibility of either positive or negative impacts, or general uncertainty
0	No impact
N/A	Not applicable to the scope or context of the appraised content
-	Strong prospect of there being minor negative impacts and mitigation would be possible
--	Strong prospect of there being significant negative impacts with mitigation unlikely to be possible (pending further investigation)

Commentary is also included to describe the significant effects of the policy on the sustainability objectives.

4.7.2 Description of 'Temporal Effects'

The appraisals of the policies contained within the Plan recognise that impacts may vary over time. Three time periods have been used to reflect this and are shown in the appraisal tables as S (short term), M (medium term) and L (long term). For the purpose of the policy elements of the Plan S, M and L depict:

(S) Short term: early stages of the plan period (i.e. before 2030).

(M) Medium Term: middle stages of the plan period (2030-2035)

(L) Long term: latter stages of the plan period (2035) and where relevant beyond

4.7.3 Description of 'Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic Effects'

In addition to those effects that may arise indirectly (secondary effects), relationships between different policies will be assessed in order to highlight any possible strengthening or weakening of impacts from their implementation together. Cumulative effects respond to impacts occurring directly from two different policies together, and synergistic effects are those that offer a strengthening or worsening of more than one policy that is greater than any individual impact.

4.7.4 Description of 'Alternatives Considered'

Planning Practice Guidance states that reasonable alternatives are the different realistic options considered by the plan-maker in developing the policies in its plan. They must be sufficiently distinct to highlight the different sustainability implications of each so that meaningful comparisons can be made. The alternatives must be realistic and deliverable.

Alternatives for the direction of policies will be appraised and chronicled alongside each appraisal where relevant and identified, together with the reason for their rejection / non-progression. Reasonable alternative borough-wide development strategies are assessed in Section 6.

4.7.5 Description of 'Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations'

Negative or uncertain impacts may be highlighted within appraisals. As such, mitigation measures may be needed, and these will be highlighted in this section for each policy where relevant. In addition to this, this section will also include any

recommendations that are not directly linked to negative or uncertain impacts, but if incorporated may lead to sustainability improvements.

4.8 Assumptions Made in the Assessment of the Plan's Content

4.8.1 Policy and site Appraisals

It should be noted that the appraisal of options is not straightforward, in reflection of the need to create a 'level playing field' for the assessment of both allocated and alternative sites. A lot of evidence commissioned for the Plan may have been progressed in line with the allocated sites and strategy as preferred. To fairly appraise options to the same level of detail, a lot of this information may not be considered within future appraisal work. The appraisal of the Plan's options will be undertaken using information that is relevant for use across all options.

To further reflect a consistency of approach, regarding sites, the detailed information submitted for each site by the landowners / developers of each option may not be considered in those instances where they can be seen to offer different levels of information. As such, it may be the case that only those site boundaries and the quantum of development for options have been taken from the respective submissions.

5. Sustainability Frameworks

5.1 The Appraisal of Policies (SA Framework)

The SA Framework is an important tool in the SA process. It provides the context against which the Plan's content can be assessed and sets out the SA objectives with additional criteria / key questions that should be asked to decipher whether the suggested approach achieves the desired sustainability outcomes; and indicators which can monitor the impact of the documents.

To meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations, the views of the three statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) are being sought in relation to the scope of the sustainability appraisal, and the sustainability appraisal framework that results from it. This ensures that key environmental considerations are adequately covered by the framework.

Additionally, the sustainability assessment framework has been used to assess the initial strategic growth options set out in the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document. Not only does this provide an initial insight into the relative sustainability benefits and issues associated with each of the strategic growth options. It also provides the statutory environmental bodies and other stakeholders the opportunity to see how the sustainability appraisal framework is working in practice, which assists with drawing out any opportunities for improvement at this interim stage in its preparation.

The SA Framework proposed for assessing the Castle Point Local Plan can be found in the following table. It is this framework which has been used to assess the strategic growth options in the Castle Point Plan Issues and Options Document in section 6 of this report. The appraisal of the strategic options may be updated following consultation on this document, if the SA Framework is adjusted to reflect comments received.

Table 8: The SA Framework (Policy Content)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
1) To protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species, and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halting biodiversity net loss and securing achievement of biodiversity net gain • Conservation and protection of nationally and locally important designated sites • Condition of some of the SSSIs • Sensitivity of water environment to physical change • Green infrastructure • Brownfield habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats? • Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to indigenous BAP priority species? • Will it maintain and enhance sites designated for their nature conservation interest? • Will it maintain and enhance the connectivity of habitats and their ability to deliver ecosystem services e.g., flood risk management, climate change mitigation & adaptation and access for health? • Will there be any impacts on the water environment as a result of hydro morphological changes and vice versa? • Will it help to reverse the national decline in at risk species? • Will it seek and lead to the creation of new habitats? • Does it seek the requirement of an appropriate level of ecological assessment relevant to a hierarchy of designations / 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial extent of designated sites within the borough • Achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan targets • Ecological potential assessments • Distance from site to nearest designated site • Ancient Woodland • Other sensitive designated or non-designated receptors • Condition of the nearest sensitive receptors (where viable) • Site visit surveys on typical abundance and frequency of habitats (DAFOR scale) • Change in the number and area of designated ecological sites (Natural England) • Recorded condition/status of designated ecological sites (Natural England)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<p>ecological sites including brownfield sites, at the planning application stage?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recorded visitor numbers on designated European sites (Natural England, Council records) RAMS monitoring results Contribution to the LNRS
<p>2) To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and ensure sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing water quality and resources Pollution of water courses Water scarcity Timely provision of new water services infrastructure in line with growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it help to ensure that good status of surface water is achieved and that deterioration in the status of waters is prevented? Will it help to ensure that good status of groundwater is achieved in the status of waters is prevented? Will it support the achievement of Water framework Directive Targets? Will it protect and improve the quality of coastal water? Will it promote sustainable use of water? Will it maintain water availability of water dependent habitats? Will it support the provision of sufficient water supply and treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality (and trends) in river basin district (river quality data). Recorded water quality in rivers, estuaries, and groundwater from River Basin Management Plans (Environment Agency). Compliance with emissions limits in identified locations. Compliance with environmental quality standards in identified locations. Recorded Water Resource Availability Status (Environment Agency, Anglian water, Essex & Suffolk Water). Bathing water quality (EA).

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<p>infrastructure in a timely manner to support new development?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it lead to no deterioration on the quality of water bodies? • Does it promote the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems in new developments? • Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts at the site level? 	
<p>3)To maintain, conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local landscape varies in its sensitivity to change • The need to ensure the protection and enhancement of local distinctiveness and character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will landscape character areas be protected? • Will it enhance and/or conserve the countryside? • Does it seek the regeneration of existing urban areas? • Will it protect and enhance the settlement and its setting within the landscape? • Will it protect and enhance landscape character and townscapes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments permitted contrary to Landscape Character Assessment 'sensitivities to change' • Number and extent of field boundaries affected • Percentage of applications permitted on the borough's best agricultural land (from ALC) • Development brought forward through regeneration projects (Council records)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote high quality design in context with its urban or rural landscape? • Does it seek to minimise the impacts of coalescence and sprawl? • Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	
<p>4)To protect, conserve and enhance land and soils and mineral resources, minimise the loss of agricultural land, whilst reducing land contamination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the best and most versatile soil. • The need to maintain and/or enhance soil quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it seek to protect the borough's best and most versatile soil (Grade 3)? • Will it seek to direct development away from Grade 3 soil, where feasible and in consideration of the impacts and benefits of development? • Will it encourage the use of previously developed land and/or the reuse of existing buildings? • Will it prevent land contamination and facilitate remediation of contaminated sites? • Does it seek to protect soil quality, including the remediation of contaminated sites? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportional loss of Grade 3 agricultural land. • Change in recorded soil quality (Environment Agency) • Allocations recorded on best agricultural land quality (1,2,3) (Council records/DEFRA)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does it ensure that development is directed outside of Minerals Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) in the first instance? Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	
5) To contribute to the sustainable use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presence of the Green Belt within the Plan area and maintaining its function The need to prioritise development on previously developed land and/or make use of existing buildings and infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage the efficient use of land? Does it seek to ensure appropriate densities for new development? Does it set out different densities appropriate to different settlements / areas? Does it encourage the recycling of derelict and other urban land? Does it broadly seek to protect the Green Belt in line with its five predominant purposes? Does it respond to the findings of the Green Belt Review (GBR)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of development directed to Grade 3 agricultural land. Proportion of development on brownfield land. Percentage of development recorded on greenfield / brownfield land (Council records) Density of development

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	
<p>6) To maintain and enhance the Borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining and enhancing designated and non-designated heritage and cultural assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it protect and enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological, and cultural value in both urban and rural areas? Will areas of historic character be protected from development? Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces? Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land? Does it encourage the use of high quality design principles to respect local character? Will any adverse impacts be reduced through adequate mitigation? Will it protect and enhance buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas and landscapes of heritage interest or cultural value (including their setting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in the number of designated and non- designated heritage assets (English Heritage, Council records) Proximity to nearest heritage asset (including its setting): Scheduled Monument? Listed Building? Conservation Area? Registered Historic Park or Garden? Site identified in the Historic Environment Record? Building of local interest? Other historic feature? Number and spatial extent of listed buildings

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<p>meriting consideration in planning decisions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect and enhance sites, features and areas of archaeological value in both urban and rural areas? • Will it enhance accessibility to and the enjoyments of cultural heritage assets? • Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and spatial extent of scheduled monuments • Buildings At Risk Register number of heritage assets recorded as 'at risk' (English Heritage) • Heritage at risk surveys • Percentage of conservation area demolished or otherwise lost. • Amount of derelict properties and/or vacant land • Number of heritage assets being positively removed from the heritage at risk register. • Amount of damage to listed buildings or scheduled monuments • Management of designated and undesignated historic environment assets • Numbers of undesignated historic environment assets lost through the planning process.

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
7) To reduce contributions to climatic change by adapting and responding to the implications of a changing climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future climate change projections • Energy consumption • High private vehicle usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption? or Will it reduce emission of greenhouse gases/head of population by reducing energy consumption? • Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources? • Does it ensure more sustainable modes of travel are provided? • Will it encourage greater energy efficiency? • Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Dioxide emissions Estimated borough CO2 emissions (Department of Energy and Climate Change) • Energy consumption GWh/households • Spatial extent of flood zones. • Percentage of energy supplied from renewable sources. • Installed MWs of commercial scale renewable energy schemes (Council records) • Air quality monitoring data
8) To adapt and respond to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services • Addressing pluvial, fluvial, and coastal flood risk • The need to ensure that the built environment adapts to the impact of climate change and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it ensure suitable adaptation to climate change? • Will it reduce the risk of damage from extreme weather events? • Does it seek to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding? • Does it seek to avoid increasing flood risk in areas away from initial development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidences of flooding and location • Distance of site to floodplains • SFRA results • Incidences of flood warnings in site area • Distance to areas that are susceptible to surface water flooding –updated Flood Map for Surface Water Flooding (EA)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
	extreme weather events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it take account of climate change in relation to flooding? • Does it seek to manage and mitigate the risk of flooding? • Is/will the sequential test being used to reach decisions on development proposals? • Will developer contributions be utilised for the provision and maintenance of flood defences? • Does it require sustainable drainage systems to be included within new development? • Will it minimise the risk of flooding from rivers and watercourses? • Will it minimise the risk of flooding on the coasts/estuaries? • Will it reduce the risk of coastal/ estuarine erosion? • Will it reduce the risk of damage from extreme weather events? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On site and nearby topography via ordnance survey mapping • Number of applications where there was a failure to pass the sequential test, even though sites at lower risk of flooding were available, but other planning reasons were given for granting planning permission. • Estimated number of properties at risk from flooding (Environment Agency) • Number of schemes incorporating SUDs mechanisms (Essex County Council) • Distance from existing flood defences

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	
<p>9) To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough, reducing contributions to climate change, and reduce noise pollution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving air quality Clean vehicle infrastructure to encourage uptake of technologies Reducing noise nuisance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve, or not detrimentally affect air quality? Will emissions be limited to levels that will not damage natural systems and affect human health? Does it ensure that National Air Quality Standards are met at relevant points? Does it seek to protect rural areas from increased traffic? Does it seek to reduce, or not detrimentally affect noise levels? Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM10 emissions NO2 emissions Recorded traffic flows Location and extent of AQMAs in relation to infrastructure requirements Location and extent of potentially significant junctions in relation to infrastructure requirements Percentage of water bodies at good ecological status or potential Percentage of water bodies assessed at good or high biological status Percentage of water bodies assessed at good chemical status Number of Sustainable Drainage Systems applications and number granted

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambient noise levels • Development on PDL
<p>10) To reduce the need to travel and promote and encourage the use of sustainable and active alternative methods of travel to motorised vehicles to reduce road traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High private vehicle usage • Public transport, walking and cycling coverage across the Borough • Improving opportunities for active transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase and/or improve the availability of sustainable transport modes? • Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transport other than private vehicle? • Will it contribute positively to reducing social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services? • Will it reduce the need to travel? • Will it lead to the integration of transport modes? • Will it improve rural public transport? • Will it promote the integration of sustainable school travel and transport? • Will it reduce commuting? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to services and business' by public transport • Indices of Multiple Deprivation • Travel to work methods, distances, and flows (Census) • Car ownership • Network performance on roads • Public transport punctuality and efficiency • Provision of key infrastructure projects (Essex County Council) • Extent of cycle lanes

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase the proportion of freight transported by rail or other sustainable modes? • Will it maintain and improve access to key services and facilities for all sectors of the population? • Will it reduce journey times? • Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in adequately identifying any impacts on a site level? 	
<p>11) To improve the quality, range, and accessibility to essential services, facilities, green infrastructure and open space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to services such as education, healthcare and jobs, and other amenities • Reducing the need to travel • Access to natural greenspace • Self-sustainability (little need to out commute for jobs and services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it contribute positively to reduce social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, services, and leisure facilities for all? • Will it improve access to jobs, shopping, services, and leisure facilities? • Will it reduce the need to travel? • Will it increase traffic in rural areas? • Does it protect or increase village facilities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents' opinion on availability of open space/leisure facilities • Access to services by public transport, walking or cycling • Public and active travel infrastructure • Indices of Multiple Deprivation – sub-domain scores • Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards • Recorded traffic flows • KSI casualties for adults and children

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it lead to the integration of transport modes? • Does it seek to concentrate development and facilities in town centres or where access via sustainable travel is greatest? • Will it assist in reducing the number of road casualties and ensure ease of pedestrian movement especially for the disabled? • Will it maintain and improve access to key services and facilities for all sectors of the population? • Will it increase access to the open countryside? • Will it increase access to public open space? • Will it improve access to cultural facilities? • Will it reduce journey times? • Will it help to enhance the connectivity of more remote, rural settlements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car ownership • Location of site with regards to areas of high deprivation • Loss of key services (Council records) • Ultra-fast broadband coverage

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
12) To reduce levels of deprivation and disparity and social exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to reduce inequality and social exclusion • To manage the impact of changing demographics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion in those areas most affected? • Will it reduce benefit dependency? • Does it support the changing population profile of the area? • Will it encourage engagement/participation in community/cultural activities? • Will it contribute to regeneration activities? • Will it enhance the public realm? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term unemployment rate • Proportion of the population who live in wards that rank within the most deprived 10% and 25% of wards in the country (Index of Multiple Deprivation) • Ageing population • Prevalence of different community groups (cultural and religious)
13) To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and provision of healthcare and social care in line with growth • Needs of an ageing population • Needs of disabled population • Needs of different community groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce health inequalities? • Will it improve access to high quality health facilities and / or social care services? • Will it improve air quality? • Will it improve water quality? • Will it increase access to sport and recreation facilities and open space? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Expectancy • Indices of Multiple Deprivation – sub-domain scores • Residents' opinion on availability of open space/leisure facilities • Air Quality Management Areas (number and performance) and PM10 emissions • KSI casualties for adults and children

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
	<p>(cultural and religious)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting healthy lifestyles Addressing crime and anti-social behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage healthy lifestyles? Will it improve services for young people? Will it contribute positively to reducing social exclusion for all members of society? Will it ensure access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services is available for all? Will there be measures to increase the safety and security of new development and public realm? Does it seek to reduce inequalities between areas and support cultural identity? Will it encourage access by walking or cycling, and will it increase the overall rates of walking and cycling? Does it respond to ageing demographics in all relevant areas of influence throughout the plan period? Will it support the diverse range of health needs within the community? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) Recorded key offences Location and extent of recreational facilities to development site Location and extent of accessible greenspace to development site Proximity of site to healthcare facilities Percentage of population obese Condition of residents' general health (Census - QS302EW) Change in the amount of Accessible Natural Greenspace (Natural England) Level of recorded crime and antisocial behaviour (Essex Police) Participation in local sporting clubs

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it contribute to a healthy living environment? (noise, odour etc?) • Will it reduce crime/ fear of crime and anti-social activity? • Will it promote design that discourages crime? • Will it avoid locating development in locations that could adversely affect people's health? • Will it support those with disabilities? 	
<p>14) To provide appropriate, affordable and decent housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community, and reducing disparity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the delivery of a sustainable supply of housing to meet needs • Ensuring the delivery of a mix of housing types and tenures and price-points (including affordable housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide housing which meets local needs? • Will it increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups to the designated target? • Will it reduce the number of unfit homes? • Does it allow for homes to be adapted for lifetime use, or make provisions for them to be included in new development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House Prices • LA dwelling stock below the 'Decent Home Standard' • Indices of Multiple Deprivation Score – particularly Housing and Services Domain and the Living Environment Deprivation Domain • Number of affordable dwelling completions • Annual dwelling completions (Council records)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it seek to deliver self-build and custom build homes? • Does it respond to the needs of an ageing population? • Is there scope to deliver the independent living agenda in larger developments? • Will it contribute to the delivery of sustainable homes? • Are dwellings easily accessed by transport links, jobs, services, commercial areas, and leisure facilities? • Will homes be designed to enhance the existing street scene creating a better cultural heritage & public realm? • Will homes be sufficiently phased during the plan period and beyond in light of the East of England Plan or subsequent targets? • Will homes be supported by adequate greenspace? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New homes approved in the monitoring year (council records) • Size and age of housing stock • Access to sustainable transport links • Population projections and forecasts • Crime rates • Recorded homeless rates (ONS) • Net additional dwellings – size, type, affordable (Council records) • Number of household headship rates • Council Housing Waiting List

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it make provision for gypsy and traveller, and travelling showpeople accommodation? • Will it contribute to the supply of housing? • Will it reduce homelessness? • Will it contribute not meeting demand for a range and mix of housing including affordable housing and specialist housing? 	
15) To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing water resources and water quality • Open space • Housing growth to be supported by jobs, and services • Ensuring Health Infrastructure meets local needs • Ensuring education infrastructure meets local needs • Ensuring that local utilities are able to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it seek to ensure the provision of sufficient infrastructure in line with projected increases in population? • Does it ensure that adequate school expansion, new healthcare and community facilities are provided where the size of housing development requires it? • Will water resources be able to accommodate growth? • Does it ensure the reinforcement of wastewater treatment works or the provision of alternatives (where required) to support growth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water cycle study • S106 agreement contributions • Transport Assessments • Additional capacity of local schools • Number of GPs and dentists accepting new patients • ANGSt • Amount of waste recycled/landfilled.

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accommodate growth Foul water disposal / sewerage infrastructure Transport Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will financial contributions be adequate to provide the necessary infrastructure? Does it seek to promote the minimisation of waste at its source, and integrate solutions into the design of new development? Does it ensure that infrastructure /highway improvements will be made (where required) to support growth? Will it ensure that infrastructure is provided prior to use or through phasing of development? Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources? 	
16) To improve the education and skills of the population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of education provision in line with growth Matching the skills in the workforce to employment needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does it seek to improve existing educational facilities and/or create more educational facilities? Does it seek to improve existing training and learning facilities and/or create more facilities? Will the employment opportunities available be mixed to suit a varied employment skills base? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCSE or equivalent performance (Department for Education) Level 2 qualifications by working age residents % (32.8% for Castle Point) of working age population with NVQ level 4+ or equivalent qualification (Census 2021 / LG Inform (Nomis)) Employment status of residents

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will new housing be supported by school expansion or other educational facilities where necessary? • Will it improve qualifications and skills of young people and adults? • Will it support the provision of an adequate range of educational and child care facilities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average gross weekly earnings • Standard Occupational Classification • Number of apprenticeship courses on offer
<p>17)To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth by improving efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy and help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing gender wage differences • Support and maintain a sustainable local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it encourage employment and reduce unemployment overall? • Does it secure more opportunities for residents, of all abilities, and in all employment sectors, to work in the Borough? • Will new housing be supported by adequate local employment opportunities? • Will it improve business development, attract investment, and enhance competitiveness? • Does it support small businesses to grow and encourage business innovation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment land availability • Typical amount of job creation (jobs per ha) within different use classes (Council records). • Percentage change and comparison in the total number of VAT registered businesses in the area • Businesses by industry type • Amount of vacant industrial floorspace • Amount of high quality agricultural land • Travel to work flows • Employment status by residents and job type

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it make land and property available for business development? • Does it prevent further loss of retail and other services to rural areas? • Will it lead to development having an adverse impact on employment for existing facilities? • Will emerging policy ensure there is adequate future provision of Early Years and Childcare? • Will it improve the resilience of business and the economy? • Will it promote growth in key sectors? • Will it improve economic performance in disadvantaged years? • Will it encourage rural economy and diversification? • Will it encourage indigenous business? • Will it encourage inward investment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job densities • Economic activity of residents • Average gross weekly pay • Proportion of business in rural locations • Amount of retail, leisure, and office floorspace in town centres. • Implemented and outstanding planning permissions for retail, office, and commercial use • Number and type of services • Pedestrian footfall count • Number of post offices closed down • Number of village shops closed down • Number of businesses paying business rates (Council records) • Numbers employed by industry (Oxford Economics - East of England Forecast Model)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of A1 use class and vacant units in town centres (Council records) • Gender pay gap levels
<p>18) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining high streets and how to enhance town centres and their role. • Competition from neighbouring Boroughs and Districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase vitality of existing towns and local centres? • Does it promote and enhance the viability of existing centres by focusing development in such centres? • Will retailing in town centres be enhanced in areas of identified need? • Will it increase the range of employment opportunities, shops, and services available in town centres? • Will it decrease the number of vacant units in town centres? Will it enhance the local distinctiveness within the centre? • Will it enhance the Borough's potential for tourism? • Does it enhance consumer choice through the provision of range of shopping, leisure, and local services to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment land availability • Typical amount of job creation (jobs per ha) within different use classes (Council records). • Amount of retail, leisure, and office floorspace in town centres. • Implemented and outstanding planning permissions for retail, office, and commercial use • Number and type of services • Pedestrian footfall count • Number of post offices closed down • Number of village shops closed down • Number of business paying business rates (Council records)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
		<p>meet the needs of the entire community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers employed by industry (Oxford Economics - East of England Forecast Model) % of A1 use class and vacant units in town centres (Council records)
<p>19) To promote the sustainable management of waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to manage waste arisings in accordance with the waste hierarchy Reducing waste arisings Pressures from housing and employment growth on waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it reduce household waste generated/ head of population? Will it reduce commercial and industrial waste generated/ head of population? Will it increase rate/head of population of waste reuse and recycling? Is Policy clear and cogent on the requirements of developers in ensuring appropriate waste management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated household waste produced (Council records) Estimated quantity of household waste recycled (Council records)

SA Objective	Sustainability Issues(s)	Key Questions – Strategy and Policy	Potential Indicators
20) To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to realise opportunities for social inclusion through the provision of improved online services • Support the growth of the digital economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it seek to ensure that new development benefits from super-fast broadband connectivity? • Will it boost the digital economy? • Does digital technology enhance the retail and leisure offer in the Borough? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average Broadband speeds • County records • Data from www.superfastessex.org • Smart cities data

5.2 The Appraisal of Sites

In addition to the above SA Framework formulated for the appraisal of the policy content within the Plan, a separate framework is proposed for the appraisal of the sustainability of site allocations within the document.

Sites will be subject to appraisal using a pro forma developed taking in the key issues of the area and all relevant available information across a range of sustainability criteria. In addition, the consultation on this Scoping Report allows input from the Statutory Consultees and any other relevant stakeholders and interested parties. Any comments on this pro forma may result in changes to the site assessment framework and will be documented at the Regulation 19 stage.

As some evidence base work is available at the time of writing, it is likely that the site assessment framework will need to change to factor in new evidence as it emerges. These updates will take place as part of the assessment of the Regulation 19 plan.

It should be noted that site assessments are not intended to be a detailed project-level assessment of each site, such as that provided by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It is intended that this assessment will provide a strategic level assessment highlighting those broad impacts of the sites to inform the plan-making process. Impacts and ranges of impacts highlighted in the site pro forma use quantitative information as far as is possible.

It is important to understand that at this time the sites in the Issues & Options document are identified as potential sources of urban development only. They are not allocations for development at this stage. They are identified to clearly set out the types of choices that need to be made, and so that these choices can be considered alongside options for growth outside of the urban area. Put simply, the more development opportunities that are identified on urban sites, the lower the risk is to our borough's precious Green Belt areas.

All the sites identified are considered to have the potential to be more intensively used, but the Council has not at this point determined which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan. These choices will be taken once consultation feedback has been received and analysed. **It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been taken as to which sites will be included in the draft Castle Point Plan.** This means sites will very likely be added to or excluded from the draft Castle Point Plan following consultation.

The site pro forma can be found in the following table.

Table 9: The Site SA Pro Forma

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
1) To protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	Proximity of any: SSSIs, SPA and Ramsar sites (including impact risk zones)	GIS mapping	Site is not within or adjacent to an impact risk zone	Site is within an impact risk zone but is for a use that would not require consultation with Natural England	Site is adjacent to a SSSI, SPA or Ramsar site	Site is within a SSSI SPA or Ramsar site	Where Applicable Site is within a SSSI, SPA or Ramsar site impact risk zone and would require consultation with Natural England	Where Applicable
	Proximity to the Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Interventions	GIS mapping	Site is not defined as a site within the draft LNRS areas	Site has potential to contribute to LNRS in an urban opportunity area	Site is within an area defined by the draft LNRS	N/A	Where applicable	Where Applicable
	Ancient woodland	GIS mapping	N/A	Site is not located outside of an ancient woodland and 15m buffer area	Site is within 15m buffer area of an ancient woodland	Site is within an ancient woodland		Where Applicable
	Local Wildlife Sites	GIS mapping	N/A	Over 100m	Within 100m	On site	Where applicable	Where applicable
2) To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and ensure	Proximity of any water bodies	GIS mapping Aerial Mapping	N/A	Over 100m	Within 100m	On site	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth		Site information						
3) To maintain, conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	Will any Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) be affected?	GIS mapping	N/A	No TPOs on site	2 TPOs or less on site	3 or more TPOs on site	TPOs adjacent to site	Where applicable
	How large is the site?	GIS mapping Landscape Character Assessment	N/A	Less than 5ha	5ha or greater	N/A	N/A	N/A
	What area type does the site fall within?	GIS mapping Draft Design Code	Town centre location	Local centre	Sub-urban area	Rural area	Site falls in more than one category	Where applicable
	Is the site on the edge of the urban area?	GIS mapping	N/A	Site is not on the edge of the urban area	Site is on the edge of the urban area	N/A	N/A	N/A
4) To protect, conserve and enhance land and soils and mineral resources,	Is the site on contaminated land?	GIS mapping	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes / Potential Impact for information only, as commentary	Site is not on contaminated land

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
minimise the loss of agricultural land, whilst reducing land contamination							in site appraisals	
	Is the site within the mineral safeguarding area?	GIS mapping	N/A	Not in mineral safeguarding area	Within mineral safeguarding area	N/A	Site is partially in the mineral safeguarding area	Where applicable
5)To contribute to the sustainable use of land	Is the site greenfield or brownfield?	Aerial mapping	100% Brownfield	Brownfield (approx. 75% plus)	Greenfield (approx.75% plus)	100% Greenfield	Approx. 50% brownfield / greenfield	Where applicable
6)To maintain and enhance the Borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings	Conservation Area	Heritage Record	Site not being within a Conservation Area	Site not being within a Conservation Area	Site within 100m of a Conservation Area	Site is within a Conservation Area	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Listed Buildings	Heritage Record	Site brings an "at risk" building off the register	More than 100m from a Listed Building	Site is within 100m of a listed building	Site contains a listed building	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Scheduled (Ancient) Monuments	Heritage Record	Site is more than 500m from a Scheduled Monument	Site is more than 100m from a Scheduled Monument	Site is less than 500m from a Scheduled Monument	Site is less than 100m from a Scheduled Monument	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Archaeology	Heritage Record	Site is not in the Archaeological consultation zone	N/A	N/A	Site is in the Archaeological consultation zone	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Is the site in the Essex Historic	Essex historic	N/A	Site is not within the Essex	Site is within the Essex historic	N/A	Site partially within Essex historic	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	Landscape Area?	landscape assessment		historic landscape area	landscape area		landscape area	
7) To reduce contributions to climatic change by adapting and responding to the implications of a changing climate	There will not be a comparable level of information available to assess all sites against this objective – features that would reduce contributions to climate change would only be known at the proposal / application stage.							
8) To adapt and respond to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change	Would the site be located in an area of high / medium / low / very low risk of flooding from surface water?	EA mapping	Very low	Low	High	N/A	Medium Risk Or Site is on zone boundary Or Where applicable	Where applicable
	Is the site at risk from tidal flooding?	GIS mapping	Site is within Zone 1 (no flood risk)	Site contains a minimum of 80% Flood Zone 1	Site is within Zone 2	Site is within Zone 3a / 3b	Uncertain (to include commentary in appraisal)	Where applicable
	Is the site at risk from fluvial flooding?	GIS mapping	Site is within Zone 1 (no flood risk)	Site contains a minimum of 80% Flood Zone 1	Site is within Zone 2	Site is within Zone 3a / 3b	Uncertain (to include commentary in appraisal)	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	Is the site located within 19m of sea defences?	GIS mapping	N/A	Site is further than 19m from the sea defences	Site is within 19m of the sea defences	N/A	Part of the site falls within the 19m buffer zone of the sea defences	Where applicable
9) To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough, reducing contributions to climate change, and reduce noise pollution	Is the site close to an area identified with having poor air quality?	Essex Air Quality data GIS mapping	N/A	Nearest AQ monitor annual average lower than 30No2	Nearest AQ monitor annual average lower than 40No2	Nearest annual average monitor higher than 40No2	Where applicable	Where applicable
	Is the site within proximity to waste management facilities?	Allocations in the Adopted Waste Local Plan (2017)	Site is beyond 250m of an either existing or allocated site for a waste management facility	N/A	Site is within 250m of either an existing or proposed site allocated for a waste management facility	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable
	Would the site be affected by noise?	GIS mapping	Site would not be affected by noise	Site would be affected by noise at < 55 dba	Site would be affected by noise at > 54-70dba	Site would be affected by noise at > 70dba	Part of the site would be affected by noise	Where applicable
	Is the site within proximity to a designated	GIS mapping	Site is beyond 250m of a designated employment site	Site is beyond 100m of a designated	Site is within 250m of a designated employment site	Site is within 100m of a designated employment site	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	employment area?			employment site				
10) To reduce the need to travel and promote and encourage the use of sustainable and active alternative methods of travel to motorised vehicles to reduce road traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution	Access to bus stop	GIS mapping	Within 400m of a bus stop with at least one bus per hour	Within 800m of a bus stop with at least one bus per hour	Over 800m to a bus stop served with at least one bus per hour	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable
	Urban permeability	Aerial mapping	Proposal states new footpaths or cycleways will be provided	N/A	N/A	Loss of public footpath or cycleway	Diversion of public footpath or cycleway required	Where applicable
	Does the proposal provide mixed uses?	Site proposals	Site is located in a town centre or local centre and proposes mixed uses	Site proposes mixed uses	Site does not provide mixed uses	Site replaces mixed use with single use	Where applicable	Where applicable
11) To improve the quality, range, and accessibility to essential services, facilities	Does the site provide safe highway access?	To be updated where specialist input available.	Existing site with suitable existing access	Adequate or good access off adequate or good standard of road. Not affected by safety issues	Poor access and / or road of poor standard. Likely to be subject to safety issues from surrounding uses incapable of mitigation	No access	Access poor but capable of being improved. Road of adequate or good standard. Likely to be affected by safety issues but capable of mitigation	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
							OR Unclear from information	
	Is the site close to local services? (shops, community facilities,	GIS mapping	Site is within 400m of a town centre/ local centre/ retail park/ local services	Site is within 800m of a town centre/ local centre/ retail park/ local services	Site is further than 800m to a town centre/ local centre/ retail park/ local services	N/A	Some services within 400m or 800m of site	Where applicable
12) To reduce levels of deprivation and disparity, and social exclusion	Is the site close to employment opportunities ?	GIS mapping	Within 400m of town centre, local centre or a designated employment area	Within 800m of town centre, local centre or a designated employment area	More than 800m from a town centre, local centre or a designated employment area	N/A	Some employment opportunities provided outside of town centres, local centres or designated employment areas	Where applicable
13)To improve the population's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities	Does the site meet Natural England's ANGSt? ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible	GIS mapping	Site conforms to 4/4 of ANGSt criteria	Site conforms to 3/4 of ANGSt criteria	Site conforms to 1/4 of ANGSt criteria	Site conforms to none of the ANGSt criteria	Where applicable Site conforms to 2/4 of the ANGSt criteria	Non-residential allocations

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	natural greenspace: -of at least 2ha in size, no more than 300m (5 minutes' walk) from home; -at least 1 accessible 20ha site within 2km of home; -1 accessible 100ha site within 5km of home; And 1 accessible 500ha site within 10 minutes of home							
	Will the site see a loss of local open space?	GIS	Proposals include local open space	No loss of local open space	N/A	Loss of local open space	Uncertain	Where applicable
	Will the site provide new community use?	Allocated Use / existing uses	Proposals increase community uses on site	No loss of community use	N/A	Proposal reduces community uses in the area	Uncertain	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	Is the site within close proximity of a GP surgery?	GIS mapping	Site is within 400m of a GP surgery	Site is within 800m of a GP surgery	Site is further than 800m to a GP surgery	N/A	Uncertain	Where applicable
	Does the site provide new GP floorspace?	Proposed allocation	N/A	Site provides new GP floorspace	Site removes GP floorspace	N/A	Uncertain	Where applicable
14) To provide appropriate, affordable and decent housing and accommodation in alignment with the findings of the Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023 (LHNA) to meet existing and future needs of the whole community, and reducing disparity	Will the site meet local thresholds for affordable housing and affordable home ownership?	Local Viability Study Local Housing Needs Assessment	Development delivers above 27% affordable housing	Development delivers 27% affordable housing	Development delivers less than 27% affordable housing	Development delivers no affordable housing	Where applicable	Non-residential proposals
15) To promote the efficient use of resources, including land and ensure the	Are utilities available on site? Criterion to be updated	Utility providers	Utilities are available	Appear to be no significant constraints	No utilities available	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	once relevant evidence base documents and assessments are progressed.							
	Does the site provide new, or redevelop existing infrastructure	Site proposals	N/A	Site provides new infrastructure	Site results in loss of infrastructure	N/A	Uncertain	Site replaces infrastructure
16)To improve the education and skill of the population	Is there a surplus of primary school places in nearby schools?	Commissioning School Places in Essex (per school: Forecast Surplus Deficit including adjustment for new housing). ECC Developer's Guide to Contributions 2023 (exemptions to school places for 1-bed flats)	Significant surplus of spaces in local area	Small surplus of spaces in local area	No surplus of spaces in local area	Significant shortage of spaces in the local area	For information only – Site would require additional place(s)	Site is not proposed for housing, or is specifically for 1-bed flats

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	Is there a surplus of secondary school spaces in nearby secondary schools?	Commissioning School Places in Essex (per school: Forecast Surplus / Deficit including adjustment for new housing). ECC Developer's Guide to Contributions 2023 (exemptions to school places for 1-bed flats)	Significant surplus of spaces in local area	Small surplus of spaces in local area	No surplus of spaces in local area	Significant shortage of spaces in the local area	For information only – Site would require additional place(s)	Site would not require additional place(s). Where applicable. OR Site is not proposed for housing, or is specifically for 1-bed flats
	Is there a surplus of spaces in local Early Years and Childcare provision?	ECC preferred thresholds for new school provision. Early years and Childcare threshold – 0.09 additional places per new house	Significant surplus of spaces in local area	Small surplus of spaces in local area	No surplus of spaces in local area	Significant shortage of spaces in the local area	For information only – Site would require additional place(s)	Site would not require additional place(s). Where applicable.

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
		and 0.045 additional spaces per new flats.						
17) To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth by improving efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy and help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	Is the site proposed for employment development / loss of employment land?	Draft Allocation	Site is proposed for employment	Site is proposed for mixed-use development	Proposal will see a loss of previously allocated employment land	N/A	Where applicable	Other uses
	Will there be a loss of employment land (housing allocations).	Draft Allocation	Site is not currently employment land	N/A	Site is partly currently employment land	Site is currently wholly employment land	Where applicable	Where applicable
18) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres	Is the proposal for a town centre location?	Draft Allocation	The proposal is for town centre functions and within a defined town centre	The proposal is for mixed-use development within a defined town centre	The site is for residential development in a defined town centre OR The proposal is for town centre functions that are not well	N/A	Where applicable	N/A

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
					related to the defined town centre			
	Does the proposal change the amount of retail floorspace in the primary shopping area?	Site proposal and GIS mapping	Proposal increases retail floorspace	N/A	N/A	Proposal reduces retail floorspace	Where applicable	Proposal maintains existing use of the same floorspace
	Does the proposal change the overall town centre floorspace?	Site proposal	Proposal increases town centre floorspace	N/A	N/A	Proposal reduces town centre floorspace	Unknown proposed mixed use	Proposal maintains existing use of the same floorspace
	Does the site support sufficient parking to ensure visitation to the centre?	Site proposal Parking surveys	Proposal increases parking provision	Proposal maintains existing parking provision	Proposal reduces parking provision	Proposal removes parking provision	Proposal relocates parking	Where applicable
	Does the site contribute to the public realm in the town centre or local centre?	Site proposal	N/A	Public realm improvements proposed	N/A	Site decreases public space within the centre	No public realm improvements proposed	Where applicable
	Will there be a net increase or	Site proposal	N/A	Proposal is for, or	Site is currently for retail use and	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	loss of retail provision?			includes retail use	proposal would see a loss of retail use			
19)To promote the sustainable management of waste	Is a household waste and recycling centre within a close proximity of the site?	GIS /aerial mapping	N/A	Within 1km	Beyond 1km	N/A	N/A	Where applicable
20)To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of the current and future generations	Fibre broadband availability	Superfastess e.org interactive rollout map	Ultrafast in area adjacent to site (>100Mbps); or site greater than 30 units	Superfast in area adjacent to site – between 24Mbps and 100Mbps	Less than 24Mbps in area adjacent to site	No broadband coverage in area adjacent to site	Where applicable	Where applicable

Following the scoring of sites, mitigations will be identified to address negative impacts identified. These will be set out for each site, and where possible, incorporated into the Policies of the Draft Plan. The method for this is set out in Table 10 below.

Table 10: The Site Mitigation proforma

SA Objective	Example Initial Score	Mitigation added	Example Mitigated Score
1) To protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species, and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	++	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
2) To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and ensure sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth	+	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
3) To maintain, conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	?	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	+
4) To protect, conserve and enhance land and soils and mineral resources, minimise the loss of agricultural land, whilst reducing land contamination	-	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	0
5) To contribute to the sustainable use of land	--	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	-
6) To maintain and enhance the Borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings	++	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
7) To reduce contributions to climatic change by adapting and responding to the implications of a changing climate	+	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
8) To adapt and respond to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change	?	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	+
9) To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough, reducing contributions to climate change, and reduce noise pollution	-	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	0
10) To reduce the need to travel and promote and encourage the use of sustainable and active alternative methods of travel to motorised vehicles to reduce road traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution	--	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	-
11) To improve the quality, range, and accessibility to essential services, facilities	++	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
12) To reduce levels of deprivation and disparity, and social exclusion	+	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++

SA Objective	Example Initial Score	Mitigation added	Example Mitigated Score
13)To improve the population's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities	?	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	+
14) To provide appropriate, affordable and decent housing and accommodation in alignment with the findings of the Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023 (LHNA) to meet existing and future needs of the whole community, and reducing disparity	-	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	0
15)To promote the efficient use of resources, including land and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	--	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	-
16)To improve the education and skill of the population	++	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
17) To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth by improving efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy and help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	++
18)To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres	?	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	+
19)To promote the sustainable management of waste	-	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	0
20)To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of the current and future generations	--	Brief summary of the mitigation to be applied to the site through the Policies of the Plan.	-

5.3 The Appraisal of Green Belt Site Options

The assessment of Green Belt Site Options differs from that of sites due to the scale of these areas. In arriving at the Draft Castle Point Plan, it will be important that the Reasonable Alternative options have been considered. This may include testing different numbers, and different combinations, of Green Belt sites, to understand what their sustainability implications would be. Each site considered as part of a Reasonable Alternative will be tested using the criteria set out in Table 11.

Table 11: The Green Belt Site Options SA Pro Forma

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
1) To protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	Proximity of any: SSSIs, SPA and Ramsar sites (including impact risk zones)	GIS mapping	Site is not within or adjacent to an impact risk zone	Site is within an impact risk zone but is for a use that would not require consultation with Natural England	Site is adjacent to a SSSI, SPA or Ramsar site	Site is within a SSSI SPA or Ramsar site	Where Applicable Site is within a SSSI, SPA or Ramsar site impact risk zone and would require consultation with Natural England	Where Applicable
	Proximity to the Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Interventions	GIS mapping	Site is not defined as a site within the draft LNRS areas	Site has potential to contribute to LNRS in an urban opportunity area	Site is within an area defined by the draft LNRS	N/A	Where applicable	Where Applicable
	Ancient woodland	GIS mapping	N/A	Site is not located outside of an ancient woodland and 15m buffer area	Site is within 15m buffer area of an ancient woodland	Site is within an ancient woodland		Where Applicable
	Local Wildlife Sites	GIS mapping	N/A	Over 100m	Within 100m	On site	Where applicable	Where applicable
2) To conserve and enhance water quality and resources, and ensure	Proximity of any water bodies	GIS mapping Aerial Mapping	N/A	Over 100m	Within 100m	On site	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
sustainable reuse of water to accommodate growth		Site information						
3) To maintain, conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	Will any Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) be affected/	GIS mapping	N/A	No TPOs on site	2 TPOs or less on site	3 or more TPOs on site	TPOs adjacent to site	Where applicable
	Site's contribution to existing landscape	Potential Green Belt Assessment	None	Minor	Strong	Very Strong	Moderate	N/A
	How contiguous with the urban area is the site?	GIS mapping	>75% of site boundary contiguous	>50% of site boundary contiguous	<50% of site boundary contiguous	<25% of site boundary contiguous	N/A	N/A
4) To protect, conserve and enhance land and soils and mineral resources, minimise the loss of agricultural land, whilst reducing land contamination	Is the site on contaminated land?	GIS mapping	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes / Potential Impact for information only, as commentary in site appraisals	Site is not on contaminated land
	Is the site within the mineral safeguarding area?	GIS mapping	N/A	Not in mineral safeguarding area	Within mineral safeguarding area	N/A	Site is partially in the mineral safeguarding area	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	Agricultural Land Classification	Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)	N/A (no Grade 4 or 5 in the Plan Area)	Urban area / extension to an existing site / other land primarily in non-agricultural use	Grade 2	N/A (no Grade 1 in the Plan Area)	Grade 3	Where applicable
5)To contribute to the sustainable use of land	Is the site greenfield or brownfield?	Aerial mapping	100% Brownfield	Brownfield (approx. 75% plus)	Greenfield (approx.75% plus)	100% Greenfield	Approx. 50% brownfield / greenfield	Where applicable
6)To maintain and enhance the Borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings	Conservation Area	Heritage Record	Site not being within a Conservation Area	Site not being within a Conservation Area	Site within 100m of a Conservation Area	Site is within a Conservation Area	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Listed Buildings	Heritage Record	Site brings an "at risk" building off the register	More than 100m from a Listed Building	Site is within 100m of a listed building	Site contains a listed building	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Scheduled (Ancient) Monuments	Heritage Record	Site is more than 500m from a Scheduled Monument	Site is more than 100m from a Scheduled Monument	Site is less than 500m from a Scheduled Monument	Site is less than 100m from a Scheduled Monument	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Archaeology	Heritage Record	Site is not in the Archaeological consultation zone	N/A	N/A	Site is in the Archaeological consultation zone	Uncertainty surrounding impacts	Where applicable
	Is the site in the Essex Historic	Essex historic	N/A	Site is not within the Essex	Site is within the Essex historic	N/A	Site partially within Essex historic	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	Landscape Area?	landscape assessment		historic landscape area	landscape area		landscape area	
7) To reduce contributions to climatic change by adapting and responding to the implications of a changing climate	There will not be a comparable level of information available to assess all sites against this objective – features that would reduce contributions to climate change would only be known at the proposal / application stage.							
8) To adapt and respond to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change	Would the site be located in an area of high / medium / low / very low risk of flooding from surface water?	EA mapping	Very low	Low	High	N/A	Medium Risk Or Site is on zone boundary Or Where applicable	Where applicable
	Is the site at risk from tidal flooding?	GIS mapping	Site is within Zone 1 (no flood risk)	Site contains a minimum of 80% Flood Zone 1	Site is within Zone 2	Site is within Zone 3a / 3b	Uncertain (to include commentary in appraisal)	Where applicable
	Is the site at risk from fluvial flooding?	GIS mapping	Site is within Zone 1 (no flood risk)	Site contains a minimum of 80% Flood Zone 1	Site is within Zone 2	Site is within Zone 3a / 3b	Uncertain (to include commentary in appraisal)	Where applicable
	Is the site located within 19m of	GIS mapping	N/A	Site is further than 19m from the sea defences	Site is within 19m of the sea defences	N/A	Part of the site falls within the 19m buffer	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	sea defences?						zone of the sea defences	
9) To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough, reducing contributions to climate change, and reduce noise pollution	Is the site close to an area identified with having poor air quality?	Essex Air Quality data GIS mapping	N/A	Nearest AQ monitor annual average lower than 30No2	Nearest AQ monitor annual average lower than 40No2	Nearest annual average monitor higher than 40No2	Where applicable	Where applicable
	Is the site within proximity to waste management facilities?	Allocations in the Adopted Waste Local Plan (2017	Site is beyond 250m of an either existing or allocated site for a waste management facility	N/A	Site is within 250m of either an existing or proposed site allocated for a waste management facility	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable
	Would the site be affected by noise?	GIS mapping	Site would not be affected by noise	Site would be affected by noise at < 55 dba	Site would be affected by noise at > 54-70dba	Site would be affected by noise at > 70dba	Part of the site would be affected by noise	Where applicable
	Is the site within proximity to a designated employment area?	GIS mapping	Site is beyond 250m of a designated employment site	Site is beyond 100m of a designated employment site	Site is within 250m of a designated employment site	Site is within 100m of a designated employment site	Where applicable	Where applicable
10) To reduce the need to travel and promote and encourage the use of sustainable and active	Access to bus stop	GIS mapping	Within 400m of a bus stop with at least one bus per hour	Within 800m of a bus stop with at least one bus per hour	Over 800m to a bus stop served with at least one bus per hour	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
alternative methods of travel to motorised vehicles to reduce road traffic congestion and mitigate air pollution	Does the site link existing routes?	Site proposals	Proposal would link surrounding areas along multiple axes	Proposal would link the surrounding areas along a single axis	Site only connects to nearby urban area	Site does not provide new connections to local areas	Diversion of public footpath or cycleway required	Where applicable
	Does the proposal provide mixed uses?	Site proposals	Site creates a new town centre or local centre and proposes mixed uses	Site proposes mixed uses	Site does not provide mixed uses	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable
11) To improve the quality, range, and accessibility to essential services, facilities	Does the site provide safe highway access?	To be updated where specialist input available.	Existing site with suitable existing access	Adequate or good access off adequate or good standard of road. Not affected by safety issues	Poor access and / or road of poor standard. Likely to be subject to safety issues from surrounding uses incapable of mitigation	No access	Access poor but capable of being improved. Road of adequate or good standard. Likely to be affected by safety issues but capable of mitigation OR Unclear from information	Where applicable
	Is the site close to local services? (shops, community facilities,	GIS mapping	Site is within 400m of a town centre/ local centre/ retail park/ local services	Site is within 800m of a town centre/ local centre/ retail park/ local services	Site is further than 800m to a town centre/ local centre/ retail park/ local services	N/A	Some services within 400m or 800m of site	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
12) To reduce levels of deprivation and disparity, and social exclusion	Is the site close to employment opportunities ?	GIS mapping	Within 400m of town centre, local centre or a designated employment area	Within 800m of town centre, local centre or a designated employment area	More than 800m from a town centre, local centre or a designated employment area	N/A	Some employment opportunities provided outside of town centres, local centres or designated employment areas	Where applicable
13)To improve the population's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities	Does the site meet Natural England's ANGSt? ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural greenspace: -of at least 2ha in size, no more than 300m (5 minutes' walk) from home; -at least 1 accessible	GIS mapping	Site conforms to 4/4 of ANGSt criteria	Site conforms to 3/4 of ANGSt criteria	Site conforms to 1/4 of ANGSt criteria	Site conforms to none of the ANGSt criteria	Where applicable Site conforms to 2/4 of the ANGSt criteria	Non-residential allocations

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	20ha site within 2km of home; -1 accessible 100ha site within 5km of home; And 1 accessible 500ha site within 10 minutes of home							
	Will the site see a loss of local open space?	GIS	Proposals include local open space	No loss of local open space	N/A	Loss of local open space	Uncertain	Where applicable
	Will the site provide new community use?	Allocated Use / existing uses	Proposals increase community uses on site	No loss of community use	N/A	Proposal reduces community uses in the area	Uncertain	Where applicable
	Is the site within close proximity of a GP surgery?	GIS mapping	Site is within 400m of a GP surgery	Site is within 800m of a GP surgery	Site is further than 800m to a GP surgery	N/A	Uncertain	Where applicable
	Does the site provide new GP floorspace?	Proposed allocation	N/A	Site provides new GP floorspace	Site removes GP floorspace	N/A	Uncertain	Where applicable
14) To provide appropriate, affordable and decent	Will the site meet local thresholds for affordable	Local Viability Study	Development delivers above 27%	Development delivers 27% affordable housing	Development delivers less than 27%	Development delivers no affordable housing	Where applicable	Non-residential proposals

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
housing and accommodation in alignment with the findings of the Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023 (LHNA) to meet existing and future needs of the whole community, and reducing disparity	housing and affordable home ownership?	Local Housing Needs Assessment	affordable housing		affordable housing			
	Will the site deliver a range of types and sizes of new homes?	Local Viability Study Local Housing Needs Assessment Site proposals	Development delivers multiple tenures, and a balanced house size mix	Development delivers multiple tenure or a balanced house size mix	Development fails to deliver multiple tenures and house size mix	N/A	Where applicable	Non-residential proposals
15)To promote the efficient use of resources, including land and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development	Are utilities available on site? Criterion to be updated once relevant evidence base documents and assessments are progressed.	Utility providers	Utilities are available	Appear to be no significant constraints	No utilities available	N/A	Where applicable	Where applicable
	Does the site provide new, or redevelop	Site proposals	N/A	Site provides new infrastructure	Site results in loss of infrastructure	N/A	Uncertain	Site replaces infrastructure

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	existing infrastructure							
16)To improve the education and skill of the population	Is there a surplus of primary school places in nearby schools?	Commissioning School Places in Essex (per school: Forecast Surplus Deficit including adjustment for new housing). ECC Developer's Guide to Contributions 2023 (exemptions to school places for 1-bed flats)	Significant surplus of spaces in local area	Small surplus of spaces in local area	No surplus of spaces in local area	Significant shortage of spaces in the local area	For information only – Site would require additional place(s)	Site is not proposed for housing, or is specifically for 1-bed flats
	Does the site deliver a new school or early years provision	Site proposal	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	Uncertain	Site is not proposed for housing, or is specifically for 1-bed flats
	Is there a surplus of secondary school spaces in	Commissioning School Places in Essex (per school:	Significant surplus of spaces in local area	Small surplus of spaces in local area	No surplus of spaces in local area	Significant shortage of spaces in the local area	For information only – Site would require	Site would not require additional place(s). Where

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	nearby secondary schools?	Forecast Surplus / Deficit including adjustment for new housing). ECC Developer's Guide to Contributions 2023 (exemptions to school places for 1-bed flats)					additional place(s)	applicable. OR Site is not proposed for housing, or is specifically for 1-bed flats
	Is there a surplus of spaces in local Early Years and Childcare provision?	ECC preferred thresholds for new school provision. Early years and Childcare threshold – 0.09 additional places per new house and 0.045 additional spaces per new flats.	Significant surplus of spaces in local area	Small surplus of spaces in local area	No surplus of spaces in local area	Significant shortage of spaces in the local area	For information only – Site would require additional place(s)	Site would not require additional place(s). Where applicable.

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
17) To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth by improving efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy and help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	Is the site proposed for employment development / loss of employment land?	Site proposal	Site is proposed for employment	Site is proposed for mixed-use development	Proposal will see a loss of previously allocated employment land	N/A	Where applicable	Other uses
	Will there be a loss of employment land (housing allocations).	Site proposal	Site is not currently employment land	N/A	Site is partly currently employment land	Site is currently wholly employment land	Where applicable	Where applicable
18) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres	Does the proposal include a new centre?	Site proposal	The proposal includes a new centre	The site promotes excellent connectivity to an existing centre	The site does not include a new centre	The site does not create a new centre, and does not promote excellent connectivity to an existing centre.	Where applicable	N/A
	Would any new retail in the proposal threaten the function of	Site proposal Retail impact assessment	Proposal creates no impact	Proposal creates minimal impact	Proposal creates moderate impact	Proposal creates significant impact	Where applicable	Where applicable

SA Objective	Site Criteria	Source	Significant Positive (++)	Positive (+)	Negative (-)	Significant Negative (--)	Uncertain Unknown (?)	No / negligible impact (0)
	nearby centres?							
19)To promote the sustainable management of waste	Is a household waste and recycling centre within a close proximity of the site?	GIS /aerial mapping	N/A	Within 1km	Beyond 1km	N/A	N/A	Where applicable
20)To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of the current and future generations	Fibre broadband availability	Superfastess e.org interactive rollout map	Ultrafast in area adjacent to site (>100Mbps); or site greater than 30 units	Superfast in area adjacent to site – between 24Mbps and 100Mbps	Less than 24Mbps in area adjacent to site	No broadband coverage in area adjacent to site	Where applicable	Where applicable

6. Initial Assessment of the Castle Point Plan's Reasonable Alternative Strategic Development Options

6.1 Introduction

The following sub-sections summarise the impacts highlighted within an interim appraisal of each of the Reasonable Alternatives within the emerging Castle Point Plan. This responds to an appraisal of the emerging Plan context, baseline conditions, and identified SA Objectives which the Council will be consulting on in early Summer 2024.

6.1.1 The Reasonable Alternatives

The emerging Castle Point Plan sets out six Borough-wide development strategy options – the alternative development scenarios:

1a – Limit new development to the brownfield sites within the Urban Area

1b – Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area

1c – Increase density in the urban area

2a – Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need

2b – Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley

3 – Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need

The options have been set out by Castle Point Borough Council in the preparation of the emerging Castle Point Plan. The options are not intended to be mutually exclusive, i.e., they could potentially form a combination of scenarios to meet identified housing and employment need.

Where the scenarios refer to the Urban Area, meaning the four towns of Benfleet, Canvey Island, Thundersley, and Hadleigh, as well as the village of Daws Heath. Anything outside the Urban Area is in the Green Belt.

It should be noted that the findings regarding significant effects contained within this section are indicative only at this stage and will need to be revised, and appraisal work revisited once a full suite of evidence base documents have been concluded.

The emerging Castle Point Plan consultation document sets out the Reasonable Alternatives to be considered in the plan-making process along with complementary themes both of which may conflict with the requirements of sustainable development of which the SA work will assess.

6.1.2 What assumptions are used in the assessment of the Reasonable Alternatives?

A total of 20 Sustainability Objectives have been identified for the appraisal of the emerging Castle Point Plan in this Report. General assumptions can be made at this interim stage in response to creating environmentally sustainable development and in the identification of potential effects (and their significance) across the 20 thematic Sustainability Objectives. The use of assumptions assists the identification of key differences between the emerging Plan's overall strategy and the Reasonable Alternatives. These are:

- Greenfield land (including the Green Belt) is more peripheral to existing centres, and therefore more distanced from existing services.
- Any development in the Green Belt will have some degree of harm in consideration of the designation of the Green Belt and the purpose of the Green Belt in the first instance.
- The bulk of undeveloped land will be comparably more constrained in respect of available existing infrastructure than development on previously developed land, or within infill development / regeneration opportunities in existing settlements.
- The land on the mainland area is varied in terms of topography and landscape, and these features act to create an attractive and green environment, and also form the separation between the three towns. To this extent, any development of Greenfield land can be expected to have a degree of landscape harm.
- As per the Transport Evidence for the withdrawn Plan, background growth alone will result in some junctions suffering congestion issues. Congestion management and the management of the impacts of congestion on air quality are therefore highly important in the delivery of new homes and there can be little differentiation between options as a result.

6.1.3 The Significant Effects of creating environmentally sustainable development and Reasonable Alternatives

Description of 'Significant Effects'

The strength of impacts can vary dependant on the relevance of the Reasonable Alternative content to certain sustainability objectives or themes. Where the Reasonable Alternatives have been appraised against the Sustainability Objectives the basis for making judgements within the assessment is identified within the following key:

Possible impact / effect	Basis for judgement – description of effect
++	Strong prospect of there being significant positive impacts
+	Strong prospect of there being minor positive impacts
?	Possibility of either positive or negative impacts, or general uncertainty
0	No impact
N/A	Not applicable to the scope or context of the appraised content
-	Strong prospect of there being minor negative impacts and mitigation would be possible
--	Strong prospect of there being significant negative impacts with mitigation unlikely to be possible (pending further investigation)

Significant Effects

Table 10: Significant effects of Option 1a

Option 1a: Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	++	<p>For this scenario (as with 1b and 1c) it can be assumed that effects would be significantly positive should development be limited to urban areas outside the Green Belt. Impacts are generally uncertain however, due to the presence of wildlife designations and protected species / habitats being site specific and present throughout the Borough.</p> <p>Urban greening features within new developments can contribute to enhancing biodiversity through site and building design, thus making space for nature within the built environment.</p>
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	?	<p>The scale of development that would come forward under any of the six scenarios would result in an increased demand for water consumption; however, it is possible that new development would be designed and built to high standards of efficiency. The spatial distribution of development will not have significant impacts on water availability.</p> <p>There are, however, uncertain impacts at this stage of the Plan taking into consideration that Castle Point falls within a water stressed region with a low average rainfall.</p>
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	+	<p>Although there is an element of uncertainty with this scenario, there are likely to be minor positive effects with regard to the requirement of good design meeting national policy requirements. New development within the urban area has the potential to enhance the townscape, particularly on disused brownfield sites.</p>

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>Coalescence - the effects of this alternative approach would be comparatively positive in regard to coalescence, with development focused within existing urban areas outside the Green Belt.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor positive effects.</p>
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.	++	<p>There are no minerals extraction sites or deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan in the borough.</p> <p>Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective as it re-uses brownfield sites.</p>
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	++	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>As with option 1c, option 1a is not expected to impact local landscapes e.g., the limited amount of historic woodland and green / blue spaces. Development in the urban area where there are existing services and facilities, and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.	?	<p>All new development has the potential to have an impact on the historic environment, both directly and indirectly. Specific effects, including the extent to which new development may enhance the historic environment, will be dependent on the design and layout of specific proposals.</p> <p>Castle Point has two Conservation Areas (South Benfleet and Florence Gardens). Although locally listed assets have been identified, there is generally only a small number of Listed Buildings, and as such the effects of intensification are likely to be minimal. Uncertain impacts are highlighted in the absence of site specifics for urban intensification.</p> <p>Whilst risks of impacts have been identified, any potential impacts from development have the opportunity to be mitigated through good design and safeguard from cultural loss.</p>
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.	++	<p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards climate change, in addition to poor air quality. Embodied carbon, i.e., CO2 emissions from production of materials and their transportation in manufacturing also contributes to</p>

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>climate change. Carbon use is however, reducing due to sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>Mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally urban areas have good access to public transport and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling. The range of services and facilities also helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities.</p> <p>Option 1a presents the lowest scale of development, and which will be mixed use compared to the alternatives.</p> <p>Overall, there are significant positive effects in relation to this objective.</p>
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	<p>Flooding - Castle Point is located on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary and as such is generally at high risk of flooding due in particular to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall. There is, however, substantial tidal flooding defences, particularly to Canvey Island. There is a risk of flooding in the urban areas generally from surface water due to more intense rainfall.</p> <p>Canvey, Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet are in the higher flood risk zone 3.</p> <p>Surface water flood risk - impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain</p>

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p><u>Fluvial and tidal flood risk</u> - Impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>As with option 1b and 1c, and options 2a,2b and 3, most development is directed to the urban area. Urbanisation reduces the ability of land to absorb water and so the risk of flooding may increase in more urban areas. Development in the urban areas could result in an increased flood risk – particularly if development places pressure on existing areas of green space that could otherwise help absorb flood water.</p> <p>Mitigations, e.g., SUDs can be introduced to the design of new development to safeguard residents, buildings and infrastructure from flooding, reducing risks of flooding. However, national policy guidance provides for development to be steered to areas with the lowest flood risk in the first instance.</p> <p><u>Buildings and public spaces</u> – this objective also considers whether buildings and public spaces will respond to the effects of a changing climate (i.e., ventilation, shading and landscaping). Such design considerations are beyond the scope of this assessment and will be considered by the SA later in the plan-making process.</p> <p>Overall, option 1a as with the alternative options 1b, 1c, 2a and 2b are expected to have a minor negative effect in relation to this objective.</p>
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.	<p><u>Air quality and congestion</u> – as identified in the alternative options similar impacts can be expected to arise from option 3. Air quality effects can be expected to be negative in relation to all options as a result of the level of growth within the Plan area, the small size of Castle Point and the presence of many strategic roads in the Borough.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p>

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards poor air quality. However, sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology will mitigate potential poor air quality arising from new development.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon which will also contribute to mitigating poor air quality. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>Further mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally urban areas have good access to public transport and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling. The range of services and facilities also helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities.</p> <p><u>Noise</u> - the small size of Castle Point and the prevalence of strategic roads ensure that noise related impacts can be expected to be experienced from any development sites, pending specific circumstances. Benfleet and Canvey Island in particular experience between 55-75db. Although no specific impacts are identified for this alternative, mitigation can be ensured for all options on a case by case basis and in line with the Plan's policy content.</p> <p>Overall, minor negative impacts are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.	<p>Option 1a, as with option 1b and 1c steers most development to the urban area where there is likely to be good access to public transport, and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling.</p> <p>The range of services and facilities helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities. As such, the potential minor negative effects are mixed with significant positive effects.</p>

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			This scenario is therefore expected to have significant positive effects.
11	To ensure accessibility to services.	++	<p><u>Community services and facilities</u> - due to continued pressure from many infrastructure providers to centralise services and facilities into fewer larger hubs, access to community facilities, services and healthcare is more viable in urban areas. As such, focusing most new development in the urban areas, i.e., the towns and local service centres would likely achieve good levels of access for new residents to existing services and facilities. Any improvements delivered as part of new development or as a result of an increase in the local population would also increase accessibility and mitigate overloading of services.</p> <p>With this option there is potential for services to be located at ground floor level improving accessibility and contributing to active frontages in the built environment.</p> <p>Growing town centres can improve accessibility to services which can be expected to be better realised through this alternative in consideration of the Borough as an isolated entity.</p> <p>In comparison to the alternatives, there can still be expected to be multiple trips outside the Plan area for services in Southend and Basildon, however small day-to-day trips to local services will be maximised through an intensification of growth in urban areas.</p> <p>Overall, with regard to access to community services and facilities this scenario is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to this objective, and potentially ensures more equal access to facilities and infrastructure for all.</p> <p><u>Highways access</u> - the impacts of options 2a and 2b can reasonably be expected to apply should any additional land within the Green Belt be released for housing development. Although access arrangements may already be in place for any future allocated sites in urban areas (and brownfield sites) it can be expected that car movements and the suitability of arrangements will need some retrofitting should intensification at the scale required be forthcoming. Impacts are deemed uncertain at this stage as impacts can only be realised on a site by site and proposal specific basis.</p>
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	+	Contributes towards meeting housing need including affordable housing need (but not in full)

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>in the urban areas where there are existing services, potentially avoiding the need to travel and associated costs.</p> <p>Minor positive effects are therefore expected in relation to this objective.</p>
13	To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development of life time homes due to an increase in the urban density (but could be limited), enabling occupants to remain in their homes as they age or become disabled. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement through new development to health services and other community facilities which are generally located in urban areas.</p> <p>Many of the open spaces in the borough are located in or at the edge of urban areas. This option allows good access to these open spaces, which contributes to residents physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>
14	To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community.	-	<p>The Council has an identified local housing need of 5,100 over the Plan period 2023 – 2043.</p> <p>Option 1a contributes towards meeting local housing need (but not in full) in the urban areas offering a less positive effect . Option 1a in combination with the alternative options (2a and 2b) would offer a more positive effect in regard to meeting the full housing need.</p> <p>Minor negative impacts are expected with this option in relation to this objective.</p>
15	To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.	++	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>
16	To improve the education and skills of the population.	+	<p>This option in combination would require any suitable development to contribute towards any extra requirement of provision of education and / or training.</p> <p>This option has the potential for opportunities on mixed use sites for facilities to improve skills and training.</p> <p>Minor positive effects are expected in relation to this objective.</p>

Option 1a: <i>Limit new development to brownfield sites within the Urban Area</i>			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
17	To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth.	+	<p>The EDNA identifies an opportunity to deliver digital / cultural / creative industries within mixed-use town centre environments, which may conflict with urban residential intensification but broadly speaking would ensure that residential and employment opportunities are in close proximity to each other.</p> <p>Development would be focused within existing centres and Greenfield land outside the Green Belt, which would be comparably closer to existing centres and employment areas.</p> <p>Overall, option 1a in combination is considered to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective.</p>
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.	++	All the development scenarios are likely to have positive effects including the promotion of employment opportunities in the borough's town centres, particularly the option 1a, 1b and 1c scenarios where most development would be steered to creating significant positive effects in relation to this objective.
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste	?	New development as part of all scenarios will result in the use of raw materials and the generation of waste, both in construction and operation; however, this will not be influenced by the broad spatial distribution of development. Waste management practices are largely dependent on peoples' behaviour and the design of development. Therefore, it is uncertain as to the effects of development in relation to this objective.
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development to enhance the availability of digital access across the borough for both residents and employment / commercial purposes. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement to online health services and other community services.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>

Table 11: Significant effects of Option 1b

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	<p>++</p> <p>For this scenario (as with 1a and 1c) it can be assumed that effects would be significantly positive should development be limited to urban areas outside the Green Belt. Impacts are generally uncertain however, due to the presence of wildlife designations and protected species / habitats being site specific and present throughout the Borough.</p> <p>Urban greening features within new developments can contribute to enhancing biodiversity through site and building design, thus making space for nature within the built environment.</p>
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	<p>?</p> <p>The scale of development that would come forward under any of the six scenarios would result in an increased demand for water consumption; however, it is possible that new development would be designed and built to high standards of efficiency. The spatial distribution of development will not have significant impacts on water availability.</p> <p>There are, however, uncertain impacts at this stage of the Plan taking into consideration that Castle Point falls within a water stressed region with a low average rainfall.</p>
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	<p>+</p> <p>Although there is an element of uncertainty with this scenario, there are likely to be minor positive effects with regard to the requirement of good design meeting national policy requirements. New development within the urban area has the potential to enhance the townscape, particularly on disused brownfield sites.</p> <p>Coalescence - the effects of this alternative approach would be comparatively positive in regard to coalescence, with development focused within existing urban areas outside the Green Belt.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor positive effects.</p>
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.	<p>++</p> <p>There are no minerals extraction sites or deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan in the borough.</p> <p>Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	?	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Unlike option 1a and 1c, there is a degree of uncertainty to the effects of option 1b with regard to regeneration of designated employment areas and what this potentially presents for sustainable communities with regard to transport and accessibility to services and facilities.</p>
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.	?	<p>All new development has the potential to have an impact on the historic environment, both directly and indirectly. Specific effects, including the extent to which new development may enhance the historic environment, will be dependent on the design and layout of specific proposals.</p> <p>Castle Point has two Conservation Areas (South Benfleet and Florence Gardens). Although locally listed assets have been identified, there is generally only a small number of Listed Buildings, and as such the effects of intensification are likely to be minimal. Uncertain impacts are highlighted in the absence of site specifics for urban intensification.</p> <p>Whilst risks of impacts have been identified, any potential impacts from development have the opportunity to be mitigated through good design and safeguard from cultural loss.</p>
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.	+	<p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards climate change, in addition to poor air quality. Embodied carbon, i.e., CO2 emissions from production of materials and their transportation in manufacturing also contributes to climate change. Carbon use is however, reducing due to sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>Mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally urban areas have good access to public transport and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling. The range of services and facilities also helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities</p> <p>Option 1b presents the second lowest scale of development, and with scope for mixed use compared to the Green Belt alternatives.</p> <p>Overall, there are minor positive effects in relation to this objective.</p>
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	<p>--</p> <p><u>Flooding</u> - Castle Point is located on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary and as such is generally at high risk of flooding due in particular to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall. There is, however, substantial tidal flooding defences, particularly to Canvey Island. There is a risk of flooding in the urban areas generally from surface water due to more intense rainfall.</p> <p>Canvey, Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet are in the higher flood risk zone 3.</p> <p><u>Surface water flood risk</u> - impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p><u>Fluvial and tidal flood risk</u> - Impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>As with option 1a and 1c, and options 2a, 2b and 3, most development is directed to the urban area. Urbanisation reduces the ability of land to absorb water and so the risk of flooding may increase in more urban areas. Development in the urban areas could result in an increased flood risk – particularly if development places pressure on existing areas of green space that could otherwise help absorb flood water.</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>Mitigations, e.g., SUDs can be introduced to the design of new development to safeguard residents, buildings and infrastructure from flooding, reducing risks of flooding. However, national policy guidance provides for development to be steered to areas with the lowest flood risk in the first instance.</p> <p><u>Buildings and public spaces</u> – this objective also considers whether buildings and public spaces will respond to the effects of a changing climate (i.e., ventilation, shading and landscaping). Such design considerations are beyond the scope of this assessment and will be considered by the SA later in the plan-making process.</p> <p>Overall, option 1b is expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to this objective due to a higher scale of development.</p>
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.	?	<p><u>Air quality and congestion</u> – as identified in the alternative options similar impacts can be expected to arise from option 3. Air quality effects can be expected to be negative in relation to all options as a result of the level of growth within the Plan area, the small size of Castle Point and the presence of many strategic roads in the Borough.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards poor air quality. However, sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology will mitigate potential poor air quality arising from new development.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon which will also contribute to mitigating poor air quality. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>Further mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally urban areas have good access to public transport and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling. The range of services and facilities also helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities.</p> <p>This option presents the potential for a reduction in employment uses and therefore a potential reduction in HGV trips. However, there is a degree of uncertainty with this.</p> <p><u>Noise</u> - The small size of Castle Point and the prevalence of strategic roads ensure that noise related impacts can be expected to be experienced from any development sites, pending specific circumstances. Benfleet and Canvey Island in particular experience between 55-75db. Although no specific impacts are identified for this alternative, mitigation can be ensured for all options on a case by case basis and in line with the Plan's policy content.</p> <p>Overall, it is uncertain as to the degree of impact option 1b will have in relation to this objective.</p>
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.	++	<p>Option 1b, as with option 1a and 1c steers most development to the urban area where there is likely to be good access to public transport, and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling.</p> <p>The range of services and facilities helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities. As such, the potential minor negative effects are mixed with significant positive effects.</p> <p>This scenario is therefore expected to have significant positive effects.</p>
11	To ensure accessibility to services.	++	<p><u>Community services and facilities</u> - due to continued pressure from many infrastructure providers to centralise services and facilities into fewer larger hubs, access to community facilities, services and healthcare is more viable in urban areas. As such, focusing most new development in the urban areas, i.e., the towns and local service centres would likely achieve good levels of access for new residents to existing services</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>and facilities. Any improvements delivered as part of new development or as a result of an increase in the local population would also increase accessibility and mitigate overloading of services.</p> <p>With this option there is potential for services to be located at ground floor level improving accessibility and contributing to active frontages in the built environment.</p> <p>Growing town centres can improve accessibility to services which can be expected to be better realised through this alternative in consideration of the Borough as an isolated entity.</p> <p>In comparison to the alternatives, there can still be expected to be multiple trips outside the Plan area for services in Southend and Basildon, however small day-to-day trips to local services will be maximised through an intensification of growth in urban areas.</p> <p>Overall, with regard to access to community services and facilities this scenario is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to this objective, and potentially ensures more equal access to facilities and infrastructure for all.</p> <p><u>Highways access</u> - the impacts of options 2a and 2b can reasonably be expected to apply should any additional land within the Green Belt be released for housing development. Although access arrangements may already be in place for any future allocated sites in urban areas (and brownfield sites) it can be expected that car movements and the suitability of arrangements will need some retrofitting should intensification at the scale required be forthcoming. Impacts are deemed uncertain at this stage as impacts can only be realised on a site by site and proposal specific basis.</p>
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	++	<p>Contributes towards meeting full local housing need in the urban areas where there are existing services, potentially avoiding the need to travel and associated costs.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts are therefore expected in relation to this objective.</p>
13	To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development of life time homes due to an increase in the urban density, enabling occupants to remain in their homes as they age or become disabled. It also enables good accessibility and</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>enhancement through new development to health services and other community facilities which are generally located in urban areas.</p> <p>Many of the open spaces in the borough are located in or at the edge of urban areas. This option allows good access to these open spaces, which contributes to residents physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>
14	-	<p>The Council has an identified local housing need of 5,100 over the Plan period 2023 – 2043.</p> <p>Option 1b contributes towards meeting local housing need (but not in full) in the urban areas offering a less positive effect. Option 1b in combination with the alternative options (2a and 2b) would offer a more positive effect in regard to meeting the full housing need.</p> <p>Minor negative impacts are expected with this option in relation to this objective.</p>
15	++	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>
16	-	<p>This option presents the loss of employment land and consequential loss of jobs which therefore inhibits opportunities for improving skills and training.</p> <p>This option in combination would require any suitable development to contribute towards any extra requirement of provision of education and / or training.</p> <p>Minor negative effects are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
17	--	<p>The EDNA identifies an opportunity to deliver digital / cultural / creative industries within mixed-use town centre environments, which may conflict with urban residential intensification but broadly speaking would ensure that residential and employment opportunities are in close proximity to each other.</p> <p>Option 1b proposes to regenerate designated employment areas which would result in a loss of</p>

Option 1b: Regenerate Designated Employment Areas within the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			employment opportunities, as well as training and skills enhancement. Significant negative effects are in relation to this objective.
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.	++	All the development scenarios are likely to have positive effects including the promotion of employment opportunities in the borough's town centres, particularly the option 1a, 1b and 1c scenarios where most development would be steered to creating significant positive effects in relation to this objective.
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste	?	New development as part of all scenarios will result in the use of raw materials and the generation of waste, both in construction and operation; however, this will not be influenced by the broad spatial distribution of development. Waste management practices are largely dependent on peoples' behaviour and the design of development. Therefore, it is uncertain as to the effects of development in relation to this objective.
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.	+	This option presents opportunities for development to enhance the availability of digital access across the borough for both residents and employment / commercial purposes. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement to online health services and other community services. This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.

Table 12: Significant effects of Option 1c

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	++	For this scenario (as with 1a and 1b) it can be assumed that effects would be significantly positive should development be limited to urban areas outside the Green Belt. Impacts are generally uncertain however, due to the presence of wildlife designations and protected species / habitats being site specific and present throughout the Borough. Urban greening features within new developments can contribute to enhancing biodiversity through site and building design, thus

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		making space for nature within the built environment.
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	<p>?</p> <p>The scale of development that would come forward under any of the six scenarios would result in an increased demand for water consumption; however, it is possible that new development would be designed and built to high standards of efficiency. The spatial distribution of development will not have significant impacts on water availability.</p> <p>There are, however, uncertain impacts at this stage of the Plan taking into consideration that Castle Point falls within a water stressed region with a low average rainfall.</p>
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	<p>--</p> <p>Whereas the release of Green Belt land would not be apparent, the impacts on townscape can be assumed as being potentially negative through higher densities and inappropriate development. At the scale required to meet the Standard Methodology housing need without the release of Green Belt, 'high rise' flatted development may be required. However, development within the urban area has the potential to enhance the townscape, particularly on disused brownfield sites.</p> <p>Coalescence - the effects of this alternative approach would be comparatively positive in regard to coalescence, with development focused within existing urban areas outside the Green Belt.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have significant negative effects in relation to this objective on the borough's townscape.</p>
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.	<p>++</p> <p>There are no minerals extraction sites or deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan in the borough.</p> <p>Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	<p>++</p> <p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>As with option 1a, option 1c is not expected to impact local landscapes e.g., the limited amount of historic woodland and green / blue spaces. Development in the urban area where there are existing services and facilities, and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.	-	<p>All new development has the potential to have an impact on the historic environment, both directly and indirectly. Specific effects, including the extent to which new development may enhance the historic environment, will be dependent on the design and layout of specific proposals.</p> <p>Castle Point has two Conservation Areas (South Benfleet and Florence Gardens). Although locally listed assets have been identified, there is generally only a small number of Listed Buildings, and as such the effects of intensification are likely to be minimal. Uncertain impacts are highlighted in the absence of site specifics for urban intensification.</p> <p>The effects of option 1c presents an identified higher risk of impacts due to increasing density in the urban areas. Any potential impacts from development have the opportunity to be mitigated through good design and safeguard from cultural loss.</p> <p>Overall, this option is likely to have minor negative impacts in relation to this objective.</p>
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.	+	<p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards climate change, in addition to poor air quality. Embodied carbon, i.e., CO2 emissions from production of materials and their transportation in manufacturing also contributes to climate change. Carbon use is however, reducing due to sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p>

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>Mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. Option 1c potentially discourages use of the private vehicle by proposing development that reduces car parking requirements. However, generally urban areas have good access to public transport and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling. The range of services and facilities also helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities</p> <p>Option 1c presents a higher density of development in the urban area.</p> <p>Overall, there are minor positive effects in relation to this objective.</p>
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	<p>--</p> <p><u>Flooding</u> - Castle Point is located on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary and as such is generally at high risk of flooding due in particular to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall. There is, however, substantial tidal flooding defences, particularly to Canvey Island. There is a risk of flooding in the urban areas generally from surface water due to more intense rainfall.</p> <p>Canvey, Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet are in the higher flood risk zone 3.</p> <p><u>Surface water flood risk</u> - impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p><u>Fluvial and tidal flood risk</u> - Impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>As with option 1a and 1b, and options 2a, 2b and 3, most development is directed to the urban area. Urbanisation reduces the ability of land to absorb water and so the risk of flooding may increase in more urban areas. Development in the urban areas could result in an increased flood risk – particularly if development places pressure on existing areas of green space that could otherwise help absorb flood water.</p> <p>Mitigations, e.g., SUDs can be introduced to the design of new development to safeguard</p>

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>residents, buildings and infrastructure from flooding, reducing risks of flooding. However, national policy guidance provides for development to be steered to areas with the lowest flood risk in the first instance.</p> <p><u>Buildings and public spaces</u> – this objective also consider whether buildings and public spaces will respond to the effects of a changing climate (i.e., ventilation, shading and landscaping). Such design considerations are beyond the scope of this assessment and will be considered by the SA later in the plan-making process.</p> <p>Overall, option 1b is expected to have a significant negative effect in relation to this objective due to a higher scale of development.</p>
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.	<p><u>Air quality and congestion</u> – as identified in the alternative options similar impacts can be expected to arise from option 3. Air quality effects can be expected to be negative in relation to all options as a result of the level of growth within the Plan area, the small size of Castle Point and the presence of many strategic roads in the Borough.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO₂ emissions, which contributes towards poor air quality. However, sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology will mitigate potential poor air quality arising from new development.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon which will also contribute to mitigating poor air quality. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>Further mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move</p>

Option 1c: <i>Increase density in the urban area</i>		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally urban areas have good access to public transport and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling. The range of services and facilities also helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities.</p> <p>This option presents a higher density of development in the urban areas which are considered to be sustainable locations, and as such new development could potentially reduce the level of car parking facilities, discouraging private car ownership.</p> <p>Noise - the small size of Castle Point and the prevalence of strategic roads ensure that noise related impacts can be expected to be experienced from any development sites, pending specific circumstances. Benfleet and Canvey Island in particular experience between 55-75db. Although no specific impacts are identified for this alternative, mitigation can be ensured for all options on a case by case basis and in line with the Plan's policy content.</p> <p>Overall, minor negative impacts are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.	<p>Option 1c, as with option 1a and 1b steers most development to the urban area where there is likely to be good access to public transport, and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling.</p> <p>++</p> <p>The range of services and facilities helps minimise reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities. As such, the potential minor negative effects are mixed with significant positive effects.</p> <p>This scenario is therefore expected to have significant positive effects.</p>
11	To ensure accessibility to services.	<p><u>Community services and facilities</u> - due to continued pressure from many infrastructure providers to centralise services and facilities into fewer larger hubs, access to community facilities, services and healthcare is more viable in urban areas. As such, focusing most new development in the urban areas, i.e., the towns and local service centres would likely achieve good levels of access for new residents to existing services and facilities. Any improvements delivered as</p> <p>++</p>

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>part of new development or as a result of an increase in the local population would also increase accessibility and mitigate overloading of services.</p> <p>With this option there is potential for services to be located at ground floor level improving accessibility and contributing to active frontages in the built environment.</p> <p>Growing town centres can improve accessibility to services which can be expected to be better realised through this alternative in consideration of the Borough as an isolated entity.</p> <p>In comparison to the alternatives, there can still be expected to be multiple trips outside the Plan area for services in Southend and Basildon, however small day-to-day trips to local services will be maximised through an intensification of growth in urban areas.</p> <p>Overall, with regard to access to community services and facilities this scenario is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to this objective, and potentially ensures more equal access to facilities and infrastructure for all.</p> <p><u>Highways access</u> - the impacts of options 2a and 2b can reasonably be expected to apply should any additional land within the Green Belt be released for housing development. Although access arrangements may already be in place for any future allocated sites in urban areas (and brownfield sites) it can be expected that car movements and the suitability of arrangements will need some retrofitting should intensification at the scale required be forthcoming. Impacts are deemed uncertain at this stage as impacts can only be realised on a site by site and proposal specific basis.</p>
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	++	<p>Contributes towards meeting full local housing need in the urban areas where there are existing services, potentially avoiding the need to travel and associated costs.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts are therefore expected in relation to this objective.</p>
13	To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development of life time homes due to an increase in the urban density, enabling occupants to remain in their homes as they age or become disabled. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement through new development to health</p>

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>services and other community facilities which are generally located in urban areas.</p> <p>Many of the open spaces in the borough are located in or at the edge of urban areas. This option allows good access to these open spaces, which contributes to residents physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>
14	To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community.	<p>-</p> <p>The Council has an identified local housing need of 5,100 over the Plan period 2023 – 2043.</p> <p>Option 1c contributes towards meeting full local housing need in the urban areas offering a less positive effect. Option 1c in combination with the alternative options (2a and 2b) would offer a more positive effect in regard to meeting the full housing need.</p> <p>Minor negative impacts are expected with this option in relation to this objective.</p>
15	To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.	<p>++</p> <p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p>
16	To improve the education and skills of the population.	<p>+</p> <p>This option in combination would require any suitable development to contribute towards any extra requirement of provision of education and / or training.</p> <p>This option has the potential for opportunities on mixed use sites for facilities to improve skills and training.</p> <p>Minor positive effects are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
17	To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth.	<p>+</p> <p>The EDNA identifies an opportunity to deliver digital / cultural / creative industries within mixed-use town centre environments, which may conflict with urban residential intensification but broadly speaking would ensure that residential and employment opportunities are in close proximity to each other.</p> <p>Development would be focused within existing centres and Greenfield land outside the Green Belt, which would be comparably closer to existing centres and employment areas.</p>

Option 1c: Increase density in the urban area			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			Overall, option 1b in combination is considered to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective.
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.	++	All the development scenarios are likely to have positive effects including the promotion of employment opportunities in the borough's town centres, particularly the option 1a, 1b and 1c scenarios where most development would be steered to creating significant positive effects in relation to this objective.
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste	?	New development as part of all scenarios will result in the use of raw materials and the generation of waste, both in construction and operation; however, this will not be influenced by the broad spatial distribution of development. Waste management practices are largely dependent on peoples' behaviour and the design of development. Therefore, it is uncertain as to the effects of development in relation to this objective.
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.	+	This option presents opportunities for development to enhance the availability of digital access across the borough for both residents and employment / commercial purposes. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement to online health services and other community services. This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.

Table 12: Significant effects of Option 2a

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	?	Impacts are uncertain for potential development in the Green Belt (as with option 2b and option 3). There is, however, a potential risk that where development sites in the Green Belt are positively measured for biodiversity net gain requirements, that the net gain may be located outside of the borough due to development viability issues.
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	?	The scale of development that would come forward under any of the six scenarios would result in an increased demand for water consumption; however, it is possible that new development would be designed and built to high standards of efficiency. The spatial distribution of

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>development will not have significant impacts on water availability.</p> <p>There are, however, uncertain impacts at this stage of the Plan taking into consideration that Castle Point falls within a water stressed region with a low average rainfall.</p>
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	<p>The effects of releasing Green Belt land for housing can be seen as having a minor negative impact on the borough's landscape. Aside from Green Belt implications, new development in the Green Belt has potential for highly visible or otherwise negative implications in their own right. The impacts of development are irreversible and permanent.</p> <p>Coalescence - there is potential for release of Green Belt to have a degree of harm with regard to preventing towns from merging and creating urban sprawl. Green Belt buffers between towns may be negatively impacted on by new development. Green Belt buffers contribute to protecting characters of the towns.</p>
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.	<p>There are no minerals extraction sites or deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan in the borough.</p> <p>Castle Point contains areas of Grade 3 Agricultural Land which means good to moderate quality agricultural land with moderate limitations. Agricultural land is very rarely associated with farming in the borough. Limited cropping occurs in the east of the borough, most goes unused or is used for grazing. Much farmland is being promoted for housing developments.</p> <p>Option 2a in combination with or either options 1a, 1b and 1c distributes most development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites which is considered to have significant positive effects for this objective.</p> <p>Although the effects are considered to be mixed, overall, there are minor negative impacts with regard to conservation of soil for agricultural purposes.</p>
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Unlike options 1a, 1b and 1c, there could be potential impacts to local landscapes e.g., the limited amount of historic woodland and green / blue spaces. Impacts would be dependent on site</p>

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>specifics. Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have more positive effects for this objective.</p> <p>This option in combination with development in the urban areas enables spatial distribution, as well as directing development to the borough's most sustainable locations.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor negative effects with regard to impacts on the Green Belt and a requirement for proportionate infrastructure.</p>
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.	<p>?</p> <p>Roman, Medieval and Iron Age finds have been identified in the Borough. At this stage of the plan making process impacts from any new development in the Green Belt are broadly uncertain and dependent on specific detailed proposals on any Green Belt allocations at the planning application stage.</p> <p>However, distributing development more evenly between urban areas and in the Green Belt may reduce the potential for effects on the built historic environment.</p>
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.	<p>?</p> <p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards climate change, in addition to poor air quality. Embodied carbon, i.e., CO2 emissions from production of materials and their transportation in manufacturing also contributes to climate change. Carbon use is however, reducing due to sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>Option 2a proposes proportionate infrastructure and services to balance the increase in new</p>

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>homes. Mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle.</p> <p>Overall, effects are considered to be uncertain for this option in relation to this objective.</p>
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	<p>Flooding - Castle Point is located on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary and as such is generally at high risk of flooding due in particular to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall. There is, however, substantial tidal flooding defences, particularly to Canvey Island. There is a risk of flooding in the urban areas generally from surface water due to more intense rainfall.</p> <p>Canvey, Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet are in the higher flood risk zone 3.</p> <p>Surface water flood risk - impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>Effects in this regard are more indicative of the state of environment in Castle Point where flood risk is prevalent. There are potentially fluvial flood risk issues resulting from any future Canvey Island Green Belt allocations associated with land within Flood Risk Zone 3 and Critical Drainage Area 6. These areas are however substantially defended from flooding, and the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan commits to the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences for these settlements.</p> <p>Fluvial and tidal flood risk - Impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>Effects in this regard are more indicative of the state of environment in Castle Point where flood risk is prevalent. There are potentially fluvial flood risk issues resulting from any future Canvey Island Green Belt allocations associated with land within Flood Risk Zone 3 and Critical Drainage Area 6. These areas are however substantially defended from flooding, and the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan commits to the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences for these settlements.</p> <p>As with option 1a, 1b and 1c, and options 2b and 3, most development is directed to the urban</p>

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>area. Urbanisation reduces the ability of land to absorb water and so the risk of flooding may increase in more urban areas. Development in the urban areas could result in an increased flood risk – particularly if development places pressure on existing areas of green space that could otherwise help absorb flood water.</p> <p>Mitigations can be introduced to the design of new development to safeguard residents, buildings and infrastructure from flooding. However, national policy guidance provides for development to be steered to areas with the lowest flood risk in the first instance.</p> <p><u>Buildings and public spaces</u> – this objective also considers whether buildings and public spaces will respond to the effects of a changing climate (i.e., ventilation, shading and landscaping). Such design considerations are beyond the scope of this assessment and will be considered by the SA later in the plan-making process.</p> <p>Overall, option 2a in comparison to the alternative options 1a, 1b, 1c, 2b and is expected to have a lower negative effect in relation to this objective.</p>
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.	<p><u>Air quality and congestion</u> – as identified in the alternative options similar impacts can be expected to arise from option 3. Air quality effects can be expected to be negative in relation to all options as a result of the level of growth within the Plan area, the small size of Castle Point and the presence of many strategic roads in the Borough.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the Green Belt areas are more likely to have a less adverse effects on air pollution than the alternative urban scenarios.</p> <p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards poor air quality. However, sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology will mitigate potential poor air quality arising from new development. Green Belt options generally will potentially encourage car dependency for access to services and commuting.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes</p>

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon which will also contribute to mitigating poor air quality. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>Further mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally it can be expected that non-urban areas have less access to public transport to reach services and facilities generally located in the urban area.</p> <p><u>Noise</u> - the small size of Castle Point and the prevalence of strategic roads (A130, A127 and A13) ensure that noise related impacts can be expected to be experienced from any development sites, pending specific circumstances. Benfleet and Canvey Island in particular experience between 55-75db. Although no specific impacts are identified for this alternative, mitigation can be ensured for all options on a case by case basis and in line with the Plan's policy content.</p> <p>Overall, significant negative impacts are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.	<p>Option 2a in combination with option 1 steers most development to the urban area where there is likely to be good access to public transport, and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling.</p> <p>For this option, 2a, proportionate infrastructure including active travel and public transport provision would be required for access and connectivity to facilities and services located in the urban area.</p> <p>Provision of a range of services and facilities would contribute to minimising reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities. However, there are uncertainties to the effects of this option in relation to this objective due to potential reliance on car use.</p>
11	To ensure accessibility to services.	<p>Any new development in the Green Belt may potentially inhibit direct accessibility (i.e., within walking distances) to a full range of services (particularly healthcare services and primary school education), without utilising public or private transport. Even where future site</p>

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>allocations in the Green Belt may be in proximity to the strategic road network (bringing residents closer to services) as well as public transport services this would however be subject to access arrangements. Such proximity could also inevitably encourage reliance on private car trips.</p> <p>However, dispersal / spatial distribution of new development may mean that services and facilities are less likely to become overloaded, particularly in the urban areas due to potential new services and facilities.</p> <p><u>Highways access</u> - New development in the Green Belt could potentially impact on existing road junctions in proximity to any future allocated Green Belt sites, exceeding capacity, and would require new access and egress onto strategic roads. Future allocation would require evidence as to transport modelling and feasibility / viability work. The SA would need to be updated once completed.</p> <p>Green Belt sites would require proportionate infrastructure and services to balance the increase in new homes.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor negative effects.</p>
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	<p>+</p> <p>Contributes towards meeting full local housing need in combination with development in the urban areas where there are existing services, potentially avoiding the need to travel and associated costs.</p> <p>Minor positive impacts are therefore expected in relation to this objective.</p>
13	To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.	<p>+</p> <p>This option presents opportunities for development of life time homes due to an increase in the urban density in combination with option 1, as well as new development in the Green Belt, enabling occupants to remain in their homes as they age or become disabled. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement through new development from a higher CIL contribution to health services and other community facilities which are generally located in urban areas.</p> <p>Although some development would be less well located away from the urban area, a better housing product can enable improved health benefits.</p>

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		Retention of open spaces contributes to residents physical and mental wellbeing, this option also has opportunity to increase open space provision. This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.
14	To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community.	+
		The Council has an identified local housing need of 5,100 over the Plan period 2023 – 2043. Overall, Option 2a contributes towards meeting full local housing need in combination with Option 1. Minor positive impacts are expected with this option in relation to this objective.
15	To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.	?
		The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. This option in combination with development in the urban areas enables spatial distribution, as well as directing development to the borough's most sustainable locations. The effects of this option are considered uncertain in relation to this objective.
16	To improve the education and skills of the population.	+
		This option in combination would require any suitable development to contribute towards any extra requirement of provision of education and / or training. This option has the potential for opportunities on mixed use sites for facilities to improve skills and training. Minor positive effects are expected in relation to this objective.
17	To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth.	+
		The EDNA identifies an opportunity to deliver digital / cultural / creative industries within mixed-use town centre environments, which may conflict with urban residential intensification but broadly speaking would ensure that residential and employment opportunities are in close proximity to each other. Development would be focused within existing centres and Greenfield land outside the Green Belt, which would be comparably closer to existing centres and employment areas. Overall, option 2a in combination is considered to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective.

Option 2a: Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.	<p>+</p> <p>All the development scenarios are likely to have positive effects including the promotion of employment opportunities in the borough's town centres, particularly the option 1a, 1b and 1c scenarios where most development would be steered to creating significant positive effects in relation to this objective.</p> <p>However, the option 2 scenarios (as with option 3) are expected to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective as while they do support vitality and viability of the town centres, they also distribute development more widely across the borough. Therefore, residents in these areas may not necessarily be within proximity or able to easily access the town centres.</p>
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste	<p>?</p> <p>New development as part of all scenarios will result in the use of raw materials and the generation of waste, both in construction and operation; however, this will not be influenced by the broad spatial distribution of development. Waste management practices are largely dependent on peoples' behaviour and the design of development. Therefore, it is uncertain as to the effects of development in relation to this objective.</p>
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.	<p>+</p> <p>This option presents opportunities for development to enhance the availability of digital access across the borough for both residents and employment / commercial purposes. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement to online health services and other community services.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>

Table 14: Significant effects of Option 2b

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	<p>?</p> <p>Impacts are uncertain for potential development in the Green Belt (as with option 2a and option 3).</p> <p>There is, however, a potential risk that where development sites in the Green Belt are positively measured for biodiversity net gain requirements, that the net gain may be located outside of the borough due to development viability issues.</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	?	<p>The scale of development that would come forward under any of the six scenarios would result in an increased demand for water consumption; however, it is possible that new development would be designed and built to high standards of efficiency. The spatial distribution of development will not have significant impacts on water availability.</p> <p>There are, however, uncertain impacts at this stage of the Plan taking into consideration that Castle Point falls within a water stressed region with a low average rainfall.</p>
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	-	<p>The effects of releasing Green Belt land for housing can be seen as having a minor negative impact on the borough's landscape. Aside from Green Belt implications, new development in the Green Belt has potential for highly visible or otherwise negative implications in their own right. The impacts of development are irreversible and permanent.</p> <p><u>Coalescence</u> - there is potential for release of Green Belt to have a degree of harm with regard to preventing towns from merging and creating urban sprawl. Green Belt buffers between towns may be negatively impacted on by new development. Green Belt buffers contribute to protecting characters of the towns.</p>
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.	-	<p>There are no minerals extraction sites or deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan in the borough.</p> <p>Castle Point contains areas of Grade 3 Agricultural Land which means good to moderate quality agricultural land with moderate limitations. Agricultural land is very rarely associated with farming in the borough. Limited cropping occurs in the east of the borough, most goes unused or is used for grazing. Much farmland is being promoted for housing developments.</p> <p>Option 2b, in combination with Option 1a distributes most development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites which is considered to have some positive effects for this objective.</p> <p>Although the effects are considered to be mixed, overall, there are minor negative impacts (as with option 2a) with regard to conservation of soil for agricultural purposes.</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Unlike options 1a, 1b and 1c, there could be potential impacts to local landscapes e.g., the limited amount of historic woodland and green / blue spaces. Impacts would be dependent on site specifics. Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have more positive effects for this objective.</p> <p>This option in combination with development in the urban areas enables spatial distribution, as well as directing development to the borough's most sustainable locations.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor negative effects with regard to impacts on the Green Belt and a requirement for proportionate infrastructure.</p>
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.	<p>Roman, Medieval and Iron Age finds have been identified in the Borough. At this stage of the plan making process impacts from any new development in the Green Belt are broadly uncertain and dependent on specific detailed proposals on any Green Belt allocations at the planning application stage.</p> <p>However, distributing development more evenly between urban areas and in the Green Belt may reduce the potential for effects on the built historic environment.</p>
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.	<p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards climate change, in addition to poor air quality. Embodied carbon, i.e., CO2 emissions from production of materials and their transportation in manufacturing also contributes to climate change. Carbon use is however, reducing due to sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>Option 2b proposes a substantial new development in NW of Thundersley and would also require new infrastructure. Mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle.</p> <p>Overall, effects are considered to be uncertain for this option in relation to this objective.</p>
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	<p>Flooding - Castle Point is located on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary and as such is generally at high risk of flooding due in particular to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall. There is, however, substantial tidal flooding defences, particularly to Canvey Island. There is a risk of flooding in the urban areas generally from surface water due to more intense rainfall.</p> <p>Canvey, Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet are in the higher flood risk zone 3.</p> <p>Surface water flood risk - impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>Effects in this regard are more indicative of the state of environment in Castle Point where flood risk is prevalent. There are potentially fluvial flood risk issues resulting from any future Canvey Island Green Belt allocations associated with land within Flood Risk Zone 3 and Critical Drainage Area 6. These areas are however substantially defended from flooding, and the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan commits to the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences for these settlements.</p> <p>Fluvial and tidal flood risk - Impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>Effects in this regard are more indicative of the state of environment in Castle Point where flood</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>risk is prevalent. There are potentially fluvial flood risk issues resulting from any future Canvey Island Green Belt allocations associated with land within Flood Risk Zone 3 and Critical Drainage Area 6. These areas are however substantially defended from flooding, and the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan commits to the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences for these settlements.</p> <p>As with option 1a, 1b and 1c, and options 2a and 3, most development is directed to the urban area. Urbanisation reduces the ability of land to absorb water and so the risk of flooding may increase in more urban areas. Development in the urban areas could result in an increased flood risk – particularly if development places pressure on existing areas of green space that could otherwise help absorb flood water.</p> <p>Mitigations can be introduced to the design of new development to safeguard residents, buildings and infrastructure from flooding. However, national policy guidance provides for development to be steered to areas with the lowest flood risk in the first instance.</p> <p><u>Buildings and public spaces</u> – this objective also considers whether buildings and public spaces will respond to the effects of a changing climate (i.e., ventilation, shading and landscaping). Such design considerations are beyond the scope of this assessment and will be considered by the SA later in the plan-making process.</p> <p>Overall, option 2b in comparison to the alternative options 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a and is expected to have a lower negative effect in relation to this objective.</p>
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.	<p><u>Air quality and congestion</u> – as identified in the alternative options similar impacts can be expected to arise from option 3. Air quality effects can be expected to be negative in relation to all options as a result of the level of growth within the Plan area, the small size of Castle Point and the presence of many strategic roads in the Borough.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the Green Belt areas are more likely to have a less adverse</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley		
Sustainability Objective	Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
		<p>effects on air pollution than the alternative urban scenarios.</p> <p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards poor air quality. However, sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology will mitigate potential poor air quality arising from new development. Green Belt options generally will potentially encourage car dependency for access to services and commuting.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon which will also contribute to mitigating poor air quality. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>Further mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally it can be expected that non-urban areas have less access to public transport to reach services and facilities generally located in the urban area.</p> <p><u>Noise</u> - the small size of Castle Point and the prevalence of strategic roads (A130, A127 and A13) ensure that noise related impacts can be expected to be experienced from any development sites, pending specific circumstances. Benfleet and Canvey Island in particular experience between 55-75db. Although no specific impacts are identified for this alternative, mitigation can be ensured for all options on a case by case basis and in line with the Plan's policy content.</p> <p>Overall, significant negative impacts are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.	<p>Option 2b in combination with option 1 steers most development to the urban area where there is likely to be good access to public transport, and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling.</p> <p>For this option, 2b, proportionate infrastructure including active travel and public transport provision would be required for access and</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>connectivity to facilities and services located in the urban area.</p> <p>Provision of a range of services and facilities would contribute to minimising reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities. However, there are uncertainties to the effects of this option in relation to this objective due to potential reliance on car use.</p>
11	To ensure accessibility to services.	-	<p>Any new development in the Green Belt may potentially inhibit direct accessibility (i.e., within walking distances) to a full range of services (particularly healthcare services and primary school education), without utilising public or private transport. Even where future site allocations in the Green Belt may be in proximity to the strategic road network (bringing residents closer to services) as well as public transport services this would however be subject to access arrangements. Such proximity could also inevitably encourage reliance on private car trips.</p> <p>However, dispersal / spatial distribution of new development may mean that services and facilities are less likely to become overloaded, particularly in the urban areas due to potential new services and facilities.</p> <p>Highways access - New development in the Green Belt could potentially impact on existing road junctions in proximity to any future allocated Green Belt sites, exceeding capacity, and would require new access and egress onto strategic roads. Future allocation would require evidence as to transport modelling and feasibility / viability work. The SA would need to be updated once completed.</p> <p>Green Belt sites would require proportionate infrastructure and services to balance the increase in new homes.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor negative effects.</p>
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	+	<p>Contributes towards meeting full local housing need in combination with development in the urban areas where there are existing services, potentially avoiding the need to travel and associated costs.</p> <p>Minor positive impacts are therefore expected in relation to this objective.</p>
13	To improve the population's health	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development of life time homes due to an</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
	and reduce health inequalities.	<p>increase in the urban density in combination with option 1, as well as new development in the Green Belt, enabling occupants to remain in their homes as they age or become disabled. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement through new development from a higher CIL contribution to health services and other community facilities which are generally located in urban areas.</p> <p>Although some development would be less well located away from the urban area, a better housing product can enable improved health benefits.</p> <p>Retention of open spaces contributes to residents physical and mental wellbeing, this option also has opportunity to increase open space provision.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>
14	To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community.	<p>The Council has an identified local housing need of 5,100 over the Plan period 2023 – 2043.</p> <p>Option 2b contributes towards meeting full local housing need through the use of Green Belt land.</p> <p>Minor positive impacts are expected with this option in relation to this objective.</p>
15	To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>This option in combination with development in the urban areas enables spatial distribution, as well as directing development to the borough's most sustainable locations.</p> <p>The effects of this option are considered uncertain in relation to this objective.</p>
16	To improve the education and skills of the population.	<p>This option in combination would require any suitable development to contribute towards any extra requirement of provision of education and / or training.</p> <p>This option has the potential for opportunities on mixed use sites for facilities to improve skills and training.</p> <p>Minor positive effects are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
17	To ensure sustainable	<p>The EDNA identifies an opportunity to deliver digital / cultural / creative industries within mixed-</p>

Option 2b: Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
	employment provision and economic growth.		<p>use town centre environments, which may conflict with urban residential intensification but broadly speaking would ensure that residential and employment opportunities are in close proximity to each other.</p> <p>Development would be focused within existing centres and Greenfield land outside the Green Belt, which would be comparably closer to existing centres and employment areas.</p> <p>Option 2b presents as being the only real opportunity to increase the economic profile of the borough.</p> <p>Overall, option 2b in combination is considered to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective.</p>
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.	+	<p>All the development scenarios are likely to have positive effects including the promotion of employment opportunities in the borough's town centres, particularly the option 1a, 1b and 1c scenarios where most development would be steered to creating significant positive effects in relation to this objective.</p> <p>However, the option 2 scenarios (as with option 3) are expected to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective as while they do support vitality and viability of the town centres, they also distribute development more widely across the borough. Therefore, residents in these areas may not necessarily be within proximity or able to easily access the town centres.</p>
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste	?	<p>New development as part of all scenarios will result in the use of raw materials and the generation of waste, both in construction and operation; however, this will not be influenced by the broad spatial distribution of development. Waste management practices are largely dependent on peoples' behaviour and the design of development. Therefore, it is uncertain as to the effects of development in relation to this objective.</p>
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development to enhance the availability of digital access across the borough for both residents and employment / commercial purposes. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement to online health services and other community services.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>

Table 15: Significant effects of Option 3

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
1	To conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats, species and ecosystems) and geodiversity within the Borough	?	<p>Impacts are uncertain for potential development in the Green Belt (as with option 2a and option 2b).</p> <p>There is, however, a potential risk that where development sites in the Green Belt are positively measured for biodiversity net gain requirements, that the net gain may be located outside of the borough due to development viability issues.</p>
2	To conserve and enhance water quality and resources.	?	<p>The scale of development that would come forward under any of the six scenarios would result in an increased demand for water consumption; however, it is possible that new development would be designed and built to high standards of efficiency. The spatial distribution of development will not have significant impacts on water availability.</p> <p>There are, however, uncertain impacts at this stage of the Plan taking into consideration that Castle Point falls within a water stressed region with a low average rainfall.</p>
3	To conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape character and townscapes	--	<p>The impacts of the release of more Green Belt land can be seen as a negative with a higher degree of significance on the borough's landscape than options 2a and 2b. It is likely that either any allocated sites would be expanded, or a further site(s) would need to be released. This would ultimately lead to the allocation of piecemeal development within the Green Belt at the combined quantum of the Plan's unmet needs, with associated effects of an inability to check unrestricted sprawl, or the release of land which has not been deemed suitable, achievable or available within any assessment.</p> <p>Coalescence - Option 3 would potentially meet the Standard Methodology housing need but could also have a degree of harm with regard to preventing towns from merging and creating urban sprawl. Green Belt buffers between towns may be negatively impacted by new development. Green Belt buffers contribute to protecting characters of the towns.</p>
4	To conserve and enhance soil and mineral resources.	--	<p>There are no minerals extraction sites or deposits safeguarded by the Essex Minerals Plan in the borough.</p> <p>Castle Point contains areas of Grade 3 Agricultural Land which means good to moderate quality agricultural land with moderate limitations. Agricultural land is very rarely associated with</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p>farming in the borough. Limited cropping occurs in the east of the borough, most goes unused or is used for grazing. Much farmland is being promoted for housing developments.</p> <p>Option 2b in combination with or either options 1a, 1b and 1c distributes most development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites which is considered to have some positive effects for this objective.</p> <p>Although the effects are considered to be mixed, overall, there are significant negative impacts with regard to conservation of soil for agricultural purposes for this objective due to the scale of proposed development in the Green Belt.</p>
5	To contribute to the sustainable use of land.	--	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>Unlike options 1a, 1b and 1c, there could be significant potential impacts to local landscapes e.g., the limited amount of historic woodland and green / blue spaces. Impacts would be dependent on site specifics. Development in the urban area and in particular on brownfield sites is considered to have more positive effects for this objective.</p> <p>This option in combination with development in the urban areas enables spatial distribution, as well as directing development to the borough's most sustainable locations.</p> <p>However, overall, this scenario is expected to have significant negative effects with regard to impacts on the Green Belt and a requirement for proportionate infrastructure to balance the higher scale of development of homes.</p>
6	To maintain and enhance the borough's cultural heritage assets and areas, assets of historical and archaeological importance and their settings.	?	<p>There are likely to be similar degrees of impact resulting from this alternative scenario due to the extent of the archaeological consultation zone should there be any allocated Green Belt sites. Due to the absence of any alternative Green Belt options of the scale required, it is uncertain as to what the effects on the historic environment would be through a more piecemeal approach to releasing Green Belt land due to the site specific implications of below ground assets.</p> <p>However, distributing development more evenly between urban areas and in the Green Belt may</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			reduce the potential for effects on the built historic environment.
7	To reduce contributions to climatic change.		<p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards climate change, in addition to poor air quality. Embodied carbon, i.e., CO2 emissions from production of materials and their transportation in manufacturing also contributes to climate change. Carbon use is however, reducing due to sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the urban areas are more likely to have adverse effects on air pollution than the other alternative Green Belt scenarios.</p> <p>Option 3 proposes a greater scale of development in the Green Belt with proportionate infrastructure and services to balance the increase in new homes. An increase in population associated with this scale of development may increase out commuting and associated congestion, and CO2 emissions on local roads contributing to climate change Mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move away from the use of the private vehicle.</p> <p>Overall, negative effects are considered to be minor for this option in relation to this objective.</p>
8	To reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to extreme weather events and flooding which may be caused by climate change.	--	<p>Flooding - Castle Point is located on the northern coast of the Thames Estuary and as such is generally at high risk of flooding due in particular to rising sea levels and more intense rainfall. There is, however, substantial tidal flooding defences, particularly to Canvey Island. There is a risk of flooding in the urban areas generally from surface water due to more intense rainfall.</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>Canvey, Hadleigh Marshes and South Benfleet are in the higher flood risk zone 3.</p> <p><u>Surface water flood risk</u> - impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>Effects in this regard are more indicative of the state of environment in Castle Point where flood risk is prevalent. There are potentially fluvial flood risk issues resulting from any future Canvey Island Green Belt allocations associated with land within Flood Risk Zone 3 and Critical Drainage Area 6. These areas are however substantially defended from flooding, and the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan commits to the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences for these settlements.</p> <p><u>Fluvial and tidal flood risk</u> - Impacts regarding flood risk are entirely site specific, leading to uncertain effects in the absence of specific proposals regarding increased intensification.</p> <p>Effects in this regard are more indicative of the state of environment in Castle Point where flood risk is prevalent. There are potentially fluvial flood risk issues resulting from any future Canvey Island Green Belt allocations associated with land within Flood Risk Zone 3 and Critical Drainage Area 6. These areas are however substantially defended from flooding, and the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan commits to the maintenance and improvement of the sea defences for these settlements.</p> <p>As with option 1a, 1b and 1c, and options 2a and 2b, most development is directed to the urban area. Urbanisation reduces the ability of land to absorb water and so the risk of flooding may increase in more urban areas. Development in the urban areas could result in an increased flood risk – particularly if development places pressure on existing areas of green space that could otherwise help absorb flood water.</p> <p>Mitigations can be introduced to the design of new development to safeguard residents, buildings and infrastructure from flooding. However, national policy guidance provides for development to be steered to areas with the lowest flood risk in the first instance.</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
			<p><u>Buildings and public spaces</u> – this objective also considers whether buildings and public spaces will respond to the effects of a changing climate (i.e., ventilation, shading and landscaping). Such design considerations are beyond the scope of this assessment and will be considered by the SA later in the plan-making process.</p> <p>Overall, option 3 in comparison to the alternative options 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a and 2b is expected to have a significant due to the higher scale of proposed development negative effect in relation to this objective.</p>
9	To maintain and enhance air quality in the Borough and reduce noise pollution.	--	<p><u>Air quality and congestion</u> – as identified in the alternative options similar impacts can be expected to arise from option 3. Air quality effects can be expected to be negative in relation to all options as a result of the level of growth within the Plan area, the small size of Castle Point and the presence of many strategic roads in the Borough.</p> <p>All the growth options (in combination) will distribute growth to the urban areas. Therefore, all six scenarios could impact on air quality, but it is uncertain to what degree the impact may have. There are no existing Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. Development in the Green Belt areas are more likely to have a less adverse effects on air pollution than the alternative urban scenarios.</p> <p>There are close linkages between vehicle use and associated CO2 emissions, which contributes towards poor air quality. However, sustainable transport patterns and more efficient technology will mitigate potential poor air quality arising from new development. Green Belt options generally will potentially encourage car dependency for access to services and commuting.</p> <p>The new Future Homes Standard (Building Regulations) should ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon which will also contribute to mitigating poor air quality. The Council could consider introducing policies into the new Plan to support this further but would need to consider impacts on development viability.</p> <p>Further mitigation to reduce impacts could include new or enhanced active travel infrastructure and sustainable public transport to encourage a move</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>away from the use of the private vehicle. However, generally it can be expected that non-urban areas have less access to public transport to reach services and facilities generally located in the urban area.</p> <p><u>Noise</u> - the small size of Castle Point and the prevalence of strategic roads (A130, A127 and A13) ensure that noise related impacts can be expected to be experienced from any development sites, pending specific circumstances. Benfleet and Canvey Island in particular experience between 55-75db. Although no specific impacts are identified for this alternative, mitigation can be ensured for all options on a case by case basis and in line with the Plan's policy content.</p> <p>Overall, significant negative impacts are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
10	To promote and encourage the use of sustainable methods of travel.	<p>Option 3 in combination with option 1 steers most development to the urban area where there is likely to be good access to public transport, and as various services and facilities are within proximity of one another, can be easily accessed via walking and cycling.</p> <p>For this option 3, proportionate infrastructure including active travel and public transport provision would be required for access and connectivity to facilities and services located in the urban area.</p> <p>Provision of a range of services and facilities would contribute to minimising reliance on the private car to travel elsewhere to reach certain amenities. However, there are uncertainties to the effects of this option in relation to this objective due to potential reliance on car use.</p>
11	To ensure accessibility to services.	<p>Any new development in the Green Belt may potentially inhibit direct accessibility (i.e., within walking distances) to a full range of services (particularly healthcare services and primary school education), without utilising public or private transport. Even where future site allocations in the Green Belt may be in proximity to the strategic road network (bringing residents closer to services) as well as public transport services this would however be subject to access arrangements. Such proximity could also inevitably encourage reliance on private car trips.</p> <p>However, dispersal / spatial distribution of new development may mean that services and</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need		
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect
		<p>facilities are less likely to become overloaded, particularly in the urban areas due to potential new services and facilities.</p> <p><u>Highways access</u> - New development in the Green Belt could potentially impact on existing road junctions in proximity to any future allocated Green Belt sites, exceeding capacity, and would require new access and egress onto strategic roads. Future allocation would require evidence as to transport modelling and feasibility / viability work. The SA would need to be updated once completed.</p> <p>Green Belt sites would require proportionate infrastructure and services to balance the increase in new homes.</p> <p>Overall, this scenario is expected to have minor negative effects.</p>
12	To reduce poverty and social exclusion.	<p>++</p> <p>Contributes towards meeting full Standard Methodology housing need with potential increase in housing types and tenures, in combination with development in the urban areas where there are existing services, potentially avoiding the need to travel and associated costs.</p> <p>Significant positive impacts are therefore expected in relation to this objective.</p>
13	To improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities.	<p>+</p> <p>This option presents opportunities for development of life time homes due to an increase in the urban density in combination with option 1, as well as new development in the Green Belt, enabling occupants to remain in their homes as they age or become disabled. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement through new development from a higher CIL contribution to health services and other community facilities which are generally located in urban areas.</p> <p>Although some development would be less well located away from the urban area, a better housing product can enable improved health benefits.</p> <p>Retention of open spaces contributes to residents physical and mental wellbeing, this option also has opportunity to increase open space provision.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
14	To provide appropriate housing and accommodation to meet existing and future needs of the whole community.	++	<p>The Council has an identified local housing need of 5,100 over the Plan period 2023 – 2043.</p> <p>Option 3 contributes towards meeting the Standard Methodology housing need offering a more positive effect in combination with the alternative options (1a, 1b and 1c). This would enable more housing choice throughout the Plan period.</p> <p>significant positive impacts are expected with this option in relation to this objective.</p>
15	To promote the efficient use of resources and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.	?	<p>The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>This option in combination with development in the urban areas enables spatial distribution, as well as directing development to the borough's most sustainable locations.</p> <p>The effects of this option are considered uncertain in relation to this objective.</p>
16	To improve the education and skills of the population.	+	<p>This option in combination would require any suitable development to contribute towards any extra requirement of provision of education and / or training.</p> <p>This option has the potential for opportunities on mixed use sites for facilities to improve skills and training.</p> <p>Minor positive effects are expected in relation to this objective.</p>
17	To ensure sustainable employment provision and economic growth.	+	<p>The EDNA identifies an opportunity to deliver digital / cultural / creative industries within mixed-use town centre environments, which may conflict with urban residential intensification but broadly speaking would ensure that residential and employment opportunities are in close proximity to each other.</p> <p>Development would be focused within existing centres and Greenfield land outside the Green Belt, which would be comparably closer to existing centres and employment areas.</p> <p>Overall, option 3 in combination is considered to have minor positive effects in relation to this objective.</p>

Option 3: Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology housing need			
Sustainability Objective		Possible Impact / Effect	Commentary
18	To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town and retail centres.	++	<p>All the development scenarios are likely to have positive effects including the promotion of employment opportunities in the borough's town centres, particularly the option 1a, 1b and 1c scenarios where most development would be steered to creating significant positive effects in relation to this objective.</p> <p>However, the option 3 scenario is expected to have significant positive effects in relation to this objective. Although it distributes development more widely across the borough the scale of development enables an increase in population presenting positive effects for the town centres.</p>
19	To promote the sustainable management of waste	?	<p>New development as part of all scenarios will result in the use of raw materials and the generation of waste, both in construction and operation; however, this will not be influenced by the broad spatial distribution of development. Waste management practices are largely dependent on peoples' behaviour and the design of development. Therefore, it is uncertain as to the effects of development in relation to this objective.</p>
20	To ensure that the digital infrastructure available meets the needs of current and future generations.	+	<p>This option presents opportunities for development to enhance the availability of digital access across the borough for both residents and employment / commercial purposes. It also enables good accessibility and enhancement to online health services and other community services.</p> <p>This option can be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to this objective.</p>

The ultimate aim of the emerging Plan as a whole is to ensure sustainable development within the Borough in accordance with the NPPF. More is explored in Section 9 of this Report.

The effects of Option 3 – *Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology need*, has been assessed as having potentially significant negative environmental impacts, but which does offer some positive outcomes should real net gains in infrastructure and services be secured.

6.1.4 The Implications of Options 2a, 2b and 3, and the Alternatives on Housing Growth

Option 2a and **Option 2b** seek to ensure that local housing need is met through directing “*intense development*” to the urban areas, in particular existing brownfield sites with multi-story development in and around town centres. To this extent, **Option 2a** and **Option 2b** has a number of positive implications in line with the merits of spatial distribution and directing development to the Borough’s most sustainable settlements; however, acknowledgement must be had to the negative implications of the development of Green Belt land and the extent to which plan-period local housing need and employment need is met through future Green Belt allocations. The emerging Plan’s **Option 2a** and **Option 2b** allows for both Green Belt protection in the first instance, with a secondary focus of new development to be located on previously developed land outside and within the Green Belt.

The proposal of release of Green Belt land exists in this sense as a last resort. In consideration of these development approaches, broadly speaking the permutations of the alternative approaches **Options 1a**, **1b** and **1c** are comparably more favourable for environmental themes. Option **1a** however, has potentially **negative** implications of housing delivery within the Plan area whilst **1b** has potentially **negative** implications for the economy and economic growth and **1c** has potentially **negative** implications for the character of the local area including the character of the historic environment. The potential **negative** impacts highlighted for **Option 2a** and **Option 2b** are exacerbated by **Option 3**. Potential significant **negative** impacts are realised therefore for landscape under **Option 2a**, **Option 2b** and **Option 3**, and in contrast potential significant **negative** impacts are highlighted at this stage notionally for housing under **Option** alternative **1b**.

At this stage of the plan-making process there are uncertainties as to development impacts for the purposes of this SA due to the uncertainty of where growth will be located, viability of future strategic allocated sites, and the unknown outcomes of the emerging Essex Local Transport Plan (LTP4) due to be completed in 2024. Uncertain impacts are realised with regard to the possible requirement to release more Green Belt land to support potential strategic Green Belt growth allocations and how these correspond to protecting the Borough’s character and environment, and how improved accessibility will impact on the vitality of the Borough’s town centres.

There is a risk that any potential connectivity improvement schemes may have adverse impacts on biodiversity (increasing recreational pressure on the Essex Coast SPA), the landscape and openness of the Green Belt, although there can be considered generally positive outcomes regarding air quality and health through maximising the opportunities for walking and cycling and alleviating congestion.

The emerging Plan need to have regard to environmental sustainability, ensuring a balance is struck between the likely environmental impacts and the potential benefits of the strategy, such as greater flood resilience, congestion management and economic connectivity with associated social benefits.

From the assessment of evidence and data there is a need for improvements to the road network in Castle Point and indeed, neighbouring administrative areas to deliver public transport improvements and manage congestion, potentially given the scale of growth and need for access to the strategic road network.

7. Cumulative, Synergistic and Transboundary Effects

7.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires cumulative, synergistic and transboundary effects to be assessed. The effects of the Plan (as assessed) may be magnified by plan-led growth, or other projects in the wider area. Discussion as to the possibility and likelihood of effects in this regard is included within this Section.

7.2 Cumulative, Synergistic and Transboundary Effects

The geographical extent of effects will be experienced predominantly in the Castle Point Borough. However, where effects would be likely to be discernible in neighbouring authorities or at a scale greater than the Castle Point Borough, this will be specified. For example, transboundary effects may be experienced as housing provision and education which can all result in flows of people across local authority boundaries. Furthermore, the high number of Castle Point Borough residents commuting to other local authority areas for work, mainly by private car, is contributing to traffic congestion and poor air quality in the region.

7.2.1 Green Belt

Across the Housing Market Area (HMA), there is substantial pressure for growth across the Thames Gateway South Essex. Except for Southend (where there is limited Green Belt), there could therefore be a significant impact on the stated purpose of the Green Belt in this location as well as for the local environment – habitats and informal open space which may be used for recreation.

The emerging Castle Point Plan has identified the potential alternative growth options scenarios in addition to options 1a, 1b and 1c which utilises urban land only. Alternative options include the release of Green Belt to enable future new development for both homes and jobs in the Borough. Any future release of Green Belt would require a Green Belt Review.

Option 2a – *Release a limited amount of Green Belt to meet local housing need*, it is proposed that this option would be complementary to Option 1a (Limit new development to the urban area). This alternative growth scenario limits the potential impacts to the Green Belt with regard to its principal purpose of restricting urban sprawl, impact on the local environment including habitats, and informal open spaces that may be used for recreational purposes.

Option 2b – *Create a substantial new development area in NW of Thundersley*, it is proposed that this option would be complementary to Option 1a (Limit new development to the urban area). This particular location for growth would require enhanced road infrastructure for access (A127 / A130) allowing for combination with potential new development growth in neighbouring Rochford and Basildon subject to their agreement.

Option 3 – *Release significant Green Belt land to meet standard methodology need*, it

is proposed that this option will require significant release of Green Belt and complementary to Option 1a (Limit new development to the urban area). The emerging Plan does recognise that this alternative growth scenario is considered to have significant environmental impacts, but also promotes the potential creation of local environmental and regeneration benefits.

All of the options presented at this time are potential options at this stage. It may be that the preferred strategy is a combination of different options. If this is the case then any future SA will assess that strategy at that time.

7.2.2 Economic Growth

The Local Plans, for neighbouring administrative areas and recent developments in South Essex, include significant drivers for employment growth including the Free Port development in Thurrock and Southend Airport. Potential proposals for town centre growth in Basildon and Southend would be significant. It is therefore likely that plans for neighbouring areas will continue to encourage out-commuting for work for existing and future Castle Point residents, aided by good strategic road links.

Furthermore, The South Essex EDNA (2017) identifies strategic employment clusters delivering economic growth potential in the sub-region, supported by smaller South Essex town centres which can contribute to strategic economic growth, including Hadleigh.

The EDNA does not identify any strategic clusters in Castle Point specifically, instead concluding that the locational requirements for multiple sectors are better met elsewhere in South Essex. The EDNA states that the strategic portfolio of employment clusters identified, 'underpins a strategy to co-ordinate and focus future site delivery and investment to ensure the area acts like a functional economic hub, rather than a group of local authority areas with competing or conflicting propositions.' Economic growth in Castle Point is therefore likely to be subsidiary to the growth of the strategic clusters, in the form of supply chain opportunities and jobs needed to support residents such as in shops, leisure and public services.

In response to this, the South Essex Councils (SEC) are developing an Economy, Skills and Jobs Strategy which sets out how the economy across South Essex can grow to maximise the opportunities arising from strategic growth opportunities. This aims to achieve synergy and consistency across each of the individual authorities in terms of the approach to economic growth and how it can be harnessed to the benefit of the entire area rather than just those authorities hosting key growth clusters. In order to identify any significant effects moving forward and outside of the sole scope of the emerging Castle Point Plan, it is appropriate that the Plan considers the SEC Economy, Skills and Jobs Strategy and ensures that matters such as housing needs align with its ambitions.

7.2.3 Biodiversity

Additionally, cumulative negative ‘in-combination’ and trans-boundary effects have been highlighted related to the potential level of growth in the Plan area and growth across Essex as a whole. The likelihood of negative recreational effects on Habitats Sites (Natura 2000 sites) along the Essex Coast has stimulated the need for a Recreational Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and SPD, which has been adopted by Castle Point Borough Council. The SPD sets out the mechanism for development contributions that are pooled across the County to fund appropriate strategic mitigation in relation to the residual recreation impacts of growth on habitats for nesting and feeding birds along the Essex Coast. It is further recommended that a future Policy related to the requirement and the mechanism of the SPD is included within the Plan, or failing that, clear reference to the requirements for developers within a more general thematic Policy regarding developer contributions.

As with the Green Belt growth development scenarios above, there is the potential for significant impacts on biodiversity within the Green Belt. The Plan review provides opportunities to incorporate updated policy to support the management, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in connection with new development in Castle Point. There will also be opportunities for new policies to support the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain in new development in line with national policy and to support the achievement of the government’s emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

7.2.4 Water

The South Essex Water Cycle Study (2011) indicated that the Southend Recycling Centre is operating close to capacity and may experience difficulties in accommodating growth. Consequently, Anglian Water carried out additional investigation works for this centre. This additional investigation identified that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate growth in Southend, Rochford and Castle Point within this centre.

In 2023, Anglian Water published a Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) which sets out how it will invest in drainage and wastewater management across its region, including in Castle Point and neighbouring areas. This sets out the improvements necessary for the Benfleet, Canvey, Rayleigh East, and Southend Water Recycling Centres in response to growth and climate change over the period to 2050.

In terms of water supply, Essex County Council have published their Water Strategy for Essex (2024) which emphasises that Essex is a “*water-stressed area*”. The Strategy also indicates that “*with climate change and population growth, plus the need to restore, protect and enhance the natural environment, the situation can be expected to get worse*”.

All the growth option scenarios in the emerging Plan have the potential to align positively with the Essex Water Strategy regarding new development by setting “ambitious policies” for water efficiency and resilience for new homes and non-residential development. By setting ambitious policies this will help to reduce pressure in an already water-stressed area, that previous policies with lesser water efficiency standards would have had.

7.2.5 Highways & Air Quality

Air quality issues in Castle Point are largely attributable to traffic and congestion on key routes and at key junctions within Castle Point. The Transport Evidence for the withdrawn Local Plan indicated that congestion on these key routes and at these key junctions will worsen over time. The assessment of the withdrawn Plan’s growth further indicated that air quality could be a cumulative issue related to the amount of new growth within strategic transport corridors. Development in Southend, Rochford and Basildon will contribute towards this congestion. It should however be noted that these districts, along with Brentwood, Thurrock and Essex County Council work together under the auspice of the South Essex Councils and are seeking government investment to address transport issues in the South Essex area. This will allow the cumulative and transboundary effects of future growth to be dealt with in a synergistic way.

8. Next Steps (Task A5)

10.1 Consultation on this Scoping Report

The draft Scoping Report will be subject to an 8 week period of public consultation between July and September 2024.

In responding to this Scoping Report, we would appreciate a response to the following questions:

1. Have we captured the right information in our review of plans and programmes and production of baseline evidence and analysis?
 - a. Have we missed any areas?
 - b. Where is information on this/these topics available from?
2. Are the economic, social, and environmental issues we have identified in this report relevant to the SA of the Castle Point Plan?
 - a. Are there any issues you think we need to include?
 - b. Are there any issues you think we need to exclude?
3. Do you agree with the proposed approach to the SA of the Local Plan?
 - a. Do the SA objectives and guide questions that comprise the SA Framework cover a sufficient range of environmental, social, and economic topics?
 - b. Are there any objectives/guide questions which should be amended?
 - c. Are there any other objectives/guide questions which we should include?
4. Do you have any comments on the Initial Assessment of the Strategic Development Options?

Any comments received during the consultation period will be considered and where relevant the Scoping Report will be revised and republished to reflect the representations as part of the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanies the Regulation 19 Castle Point Plan.

10.2 Appraisal of the Regulation 19 Castle Point Plan

Post-consultation on this SA / SEA Scoping Report and Initial Assessment of Strategic Options, the assessment on a draft Regulation 19 Plan will be undertaken, with findings fed back to the Borough Council in order to inform and aid Policy formulation in an iterative manner.

Assessment will be undertaken on:

- Draft Strategic Policies, including the Spatial Strategy.
- Draft Development Management Policies; and

- Draft Site Allocations.

In all the above instances, reasonable alternatives to the Plan's preferred Policy approaches and site allocations will be identified by the authors of the SA alongside and in conversations with the plan-makers at Castle Point Borough Council. Reasonable alternatives will be assessed to ensure that the preferred plan has been prepared in cognisance of the benefits and issues those alternatives present.

Consultation will be undertaken on the Regulation 19 SA alongside that of the Plan and in accordance with the Borough Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) and Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Castle Point Borough Council Plan

Draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA):

Scoping Report – 2024:

Annex A - Plans & Programmes

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
1.1	Background	3
1.2	Identifying Other Relevant Policies, Plan and Programmes.....	3
2.	List of Relevant Plan and Programmes	4
3.	Review of Plans and Programmes	9
3.1	Review of International Plans and Programmes	9
3.2	Review of National Plans and Programmes	12
3.3	Review of Sub-National Plans and Programmes	21
3.4	Review of Local Plans, Programmes and Evidence Base.....	28

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This document forms an annex (Annex A) to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report of the Castle Point Plan. An SA/SEA forms part of an assessment process designed to consider and report upon the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives. Such an assessment informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of such documents, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects.

The purpose of the Scoping Report is to provide the context for, and determine the scope of, the SA/SEA of the Castle Point Plan and to set out the assessment framework.

This document forms a report on the plans and programmes (contextual review) annex (Annex A) to the main SA Scoping Report.

1.2 Identifying Other Relevant Policies, Plan and Programmes

The SEA Directive requires the production of the following information:

“an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;” Annex 1(a); and

“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;” Annex 1(e).

2. List of Relevant Plan and Programmes

Local Plans must have regard to existing policies, plans and programmes at national and regional levels. It is therefore important to identify and review those policies, plans and programmes which are likely to influence the Plan.

Brexit

Whilst the SEA statutory process was originally required under the European SEA Directive, the Directive became transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). As set out in the explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments, necessary to ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA regulations remain in force.

The following table offers a reference to the plans and programmes relevant to the Castle Point Plan and the accompanying SA.

International Plans and Programmes
European Commission (EC) (2011) / Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. (Transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232) ¹
European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2002)
United Nations Kyoto Protocol
World Commission on Environment and Development 'Our Common Future' 1987
The World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg Summit 2002
National Plans and Programmes
Planning Practice Guidance (updated)
The Localism Act 2011
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)
National Design Guide MHCLG (2021)
Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth, HM Treasury (2021)
Agricultural Act 2020, UK Parliament (2020)
Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024, DEFRA (2020)
UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future, HM Government (2018)
Developing a sustainable framework for UK aviation - Scoping document (March 2011)
Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement (July 2007)
The Road to Zero, DfT (2018)
Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain, DCLG (2021)
Future of Transport: Supporting Rural Transport Innovation, DfT (2023)
Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge, DEFRA (2023)

¹ To ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA Regulations remain in force, and it is a legal requirement for the Castle Point Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy report to Parliament, Secretary for Transport (2022)
Community Infrastructure Levy An Overview, DCLG (9th May 2011)
Underground, Under Threat - Groundwater protection: policy and practice (GP3)
Land contamination risk management (LCRM), EA (2020, and subsequent updates)
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations, DEFRA and DfT (2017)
Clean Air Strategy 2019, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2019)
The Air Quality Strategy for England, DEFRA (2023)
The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2023)
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, DEFRA (2022)
The British energy security strategy, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street (2022)
The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2021)
Safeguarding Our Soils: A Strategy for England (2009)
Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011)
The Environment Act 2021, HM Government (2021)
The 25 Year Environment Plan, HM Government (2018)
The Waste Prevention programme for England: Maximising Resources, Minimising Waste, DEFRA (2023)
Waste Management Plan for England, DEFRA (2021)
The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations, HM Government (2020)
The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations, HM Government (2021)
Green Infrastructure Framework, Natural England (2023)
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (December 2023)
Sub-national Plans and Programmes
Essex Gypsy and Traveller Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2016 - 2033, ORS (Update 2018)
South Essex Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Update 2016 – 2038, ORS, (2019) (to be updated by the Castle Point Borough Council Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2024 for Castle Point)
Castle Point demographic projections 2023 -33, CLG, ONS
Essex Local Transport Plan 2011 (LTP3)
South Essex Transport Study, Jacobs, 2024 (LTP4) (underway to be completed by June 2024)
Essex Biodiversity Action Plans 2010 - 2020
Essex Design Guide – Ecology and Biodiversity (2023)
Heritage at Risk, East of England register 2022, Historic England
Essex Thames Gateway Historic Landscape Characterisation, ECC, 2007
School Organisation 10-year plan for Essex school places 2024 – 2033 (ECC)
ECC Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007-2032
ECC Draft Waste Strategy for Essex 2024 - 2054
Water Strategy for Essex, 2024, ECC
Water for life and livelihoods River Basin Management Plan Thames River Basin District
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Plans

Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Statements
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes A Vision for the Future of Essex
Essex Rural Strategy: 2020 Vision for Rural Essex (under review to be launched 2024)
Essex Rural Partnership
ECC Development Management Policies (February 2011)
ECC Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (September 2009) (to be updated once work completed)
Essex Design Guide – Parking Design (live document)
The Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex 2020
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape Statements
The Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (Revised Edition 2023)
Essex Sector Development Strategy (Essex County Council 2022)
River Basin Management Plan Thames River Basin District 2022
The Essex Design Guide – Health and Wellbeing (updated 2021) Live Document
Essex Healthy Places – Advice Notes for Planners, Developers and Designers (ECC)
Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, ECC, 2022
Everyone's Essex: Our Plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025 (ECC)
Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)
Essex Minerals Local Plan Review 2025 - 2040
Essex Design Guide – Minerals and Waste Policy S8 – Safeguarding Mineral Resources (live document)
Essex Design Guide (2024) Live Document
Essex Climate Action Commission Plan, Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral, 2021
Local Plans and Programmes
Castle Point Local Plan 1998 (withdrawn)
South Essex Joint Strategic Plan Statement of Common Ground (June 2018)
Castle Point Engagement Through Art (underway)
Local Reports and Assessments (Evidence Base)
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2018), to be updated (Urban Land Capacity Assessment) in 2024 and Brownfield Land Register (2022)
Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report 2023
Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) (2018)
Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation SPD (2020) Adopted
Local Wildlife Site Review (underway / to be completed Spring 2024)
Essex Wildlife Trust – Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living landscape Vision, 2010
Essex Wildlife Trust – South Essex Marshes Living Landscape Vision, 2010
Castle Point Design Code (to completed 2024)
Greenbelt Review – Part 1 (2018)
Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, ECC (2020)
South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, 2020
Castle Point Open Space Assessment, 2023 (Final April 2024)
Playing Pitch Strategy and Sports Facilities Strategy 2018 (updated 2022)
Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment (2018)
South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 1) (2018)
Castle Point Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 1) (2024) in progress
Castle Point Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 2) (to be completed Autumn 2024)
Castle Point Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plan Stage 1 and Stage 2 Analysis (2023)
Castle Point Bus Network Review (2023)
Whole Plan Viability Assessment (2018) To be updated Autumn 2024

Essex & District Population Projections 2020 All Ages
Essex Area Profiles – Essex Open Data
South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (November 2017)
Essex Sector Development Strategy (Essex County Council 2022)
Economic Development Strategy (underway / to be completed April 2024)
South Essex Retail Study Volume 1 (May 2017)
Castle Point Town Centre Shopping Frontages Assessment (2019)
Castle Point Transport Evidence Phase 2 Report (2015)
Castle Point Transport Evidence Refresh Interim Report, Mott Macdonald (2018)
Transport Assessment, Jacobs Update (to be completed June 2024)
South Essex SHMA Addendum (May 2017)
South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2016)
Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment (2023)
Greater Essex GTAA (September 2017)
Castle Point Borough Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2017 (to be updated / completed March 2024)
Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2015)
Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update (2018) withdrawn
South Essex Employment Land Availability Assessment Site Assessment Report (2022)
South Essex ELAA Stage 4: Site Assessment and Stage 5: Site Typologies (2023)
Castle Point Economic Development Site Review (to be completed May 2024)
Urban Capacity Assessment (underway to be completed March 2024)
Sustainability Appraisal of Sites in the Green Belt (2011) to be updated
Sustainability Appraisal of Sites Review (2013) & Second Review (2014) to be updated
Extract from the Essex Historic Environment Record – Castle Point Records (2013)
Castle Point Urban Characterisation Report (2013)
Castle Point Local List of Non-Designated Historic Assets Review (2013)
Castle Point Appendix Five: Designated Historic Assets (2022) (to be reviewed)
Nationally Described Space Standards Report (2015)
Essex Air Quality Live Map (for Castle Point)
Castle Point Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023)
Essex Thames Gateway Historic Landscape Characterisation (2007)
Greater Essex Growth and Infrastructure Framework 2016 - 2036 (2016)
Essex Design Guide – South Essex Surface Water Management Plan (2022)
Canvey Island IUD Model (2015) – to be updated through SFRA to incorporate up to date climate change allowances (update to be completed Summer 2024)
Canvey Island 6 Point Plan (2015)
Castle Point Infrastructure Delivery Plan (to be completed Autumn 2024)
Castle Point Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supplementary Planning Document, Jan. 2024
Castle Point Developer Contributions Guidance Supplementary Planning Documents March 2023
Castle Point Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, May 2023
Castle Point Habitats Regulations Assessment and Appropriate Assessment, November 2021 (withdrawn)
Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping for Castle Point Plan (due Summer 2024)
Habitats Regulations Assessment for Castle Point Plan (due Autumn 2024)

The following section offers a summary of each of these above plans and programmes and the implications of them for the Plan and the SA.

It should be noted that many of the Castle Point Plan evidence base documents have been summarised in more depth within the relevant sections of Annex B which also

accompanies the SA Environmental Report. These findings are summarised within that Annex and are not duplicated here.

3. Review of Plans and Programmes

3.1 Review of International Plans and Programmes

International Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
<p>European Commission (EC) (2011) / Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.</p> <p>(Transposed in the UK by the SEA Regulations and amended by the Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232)²</p>	<p>The policy aims to enjoy the benefits of a resource- efficient and low-carbon economy, through achieving three conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, to take coordinated action in a wide range of policy areas and this action needs political visibility and support. • Second, act urgently due to long investment lead-times. While some actions will have a positive impact on growth and jobs in the short-term, others require an upfront investment and have long pay- back times but will bring real economic benefits in the long term. • Third, to empower consumers to move to resource-efficient consumption, to drive continuous innovation and ensure that efficiency gains are not lost. 	<p>The Plan should incorporate these principles into the local scale development strategy to create targets contributing to national targets. In this way, the Plan will assist in facilitating similar benefits as those described in the transposed EC policy for the population of Castle Point.</p>
<p>European Landscape Convention (Florence 2002)</p>	<p>The aims of this Convention are to promote landscape protection, management, and planning, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues.</p>	<p>In order to co-operate on matters concerning landscape conservation and protection, the Plan will need to consult with this policy to inform practices of development and avoid substantial harm to protected landscapes.</p>
<p>United Nations Kyoto Protocol</p>	<p>This protocol aims to Implement and/or further elaborate policies and measures for member states in accordance with its national circumstances, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of energy 	<p>The Plan should attempt to create new developments that adhere to the low carbon and low emissions ethos that is within the Kyoto Protocol. Any development that utilises new technologies, techniques or</p>

² To ensure that the law functions correctly following the UK's exit from the EU. No substantive changes were made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime currently operates. Therefore, the SEA Regulations remain in force, and it is a legal requirement for the Castle Point Plan to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

International Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>efficiency in relevant sectors of the national economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, considering its commitments under relevant international environmental agreements, promotion of sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation. • Promotion of sustainable forms of agriculture considering climate change considerations. • Research on, and promotion, development, and increased use of, new and renewable forms of energy, of carbon dioxide sequestration technologies and of advanced and innovative environmentally sound technologies. • Progressive reduction or phasing out of market imperfections, fiscal incentives, tax and duty exemptions and subsidies in all greenhouse gas emitting sectors that run counter to the objective of the Convention and application of market instruments. • Encouragement of appropriate reforms in relevant sectors aimed at promoting policies and measures which limit or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol. • Measures to limit and/or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in the transport sector. • Limitation and/or reduction of methane emissions through 	<p>materials should be included in the Plan where possible and appropriate.</p>

International Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	recovery and use in waste management, as well as in the production, transport, and distribution of energy.	
World Commission on Environment and Development 'Our Common Future' 1987	<p>This report aims were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to propose long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond; • to recommend ways concern for the environment may be translated into greater co-operation among developing countries and between countries at different stages of economic and social development and lead to the achievement of common and mutually supportive objectives that take account of the interrelationships between people, resources, environment, and development. • to consider ways and means by which the international community can deal more effectively with environment concerns; and • to help define shared perceptions of long- term environmental issues and the appropriate efforts needed to deal successfully with the problems of protecting and enhancing the environment, a long-term agenda for action during the coming decades, and aspirational goals for the world community. 	The Plan would have to contribute to the co-operative effort to reduce the environmental impacts of development through policy to promote more efficient and carbon neutral techniques and materials in design and construction.
The World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg Summit 2002	<p>The Summit sought to address social, environmental, and economic with particular focus on the issues facing some of the most deprived people across the world. It aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • halve the proportion of the 	Despite many of these issues and aims having limited relevance to the population in Castle Point, who have a comparatively high level of wealth and a good quality of life, issues surrounding climate change and renewable energy

International Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>world's population that lives on less than \$1 a day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • halve the number of people living without safe drinking water or basic sanitation; and • reduce mortality rates for infants and children under five by two thirds, and maternal mortality by three quarters. • Other provisions address a comprehensive range of environmental and development issues, such as climate change, energy, agriculture, trade, African development, and small island States. The Implementation Plan calls for a substantial increase in use of renewable sources of energy "with a sense of urgency". Although it sets no specific targets; implementation of a new global system for classification and labelling of chemicals was discussed in an attempt to restore depleted fish stocks. 	<p>have significant implications for development in the Borough. The Plan should strive to produce developments of low carbon housing and reduce environmental degradation through responsible design and construction practices.</p>

3.2 Review of National Plans and Programmes

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Planning Practice Guidance	This web-based resource provides guidance to support the National Planning Policy Framework and its application in practice. It is also easy to link easily between the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant planning practice guidance, as well as between different categories of guidance.	Provides guidance on the preparation of Local Plans and accompanying SEA.
Localism Act 2011	The Localism Act provides a general power of competence for local authorities in England. It gives these authorities the same power to act	The Localism Act gave new powers to local authorities to support a much more localised

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>that an individual generally has and provides that the power may be used in innovative ways, that is, in doing things that are unlike anything that a local authority – or any other public body – has done before or may currently do. Where an authority can do something under the power, the starting point is that there are to be no limits as to how the power can be exercised. The power does not need to be exercised for the benefit of any place or group and can be exercised anywhere and in any way.</p>	<p>approach to development than had previously been possible. Following this, the Plan can utilise statistics and information relating only to the Borough to inform planning policy and allow the focus to be primarily concerned with the benefits for the population within the Borough.</p>
<p>National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)</p>	<p>This framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It replaces all Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance.</p> <p>The framework seeks to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by pursuing economic, environmental, and social gains jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. It defines planning as having:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive, and competitive economy, • a social role – supporting strong, vibrant, and healthy communities; and • an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built, and historic environment. <p>The framework provides guidance on preparing Local and Neighbourhood Plans and on determining planning applications. The framework also describes the role of planning in delivering sustainable development under 16 themes. These are:</p>	<p>This framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied into local plans.</p>

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving sustainable development • Plan-making • Decision-making • Delivering a sufficient supply of homes • Building a strong, competitive economy • Ensuring the vitality of town centres • Promoting healthy and safe communities • Promoting sustainable transport • Supporting high quality communications • Making effective use of land • Achieving well-designed and beautiful places • Protecting Green Belt Land • Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change • Conserving and enhancing the natural environment • Conserving and enhancing the historic environment • Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals <p>A key part of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development which is relevant to both plan making and decision making.</p>	
<p>The 25 Year Environment Plan, HM Government (2018)</p>	<p>This Plan sets out government policy to help the natural world regain and retain good health. Key areas related to biodiversity are set out in the Plan around which actions are to be focussed. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes: 	<p>The Plan should have regard to this Plan and include measures which seek to achieve the goals and policies set, including within development (inclusive of housing and infrastructure).</p>

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a Natural Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that have been lost from the countryside. • Securing clean, healthy productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans: ▪ Achieve a good environmental status of the UK's seas while allowing marine industries to thrive and complete our economically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas. • Protecting and improving our global environment: ▪ Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity. ▪ Support and protect international forests and sustainable agriculture. 	
Community Infrastructure Levy An Overview	<p>The Community Infrastructure Levy (the levy) came into force in April 2010. It allows local authorities in England and Wales to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development.</p> <p>The Community Infrastructure Levy charging authorities (charging authorities) in England will be district and metropolitan district councils, London borough councils, unitary authorities, national park authorities, The Broads Authority, and the Mayor of London. These bodies all prepare development plans for their areas, which are informed by assessments</p>	<p>The Plan will need to set out the Borough's funding mechanism for new infrastructure and community facilities through the planning process. The Community Infrastructure Levy must be factored into costings of any developments.</p>

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	of the infrastructure needs for which the levy may be collected.	
Underground, Under Threat – Groundwater protection: policy and practice (GP3) / The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection (update 2018)	<p>This document sets out the Environment Agency's (EA) aims and objectives for groundwater, their technical approach to its management and protection, the tools they use to do their work and the main policies and approach to the application of legislation. The main aims are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage co-operation between the EA and other bodies with statutory responsibilities for the protection of groundwater. • To promote policies, so that land-users and potential developers may anticipate how the EA are likely to respond to a proposal or activity. • To influence the decisions of other organisations on issues the EA are concerned about but which they do not regulate. • To ensure that groundwater protection and management are consistent with EA's Vision for the environment and a sustainable future; and • To provide vital information and background on groundwater protection in England and Wales. 	<p>Land use planning can have negative impacts on groundwaters. Relevant to the Plan, impacts can occur from urban development and over-abstraction. Groundwaters will have to be a consideration in the Plan policy.</p>
Land contamination risk management (LCRM), EA (2020, and subsequent updates)	<p>This government guidance sets out how to assess and manage the risks from land contamination, providing a technical framework for structured decision making about land contamination to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and assess if there is an unacceptable risk. • Assess what remediation options are suitable to manage the risk. 	<p>Contaminated land can affect Plan policy where it may present a risk to a range of receptors including humans, ecosystems, water quality, and property. Not understanding the risks may inhibit the development or redevelopment of land, and in some cases contribute to long-term dereliction and increase pressure to develop Greenfield land. In addition, the Plan</p>

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and carry out remediation, and Verify that remediation has worked. 	should endeavour to incorporate best practice principles provided by the guidance to prevent contamination in the borough for the future and align with government policy and legislation.
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)	This document relates to nature conservation, biodiversity, SSSIs and Rights of Way amongst others in regard to a duty to protect and enforce codes of conduct in relation to these designated and non-designated elements of the environment.	The Plan can influence the protection of these designations and non-designated elements of the environments through policy and appropriate site allocations.
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	Further information on Rights of Way in relation to nature conservation with wildlife protection, SSSIs and biological diversity amongst other elements of the environment, including regulations to restrict the impacts of vehicles on the environment.	The Plan can influence the protection of these designations and non-designated elements of the environments through policy and appropriate site allocations.
Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).	The SEA Regulations set out the mandatory requirements regarding Sustainability Appraisal for Local Plans and also the requirements of the process.	The Plan must and has undertaken Sustainability Appraisal. These Regulations inform the SA as to what is required to be included in formulating and presenting the Report.
Environment Act 2021	<p>This document sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air quality Biodiversity Water, and Resource efficiency and waste reduction <p>It also establishes the Office for Environmental Protection which will act as an impartial and objective body for the protection and improvement of the environment. The Act sets out legislation which covers local air quality management</p>	A requirement of the NPPF's (2023) environmental objective is that the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural resources prudently. The framework states that Local Plans should "identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks" and "promote the conservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	frameworks and the recall of motor vehicles.	pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act	<p>The PCPA requires local authorities to produce a local plan to guide future development and change within its area.</p> <p>The act aims to promote sustainable development by requiring a Sustainability Appraisal to be produced for all local plans, encouraging the integration of social, environmental, and economic considerations into development documents.</p>	<p>The RPB (in this case the Borough Council) must:</p> <p>a) Carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposals in the draft.</p> <p>b) Prepare a report of the findings of the appraisal.</p> <p>This appraisal informs the viability of any developments against economic, social, and environmental effects, in order to assess the sustainability of any developments within the locality.</p>
The Air Quality Strategy for England, DEFRA (2023)	<p>This document sets out the actions that DEFRA expects local authorities to take in support of the government’s long-term air quality goals, including new PM2.5 targets.</p> <p>It provides a framework to enable local authorities to make the best use of their powers and make improvements for their communities.</p>	The Strategy places a new requirement on local authorities without air quality management plans to produce an air quality strategy setting out the action that they will take to improve air quality in their area.
Safeguarding Our Soils: A Strategy for England (2009)	<p>By 2030, the strategy aims to have all of England’s soils to be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully. This will improve the quality of England’s soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agricultural soils will be better managed and threats to them will be addressed. • soils will play a greater role in the fight against climate change and in helping us to manage its impacts. 	<p>Soil quality has a key role in water quality, climate change issues and the historic legacy and health of the environment. The Plan should attempt to retain and protect soil quality within the borough through construction techniques. Through aligning with the strategy, development in the Borough can occur responsibly without causing soil degradation.</p>

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> soils in urban areas will be valued during development, and construction practices will ensure vital soil functions can be maintained. pollution of our soils is prevented, and our historic legacy of contaminated land is being dealt with. 	
<p>Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011) and subsequent implementation updates</p>	<p>This document strives to safeguard the environment through the promotion of a number of aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitating greater local action to protect and improve nature. creating a green economy, in which economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other, and markets, business and Government better reflect the value of nature. strengthening the connections between people and nature to the benefit of both; and showing leadership in the European Union and internationally, to protect and enhance natural assets globally. 	<p>The Plan would benefit from incorporating the values of this document when planning and constructing new developments. The protection of natural assets and the advancement of a green economy within the Borough would assist in improving the economic, social, and environmental situation in the area. The Plan should adopt these aims in policy for future development plans.</p>
<p>Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2023)</p>	<p>This document sets out the government's planning policy for traveller sites, "To ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community."</p> <p>The aims for this policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning. to ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and 	<p>This government Policy must be considered in the preparation of development plans.</p> <p>The Plan would need to include information on the requirements of land and provision for Gypsy and Traveller communities within the Borough. Despite this, the Plan would also need to deter unauthorised sites arising, particularly on Greenbelt land. By aligning with this policy, the Gypsy and Traveller community can be accommodated and integrated</p>

National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale. • that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development. • to promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites. • that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective. • for local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic, and inclusive policies. • to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply. • to reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions. • to enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare, and employment infrastructure. • for local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment 	<p>whilst protecting the natural environment and local amenity within the district.</p>

3.3 Review of Sub-National Plans and Programmes

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Essex Gypsy and Traveller Showpeople Accommodation Assessment, ORS (to be updated by the Castle Point Borough Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2024)	This assessment aims to provide more robust evidence on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need at district level in terms of residential, transit and brick and mortar sites. It quantifies current and future accommodation requirements up to 2021.	Number of additional pitches required should be taken into consideration when devising housing planning policies. The Plan should reflect the requirement of provisions for Gypsy and Traveller communities within the borough alongside housing developments.
Essex Gypsy and Traveller Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2016 - 2033, ORS (update 2018)	This update document refreshed the original assessment described above to provide more up to date evidence for the production of the Gypsy and Traveller Showpeople policy in the Plan.	Number of additional pitches required should be taken into consideration when devising housing planning policies. The Plan should reflect the requirement of provisions for Gypsy and Traveller communities within the Borough alongside housing developments.
South Essex Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Update 2016 – 2038, ORS, (2019)	This document sets out the updated GTAA outcomes, projecting new household formation forward from 2033-38.	Number of additional pitches required should be taken into consideration when devising housing planning policies. The Plan should reflect the requirement of provisions for Gypsy and Traveller communities within the Borough alongside housing developments.
Castle Point Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (underway / to be completed March 2024)	This document will set out the updated GTAA outcomes for Castle Point, projecting new household formation forward during the new Plan period.	Number of additional pitches required should be taken into consideration when devising housing planning policies. The Plan should reflect the requirement of provisions for Gypsy and Traveller communities within the Borough alongside housing developments.

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Essex Local Transport Plan 2011 (LTP3)	<p>Comprises two distinct parts – a long-term Essex Transport Strategy and a short-term Implementation Plan. The Strategy's outcomes/goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide connectivity for Essex communities and international gateways to support sustainable economic growth and regeneration. • Reduce carbon dioxide emissions and improve air quality through lifestyle changes, innovation, and technology. • Improve safety on the transport network and enhance and promote a safe travelling environment. • Secure and maintain all transport assets to an appropriate standard and ensure that the network is available for use. • Provide sustainable access and travel choice for Essex residents to help create sustainable communities. 	<p>The policies and aims within both the Local Transport Plan and those within the Plan should be complimentary of each other. Aligning the aims and objectives will result in higher levels of cohesion across the county. There will be benefits from collaboration with neighbouring District Councils as well as Essex County Council on these aims and objectives in the form of a more holistic approach to transport planning.</p>
South Essex Transport Study, Jacobs, 2024 (LTP4)	<p>(Underway to be completed in 2024). The purpose of this Study is to establish priority transport interventions within South Essex and within the Castle Point Borough to help inform the new Plan with regard to supporting development options.</p>	<p>The outcomes of this Study will help to inform the Castle Point Plan, as well as to inform infrastructure planning and the securing of developer contributions and other sources of funding for transport infrastructure.</p>
Essex Design Guide – Ecology and Biodiversity (2023)	<p>Provides for planning for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for Biodiversity • Protection of Existing Habitats and Species • New Opportunities • Buildings and Biodiversity 	<p>Informs the Castle Point Plan policies including what is expected from new development with regard to ecology and biodiversity, and how they can be incorporated with good design.</p>
Heritage at Risk, East of England Register 2022, Historic England	<p>Yearly health-check of historic places, and those most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.</p>	<p>To inform the Castle Point Plan policies and with regard to proposed development.</p>

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Essex Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation, ECC, 2007	Provides a characterisation at a strategic level to serve as a tool for the management and enhancement of the historic environment. Reveals the sensitivity, diversity and value of the historic environment resource within the area,	To inform the Castle Point Plan policies and with regard to proposed development.
School Organisation 10-year Plan for Essex school places 2024 – 2033 (ECC)	<p>The purpose of the 10-year Plan is to set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demand for mainstream school places in the next 10 years (from academic year 2024/25 to academic year 2033/34) for each for each of the pupil place planning areas. • Solutions already in the pipeline that will meet the forecast demand for school places. • Potential options to address medium to long term forecast demand for school places. • The context in which the Essex School organization Service operates to ensure there are sufficient school places. <p>In the County’s “School Organisation 10-year Plan for Essex school places 2024 – 2033” schools have been placed into forecast planning groups. These are groups of schools (primary and secondary) that serve the children residing in particular geographical areas of the district.</p> <p>There are no deficits of school places reported in the 10-year Plan for the Castle Point Borough, and there are no expansion projects currently in the pipeline.</p>	Provision of education should be considered in relation to future population growth and development within the district in the Plan. A localised focus here allows the specific age structure and required school places in the borough to be calculated more accurately compared with being part of a wider county context.
ECC Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2007-2032	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essex Authorities will work hard to reduce the amount of waste produced in the first place and re-use more of the waste that is produced. • Essex will achieve high levels of recycling, with an aspiration to 	Planning policy and allocations within the Plan should have regard to the aims set out in this strategy. Waste management should be included in the Plan to

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>achieve collectively 60% recycling of household waste by 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essex favours composting technologies such as anaerobic digestion (AD), for source segregated organic wastes. AD is a form of biotreatment and produces a gas which can be used to generate 100% renewable electricity. • Whilst we can work on reducing the amount of waste produced and recycling as much of it as possible, there will always be some waste that still needs to be disposed of. For this we propose to introduce new treatment plants using Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT). MBT processes any 'black bag' waste and recovers further material for recycling. Part of the remaining material can either be manufactured into a fuel for energy production or can be sent to landfill. 	<p>identify areas where significant improvements can be achieved, specific to the borough, to assist in the realisation of the aims set out in the Essex County Council Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.</p>
ECC Draft Waste Strategy for Essex 2024 - 2054	<p>The Draft Strategy sets out the vision and objectives of the Essex Waste Partnership. It provides a framework detailing how waste from homes and businesses will be managed for the next 30 years to protect the environment and save resources. It focuses on the need to reduce waste. It also outlines the need to reuse, recycle and recover everything we can from resources to ensure maximizing value and minimizing impacts on the environment.</p>	<p>Planning policy and allocations within the Plan should have regard to the aims set out in this draft strategy. Waste management should be included in the Plan to identify areas where significant improvements can be achieved, specific to the Borough, to assist in the realisation of the aims set out in the Essex Waste Partnership Waste Management Strategy.</p>
Water Strategy for Essex, 2024, ECC	<p>Outlines the current and future water issues facing Essex, and makes recommendations to save water, support land use change and increase natural infrastructure as well as developing new water supplies.</p>	<p>To inform the Castle Point Plan policies and with regard to proposed development to ensure and protect water quality and mitigate drought and floods.</p>

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscape plans	Essex Wildlife Trust has mapped 89 Living Landscape areas across Essex covering 7,250 acres of land. The Essex Living Landscape map aims to reconnect habitats and local people in the county, to restore habitats so that wildlife can flourish; restore the involvement of local people with their countryside so they can work for it, take pride in it and gain a better quality of life. In addition, the scheme hopes to reconnect habitats across the county, removing restrictions of travel for wildlife and increasing their chances of survival.	The Plan has sufficient scope to link habitats and people through policy and development allocations. This resource raises awareness of wildlife issues that can inform the Plan and the SA/SEA and can be easily factored into any prospective developments.
Essex Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes A vision for the Future of Essex	Sets out what Living Landscapes are and presents a Living Landscapes Vision with regard to the management, conservation and enhancement.	To inform Castle Point Plan policies and with regard to proposed development.
Essex Design Guide – Health and Wellbeing (live document)	<p>The health and wellbeing theme was established to recognise how the positive characteristics and qualities of an environment can help people to achieve and experience better quality lifestyles to support preventing poor health and encourage inclusivity and accessibility whilst reducing health inequalities. The relevant content also references the future of healthcare provision within new communities.</p> <p>The guide encourages all developments to employ the principles of Building Regulations Part M4 Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) so as to promote independent living. The provision of access to open spaces, natural environments and informal and formal recreation opportunities contributes significantly to the prevention of ill health. Transport corridors should be well-established to encourage cycling and walking as safer, more active alternatives to the car for local journeys.</p>	The Essex wide principles within this Design Guide theme will help to inform the Plan and the SA/SEA underpinning all new development within the Borough.
Essex Design Guide – Health Impact Assessments (live document)	This Essex Design Guide theme further supports the Health and Wellbeing theme within the Essex Design Guide. It includes the wider Essex Healthier Places guidance which gives more in-depth information on what needs to be	The Essex wide principles within this Design Guide theme will help to inform the Plan and the SA/SEA underpinning all new

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	considered when looking at health, wellbeing, and the environment.	development within the Borough.
Essex Healthy Places – Advice Notes for Planners, Developers and Designers (EPOA)	<p>The Essex Healthier Places Guidance has been divided into specific sections relating to health and wellbeing through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The design of homes and spaces including the promotion and application of Sport England Active Design Principles. ▪ Supporting the development of new communities and neighbourhoods and connecting to existing communities. ▪ Promoting access to education, skills, training, and employment opportunities. ▪ Providing appropriate access to NHS healthcare services and opportunities for self-care. ▪ Increasing access to interesting and stimulating open spaces and natural environments to encourage people to be physically active. ▪ Ensuring developments embody the principles of lifetime neighbourhoods and promote independent living. ▪ Promoting better access to healthy and locally sourced food. ▪ Encouraging active travel through the promotion of cycling and walking and measures to reduce reliance on motorised transport. ▪ Creating a safe and accessible built environment with well-designed public spaces that encourage community participation and designing out crime measures. ▪ Addressing environmental sustainability including future- 	The Essex wide principles within this Design Guide theme will help to inform the Plan and the SA/SEA underpinning all new development within the Borough.

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>proofing measures and the use of technology/digital</p> <p>The guidance also provides advice on environmental impact assessments and health as well as the main contacts across the health and wellbeing system.</p>	
Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, ECC, 2022	Provides an overview of the health and wellbeing needs across Essex. It summaries key insights gained from research and health needs assessment, in order to improve health and wellbeing, support evidence informed decision making, prioritisation and action to reduce health inequalities effectively.	Data will contribute to informing the Plan and the SA/SEA underpinning all new development within the Borough.
Essex Rural Strategy: 2020 Vision for Rural Essex (under review to be launched 2024) Essex Rural Partnership	<p>This Strategy seeks to create a vibrant future for rural Essex, based upon six strategic aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and caring communities • Improved access to services • Greater availability of affordable housing • A thriving economy • A rich and varied environment <p>A responsive planning and policy framework</p>	Policies and allocations held within the Plan should have regard to any new strategic aims contained within any future new strategy. As a result, the character of rural Castle Point can be preserved.
ECC Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice (2009) / Essex Design Guide (live document) (to be updated Spring 2024)	<p>Establishes guidance on parking provision for new development and provides parking standards. The purpose of this document is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the Local Planning Authorities in determining appropriate standards for their areas. • Advise members of the public in a readily comprehensible manner. • Assist intending developers in preparing plans for the development of land. 	New developments resulting from the Plan will consider parking provisions and standards in order to appropriately serve the development with vehicle accessibility.

Sub-National Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and Objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expedite the determination of planning applications. 	
The Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex 2020	This guidance sets out what is expected from new developments in how they accommodate SuDS, and the standards expected of any new SuDS scheme to be suitable for approval and adoption and advice on how SuDS will be maintained and how they should be ensured to be maintainable.	Utilised by the Plan to ensure a transparent and consistent level of service when ECC is responding to planning enquires.
Essex County Council Interactive Flood Risk Map	<p>The interactive map is a tool to assist with identifying areas that are at risk of flooding and identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Flood Assets • Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Extent • Flood investigations • Critical Drainage Areas • Capital Programme Locations 	Utilised by the Plan to ensure a transparent and consistent level of service when ECC is responding to planning enquires.
Essex Climate Action Commission Plan, Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral, 2021, ECC	<p>Sets out recommendations to 2050 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use & Green Infrastructure • Energy • Built Environment • Transport • Waste 	To help inform the Castle Point Plan policies and with regard to proposed development in the mitigation against climate change.

3.4 Review of Local Plans, Programmes and Evidence Base

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
<p>Castle Point Local Plan 2014 (withdrawn)</p> <p>Castle Point Local Plan 2016 (withdrawn)</p>	The previous Plan (withdrawn) sets out a number of strategic and non-strategic (development management) policies and also site allocations required to delivery housing needs over the Plan period.	An understanding of previous Plan evidence is important to establish and identify any key issues within the Plan area from a sustainability point of view. Previous policy approaches and allocations are also important to understand in order to generate reasonable alternatives for exploration in the SA.

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Castle Point Local Plan 2018 (withdrawn)		
Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017) (and SA)	The Waste Local Plan sets strategic policy and identifies sites / operations for the management of waste in Essex and Southend.	The WLP forms part of Castle Point's suite of development plan documents. Reference to its aims and objectives should be made within the Plan, as well as general adherence, and can be used within the SA to identify any conflicts or cumulative impacts.
<p>Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 / Essex Minerals Local Plan Review 2025 – 2040</p> <p>Essex Design Guide – Minerals and Waste Policy S8 – Safeguarding Mineral Resources (live document)</p>	<p>The MLP includes policies that protect operating mineral sites and facilities, newly allocated mineral extraction sites and potentially workable but unallocated mineral deposits from sterilisation as a result of other development proposals.</p> <p>The purpose of this guidance is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) and LPA in implementing the policies of the adopted Mineral Local Plan (MLP) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which concern mineral safeguarding. This is particularly relevant for LPAs when assessing future potential for development as part of the Local Plan making process. • To create a shared understanding of the issues and information available to avoid a duplication of tasks between authorities. • To ensure that a direct link is maintained between a Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF, incorporating both the relevant Local Plan and the Minerals Local Plan, in recognition that they are all form part of the Development Plan. 	The Plan must include policy on mineral preservation in order to align with National Planning Policy Framework. The Essex Minerals Local Plan provides information regarding issues and duties to inform the Plan minerals policies.
Strategic Housing Land Availability	The assessment identifies a pool of sites within Castle Point that are suitable,	These documents will be key in identifying sites for

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Assessment (2018), to be updated (Urban Land Capacity Assessment) in 2024, and Brownfield Land Register (2022)	available, and achievable, and gives information on what the likely timescales for delivery may be, and the potential capacity of each site. It does not determine whether a site should be allocated for development; rather, it informs the decision-making process for preparing a new Plan.	assessment as 'reasonable alternatives' within the SA and identifying the urban capacity of the borough. From the Urban Capacity Assessment, the Borough Council will allocate suitable, available, and deliverable / developable sites for housing and employment within the Plan.
Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) (2018) and SPD (2020)	The purpose of this Strategy and SPD is to ensure that recreational pressures are avoided on Habitats Sites in and around the Essex coast including within the Castle Point Borough.	The RAMS work has identified impacts for consideration in the SA and HRA and also will help inform necessary policy approaches within the Plan regarding the impacts on Habitats Sites.
Essex Design Guide (live document)	The Essex Design Guide is an on-line tool that assists developers in better place-making across Essex through effective urban built design solutions that respond to good practice and local characteristics.	Should this be effectively adopted as a guide to inform the design of development in Castle Point (through policy in the Plan), then the document will inform the Plan and the SA.
Greenbelt Review Part 1 (2018)	The Review assesses the Green Belt across the Borough against the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF. It identifies and assesses the suitability of parcels of Greenbelt land that may or may not be suitable to release for development purposes / needs. It adopts an established best practice approach to Green Belt reviews.	The GBR and the SA are intrinsically linked in terms of their assessment of suitability and sustainability. The GBR will inform the SA regarding the assessment of development options within the Greenbelt.
South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, 2020, ASELA	Provides a vision for landscape infrastructure across South Essex and outlines a coordinated approach to be supported by the Joint Strategic Plan and Local Plans.	To help inform Castle Point Plan policies for the management and delivery of green and blue infrastructure with regard to development.
Playing Pitch Strategy (2018) Sport and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment (2018)	This report was produced to identify current levels and provision of play pitches across the Castle Point Borough. It assesses issues and future recommended actions for each pitch and sport type.	These reports inform the SA on key issues regarding health and wellbeing within the Borough and assist in making quantitative

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
		judgements of relevant policy options.
South Essex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 1) (2018) - update for Castle Point underway to be completed summer 2024.	The aim of the South Essex Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is to refine the information on flood risk; identify the requirements for Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs); inform the preparation of flood risk policy and guidance; determine the acceptability of flood risk in relation to emergency planning capability; and consider opportunities to reduce flood risk to existing communities and developments through better management of surface water, provision for conveyance and storage for flood water. This document was created for the South Essex authorities of Basildon Borough, Castle Point Borough, Rochford District and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's.	The SFRA is a key document in identifying flood risk issues surrounding allocated and alternative sites within the Plan and SA. A recently commissioned update for Castle Point will ensure that changes to climate change assumptions and emerging best practice will be factored into the assessment providing a better understanding of current and future flood risk.
Castle Point Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 2) underway to be completed Autumn 2024	This will be based on the spatial strategy for Castle Point within the new Castle Point Plan.	The SFRA will be used to inform the Castle Point Plan and the risks arising from strategic allocations. It will also be used to inform planning for flood risk infrastructure in Castle Point.
Castle Point (South Essex) Transport Study, Jacobs, 2024 (LTP4) (underway to be completed by June 2024)	This assessment will identify constraints and the necessary improvements needed to accommodate growth in the Borough.	This assessment will be used to identify any transport impacts within the SA.
Whole Plan Viability Assessment (to be updated Autumn 2024)	This assessment will identify whether schemes put forward by developers and the Council are financially viable in regard to infrastructure requirements and overcoming any other key constraints.	This assessment will be used to identify reasonable alternatives within the SA.
South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (November 2017)	The South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) complements Castle Point's existing Employment and Retail Needs Assessment 2012. It focuses on economic development needs across Basildon Borough, Castle Point Borough, Rochford District, Thurrock	This assessment informs the SA on relevant economic needs issues and assists in the assessment of options and identification of alternatives within the SA.

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	Borough, and Southend- on-Sea Borough Councils.	
<p>Essex Sector Development Strategy May 2022</p> <p>The Essex Sector Development Report: 2023</p>	<p>The Strategy supports Essex County Council, public sector partners, and businesses to effectively plan together for the future economy of the county</p>	<p>This Strategy and Report will help to inform the SA on relevant economic issues at the Castle Point level</p>
<p>Economic Development Strategy (underway / to be completed April 2024)</p>	<p>The Strategy will address economic challenges in the Borough inclusive (but not exhaustive) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the Borough • Supporting local business • Land and premises • A greener more productive economy • An inclusive economy • Vibrant town centres 	<p>This Strategy will help inform the SA on relevant economic needs issues and assists in the assessment of options and identification of alternatives within the emerging new Castle Point Plan.</p>
<p>Castle Point Economic Development Site Review (to be completed May 2024)</p>	<p>To assess the economic development potential of a range of sites across the Borough. To better understand a range of factors which the Castle Point Plan can address with regard to economic growth. Objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating a range of sites across Castle Point, including existing Business Parks • Assessing site potential in terms of suitability for workspace creation, which sectors they may attract. The potential size that the market is seeking, and whether mixed use schemes could provide cross subsidy to make delivery more financially viable. • Reviewing site ability to be environmentally friendly (e.g., via public transport or design) • Assessing potential site financial viability in terms of additional infrastructure costs/constraints • Advising on design requirements to help forge a new economic profile for Castle Point 	<p>To help inform the Castle Point Plan with regard to economic growth.</p>
<p>South Essex Retail Study Volume 1 (May 2017)</p>	<p>This Study provides a common evidence base to assist cooperation between the South Essex authorities on cross-</p>	<p>SA on relevant retail needs issues and assists in the assessment of options and</p>

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
	<p>boundary retail and leisure planning matters. The five authorities include Basildon Borough, Castle Point Borough, Rochford District, Southend-on-Sea Borough and Thurrock Borough Councils.</p> <p>Issues affecting the retail sector are identified by the study as: the polarisation trend, restructuring of the convenience (food) sector, growth of the commercial leisure centre and the effects of digital technology.</p>	<p>identification of alternatives within the SA.</p>
<p>South Essex SHMA Addendum (May 2017)</p>	<p>This addendum follows on from the 2016 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) in light of the 2014 sub-national population projections (SNPP) and South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA). It considers the implications of this newly available evidence on the OAN concluded in the 2016 SHMA. It does not represent a comprehensive update of all elements of the SHMA and is intended to be read alongside the earlier document.</p>	<p>These assessments inform the SA on relevant housing needs issues and assists in the assessment of options and identification of alternatives within the SA regarding quantum.</p>
<p>South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2016)</p>	<p>This report studies the potential housing need in Castle Point from 2014-2037, it is based on varying methodologies to predict population growth from natural change, migration, the London effect, historical trends, and market signals. Employment growth is touched upon, but a more detailed assessment is found within the South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA). The local authorities of Basildon Borough, Castle Point Borough, Rochford District, Southend-on-Sea Borough, and Thurrock Borough Councils are known as Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) and are defined within this document as a single housing market area (HMA). The majority of residents live and work within the TGSE and are likely to move between these authorities compared to other areas.</p>	

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment (2023)	This document considers the needs of the Borough for the period 2023-2043 to identify the size, type and tenure of homes that would be needed in the future, and the housing needs of different groups, including affordable housing.	This assessment informs the SA on relevant housing needs issues and assists in the assessment of options and identification of alternatives within the SA regarding quantum.
Sustainability Appraisal of Sites in the Green Belt (2011) Sustainability Appraisal of Sites Review (2013) & Second Review (2014)	The SA of sites in the Greenbelt for previous Local Plans identifies any sustainability issues regarding sites and seeks to balance the weight of constraints and benefits / need.	Past SA work is useful in the current SA to identify any relevant issues and to help identify or discount any options / alternatives that may or may not be considered reasonable.
Castle Point Urban Characterisation Report (2013) Castle Point Local List of Non-Designated Historic Assets Review (2013) Castle Point Appendix Five: Designated Historic Assets (2022) A Review of Castle Point Heritage Assets is underway to be completed 2024	This Report identifies the key characteristics and threats to the existing built form in the Borough and recommended relevant protection objectives.	These assessments inform the SA on relevant urban and historic environment characterisation issues and assists in the assessment of options and identification of alternatives within the SA.
Air quality Annual Status Report (2016) & The UK Air Quality Action Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide (July 2017)	The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2016 focuses on levels of air pollution specifically in Castle Point. It is Castle Point's statutory duty to review and assess air quality in its area and determine whether or not air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. The main source of air pollution in the Borough is from traffic emissions particularly along the A127, A13 and	These assessments inform the SA on any relevant urban air quality issues and assists in the assessment of options and identification of alternatives within the SA.

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
<p>Essex Air Quality Live Map (for Castle Point)</p> <p>Castle Point Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023)</p>	<p>A130 major routes, along London Road and Canvey Way and at the key junctions of A127 Rayleigh Weir and A13 / A130 Sadlers Farm Junction.</p> <p>Generally, air pollution is considered to be low in Castle Point and currently (March 2024) there are no reported instances where air quality objectives were exceeded at relevant exposure points.</p> <p>The Annual Status Report is designed to provide the public with information relating to local air quality in the Borough, to fulfil the Council's statutory duty to review and assess air quality within its area, and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved.</p>	
<p>Essex Thames Gateway Historic Landscape Characterisation (2007)</p>	<p>This Report identifies the key characteristics and threats to existing landscapes in the Borough and recommended relevant protection objectives.</p>	<p>Landscape is key and emotive factor or theme of sustainability and as such this report informs the SA and allows the integration of relevant specialist input into the appraisal process.</p>
<p>Essex Design Guide – South Essex Surface Water Management Plan (2022)</p>	<p>The South Essex SWMP spans the administrative areas of Basildon, Castle Point and Rochford District Councils. The study area is ranked highest within the county in terms of properties at risk of surface water flooding and is also recognized nationally as a Flood Risk Area (FRA) by the Environment Agency.</p> <p>Canvey Island is located within the study area and is in an FRA in its own right. This is due to the nature of flood risk, arising from multiple flooding sources and complex asset maintenance requirements.</p> <p>The SWMP outlines the preferred surface water management strategy and establishes a more detailed long-term action plan to influence, planning, investments, maintenance, and engagement.</p>	<p>The aims and objectives of this Plan should be integrated into the Castle Point Plan where necessary and adhered to in the assessment and allocation of sites. This Plan informs the SA of relevant issues and possible mitigation measures.</p>

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
<p>Canvey Island IUD Model, 2015 (to be updated, and completed Summer 2024)</p> <p>Canvey Island 6 Point Plan (2015)</p>	<p>This model and 6-point Plan regarding flood risk in Canvey Island and future measures to mitigate and avoid future incidents of flood risk</p>	<p>The aims and objectives of this Plan should be integrated into the Plan where necessary and adhered to in the assessment and allocation of sites. This Plan informs the SA of relevant issues and possible mitigation measures.</p>
<p>Castle Point Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Version for consultation 2024</p> <p>Castle Point Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report 2023</p>	<p>The BNG SPD has been prepared to help transition to mandatory BNG. Its aim is to provide guidance on specific sites or issues.</p> <p>The Screening Report has been prepared to assess whether or not the BNG SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive.</p>	<p>The aims and objectives of the SPD are aimed at complimenting policies within the existing Local Plan and for the new Castle Point Plan.</p>
<p>Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping for Castle Point Plan (completion due Summer 2024)</p> <p>Habitats Regulations Assessment for Castle Point Plan (completions due Autumn 2024)</p>	<p>To identify the designated and candidate habitat sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection areas) that could be affected by the Castle Point Plan and that should therefore be considered through the HRA process. It provides baseline information that can inform the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), helping to ensure alignment and consistency between the HRA and SA processes.</p> <p>Will assess the level of impacts that could be caused to habitat sites as a result of development proposals.</p>	<p>To help inform the Castle Point Plan making process and evidence base with regard to housing and economic growth.</p>
<p>Castle Point Local Wildlife Site Review (to be completed Spring 2024)</p>	<p>To inform the Castle Point Plan, and aid the Council's approach to Biodiversity Net Gain and infrastructure planning. To inform recommendations for landowners to enable them to access the BNG 'market'.</p>	<p>To compliment policies within the existing Local Plan and for the new Castle Point Plan.</p>

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
Open Space Assessment and Review (to be completed Spring 2024)	To inform the current situation in relation to accessibility, quantity and quality of open spaces in the Borough. To identify opportunities for these open spaces to contribute towards high quality green infrastructure in the Borough.	To inform the Castle Point Plan in green infrastructure planning and plan making. To also secure developer contributions and other sources of funding for open space works.
Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, ECC, 2020	To take a positive approach to enhance, protect and create an inclusive and integrated network of high-quality green infrastructure in Greater Essex, to create a countrywide understanding of green infrastructure.	To guide and shape planning and other services through setting principles to inform local plan making to enable a coherent approach and partner collaboration in the delivery and long-term management of multi-functional assets, which will provide environmental, social and economic benefits for Greater Essex.
South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, ASELA, 2020	To provide a place-specific vision for landscape infrastructure across South Essex, and to outline a coordinated approach to be supported by the Joint Strategic Plan for South Essex and Local Plans in the South Essex area.	To compliment policies within the existing Local Plan and for informing / assisting with new policies within the new Castle Point Plan.
Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plan Stage 1 and Stage 2 Analysis, 2023	To identify opportunities for enhancements to the walking and cycling infrastructure within the borough.	To understand opportunities for walking and cycling improvements in Castle Point.
Castle Point Transport Evidence Refresh Interim Report, Mott Macdonald, 2018	To refresh the transport evidence base for the Castle Point Plan based on the quantitative findings of this refresh, and sets out a summary of the findings.	To help inform the Castle Point Plan policies for transport and development proposals.
Developer Contributions Guidance SPDs, 2023	To provide advice to developers on when and how the Council will expect to use Section 106 Agreements alongside the CIL to secure an acceptable development that is sustainable and contributes towards a high-quality environment supported by the services, facilities and infrastructure required.	To compliment policies within the existing Local Plan and for informing / assisting with new policies within the new Castle Point Plan.
CIL Charging Schedule, May 2023	The Schedule sets out the types of development liable for CIL, and the amount that will be charged.	To compliment policies within the existing Local Plan and for informing / assisting with new policies within the new Castle Point Plan.
Habitat Regulations Assessment for	To provide an Assessment as to whether an emerging local plan is likely to have a significant effect on the	To assist with informing policies within the plan making process.

Local Plans and Programmes	Purpose / Main Aims and objectives	Relevance to the Castle Point Plan / SA
<p>previous plan (withdrawn)</p> <p>Habitat Regulations Assessment Scoping for Castle Point Plan (due Summer 2024)</p> <p>Habitat Regulations Assessment for Castle Point Plan (due Autumn 2024)</p>	<p>achievement of the conservation objectives of the European and International conservation sites within and around the local plan area. To identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.</p> <p>To set out a proposed scope of the Habitats regulations Assessment (HRA) of the emerging Castle Point Plan. To identify designated habitat sites that could be affected by the emerging Castle Point Plan, and that should therefore be considered through the HRA process.</p> <p>To determine whether the emerging Castle Point Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the achievement of the conservation objectives of the European and International conservation sites within and around the Castle Point Plan area.</p>	<p>To assist with the plan making process.</p> <p>The HRA is a process which feeds into the Castle Point Plan making process.</p>
<p>Castle Point Town Centre Shopping Frontages Assessment, 2019</p>	<p>To survey primary shopping frontages and local shopping parades for measuring of Use Class purposes.</p>	<p>To help inform policies within the Castle Point Plan.</p>
<p>Castle Point Infrastructure Delivery Plan (to be completed Autumn 2024)</p>	<p>A plan that will set out the infrastructure needs of the Borough, both in terms of a baseline position and in respect of the growth set out in the Castle Point Plan. It will identify the estimated costs of the infrastructure needed and mechanisms by which funding and delivery may be secured,</p>	<p>To help inform policies within the Castle Point Plan relating to economic and housing growth in the Borough.</p>

Castle Point Borough Council Plan

Draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA):

Scoping Report – 2024:

Annex B – Baseline Information

Contents

1. Introduction.....	5
1.1 Background	5
1.2 Baseline Information	5
2. Economy and Employment.....	7
2.1 Economy	7
2.2 Employment	9
2.3 Castle Point in context of the South Essex Economic Land Availability Assessment, Phase 1 Report (Avison Young, April 2019) and more recent employment forecasting data 11	
2.4 Review of Economic Impact of Tourism, Castle Point Borough 2022 (Destination Research) Report.....	15
2.5 Infrastructure	17
2.5.1 Castle Point: Transport Evidence for the New Castle Point Plan	17
2.5.2 National Infrastructure Hazardous Installations.....	17
2.6 Summary	18
3. Housing.....	19
3.1 Housing Supply.....	21
3.2 Existing Housing Stock.....	22
3.3 Housing Need – Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023.....	23
3.4 Homelessness	24
3.5 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation	24
3.6 Summary	25
4. Population and Society.....	27
4.1 Population	29
4.2 Education	30
4.3 Quality of Life	32
4.4 Summary	39
5. Health and Wellbeing.....	40
5.1 Life Expectancy and Health	40
5.2 Physical Activity and Open Space	42
5.3 General Health of the Borough.....	44
4.5 Summary	46
6. Transport and Connectivity.....	47
6.1 Modes and Flows of Travel.....	47
6.1.1 Essex Local Transport Plan 2011 (LTP3).....	50

6.1.2 Castle Point Transport Assessment.....	52
6.2 Accessibility	52
6.3 Road Safety	58
6.4 Summary	59
7. Cultural Heritage.....	61
7.1 Recorded Archaeological Sites and Finds in Castle Point Borough.....	63
7.1.1 The Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest.....	63
7.2 Listed Building & Conservation Area	65
7.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.....	65
7.4 Historic Parks and Gardens.....	66
7.5 Summary	66
8. Biodiversity and Nature Conservation.....	68
8.1 Biodiversity Action Plans and Assessments.....	70
8.1.1 Biodiversity Action Plan	70
8.1.2 Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment 2019.....	70
8.1.3 Castle Point Local Wildlife Site Review 2024	75
8.2 Designated Sites.....	75
8.2.1 Essex Coastal Recreational Avoidance and Mitigations Strategy	76
8.3 Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services	76
8.4 Biodiversity Net Gain	77
8.5 Summary	78
9. Landscapes	80
9.1 Landscape Features	80
9.1.2 Protected Lanes & Special Verges.....	89
9.2 Agricultural Land Classification	89
9.3 Previously Developed Land	90
9.4 Summary	92
10. Water Environment	94
10.1 Water Courses.....	95
10.2 Water Quality	96
10.3 Flood Risk.....	98
10.4 Summary	100
11. Climate and Energy	102
11.1 Energy Consumption and Emissions	102
11.2 Climate Change	104
11.3 Summary.....	105

12.	Air.....	106
12.1	Air Quality	106
12.2	Noise	110
12.3	Summary.....	111
13.	Material assets (including soil, minerals, and waste)	113
13.1	Local Authority Collected Waste	113
13.2	Transfer Facilities	115
13.3	The Adopted Waste Local Plan for Essex and Southend-on-Sea 2017	117
13.4	Waste Miles.....	117
13.5	Anaerobic Digestion (AD)	117
13.6	Commercial and Industrial Waste (CD & I)	117
13.7	Construction, Demolition and Evacuation Waste (CD & E).....	117
13.8	Summary	118
14.	Minerals	119
14.1	The Adopted Minerals Local Plan 2014.....	119
14.1.1	Sand & Gravel	120
14.1.2	Chalk	121
14.1.3	Policy S5 Creating a network of aggregate recycling facilities.....	121
14.2	Summary.....	123

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This document forms an annex (Annex B) to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report of the Castle Point Plan. An SA/SEA forms part of an assessment process designed to consider and report upon the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies, including their reasonable alternatives. Such an assessment informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of such documents, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects.

The purpose of the Scoping Report is to provide the context for, and determine the scope of, the SA/SEA of the Castle Point Plan and to set out the assessment framework.

This Report is the baseline annex (Annex B) to the main SA Scoping Report.

1.2 Baseline Information

The SEA Directive requires the production of the following information:

“the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;” Annex 1(b).

“the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;” Annex 1(c); and

“any existing problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/ECC” Annex 1(d).

The baseline information identifies current sustainability issues in the Plan Area which should be addressed and provides a basis for predicting and monitoring the effects of implementing the document. To ensure the data collected was relevant and captured the full range of sustainability issues it was categorised under thirteen thematic topics. They cover all the topics referred to in Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive and follow the order of:

- Economy and employment

- Housing
- Population and society
- Health and wellbeing
- Education
- Transport and connectivity
- Cultural heritage
- Biodiversity and nature conservation
- Landscapes
- Water and flood risk
- Climate and energy
- Air
- Waste, soils, and minerals
- Digital infrastructure.

2. Economy and Employment

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The new Castle Point Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which includes as part of its three overarching objectives for the planning system building a “strong, responsive and competitive economy”. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support “economic growth and productivity taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development”. Furthermore, planning policies should “create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt”.

The NPPF states that strategic policies should “set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment”, “seek to address potential barriers to investment” and be flexible to “enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstance”. This policy approach should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth

Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth sets out the Government’s plans to support economic growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. The plan focusses on three pillars of growth: high quality infrastructure, providing skills to succeed and innovation to drive economic growth and create jobs. Each pillar is supported by specific actions, and the growth the plan supports is set out to levelling up the whole of the UK, support transition to net-zero and support the vision of a global Britain.

2.1 Economy

Table 1: Economic Activity

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Number of economically active	48,900	766,300	3,236,000	34,494,000
Percentage of the population economically active	90.2%	80.4%	79.2%	78.1
Job density	0.64	0.78	0.84	0.87

Source: NOMIS Labour Supply (October 2022 – September 2023)

The borough has the highest rate of economic activity at 90.2% compared to the county, region, and country. The rate of economic activity within Castle Point has seen an increase of 9% since 2017.

Table 2: Business Registration and De-registration Rate (2022)

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Birth	400	7,600	31,850	331,540
Death	380	7,715	32,615	340,200
All Active enterprises	3,615	71,995	290,480	2,859,940

Source: ONS, Business Demography 2022 (Released November 2023)

There has been a slight increase in the number of active businesses in Castle Point due to a higher rate of registrations than de-registrations. Compared to sub-national and national figures the Borough has experienced a higher start up rate and a lower de-registration rate indicating a more robust local economy.

Table 3: UK Business Counts

	Castle Point		Essex		East	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Enterprises						
Micro (0 to 9)	2,980	91.5	59,650	89.7	241,525	89.6
Small (10 to 49)	235	7.2	5,725	8.6	22,955	8.5
Medium (50 to 249)	30	0.9	970	1.5	4,125	1.5
Large (250+)	10	0.3	180	0.3	970	0.4
Total	3,255		66,520		269,575	
Local Units¹						
Micro (0 to 9)	3,160	88	63,945	86	263,115	85.2
Small (10 to 49)	365	10.2	8,605	11.6	36,960	12
Medium (50 to 249)	60	1.7	1,595	2.1	7,585	2.5
Large (250+)	5	0.1	190	0.25	1,025	0.3
Total	3,590		74,335		308,685	

Source: Nomis Labor Supply (Released September 2023)

In general, local based businesses are more prevalent within the Borough than in the county and comparatively more when compared to the national figure. Nearly three quarters of all local businesses within the Borough employ 4 or less people and approximately 6% employ more than 20 people.

Table 4: Proportion of businesses by industry type

Industry	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	10 (0.3%)	2,070 (2.8%)	11,235 (3.6%)	126,665 (4.1%)
Production	195 (5.4%)	4,240 (5.7%)	16,765 (5.4%)	162,640 (5.3%)
Construction	970 (27%)	14,240 (19.1%)	47,675 (15.4%)	367,860 (12%)
Motor Trades	110 (3.1%)	2,455 (3.3%)	10,260 (3.3%)	88,685 (3%)
Wholesale	110 (3.1%)	2,970 (4%)	12,210 (4%)	119,790 (4%)
Retail	325 (9.1%)	6,035 (8.1%)	25,995 (8.4%)	297,465 (9.7%)

¹ A local unit is a place of work, a factory, shop, or a branch. An Enterprise can be thought of as the overall business, made up of all the individual sites or workplaces (local units). It is defined as the smallest combination of legal units (generally based on VAT and/or PAYE records) that has a certain degree of autonomy within an enterprise group (ONS).

Industry	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Transport & Storage (including postal)	135 (3.8 %)	3,215 (4.3%)	16,100 (5.2%)	141,665 (4.6%)
Accommodation & Food Services	170 (4.7%)	4,005 (5.4%)	18,765 (6.1%)	217,350 (7%)
Information & Communication	130 (3.6%)	3,830 (5.2%)	18,530 (6%)	193,160 (6.3%)
Finance & Insurance	85 (2.4%)	1,575 (2.1%)	6,270 (2%)	70,265 (2.3%)
Property	115 (3.2%)	2,905 (4%)	11,890 (4%)	123,850 (4%)
Professional, Scientific & Technical	410 (11.4%)	9,715 (13.1%)	41,825 (14%)	429,575 (14%)
Business Administration & Support Services	320 (9%)	6,905 (9.3%)	26,825 (8.7%)	265,420 (8.6%)
Public Administration & Defense	15 (0.4%)	485 (0.7%)	2,585 (0.8%)	23,695 (0.8%)
Education	85 (2.4%)	1,605 (2.2%)	7,325 (2.4%)	74,140 (2.4%)
Health	155 (4.3%)	3,440 (4.6%)	14,970 (4.8%)	162,980 (5.3%)
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and other Services	250 (7%)	4,645 (6.2%)	19,460 (6.3%)	207,920 (6.7%)
Total	3,590	74,335	308,685	3,082,125

Source: ONS, 2023 data

There are comparatively more businesses within construction within the district than the county but noticeable fewer businesses within agriculture, forestry & fishing.

2.2 Employment

Table 5: Employment and unemployment

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
In employment	48,100 (88.7%)	737,600 (77.3%)	3,126,000 (76.3%)	32,303,000 (75.1%)
Unemployed	1,500 (2.9%)	28,700 (3.7%)	110,000 (3.4%)	1,297,000 (3.9%)

Source: NOMIS, October 2023 – December 2023 data

88.7% of the working population in Castle Point Borough are in employment which is higher than sub-national and national employment levels. The proportion of the Borough's working population who are economically active but unemployed is 2.9% which is below sub-national and national unemployment figures.

Table 6: Economically active population unemployed

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Economically active and unemployed	1,500 (2.9%)	28,700 (3.7%)	3.8%	3.7%

Out of work benefits	1,245 (2.4%)	27,890 (3%)	3.2%	3.8%
----------------------	--------------	-------------	------	------

Source: NOMIS, October 2022 – September 2023, and February 2024

Castle Point has a lower number of people who are of an economically active age but are unemployed when compared to the county, regional and national average. The percentage of the population claiming out of work benefits is also lower, but only marginally.

Table 7: Employment by occupation

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Soc 2020 major group 1-3	43%	52.1%	53.4%	52.6%
1 Managers, directors, and senior officials	#	11.7%	12.3%	10.5%
2 Professional occupations	#	26.2%	25.9%	27%
3 Associate professional & technical	#	14.1%	15%	14.9%
Soc 2020 major group 4-5	24.7%	21.8%	19.8%	18.4%
4 Administrative & secretarial	#	12.7%	10.8%	9.6%
5 Skilled trades occupations	16.9%	9%	9%	8.7%
Soc 2020 major group 6-7	21.7%	14.3%	13.4%	14.1%
6 Caring, leisure and Other Service occupations	#	8.5%	7.7%	7.9%
7 Sales and customer service occs	#	5.8%	5.7%	6.1%
Soc 2020 major group 8-9	#	11.8%	13.3%	14.9%
8 Process plant & machine operatives	!	4.2%	5.2%	5.4%
9 Elementary occupations	#	7.6%	8.1%	9.5%

Source: NOMIS, October 2022- September 2023 data

Sample size too small for reliable estimate

! Estimate is not available since sample size is disclosive

- The sample size is too small to allow data to be produced

Notes: Numbers and % are for those of 16+ % is a proportion of all persons in employment

The majority of jobs within the Borough and across all areas are in Soc 2020 major group 1-3 consisting of managers and professionals. For the Borough this accounts for 43% of all employee jobs. Two other industries in the district provide a higher proportion of employee jobs compared to the county, sub-national and national equivalent these are Soc 2020 major group 4-5 and Soc 2020 major group 6-7.

Table 8: Gross weekly pay by residence and workplace

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Gross weekly pay by residence				
Full time workers	£681.0	£711.6	£705.7	£682.6
Male full time workers	£761.8	£770.5	£755.6	£728.3
Female full time workers	£656.5	£632.5	£635.3	£628.8
Gross weekly pay by workplace				
Full time workers	£663.5	£657.7	£673.5	£682.6

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	Great Britain
Male full time workers	#	£709.1	£717.8	£728.3
Female full time workers	£578.8	£586.4	£607.9	£629.1

Source: Nomis, 2023 data

Residents of the Borough in full-time employment on average earn a weekly salary of £681.0 which is slightly below the UK average and of the region and county. A breakdown of salaries shows that male residents earn considerably more at £761.80 than their female counterpart, with females earning more than the UK average.

Weekly salaries for those working in full-time employment within the district are lower than salaries of district residents at £663.5, which is considerably lower than other areas. Businesses within the East of England region in general pay lower salaries than UK as a whole. Overall, weekly salaries within the district are lower than the regional and national average, but higher than the county average.

2.3 Castle Point in context of the South Essex Economic Land Availability Assessment, Phase 1 Report (Avison Young, April 2019) and more recent employment forecasting data

At the stage of preparing this SA Scoping Report, an Economic Development Site Review is currently underway. This Report therefore analyses previous earlier evidence to understand Castle Point in context with South Essex.

Table 9 below indicates the projected employment growth for Castle Point Borough in context with the Association of South Essex Local Authorities for an earlier projected forecast for the period 2016 - 2036 within the South Essex Economic Land Availability Assessment, Phase 1 Report (Avison Young, April 2019). In a later Addendum to the Assessment² due to potential impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit, Avison Young compared the 2016 EEFM to the 2021 Experian data which presented some small differences at a South Essex level, although these were not considered to be significant.

Table 9 also illustrates a more recent forecast for the period 2022 to 2040.

It should be noted that in 2020, the Use Class Order (England)³ was amended, inclusive of a new Use Class E: Commercial, Business and Service replacing A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, D1 and D2. These previous classes were brought together under the new use Class E. For ease of reference the earlier Use Class designations have been unchanged in this Report.

² South Essex ELAA Demand Addendum Briefing Note, Avison Young 2022

³ Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020

Table 9: Projected Employment Growth Change since 2016 for ASELA authorities 2016 – 2036 and 2022 - 2040

Jobs change⁴ (2016 – 36)	Basildon	Brentwood	Castle Point	Rochford	Southend	Thurrock	ASELA
Office (B1a/b)	4,390	1,089	690	538	2,987	2,084	11,778
Manufacturing / industrial (B1c,B2)	1,352	-107	-68	357	-269	1,115	2,380
Warehousing (B8)	-3	-117	-51	-111	-232	292	-222
Total B class	5,738	864	571	784	2,486	3,491	13,935
% of Total ASELA growth	41%	6%	4%	6%	18%	25%	100%
Jobs change⁵ (2022 – 40)	Basildon	Brentwood	Castle Point	Rochford	Southend	Thurrock	ASELA
Office (B1a/b)	2,800	1,700	700	900	2,500	5,100	13,700
Manufacturing / industrial (B1c,B2)	-2,000	-500	-500	-300	-800	-500	-5,100
Warehousing (B8)	100	0	0	100	100	600	900
Total B class	900	1,200	200	700	1,800	5,200	10,000
% of Total ASELA growth	9%	12%	2%	7%	18%	52%	100%

2016 - 2036

Table 9 above illustrates the job change projections for 2016 to 2036 in comparison to the forecasted job change in 2022 to 2040. The 2016 to 2036 forecast illustrates a job increase in the office sector, but a decline in industrial and warehousing sectors within the Castle Point Borough. This is in contrast to the strength of industrial jobs growth for Basildon, Thurrock, and to a lesser extent Rochford.

For the same period the jobs growth in Castle Point, Rochford and Brentwood is much more modest than in Southend, Thurrock, and Basildon, thought to be a reflection in the strength of office jobs growth driving the respective growth in each authority.

For Castle Point, there is a negative requirement for land for manufacturing, industrial and warehousing employment uses, but a positive requirement for land for office activity.

⁴ South Essex Economic Land Availability Assessment, Phase 1 Report (Avison Young, 2019)

⁵ Cambridge Econometrics, Employment by industry data, South Essex Projections

Recommendations in the 2019 South Essex Economic Land Availability Assessment

The 2019 Assessment made recommendations regarding the requirements for supporting economic growth

- To consider the suitability of employment activities at the strategic level as well as local authority level.
- New settlements, as well as new and existing town centres, will play an important role in accommodating employment floor space as part of mixed use development, which can help to counteract the residential development pressures on employment land.
- To consider the shortage of flexible small business space and over-reliance on dated poor quality employment stock that does not meet modern occupier requirements.

To consider the review of:

- Road infrastructure investment.
- Skills and education investment to improve locals skills levels and support.
- Digital infrastructure requirements.
- Public transport accessibility improvements for both urban and rural locations.
- New residential development to support localised economic growth

2022 – 2040

For the period 2022 – 2040, Table 9 illustrates a significant decline in the industrial sector across all South Essex areas in contrast to the 2016 – 2036 period forecast. The 2022 – 2040 forecast illustrates a decline in warehousing within Brentwood and Castle Point with no forecasted growth compared to the other South Essex areas, but also no forecasted loss of jobs in this sector.

The 2022 – 2040 forecast illustrates an increase across all of the South Essex areas for office jobs growth with Castle Point seeing the lowest growth.

There is still a negative requirement for land as presented in the 2016 – 2036 forecast for industrial uses within Castle Point as well as all the other South Essex areas. There is also still a positive land requirement for office activity.

South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) 2017

The 2017 EDNA provided an analysis of the economic and employment land opportunities and challenges for South Essex and established a strategic, multi-authority strategy for economic opportunity. It provided guidance on land delivery to help set the direction for future investment.

Table 10: EEFM⁶ Base Forecast Employment Change for South Essex authorities from EDNA⁷ (2016 – 2036)

Employment (jobs)	Basildon	Castle Point	Rochford	Southend-on-Sea	Thurrock	Total South Essex
Office	3,820	293	523	2,571	2,341	9,548
Manufacturing /Industrial	723	-392	-346	-1,306	545	-776
Warehouse	371	-88	-21	-79	321	504
Total	4,914	-187	156	1,186	3,207	9,276
% of Total SE growth	53%	-2%	2%	13%	35%	100%

The EEFM forecast above in Table 10 above, clearly supported the data from the South Essex Economic Land Availability Assessment 2019 with regard to forecasted office growth and jobs and forecasted decline in manufacturing / industrial uses and jobs for the earlier forecasted period 2016 to 2036. The more recent data illustrated in Table 9 for the forecasted period 2022 – 2040 does, however, present a more up to date forecast indicating significant changes in the industrial and warehousing sectors.

Summary of Recommendations in the South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment 2017

- Improving local skills levels and improving economic prospects.
- Increasing productivity levels and GVA growth.
- Promoting the culture of entrepreneurship.
- Supporting and promoting key economic growth sectors.
- Maintaining a Flexible and Responsive Employment Land Portfolio.
- Elevating the role and position of key town centres.
- Maximising strong transport connections and making the case for transport investment.
- Prioritising required amenities and infrastructure to support growth; and
- Strengthen the sub-region's connections and relationship with London.

Analysis of Existing Employment Sites in Castle Point Borough - Future Advice

The 2017 EDNA analysed the main existing employment sites within the Castle Point Borough and set out future advice with regard to protection, retention, and improvement as summarised in Table 11. Further work on Economic Development Sites is underway at this time, but this provides a good starting position for understanding the future role of these employment sites.

Table 11: Castle Point Existing Employment Sites Summary Future Advice from EDNA 2017

⁶EEFM - East of England Forecasting Model, a set of baseline forecasts for housing and jobs (2016 – 2036)

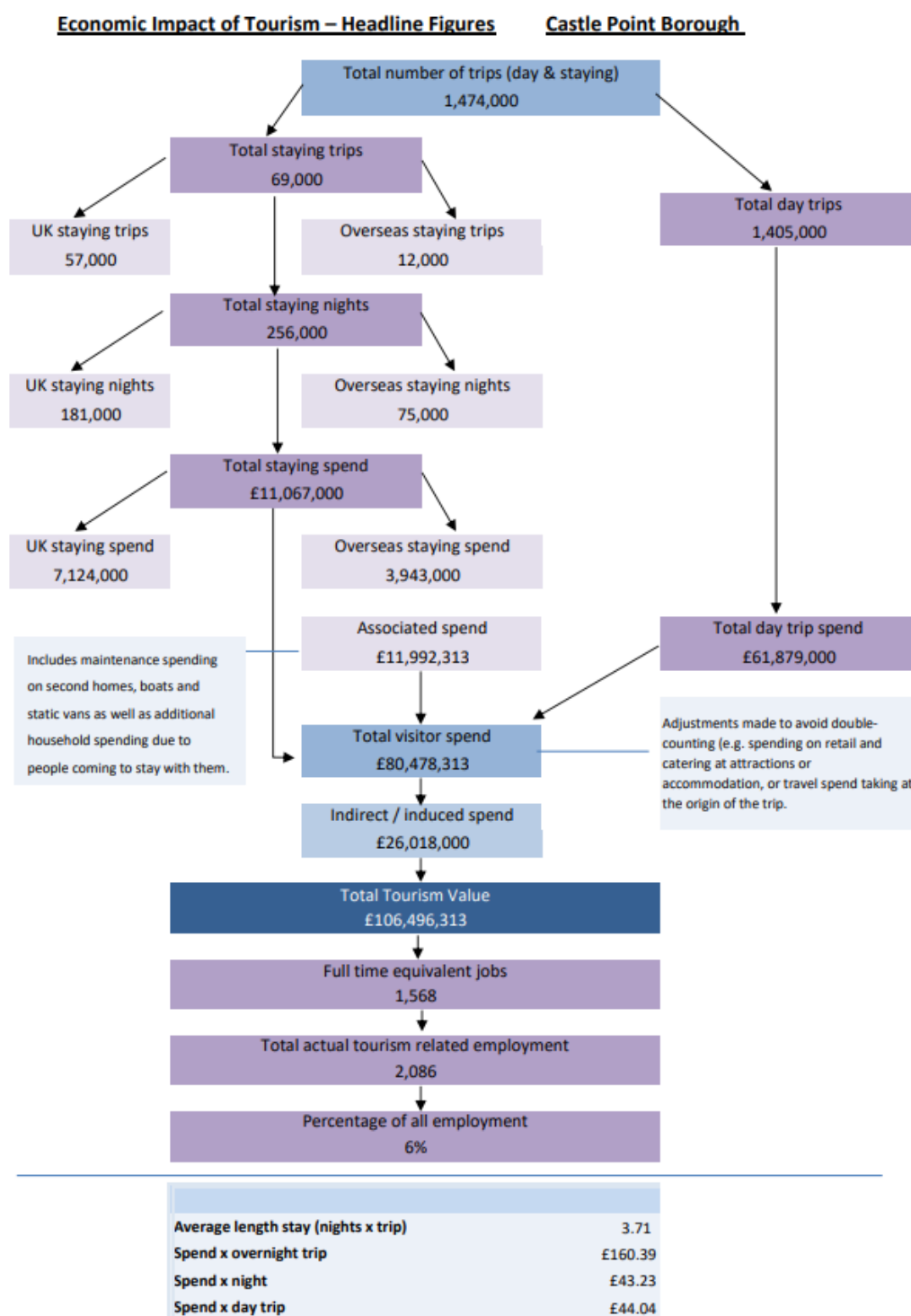
⁷ South Essex Economic Development Needs Assessment 2017

Council Site Ref	Site	Site Cluster	Site Area	Future Advice
CP1	Gas and oil Receptor and Storage Facilities	Canvey Island	22.93	Protect and Maintain Supporting port related transport & logistics activity
CP6	Castle Point Borough Council Offices	A13 Corridor	2.21	Protect and Maintain Appropriate for occupier and local employment requirements
CP8	Lychgate Industrial Estate	Northern Cluster	2.57	Significant Intervention Required Invest in stock improvement to attract occupiers and maximise opportunity created by site's connectivity
E2	Charfleets Industrial Estate	Canvey Island	27.53	Protect and Maintain Supports waste related and general industrial activity
E3	Manor Trading Estate	Northern Cluster	15.05	Protect and Maintain Although monitor close proximity to residential along western boundary
E4	Stadium Way Industrial Estate	Northern Cluster	8.31	Protect and Maintain Suitable for B class employment activity and current occupiers

2.4 Review of Economic Impact of Tourism, Castle Point Borough 2022 (Destination Research) Report

The Economic Impact of Tourism Report examined the volume and value of tourism and the impact of visitor expenditure on the local economy. The report analysed tourism activity at the Castle Point level in context with the UK. The findings indicated that overall domestic trips, including overnight trips were preferred to overseas trips due to financial pressures in the UK. At the regional level, there has been an increase in volume (21%) and value (50%) since 2021. The report indicated that increases in visitor spending generates new employment with 'actual' jobs being higher when part time and seasonal working is considered. Figure 1 illustrates the Headline Figure for Castle Point Borough in context with the UK.

Figure 1: Economic Impact of Tourism – Headline Figures



Source: Economic Impact of Tourism, Castle Point Borough 2022 (Destination Research)

The report also indicated that tourist accommodation occupancy is recovering from the impacts of the Covid pandemic, which saw a noticeable decline in 2021 at the national level as set out in Table 12.

Table 12: Accommodation Occupancy – England

Accommodation Occupancy – Room Occupancy - England		
Year	Average annual room occupancy	Difference from 2019
2019	77.70%	
2021	52.50%	-26.20%
2022	73.40%	-4.30%

Source: Economic Impact of Tourism, Castle Point Borough 2022 (Destination Research)

Should demand for overnight accommodation within the Castle Point Borough increase (established through future business surveys) to the level that outweighs supply requiring new hotel development, then it is suggested that they would be incorporated into mixed use developments.

2.5 Infrastructure

2.5.1 Castle Point: Transport Evidence for the New Castle Point Plan

An updated local Transport Assessment is being prepared to support the new Castle Point Plan and help to inform infrastructure planning and the associated securing of developer contributions and other sources of funding for transport infrastructure.

The new Assessment will inform any transport interventions required based on the modelling of transport in and around the Borough, as well as the testing of potential development options.

2.5.2 National Infrastructure Hazardous Installations

There are two top tier Hazardous Installations in the Borough which are considered to be National Infrastructure but pose a risk to the resident community. Their impacts and risk are managed in line with the COMAH Regulations⁸, but nonetheless, it is important to be mindful of them and the risk they pose through the planning process by avoiding vulnerable developments within their proximity.

National Planning Practice Guidance⁹ provides for development proposals around hazardous installations.

⁸ [COMAH – Control of Major Accident Hazards \(COMAH\) competent authority](#)

⁹ [National Planning Practice Guidance – Hazardous substances Para: 002 Ref. ID: 39-002-20161209](#), 2016

2.6 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Economic activity within the Borough is greater than average at 90.2%.</p> <p>Proportion of micro-businesses is greater than average.</p> <p>Construction companies make up over a quarter of the total businesses in the Borough.</p> <p>Unemployment is lower than average.</p> <p>Residents receive less than average gross pay. There is inequality of pay between men and women.</p>	<p>It is uncertain how the job market will change without the new Castle Point Plan. The degree of change in local circumstances will be influenced by economic issues at the national and international level. This included uncertainties posed by Brexit and slow economic growth in the UK economy¹⁰.</p> <p>Infrastructure in place may not have the capacity to support future business growth. The new Castle Point Plan should include policies that will help address traffic congestion and digital connectivity that will be necessary to make employment sites in Castle Point more attractive to potential investors.</p> <p>Without employment land allocations, development could be sporadic and/or unsustainable.</p> <p>Castle Point needs to ensure a future supply of jobs and continued investment to ensure identified employment development opportunities are taken forward and issues of income deprivation are better addressed.</p>	<p>Changes following Brexit.</p> <p>Changes following the Covid pandemic.</p> <p>Investment decisions across TGSE may falter or be sporadic.</p>

¹⁰ The UK avoided falling into recession at the end of 2022 after the economy performed better than expected. The economy continued to grow in the first two quarters of 2023, however it stagnated in the third quarter and saw zero growth between July and September 2023. In March 2023, the Office for Budget responsibility predicted that GDP in the UK would grow by 1.8% in 2024 and 2.5% in 2025. However, these figures were revised in November 2023 to present more modest levels of 0.7% growth in 2024 and 1.4% in 2025.

3. Housing

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

NPPF (2023)

The new Castle Point Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which includes as part of its objective the promotion of “strong, vibrant and healthy communities” by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing”. Ultimately, planning policies should “aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places”.

The NPPF states that strategic policies should set out the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for “housing (including affordable housing)...[as well as] community facilities) such as health, education and cultural infrastructure”. Policies should reflect “the size, type and tenure of housing needed”. This policy approach is to include but should not be limited to housing requirements relating to affordable homes, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, those who rent homes and people wishing to commission the construction of their own homes. Major developments that involve the provision of new housing planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be delivered for affordable home ownership subject to conditions and exemptions.

To help diversify opportunities for builders, the new Castle Point Plan should promote a better mix of site sizes and increase the number of schemes that can be built out quickly to meet housing need. The NPPF states that at least 10% of the sites allocated for housing through a local authority’s plan should be half a hectare or smaller.

The NPPF promotes a theme of enhancing healthy and safe communities, which is to be achieved by creating places which “promote social interaction (and) enable and support healthy lifestyles”. As part of this approach, social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs should be guided by planning policies that “plan positively provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship) and other local services; support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community; help prevent unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services”.

National Planning Practice Guidance

The NPPF is supported by planning practice guidance relating to the housing supply and delivery, the housing needs of different groups, including older and disabled people, and healthy and safe communities.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act makes a range of legislative changes associated with the Government's "levelling up" agenda, which intends to reduce geographical, economic, social and health inequalities. The Bill includes extensive changes to the planning system, which the new Castle Point Plan must respond to.

Spatial Planning for Health

Spatial Planning for Health is a resource developed by Public Health England which sets out the linkages between spatial planning and health, based on the findings from an umbrella literature review. The review also highlights the inextricable link between the built and natural environment and health. Key findings of the review include:

- Improving neighbourhood walkability and infrastructure designed to promote walking and cycling in neighbourhoods, was found to be associated with numerous positive health outcomes.
- Areas of mixed land use, diverse housing types and high-quality public transport were found to be associated with positive health outcomes such as increased physical activity levels and reduced risk of pedestrian injury.
- Good quality housing and affordable housing was associated with a variety of positive health outcomes.
- Among vulnerable groups provision of affordable housing was associated with improved quality of life, mental health and clinical health-related outcomes.
- Improvement to air quality, prioritisation of neighbourhood tree planting. And provision of open space and green spaces, was associated with increased physical activity, increased environmental cooling, and improved general physical health outcomes.
- Provision of infrastructure to support walking and cycling and increased access to buildings and facilities was associated with increased physical activity and improved social engagement among older adults.

- Flooding was associated with a number of health-related issues including carbon monoxide poisoning and poor mental health outcomes.
- The provision of open and green space, high quality public transport and improved air quality was associated with numerous positive health outcomes.

Housing Targets

The reform of the planning system by the new Government has led to significant changes in the way housing targets are devised which will impact on future housing supply. The revocation of Regional Strategies (including the East of England Plan) has given local planning authorities the responsibility of setting their own housing targets based on housing land supply, need, and robust supporting evidence.

The revisions to the NPPF in 2018 introduced a new standardised methodology for calculating housing needs. This methodology indicates that over a ten-year period, Castle Point's housing need is 355 dwellings per annum. Over a 10-year period that would equate to 3,550 dwellings. It is however expected that with new future population projections data this number could rise alongside a subsequent revision of the NPPF's standardised OAN methodology.

3.1 Housing Supply

Table 13: Net additional dwellings in future years

Time Period	Target	NPPF Buffer (20%)	Under-delivery / Backlog	Required Supply (Five Years)	Supply identified in Trajectory	Number of Years of Supply
2024-2029	1,775	355	828	1,775	947	2.22
2029-2034	1,755	355	898	3,550	877	2.06

Source: Annual Monitoring Report April 2023 - March 2024

The table above indicates that the Council is unable to identify five years' worth of housing land supply up to the period 2034 and will be unable to do so going forward in the absence of an up-to-date local plan. It is therefore necessary to prepare a new Castle Point Plan with identified strategic housing land allocations to overcome this situation.

3.2 Existing Housing Stock

Table 14: Dwelling Stock by tenure

	Local Authority (incl. owned by other LAs)	Private Registered Provider	Other public sector	Private sector	Total
Castle Point	(3.8%)	(1.5%)	(0%)	(95%)	38,977
Essex	(6.4%)	(7.7%)	(0.04%)	(86%)	661,625
England	(6.3%)	(10.4%)	(0.13%)	(83.2%)	25,160,404

Source: Dwelling Stock by Tenure, ONS, 2022

There were 38,977 dwellings within Castle Point Borough as of March 2022 which was the fourth smallest of all local authority areas in Essex. The composition of dwelling stock was similar to that of Essex, East of England, and England with the majority of dwellings being in the private sector. The Borough reported the highest proportion of stock within the private sector at 95%. In contrast there were considerably fewer dwellings owned by Private Registered Providers in Castle Point.

Table 15: Mean dwelling prices (£)

Administrative Area	Average dwelling price
Castle Point	£354,291
Essex	£359,191
East of England	£337,000
England	£298,575

Source: Land Registry Data (as at January 2024)

The average dwelling price within Castle Point Borough is £354,291. This is significantly higher than the national average. The average dwelling prices for the Borough and Essex are both above the national average while the regional average is lower.

Table 16: Housing price to income ratio

Year	House price to income ratio			
	Castle Point	Essex	East	England
2020	11.2	10.3	9.47	7.86
2021	12.2	11.52	10.57	9.06
2022	12.3	11.22	10.27	8.47
2023	11.2	10.63	9.76	8.26

Source: ONS, House price to workplace-based earnings ratio, 2024

House price to income ratio within the district is higher than the county, regional and national averages. From 2020- 2023 the housing price to income ratio has increased both within the district and nationally. Castle Point has a ratio of 11.2, whereas, Essex, East of England and England have ratios of 10.63, 9.76 and 8.26 respectively.

3.3 Housing Need – Castle Point Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023

Castle Point Borough Council has worked alongside Opinion Research Services to prepare a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA). This considers the needs of the Borough for the period 2023-2043 to identify size, type and tenure of homes that would be needed in the future, and the housing needs of different groups, including affordable housing. The document has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice guidance (PPG).

The LHNA will be used by the council to develop its policies for affordable housing in the Borough.

Local Housing Needs Assessments (LHNAs) are a crucial part of the evidence base that informs policy and helps shape strategic thinking in housing need and planning.

The Assessment has primarily used secondary data but has also reported upon a telephone survey of 501 Castle Point Borough residents that was conducted by the consultants between June and July 2023. The survey included the following topics:

- Your Home
- Moving Home
- Separate Homes for New Households
- Home Adaptations

Table 17: Objectively Assessed Need for Castle Point 2023-43

Castle Point	Annual Need
ONS 2018 based household projections: 10-year migration trend	197
Adjustment for Census and Mid-year population estimates 2021	-1
Vacancy rate applied	+7
C2 Dwelling equivalent	+5
Concealed families	+13
Suppressed household formation / Pent-up demand	+34
Total	255

Source: Local Housing Needs Assessment Castle Point (Opinion Research Services 2023)

Table 18: Assessing total need for affordable housing in Castle point 2023-2043

Castle Point 2023-2043	Affordable Housing Need		Overall Housing Need
	Households unable to afford	Households aspiring to home ownership	
Current housing need in 2023	643	1,579	2,222
Future housing need 2023-2043	490	1,495	1,985
Total Affordable Housing Need	1,133	3,075	4,208

Source: Local Housing Needs Assessment Castle Point (Opinion Research Services 2023)

It should be noted that the calculation for assessing total need for affordable housing gets adjusted further in to the plan-making process, taking into account the fact that many of those who aspire to own their homes will meet their needs through buying homes on the second hand market which can be more affordable than purchasing new build homes. Therefore, the actual need for affordable home ownership is much less.

3.4 Homelessness

Table 19: Number of homelessness acceptances where a duty owed

Year	Number of homelessness acceptances assessed as owed a duty (owed prevention duty ¹¹ or relief duty ¹²)
2022 - 23	248
2021 - 22	241
2020 - 21	232
2019 - 20	289
2018 - 19	304

Source: Homelessness Statistics, DLUHC

There has been a significant drop in homelessness acceptances since 2019 in the Borough. This decrease of homelessness acceptances is not in line with national trends, which have seen an increase of 10.7%, whereas the Borough saw a decrease of 18%.

3.5 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

At the time of compiling this Scoping Report a new Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is being prepared to support the new Castle Point Plan. This Scoping Report therefore examines the most recent Assessment – Greater Essex Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2018.

The 2018 GTAA identified a need for no additional pitches for households that met the planning definition.

There was, however, a need for 5 additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition.

Table 20: Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Castle Point 2016-2033

Status	Total
Meet Planning Definition	0

¹¹ Prevention duties include activities aimed at preventing homelessness (DLUHC)

¹² Relief duties where help is required to secure accommodation (DLUHC)

Status	Total
Unknown	0-1 (10% = 0)
Do Not Meet Planning Definition	5

Source: Greater Essex GTTAA, Opinion Research Services, 2018

Table 21: Breakdown of sites and yards by local authority

Local Authority	Gypsies and Travellers		Travelling Showpeople	
	Sites	Pitches	Yards	Plots
Basildon	102	206	1	2
Braintree	10	59	2	6
Brentwood	20	55	0	0
Castle Point	2	7	0	0
Chelmsford	22	81	3	42
Colchester	11	28	0	0
Epping Forest	54	148	1	9
Harlow	3	37	0	0
Maldon	17	61	1	5
Rochford	13	20	0	0
Southend-on-Sea	0	0	0	0
Tendring	6	17	0	0
Thurrock	18	131	2	8
Uttlesford	19	61	1	1
Total - Essex	279	780	9	65
Total – Greater Essex	297	911	11	73

Source: Greater Essex GTTAA, Opinion Research Services, 2018

3.6 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>The NPPF revisions in 2018 introduced a new standardised methodology for calculating housing needs. This methodology indicates that over a ten-year period, Castle Point's housing need is 342 dwellings per annum. It is however expected that with new population projections data, this number could rise alongside a subsequent revision of the NPPF's standardised OAN methodology.</p> <p>Housing supply is currently below the annual requirement.</p> <p>The percentage of privately owned dwellings is greater than average at 95%.</p>	<p>Homelessness rates could continue to increase in future years.</p> <p>House prices could continue to increase, due to proximity to London.</p> <p>Homes could be constructed at a lesser standard due to constraints.</p>	<p>TGSE may not meet objectively assessed needs.</p>

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Mean house prices are greater than the national average, but lower than county average.</p> <p>Housing price to income ratio is higher than average at 11.2.</p> <p>Homelessness is increasing at a higher rate 20/21; 232, 21/22; 241, 22/23; 248.</p> <p>The district requires 5 gypsy/traveller pitches.</p> <p>Future Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land availability • Tenure models • London effect • Homelessness • Good quality homes, in all tenures 	<p>Without the Local Plan:</p> <p>Not planning positively for an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures and locations.</p> <p>Stalling delivery of homes.</p> <p>Unmet need for affordable housing.</p> <p>Not meeting OAN.</p>	

4. Population and Society

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

Communities

The new Castle Point Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which includes as part of its objective the promotion of “strong, vibrant and healthy communities” by “ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations’ and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and cultural well-being”. Ultimately, planning policies should “aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places”.

The NPPF promotes a theme of enhancing healthy and safe communities, which is to be achieved by creating places which “promote social interaction (and) enable and support healthy lifestyles”. As part of this approach, social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs should be guided by planning policies that “plan positively provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services; support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community; help prevent unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services”. The NPPF is supported by planning practice guidance relating to the housing supply and delivery the housing needs of different groups, including older and disable people, and healthy and safe communities.

Housing

The NPPF states that strategic policies should set out the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for “housing (including affordable housing)... [as well as] community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)”. Policies should reflect the “size, type and tenure of housing needed”. This policy approach is to include but should not be limited to housing requirements relating to affordable homes, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, those who rent their homes and people wishing to commission the construction of their own homes. Major developments that involve the provision of new housing planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be delivered for affordable home ownership subject to conditions and exemptions.

New Development

To help diversify opportunities for builders, the Castle Point Plan should promote a better mix of sites and increase the number of schemes that can be built out quickly to meet housing need. The NPPF states that at least 10% of the sites allocated for housing through a local authority’s plan should be half a hectare or smaller.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act makes a range of legislative changes associated with the Government's "levelling up" agenda, which intends to reduce geographical, economic, social and health inequalities. The Bill includes extensive changes to the planning system, which the new Castle Point Plan must respond to.

Spatial Planning for Health

Spatial Planning for Health is a resource developed by Public Health England which sets out the linkages between spatial planning and health, based on the findings from an umbrella literature review. The review also highlights the inextricable link between the built and natural environment and health. Key findings of the review include:

- Improving neighbourhood walkability and infrastructure designed to promote walking and cycling in neighbourhoods, was found to be associated with numerous positive health outcomes.
- Areas of mixed land use, diverse housing types and high-quality public transport were found to be associated with positive health outcomes such as increased physical activity levels and reduced risk of pedestrian injury.
- Good quality housing and affordable housing was associated with a variety of positive health outcomes.
- Among vulnerable groups provision of affordable housing was associated with improved quality of life, mental health and clinical health-related outcomes.
- Improvement to air quality, prioritisation of neighbourhood tree planting. And provision of open space and green spaces, was associated with increased physical activity, increased environmental cooling, and improved general physical health outcomes.
- Provision of infrastructure to support walking and cycling and increased access to buildings and facilities was associated with increased physical activity and improved social engagement among older adults.
- Flooding was associated with a number of health-related issues including carbon monoxide poisoning and poor mental health outcomes.
- The provision of open and green space, high quality public transport and improved air quality was associated with numerous positive health outcomes.

4.1 Population

Table 22: Population

	2011	2022	% change
Castle Point	87,964	89,731	2%
Essex	1,396,599	1,519,509	8.8%
East of England	5,862,418	6,398,497	9.1%
Great Britain	61,470,827	65,685,738	6.8%

Source: ONS, 2023

Castle Point Borough has an estimated population of 89,731. Since 2011 the population has grown at a considerably lower rate than that of the county, region, and the country. At 2% it is considerably below the national population growth rate of 6.8%.

Table 23: Population age structure

	Castle Point	Essex	East of England	England
Persons aged 0-4	(4.9%)	(5.5%)	(5.46%)	(3.37%)
Persons aged 5-14	(11.1%)	(12%)	(12%)	(12%)
Persons aged 15-19	(5.2%)	(5.37%)	(5.5%)	(5.7%)
Persons aged 20-44	(27.2%)	(30%)	(31%)	(32.7%)
Persons aged 45-64	(26%)	(26.2%)	(26%)	(25.5%)
Persons aged 65+	(25.4%)	(20.8%)	(19.8%)	(18.6%)

Source: ONS, 2023

The majority of Castle Point Borough's population are adults within the age bands of 20-44 years and 45-64 years. The district has a lower proportion of young persons under the age of 15 at 16% compared to the proportion of persons aged 65 and over at 25.4%. The proportion of young persons is below the county, regional and national equivalent.

Table 24: Population projections

	2024	2034	2043	Percentage change (2024 – 2043)
Castle Point	91,428	93,519	95,999	4.99%
Essex	1,534,708	1,607,698	1,667,768	8.67%
England	57,816,890	59,988,992	61,744,098	6.79%

Source: ONS population projections (2018 based)

The population of Castle Point Borough is projected to increase to 95,999 by 2043 which represents a 4.99% projected growth on the 2024 projected population figures. This percentage change is lower than the county figure, and the national growth figure.

Table 25: Population projections for Castle Point on broad age groups

Broad Age Groups	2024	2034	2043	% of projected population in 2024	% of projected population in 2043
Children	14,705	14,236	14,812	16.1%	15.42%
Working age	52,777	52,801	53,775	57.7%	56.01%
Older People	23,946	26,481	27,416	26.2%	28.55%

Note: Children (0-14), Working age (15-64), Older people (65 and over)

Source: ONS population projections (2018 based)

The population within Castle Point is projected to increase overall. Categorised as aged 65 years and over, there is projected to be 27,416 older people by 2043 a slight increase compared to 26,481 in 2034. By 2043 the projected number of children is 14,812 meaning that the population will be an ageing one, which will likely result in changing requirements of the Borough's residents. This is further demonstrated by the slight decrease in children as a percentage of the population in 2043.

4.2 Education

The new Castle Point Plan presents an opportunity to improve the accessibility and provision of high-quality education and training facilities in the Borough. By improving levels of educational attainment there is potential for wider social benefits and improvements to the local economy to result.

Table 26: Number attending and capacity of schools in Castle Point Borough

	Total Net capacity 10 Year Plan 2024/2034	Number on roll (2024/25)	Surplus / deficit (2024/25)	Forecast number on roll (2026/27)	Forecast surplus / deficit 2026/27 including adjustment for new housing
Primary School	6,920	6,296	145	6,044	138
Secondary School	6,550	6,082	103	6,052	122
Special School	0	0	0	0	0
Total	13,470	9,378	248	12,096	260

Source: 10 Year Plan – Meeting the demand for mainstream school places in Essex, 2024-2033, , ECC, 2024

School age population numbers are projected to grow relatively slowly and school capacity within Castle Point is expected to be sufficient to accommodate children in the Borough. Primary schools are predicted to have a surplus of 138 places for the 2026/27 academic year. Secondary schools are predicted to have a surplus of 122 for the same time period. However, when adjustments are made to the pupil forecast figures to take account of the numbers of primary and secondary pupils it is anticipated will be produced by new housing that is likely to be built by 2027 the forecasts show a surplus of some 138 places for primary schools and a surplus of 122 secondary school places.

Table 27: Secondary schools and colleges in Castle Point

School / College	Institution type (age range)	Ofsted inspection result	Ofsted inspection date
The Appleton School	11-19	2-Good	12-13 February 2019
Castle View School	11-16	3-Requires improvement	5-6 December 2023
The Cornelius Vermuyden School	11-16	4-Inadequate	31 October – 1 November 2023
The Deanes School	11-16	2-Good	26-27 September 2023
The King John School	11-18	2-Good	7-8 July 2021
Prospects College of Advanced Technology (PROCAT) (a)	General FE College (16+)	2-Good	10-13 May 2021
SEEVIC College	General FE College (16+)	2-Good	9-12 November 2021

Source: Ofsted (April 2024)

Out of the seven Secondary schools and colleges found in Castle Point, two have received an Ofsted result which is lower than Good, Castle View School and The Cornelius Vermuyden School.

Table 28: Adult qualifications

	Castle Point		Essex	East of England	Great Britain
NVQ4 and above	15,200	31.3%	38.9%	41.7%	45.7%
NVQ3 and above	27,400	56.3%	61.8%	64.5%	66.9%
NVQ2 and above	36,700	77.5%	85.1%	87.1%	18.9%
NVQ1 and above	41,800	86.1%	88.9%	90.0%	85.8%
Other qualification	!	!	4.5%	4.3%	88.5%

Note: ! Estimate not available

Nomis, 2022 data

The population of Castle Point Borough has in general fewer qualifications than the overall sub-national and national populations. 86.1% of the working age population of Castle Point Borough which accounts for 41,800 people are qualified to at least level 1 or higher compared to 85.8% across Great Britain. Level 1 represents foundation GNVQ, NVQ 1 or up to 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C. The most significant

difference is that Castle Point has comparatively lower proportions of the population qualified at Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4 and above. With 56.3% of the population having attained at least 2 or more A levels, advanced GNVQ, NVQ 3 or equivalent (level 3) and 31.3% achieving a higher national diploma, degree, and higher degree level or equivalent (level 4). Castle Point has a significantly lower skilled workforce in comparison to the county and a lower proportion than the regional level.

Table 29: Apprenticeship starts by Castle Point's residents

Year	Number of Apprenticeship Starts
2018 - 2019	630
2019 - 2020	520
2020 - 2021	520
2021 - 2022	600
2022 - 2023	550

Source: Apprenticeships starts data (GOV, November 2023)

Table 30: Apprenticeship starts by Castle Point residents, by age

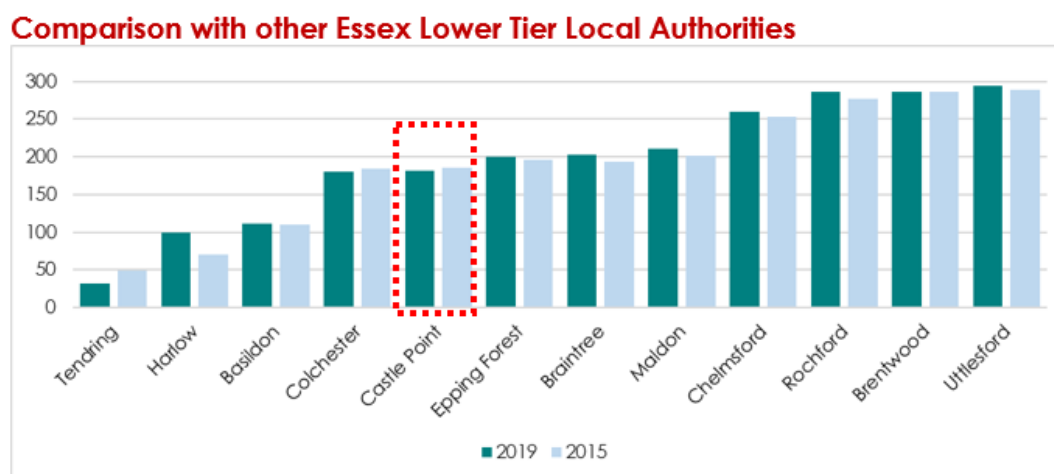
Year	Under 19 yrs	19-24 yrs	25+ yrs
2018 - 2019	240	190	200
2019 - 2020	170	160	190
2020 - 2021	140	180	210
2021 - 2022	170	210	230
2022 - 2023	180	170	200

Source: Apprenticeships starts data (GOV, November 2023)

Castle Point has seen a decrease in uptake of apprenticeships in the period 2018/19 – 2022/23, this is in line with the national figure. This could correlate with a national decline in Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and their taking on of apprentices as widely reported.

4.3 Quality of Life

Figure 2: Indices of multiple deprivation 2019



Source: ECC, Changes in the Index of Multiple Deprivation for Essex, 2019

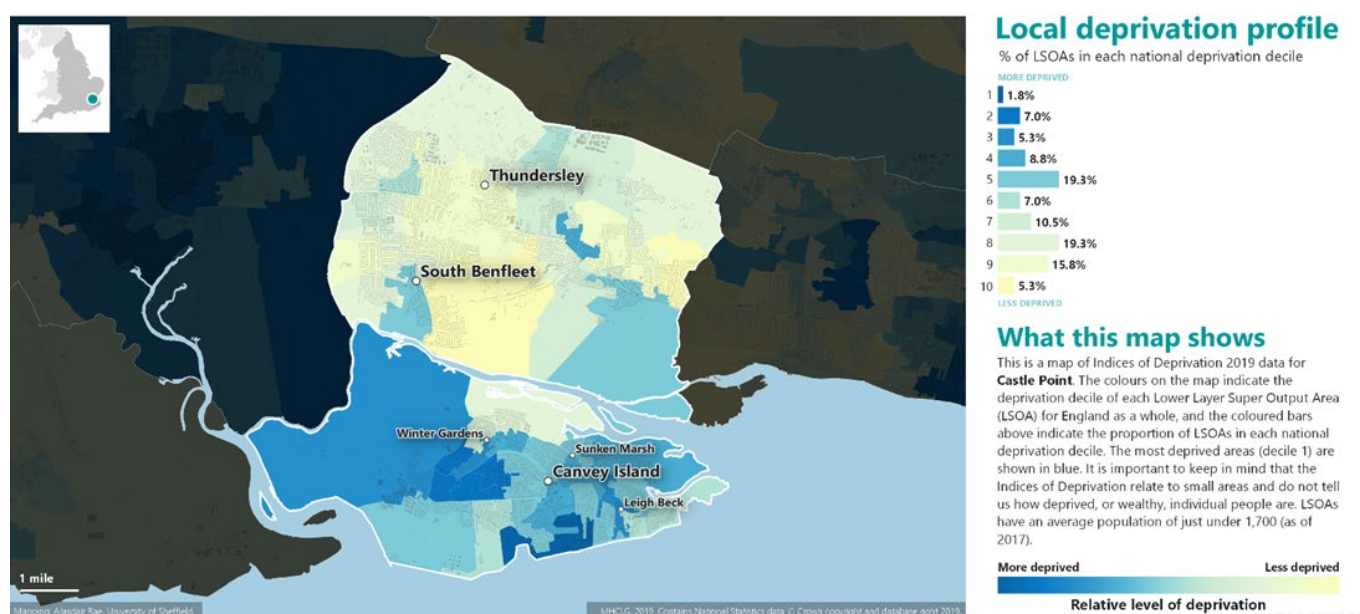
In the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 the Castle Point Borough was ranked 182 out of 317 lower tier authorities in England based on the average rank of the LSOAs in this area (where 1= most deprived). This places Castle Point in the 50% of least deprived Lower Tier Local Authorities (LTLAs) nationally.

Compared to previous years the average rank of the area has decreased year on year since 2007 (IMD 2007 – 26 places; IMD 2010 – 8 places; IMD 2015 – 4) and has moved from decile 7 to decile 6 between 2007 and 2010.

Compared to the other local authority areas in Essex, Castle Point is ranked as 4th out of 12 in the county for overall deprivation. Castle Point is one of two areas in Essex which fall into the 7th decile nationally and is also one of the 3 areas in Essex which moved down in their rank of average compared to the 2015 IMD period.

Figure 3 below illustrates that 1.8% of the Castle Point population live in the 20% most deprived areas, whilst 53.2% of the population live in the 20% least deprived areas¹³. The map shows that the most deprived areas are within Canvey Island, with the least deprived areas being within the Benfleet area.

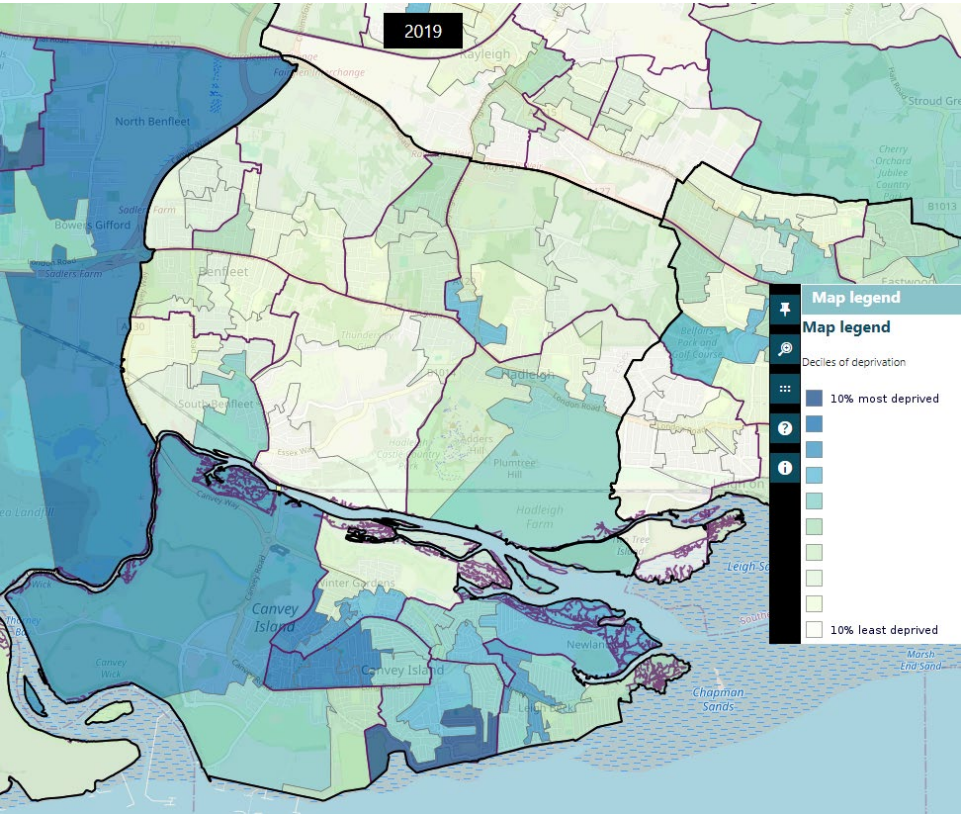
Figure 3: Castle Point Local Deprivation Profile Map



Source: Essex County Council Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 Report

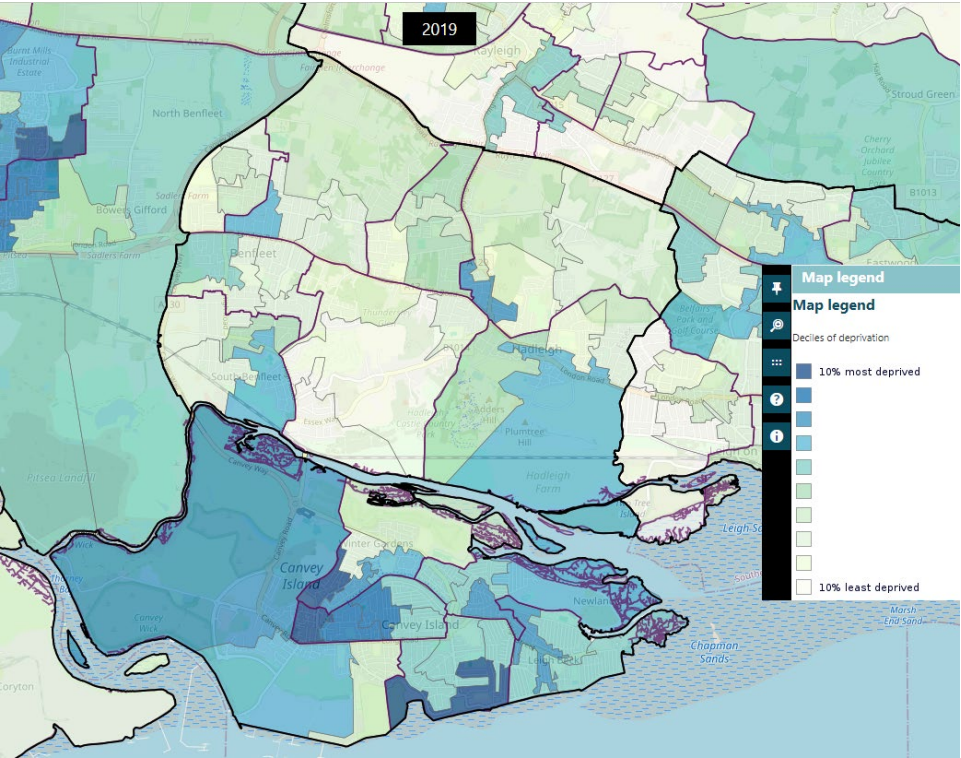
¹³ Essex County Council Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 Report

Figure 4: Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for Castle Point



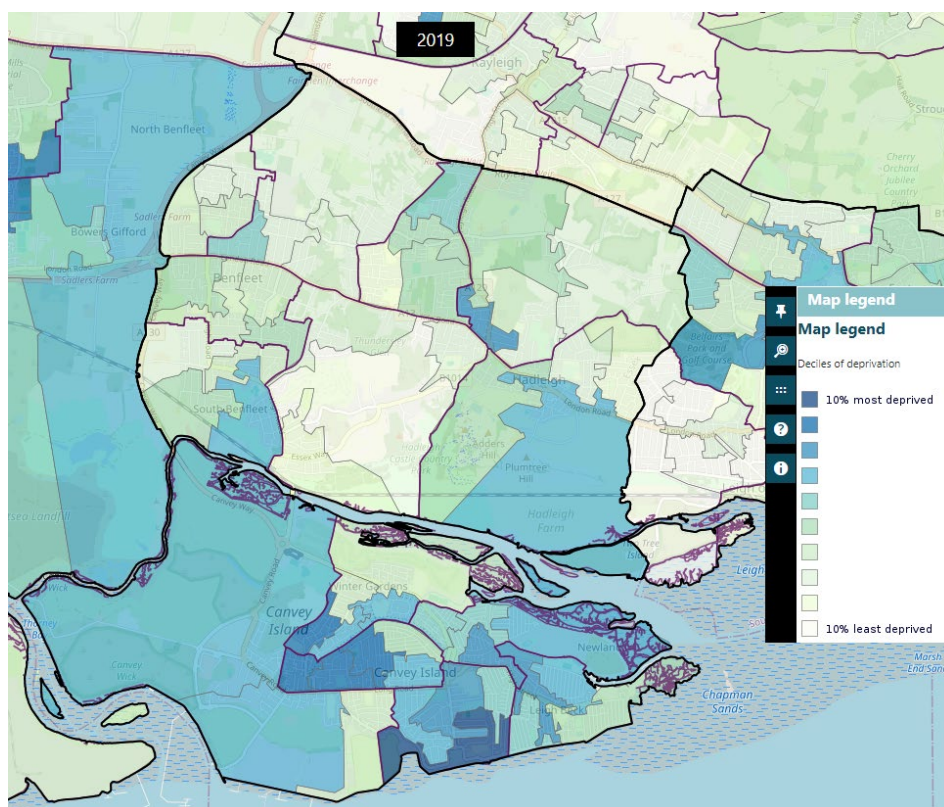
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 5: Income Deprivation Domain for Castle Point



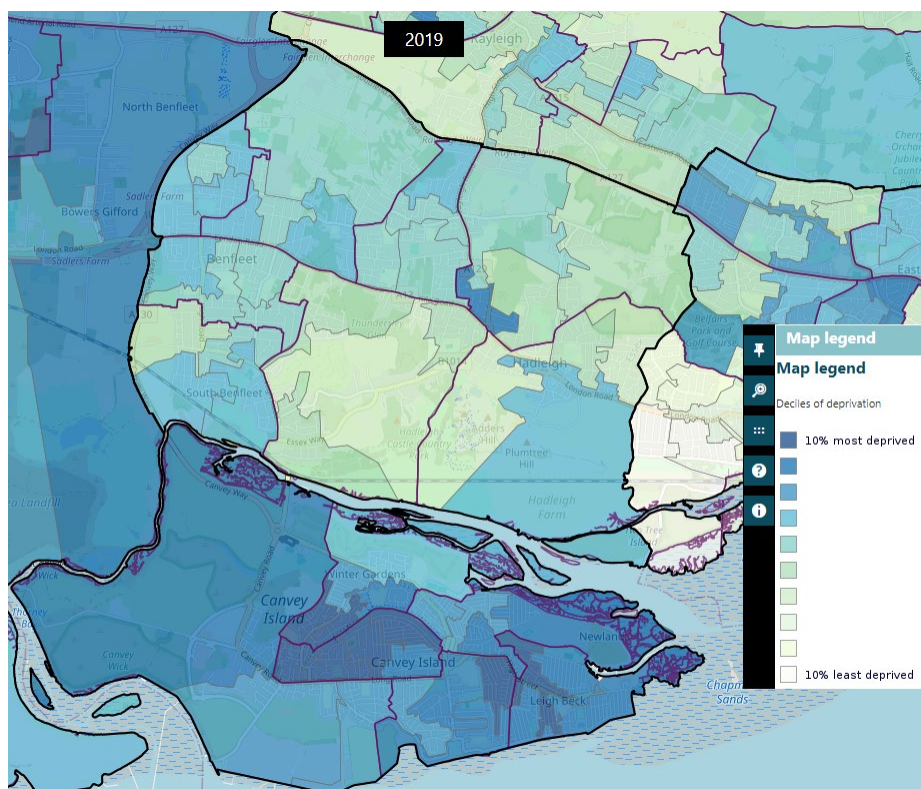
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 6: Employment Deprivation Domain for Castle Point



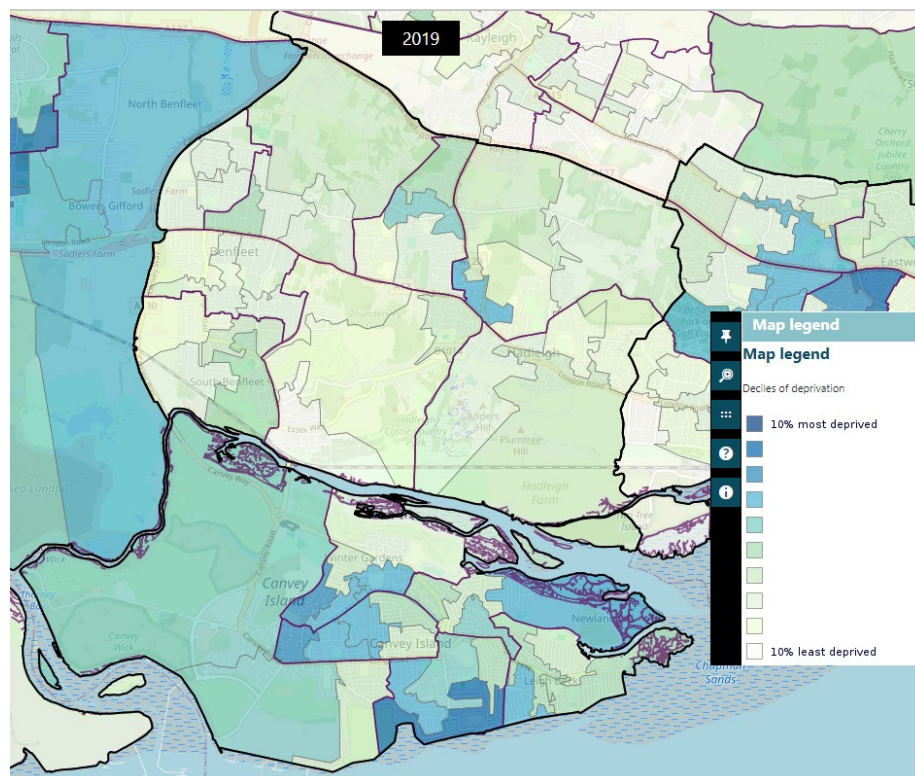
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 7: Education, Skills, and Training Domain for Castle Point



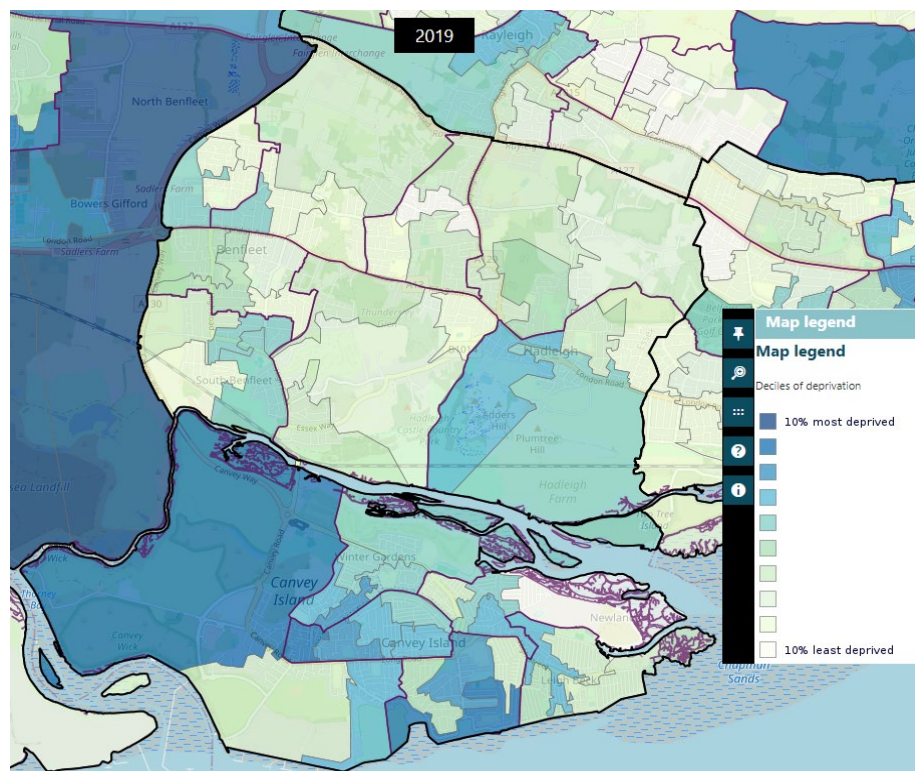
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 8: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain for Castle Point



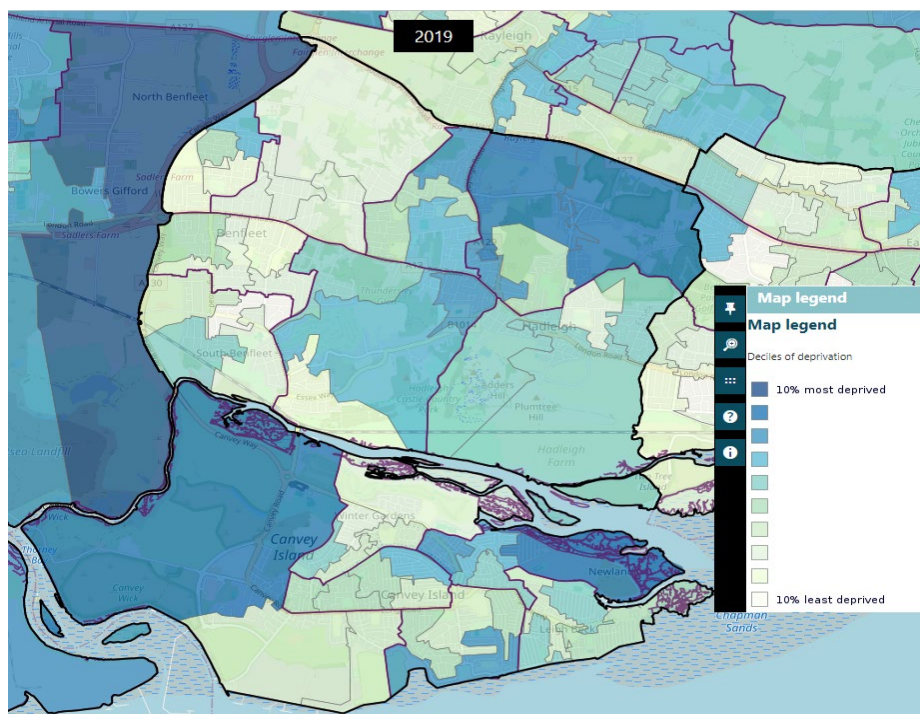
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 9: Crime Domain for Castle Point



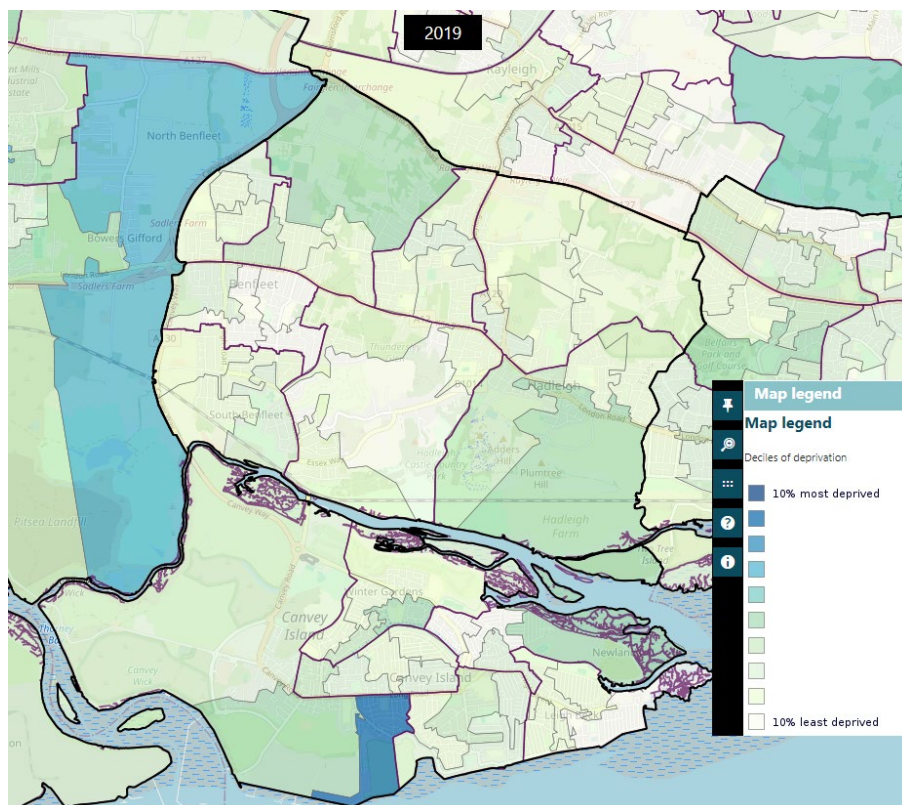
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 10: Barriers to Housing and Services Domain for Castle Point



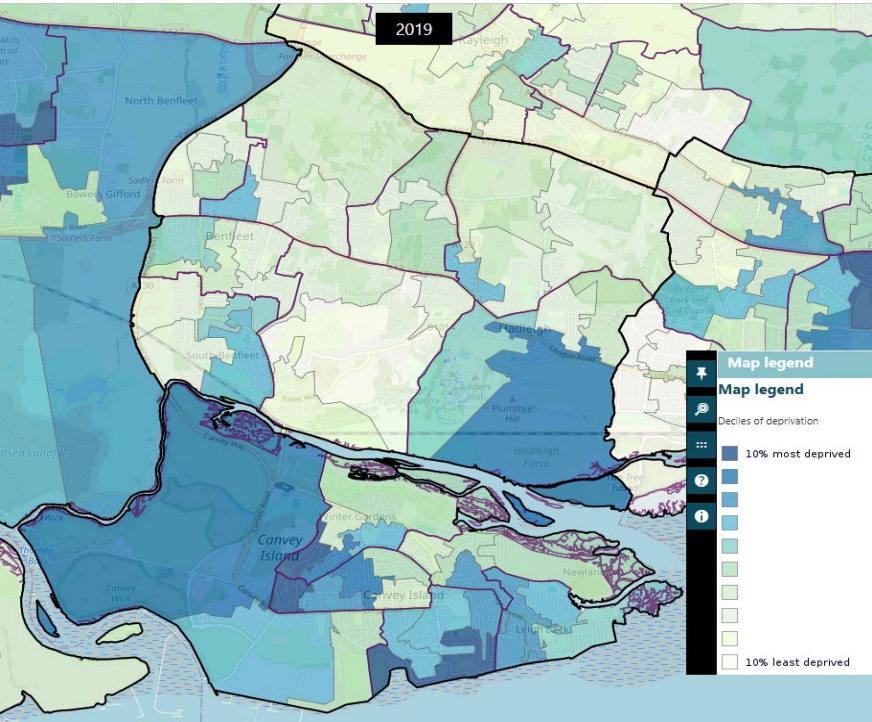
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 11: Living Environment Deprivation Domain for Castle Point



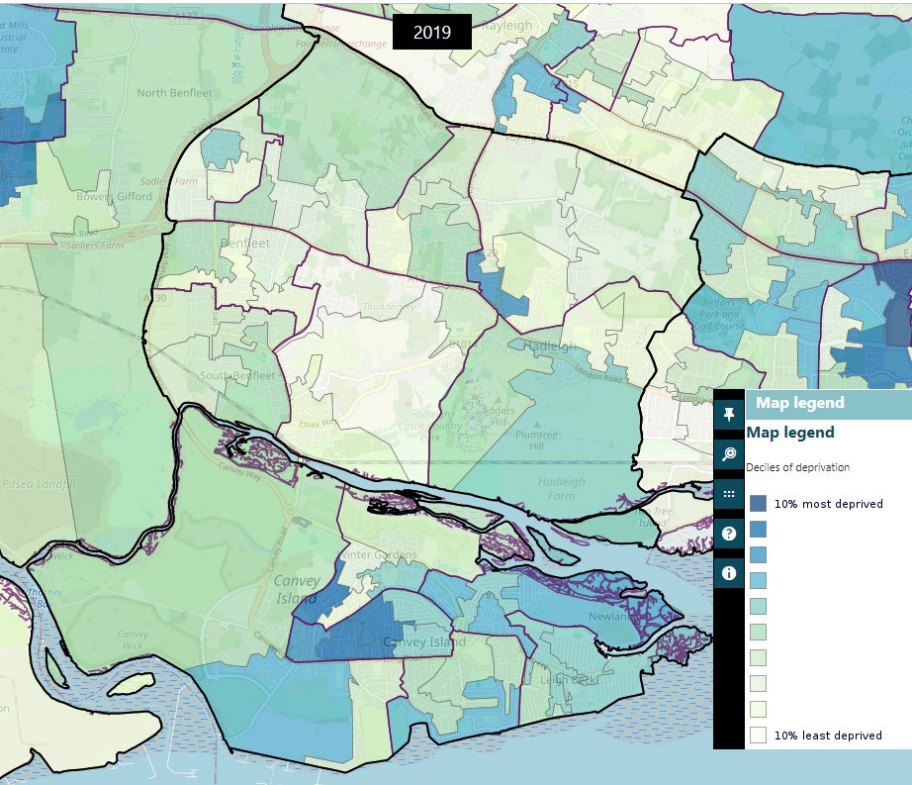
Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 12: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index for Castle Point



Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

Figure 13: Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index for Castle Point



Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019 explorer, 2024

4.4 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Population change within the district was 2% in a 10-year period. Considerably lower than the national and regional averages.</p> <p>The population within Castle Point is ageing and will continue to increase in age.</p> <p>Predicted population change within Castle Point is lower than national predictions, but higher than the Essex predictions.</p> <p>There is a surplus of school places at primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>Out of seven secondary schools, two are rated below good.</p> <p>Castle Point has a lower skilled workforce in comparison to the county and region.</p> <p>Future Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing demographics and planning for suitable services • Change to migration trends • Inequality 	<p>Castle Point must adapt to having an ageing populous.</p> <p>Population change within the district is considerably lower than average, possibly causing further problems with the aging population.</p> <p>Likely evolution of the Baseline without the Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity to plan positively to reduce deprivation and improve social inclusion. There is a need to reduce inequality between those living in the most deprived areas of Castle Point and those living in the least deprived areas of the Borough through spatial planning particularly with a view to encouraging new development that will provide jobs, raise income levels, support education/skills/training, reduce crime, and barriers to housing and services. • No opportunities to address ageing population and meet the needs of a changing population with a need for suitable accommodation for all 	<p>The wider area must adapt to having a greater than average percentage of aging populous</p>

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
	<p>types of residents with a range of care needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population growth and demographic change is likely to place additional demand on key services and facilities such as health, education and social care. Services are less likely to be delivered without a new Castle Point Plan in appropriate locations, or of sufficient quality and quantity. 	

5. Health and Wellbeing

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

5.1 Life Expectancy and Health

One of the most important measures of health inequality is life expectancy. This is closely linked to a person's socio-economic circumstances, which are measured by level of deprivation. **Table 31: Life expectancy**

Area	2017 - 2019		2020-2022	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Castle Point	80.1	83.5	79.1	82.9
East of England	80.4	83.8	79.8	83.5
England	79.7	83.3	78.9	82.8

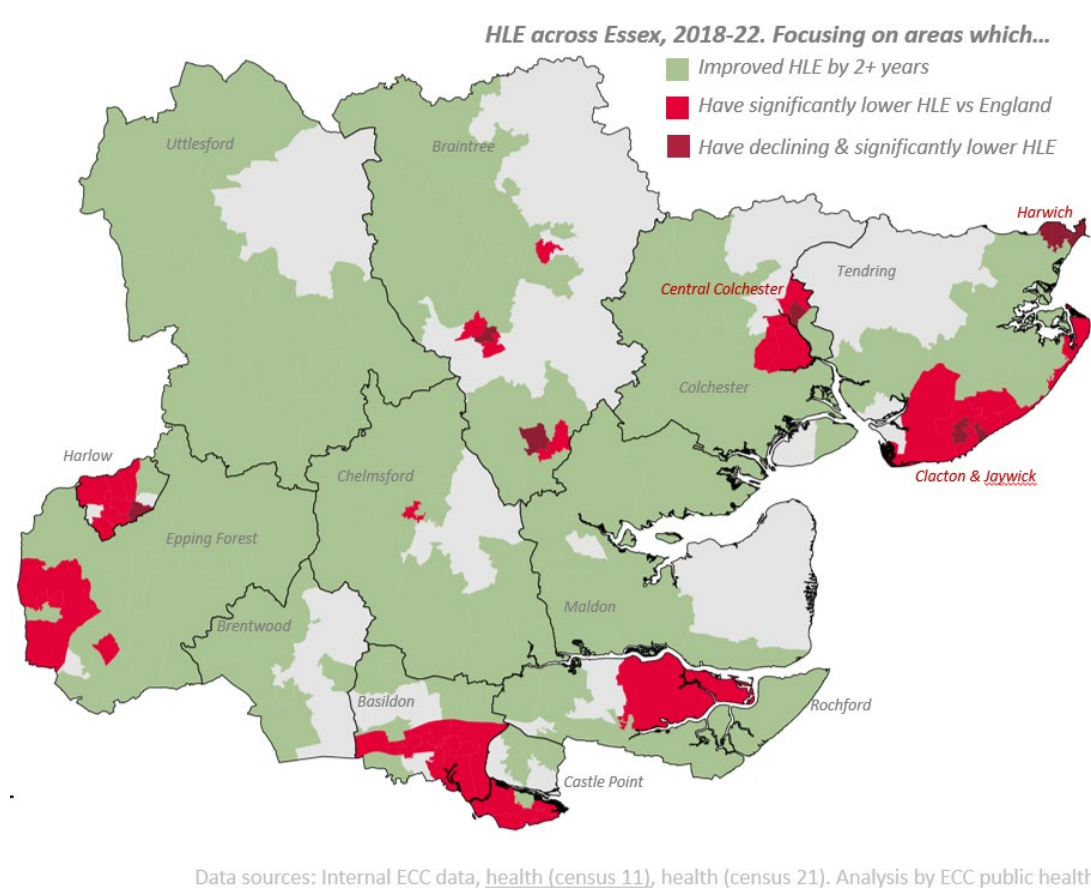
Source: ONS, 2024 data

Life expectancy of residents within Castle Point Borough is lower than the regional averages but higher than national averages with men living for an average of 79.1 years and women on average living 82.9 years. In general, life expectancy is increasing nationwide. The implications of this will mean that as people live longer there will be increased pressure on services for the elderly.

Life expectancy varies between the deprived and less deprived areas as illustrated in the map in Figure 14 below when compared to the map in Figure 3: Castle Point Local Deprivation Profile Map above. Figure 14 illustrates that almost all of Canvey Island (aside from Winter Gardens) has low healthy life expectancy compared to the rest of the Borough.

In Castle Point, males living in the least deprived areas can, at birth, expect to live 7.3 years longer than males living in the most deprived areas. For females, this gap is 6.4 years¹⁴.

Figure 14: Low Healthy Life Expectancy Across Essex



Source: Essex County Council data, 2021

The health of people in Castle Point is varied compared with the England average. About 14.7% of children live in low income families. In year 6, 19.2% of children were classified as obese in 2019. Estimated levels of excess weight in adults (aged 18+) are worse than the England average. The rate for self-harm hospital admissions is better than the average for England. Rates of STIs and TB are better than average.

¹⁴ Public Health Profiles data – Public Health England, 2024

Rates of statutory, homelessness, violent crime, long term unemployment and early deaths from cardiovascular diseases are better than average¹⁵.

5.2 Physical Activity and Open Space

60.8% of Castle Point residents were active in the year 2022-2023¹⁶. Castle Point has seen a 3.2% increase in active residents during this period compared to an average of 3.9% across Essex. In general, Essex has seen a reduction in inactivity levels (0.9%).

Accessible Natural Greenspace

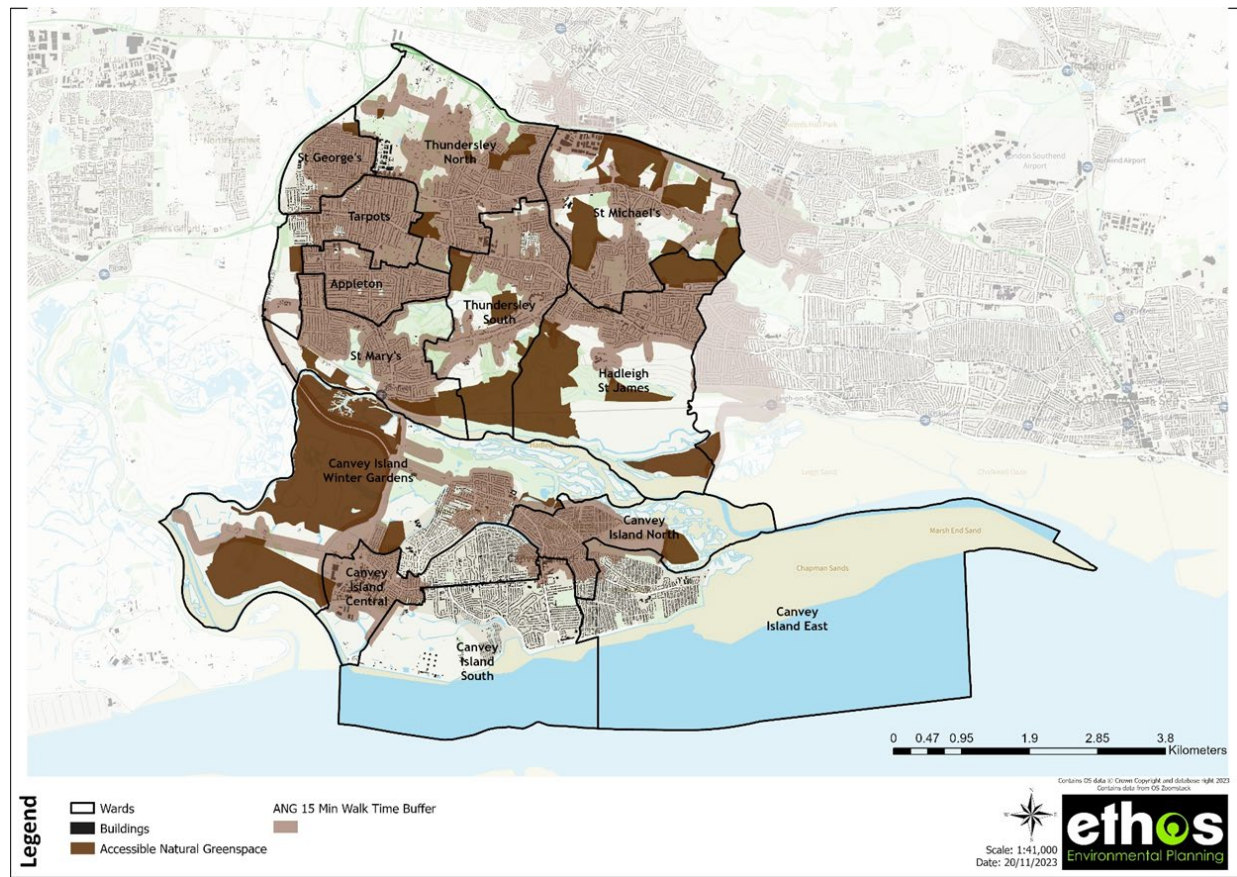
Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) created by Natural England sets out the minimum amount of accessible natural greenspace that any household should be within reach of. Analysis of Accessible Natural Greenspace Provision for Essex (2009) showed that only 7% of Essex households met all the ANGSt requirements while 14% didn't meet any. According to the report, "the areas that fare the worst according to the ANGSt criteria are the more rural parts of the county; although there may be greenspace surrounding rural inhabitants, there is often limited official public access beyond the footpath network". This isn't necessarily true of households within Castle Point as 100% of them meet some ANGSt criteria. The Borough covers around 4,481ha and 677ha of it is considered to be accessible natural greenspace as shown in the figure below.

The Castle Point Open Space Assessment, 2023, reports that "*there is generally good access [15 minutes' walk time] across the majority of the borough, however there is a large gap in access across the southern part of Canvey Island.*"

¹⁵ Castle Point , Health Profile 2019, Public Health England 2019

¹⁶ Active Essex, 2024 data

Figure 15: Accessible Natural Greenspace in Castle Point

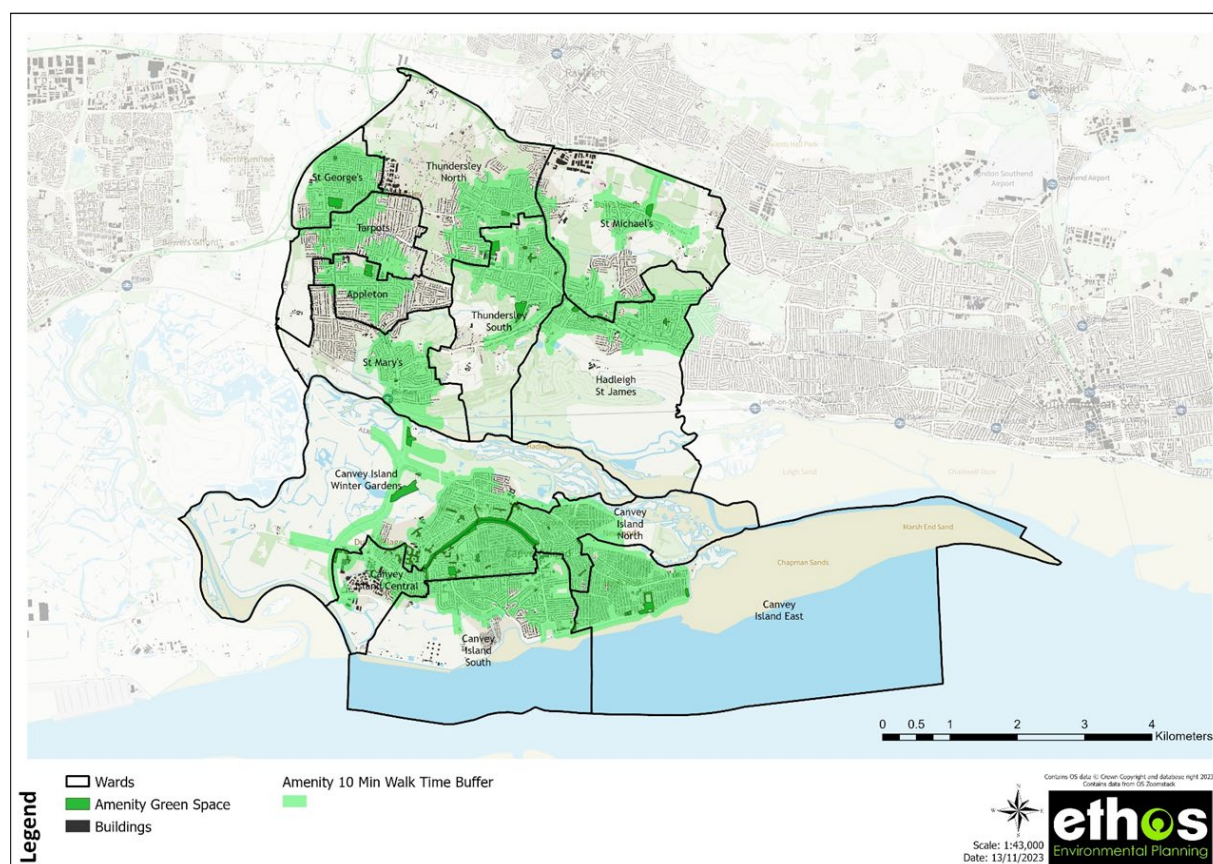


Source: Castle Point Open Space Assessment, 2023

Accessible Amenity Green Space

The Castle Point Open Space Assessment, 2023, has reported that there is “generally good access across the built-up area of the borough, although there are small gaps within several wards. This includes the west of St Mary’s east of Tarpots and Appleton. In Canvey Island, access is generally good with a small gap in the south of Canvey Island Central”.

Figure 16: Access to Amenity Green Space in Castle Point



Source: Castle Point Open Space Assessment, 2023

5.3 General Health of the Borough

Health Index for England

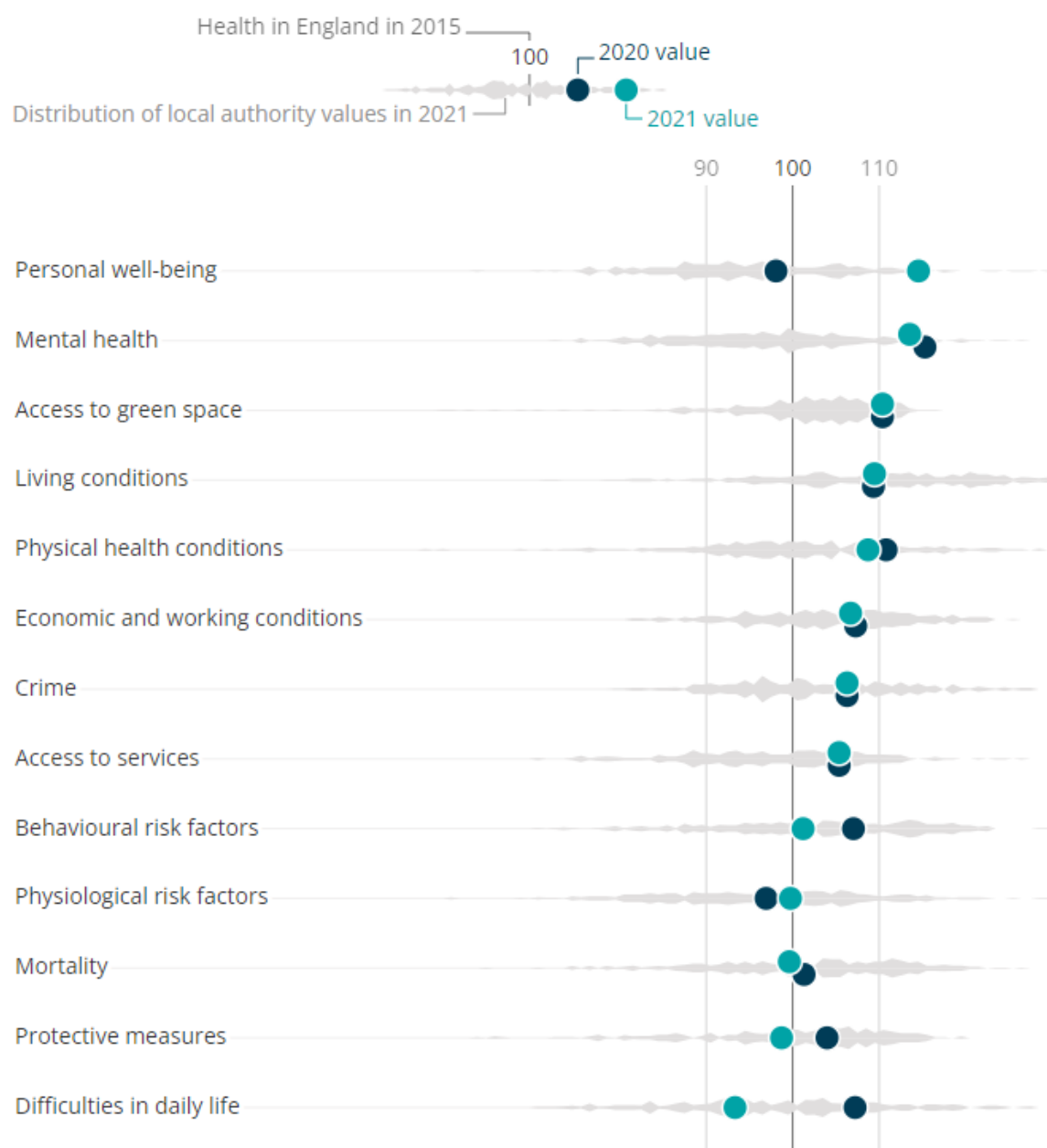
The Health Index¹⁷ for England is a new measure of the health of the nation. It uses a broad definition of health to provide a single value for the health of each local authority area that can be broken down into various measures within three broad domains: health outcomes; health related behaviours and personal circumstances; and wider drivers of health that relate to the places where people live.

Castle Point has an overall Health Index of 110.6 which is down 1.5 points compared with the previous year. Castle Point ranked roughly in the top 30 percent of local authority areas in England for health in 2021. As shown in Figure 14, health in Castle Point is strongest for the “personal well-being” subdomain, which looks at people’s belief that activities in life are worthwhile, feelings of anxiety, happiness, and life satisfaction. Castle Point’s worst score is “difficulties in daily life”.

Figure 17: Health Index values for each subdomain in Castle Point (2021)

¹⁷ How Health has changed in your area: 2015-2021, ONS, 2023

Health Index values for each subdomain, Castle Point, 2021



Source: ONS, 2023

Castle Point and Rochford have a higher rate of diabetes (7.2%) than the Essex (6.6%) and England (6.5%)¹⁸ averages. The district has the lowest rate of hospital admissions due to hip fractures. Generally, both adults, young people and children have good wellbeing and as a result there is a low percentage of mental health problems.

¹⁸ Castle point Local Authority Profile, JSNA 2019, ECC

Teenage pregnancy in the Borough is second highest in Essex and above the county average¹⁹, linked to a range of poor outcomes in later life. The amount of testing for chlamydia is lower than the county average, and a lower rate of positive diagnosis²⁰.

Castle Point has some areas which have high levels of child poverty. Free early education entitlement has an average take up.

Although the overall picture for Castle Point is relatively good in terms of health, it is not the same for everyone. Some people are more likely to experience poor health because of their circumstances, and this is where resources will need to be targeted.

For example, since 2007 Castle Point has seen a rise in deprivation, particularly on Canvey Island. Deprivation can affect health and wellbeing.

4.5 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Life expectancy within the borough is greater than England averages, but lower than the Essex average.</p> <p>Adult activity has increased in the period 2022-2023, at present; slightly lower than the county, regional and national averages.</p> <p>Future Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing lifestyles and the rise in lifestyle related illnesses – sedentary lifestyles, lack of time spent outdoors etc • Changes to health and social care 	<p>Lifestyle changes to more sedentary practices.</p> <p>Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not designing to encourage physical activity, safe neighbourhoods and with the needs of an ageing population in mind. 	<p>New developments not being designed to appropriately reflect the need to shift to more active lifestyles.</p>

¹⁹ Under 18 Conceptions and Abortions Statistical Update for 2021, Public Health Intelligence, ECC

²⁰ Local Government Association, Chlamydia Diagnosis Rate , 2023 data

6. Transport and Connectivity

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

NPPF (2023)

The new Castle Point Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which seeks to promote sustainable transport requiring that related issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making. The framework requires that the planning system should “actively manage patterns of growth” in support of the objectives underpinning the promotion of sustainable transport and address the “potential impacts of development on transport networks”. The promotion of sustainable transport should seek to promote opportunities arising or proposed transport infrastructure, along with changing transport technology. Furthermore, opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use should be identified and pursued.

The framework states that planning policies should aspire to create “healthy, inclusive and safe places.” This involves supporting a mix of uses across an area and focussing development at locations that can be made sustainable, to minimise the number and length of car journeys required.

National Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Practice Guidance offers guidance to local planning authorities on assessing and reflecting strategic transport needs in Local Plan making. It also provides advice on when Transport Assessments and Transport Statements will be required, outlining their essential contents.

6.1 Modes and Flows of Travel

Table 32: Private Vehicle Ownership

	All households	No car or van	1 or more cars or vans
Castle Point	37,393	5,597 (15%)	31,796 (85%)
East of England	2,628,779	442,119 (16.8%)	2,186,660 (83.2%)
England	23,436,083	5,516,097 (23.5%)	17,919,986 (76.4%)

Source: Nomis, Car or van availability by household composition, Census 2021 data

In general, Castle Point Borough has a higher number of cars or vans per household compared to sub-national and England levels for no cars to one or more cars or vans.

Travel to work methods and flows

The tables below include the data from 2011 due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the 2021 Census data in that many workers worked from home at the time data was recorded due to the 'lockdown' occurrence at that time.

Table 33: Travel to work methods for the residential population of Castle Point Borough

	Castle Point		East of England		England	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
All People ²¹	64,626	100%	4,245,544	100%	38,881,374	100%
Works mainly at or from home	1,700	2.63%	161,428	3.80%	1,349,568	3.47%
Underground, metro, light rail, or tram	169	0.26%	33,110	0.78%	1,027,625	2.64%
Train	5,747	8.89%	205,077	4.83%	1,343,684	3.46%
Bus, minibus, or coach	1,465	2.27%	106,303	2.50%	1,886,539	4.85%
Taxi or minicab	250	0.39%	23,227	0.31%	131,465	0.34%
Driving a car or van	26,390	40.83%	1,757,121	41.39%	14,345,882	36.90%
Passenger in a car or van	1,947	3.01%	143,749	3.39%	1,264,553	3.25%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	336	0.52%	22,475	0.53%	206,550	0.53%
Bicycle	651	1.01%	100,651	2.37%	742,675	1.91%
On foot	2,549	3.94%	288,663	6.80%	2,701,453	6.95%
Other	239	0.37%	17,708	0.42%	162,727	0.42%
Not Currently working	23,183	35.87%	1,396,032	32.88%	13,718,653	35.28%

Source: Census data 2011 from ONS (updated Jan 2013)

Castle Point Borough has a lower proportion of residents driving to work by either car or van (40.83%) when compared to regional levels. There is a considerably higher usage of trains as a mode of transport within the Borough compared to the national trend but fewer residents' cycle or travel by underground or on a bus, minibus or coach, rail travel could be greater because of the travel links into London. The proportion of residents who walk to work is significantly lower when compared to regional and national levels.

It is suggested by the increased train line usage that residents of Castle Point are regularly taking advantage of the rail links to commute into the city.

Table 34: Travel to workflows in Castle Point Borough

Usual residence	Work in Castle Point	Live in Castle Point	Net flow
Southend-on-Sea	2,577	4,869	-2,292
Rochford	1,479	1,554	-75
Basildon	1,331	5,083	-3,752

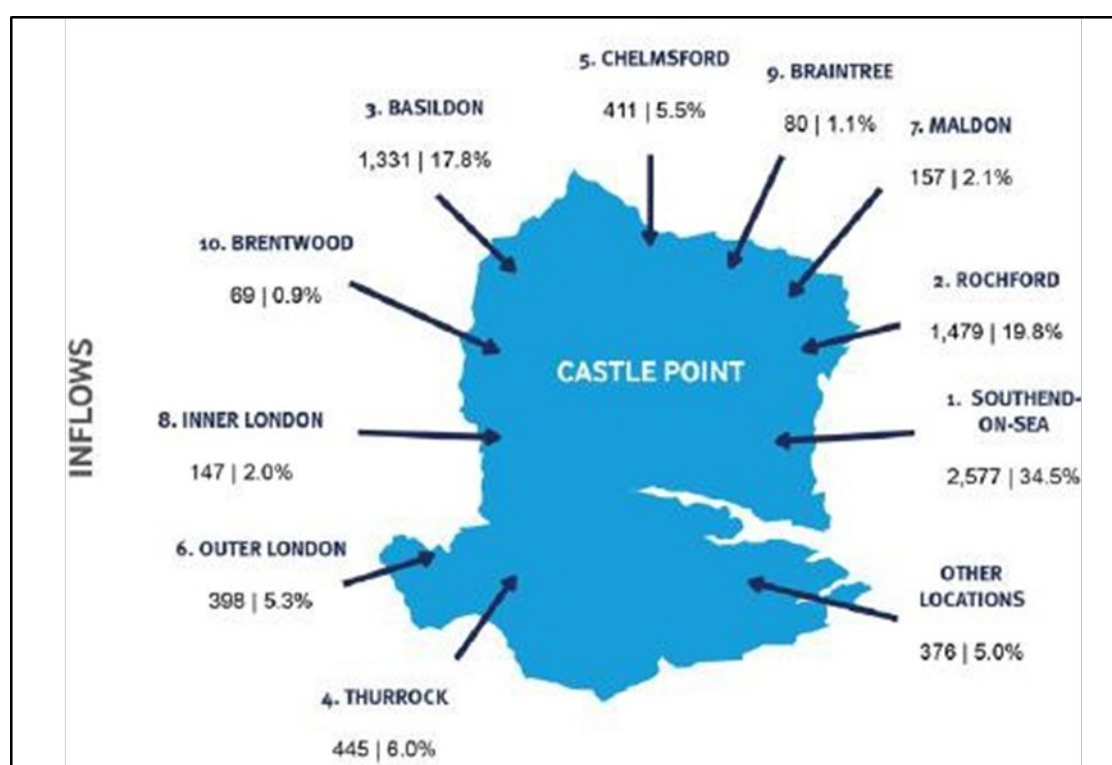
²¹ All usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment before the Census

Usual residence	Work in Castle Point	Live in Castle Point	Net flow
Thurrock	445	1,638	-1,193
Chelmsford	411	1,030	-619
Maldon	157	140	17
Westminster, City of London	10	2,577	-2,567
Havering	142	626	-484
Braintree	80	134	-54
Total	7,470	23,573	16,103

Note: Total net flow does not equal Castle Points' net flow exactly due to only the major commuting locations being included.

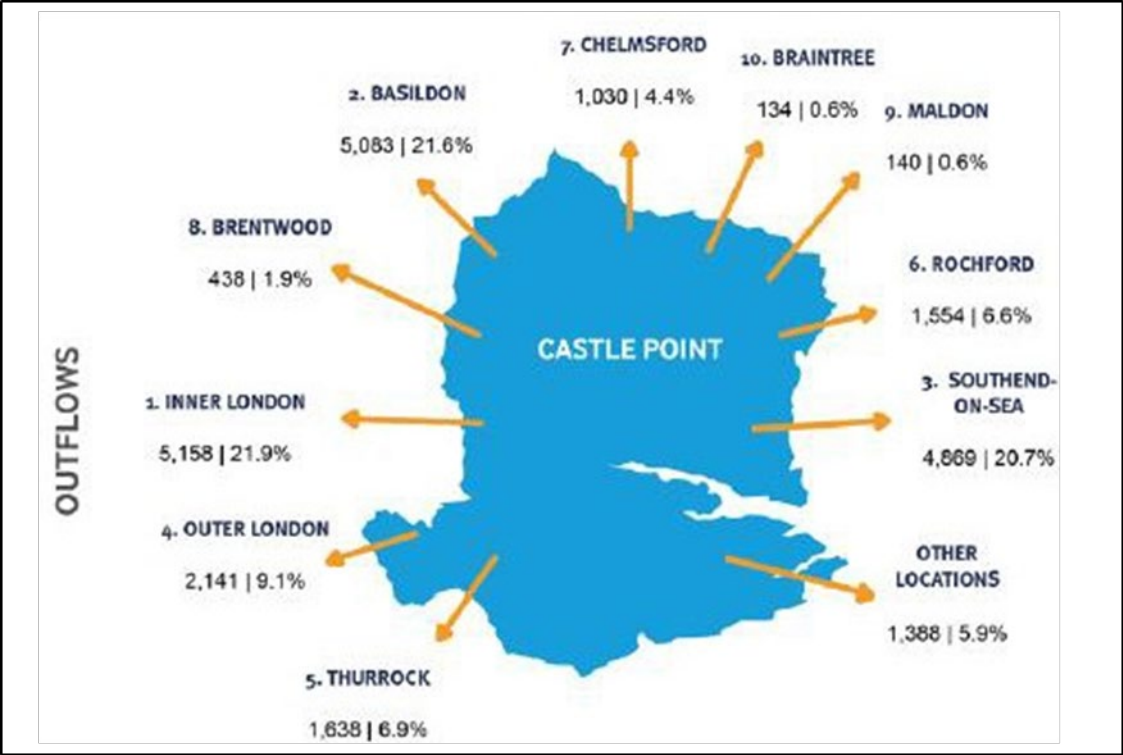
Source: NOMIS, census data 2011

Figure 18: Travel to Work Patterns – Inflow



Source: Essex Employment and Skills Board District Profile – Castle Point, 2017

Figure 19: Travel to Work Patterns – Outflow



Source: Essex Employment and Skills Board District Profile – Castle Point, 2017

6.1.1 Essex Local Transport Plan 2011 (LTP3)

At the time of preparing this SA Scoping Report a new Transport Plan for Essex (LTP4) is being prepared (completion due in 2024) which will replace the current Essex Transport Strategy. The LTP3 therefore currently remains the statutory transport Plan for Essex.

The Essex Transport Strategy is an important component of the Local Transport Plan. The strategy enables: helping the delivery of the Council’s long-term vision. Supporting the delivery of the Integrated County Strategy. Identifying suitable transport investment. Supporting identified and unidentified funding bids.

The Vision of the Local Transport Plan is: ‘for a transport system that supports sustainable economic growth and helps deliver the best quality of life for the residents of Essex’.

Table 35: Outcomes and Challenges of the Essex Transport Strategy

Outcome	Challenges
Provide connectivity for Essex communities and international gateways to support sustainable economic growth and regeneration	Providing good connectivity to and within urban areas to support self- contained employment and housing growth and regeneration. Providing good inter-urban connectivity within Essex and with adjacent major urban areas.

Outcome	Challenges
	Maximising the benefit to the local economy of Greater Essex's international gateways and strategic transport links to London, the East and Southeast of England and the rest of the UK.
Reduce carbon dioxide emissions and improve air quality through lifestyle changes, innovation, and technology.	Reducing the carbon-intensity of travel in Essex. Reducing pollution from transport to improve air quality in urban areas and along key corridors. Protecting and enhancing the natural, built, and historic environment.
Improve safety on the transport network and enhance and promote a safe travelling environment	Reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on Essex roads. Working with partners to promote a safe and secure travelling environment.
Secure and maintain all transport assets to an appropriate standard and ensure that the network is available for use.	Effectively and efficiently managing our roads and footways. Effectively and efficiently managing all of the Council's wider transport assets. Keeping the transport network operational and safe in all seasons.
Provide sustainable access and travel choice for Essex residents to help create sustainable communities.	Enabling Essex residents to access further education, employment, and vital services (including healthcare, hospitals, and retail). Maintaining the vitality of our rural communities Encouraging and enabling healthier travel and leisure activities Creating strong and sustainable communities.

Source: Essex Highways, June 2011

Transport services and projects should be delivered efficiently and effectively. Procedures are put in place to ensure that the programme of transport interventions delivers the outcomes identified in the transport strategy. The Highways Strategic Transformation programme will see changes to how ECC works, ensuring; value for money, efficiency, and the consideration of the wider needs of Essex at the core of all decisions.

The delivery of the Local Transport Plan will be monitored, with each of the five indicators at the core of a series of performance indicators. This provides a broad measure of the plan and allows for the assessment of success in the local transport plan implementation.

6.1.2 Castle Point Transport Assessment

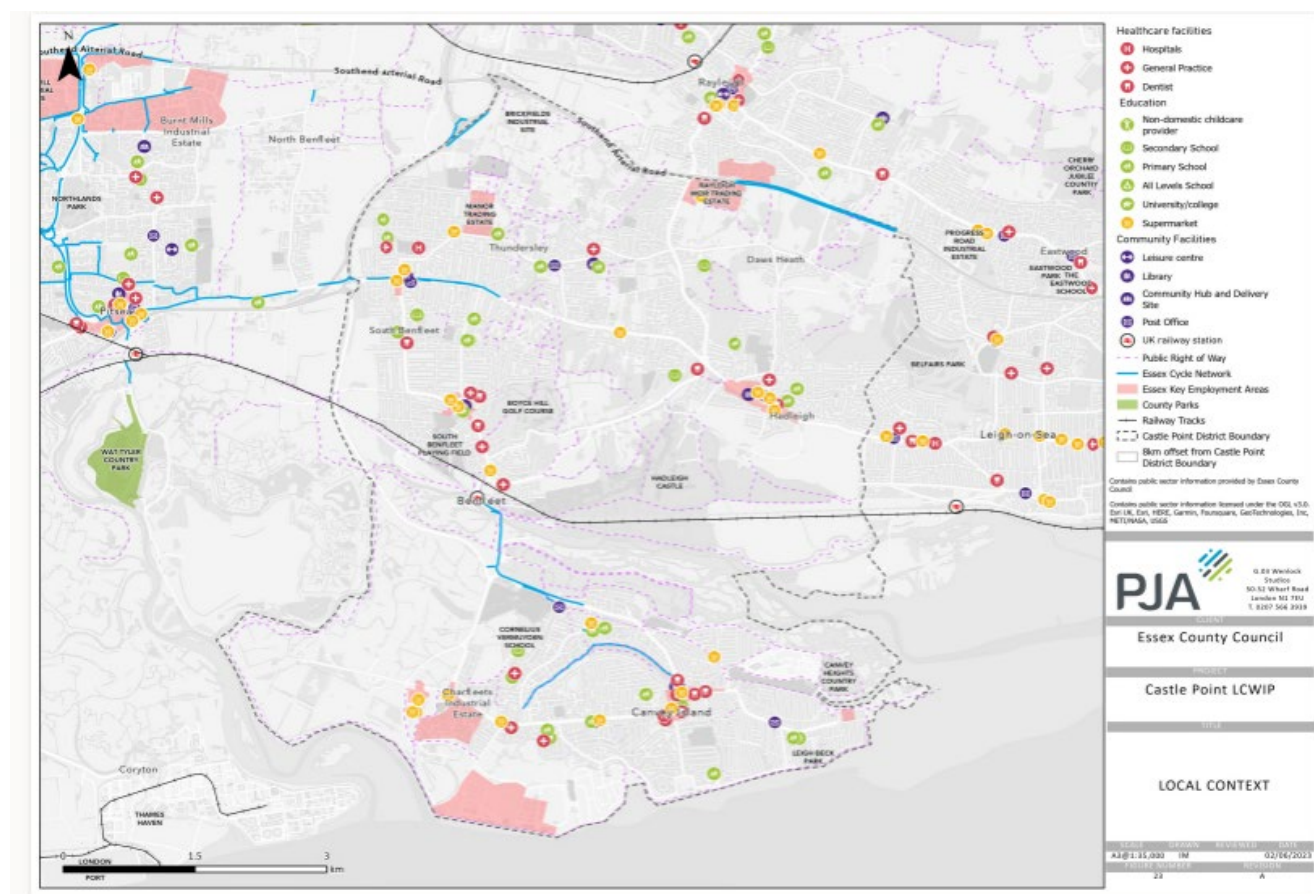
At the time of preparing this SA Scoping Report a local level Transport Assessment is currently being prepared for the Castle Point Borough to further inform the Castle Point Plan. This Assessment will be used to inform infrastructure planning and will be used to secure developer contributions and other sources of funding for transport infrastructure within the Castle Point Borough. Completion date for the Assessment is mid-2024.

6.2 Accessibility

Accessibility to Key Services in Context

Figure 20 illustrates key facilities in context to Castle Point Borough.

Figure 20: Access to Healthcare Facilities, Education, Facilities and Key Employment Sites in Geographical Context within Castle Point Borough

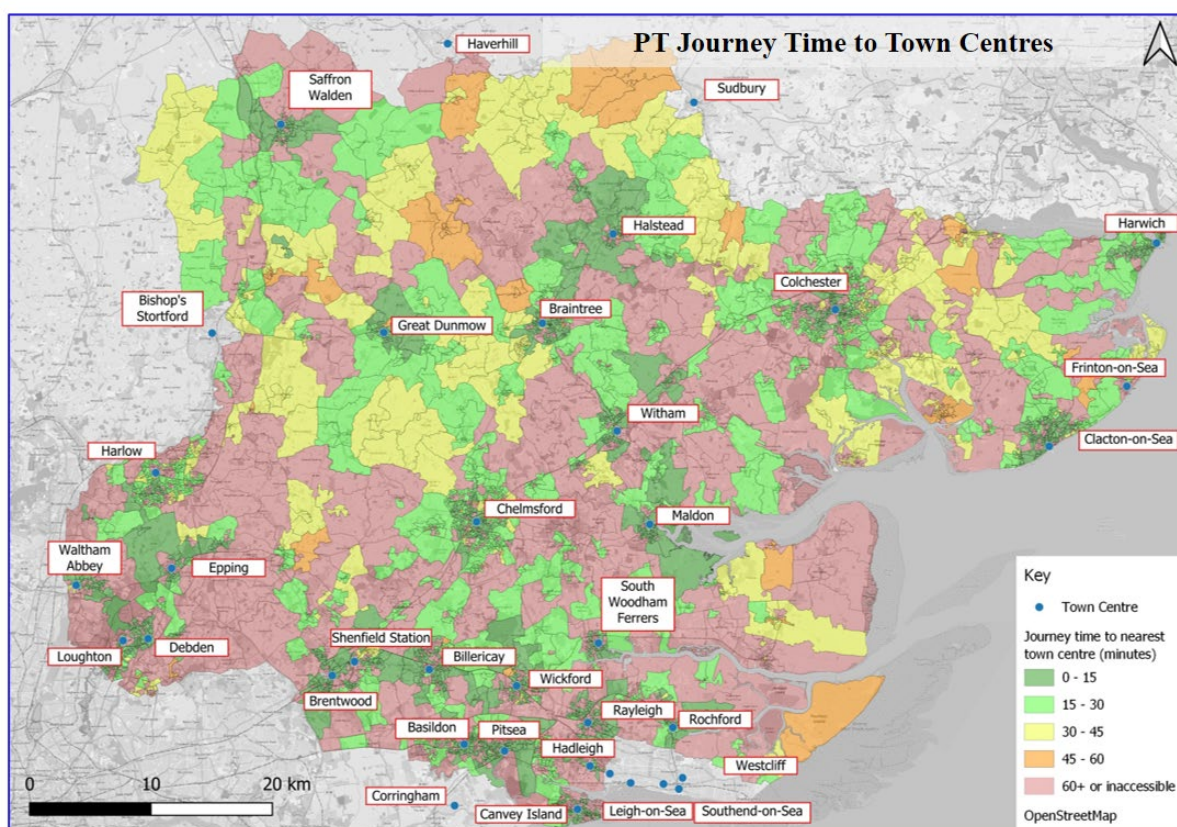


Source: Castle Point Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan, Stage 1 Analysis, 2023

The map below indicates significant areas where access to the nearest town centre is difficult by public transport.

For town centres to become more resilient, the challenges facing them should form a focal point of local authority strategy across a range of themes, including transport. It is noticeable from the map below that there are areas in Castle Point that present difficult access into Hadleigh and Canvey Island town centres by public transport.

Figure 21: Accessibility to Key Services by Public Transport – Town Centres in Context



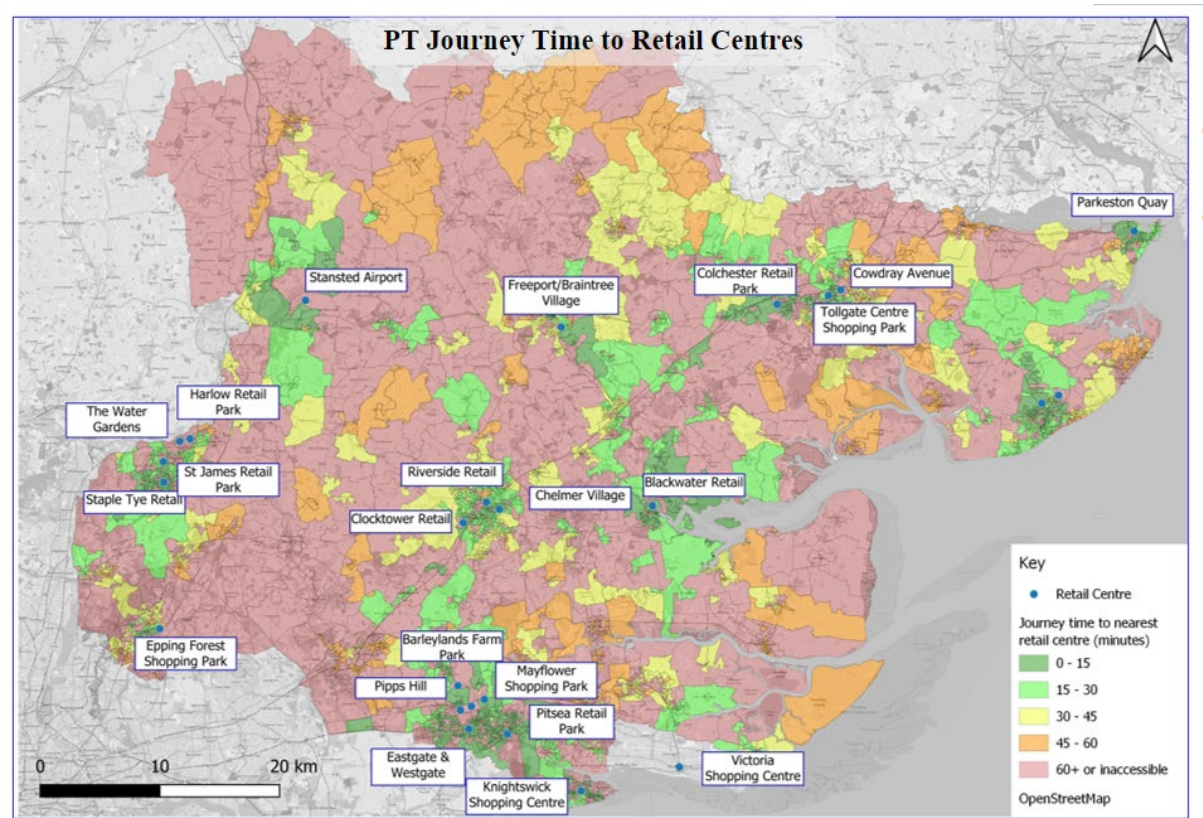
Source: Essex County Council data, 2022

Accessibility to Retail Centres

Large areas of Essex have poor accessibility to their nearest retail centre by public transport. This could be because, by their nature, public transport services are focussed on main town centres rather than more local shopping centres and retail parks. Retail parks have historically been built within the context of car-centric planning policies. To retain these community assets investment is needed to improve public transport and active travel connections.

It is noticeable from the map below that there are significant areas in Castle Point that present difficult access to retail centres by public transport.

Figure 22: Accessibility to Retail Centres by Public Transport in Context

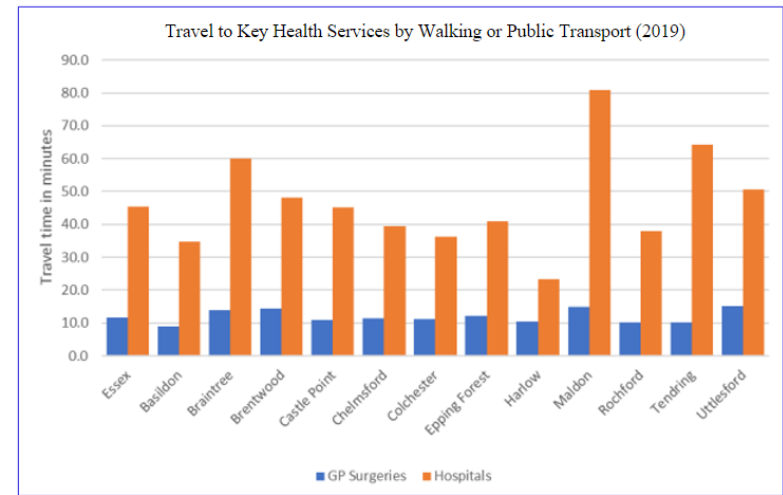


Source: Essex County Council data, 2022

Accessibility to Key Health Services in Context

Travel time to GP surgeries (11.6 minutes) and to hospitals (45.4 minutes) in Castle Point by public transport is the same as the Essex County average.

Figure 23: Travel to Key Health Services by Public Transport – Hospitals and GPs in Context to the Essex County



It should be noted that figures are based on average journey time by public transport but do not account for frequency of services at different times of day.

Source: Essex County Council data, 2019

Accessibility by Public Transport to Schools in Context

Both primary and secondary schools are typically less accessible by public transport for rural residents as journey times are often more than an hour.

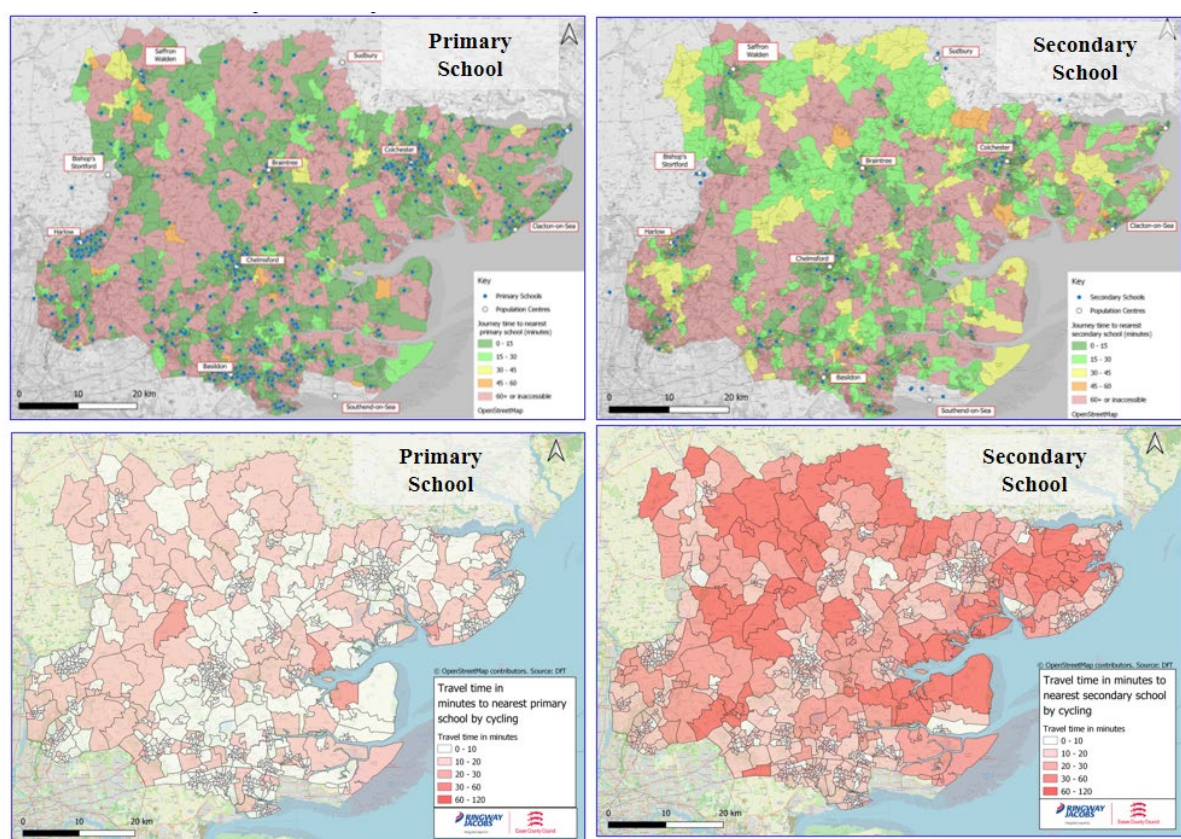
Children between years 0-6 (including low-income families) can get free home to school transport if they attend their nearest school and live more than 2-3 miles away. This is provided by Essex County Council, who has a statutory duty to provide free home to school transport for qualifying children.

Most areas are within a 20-minute cycle ride from primary school, making active travel highly accessible. However, accessibility is only utilised if safe cycle networks exist. Schools must also have adequate and safe cycle parking.

Accessibility is reduced in almost all areas as children tend to travel further distances to secondary school. Also, special consideration is needed for access to SEN Schools where students are often unable to travel independently.

It is noticeable from the map below that there are significant areas that present difficult access to both primary and secondary schools by public transport.

Figure 24: Accessibility by Public Transport to Schools in Context



Source: Essex County Council data, 2022

Accessibility by Public Transport to Leisure Centres in Context

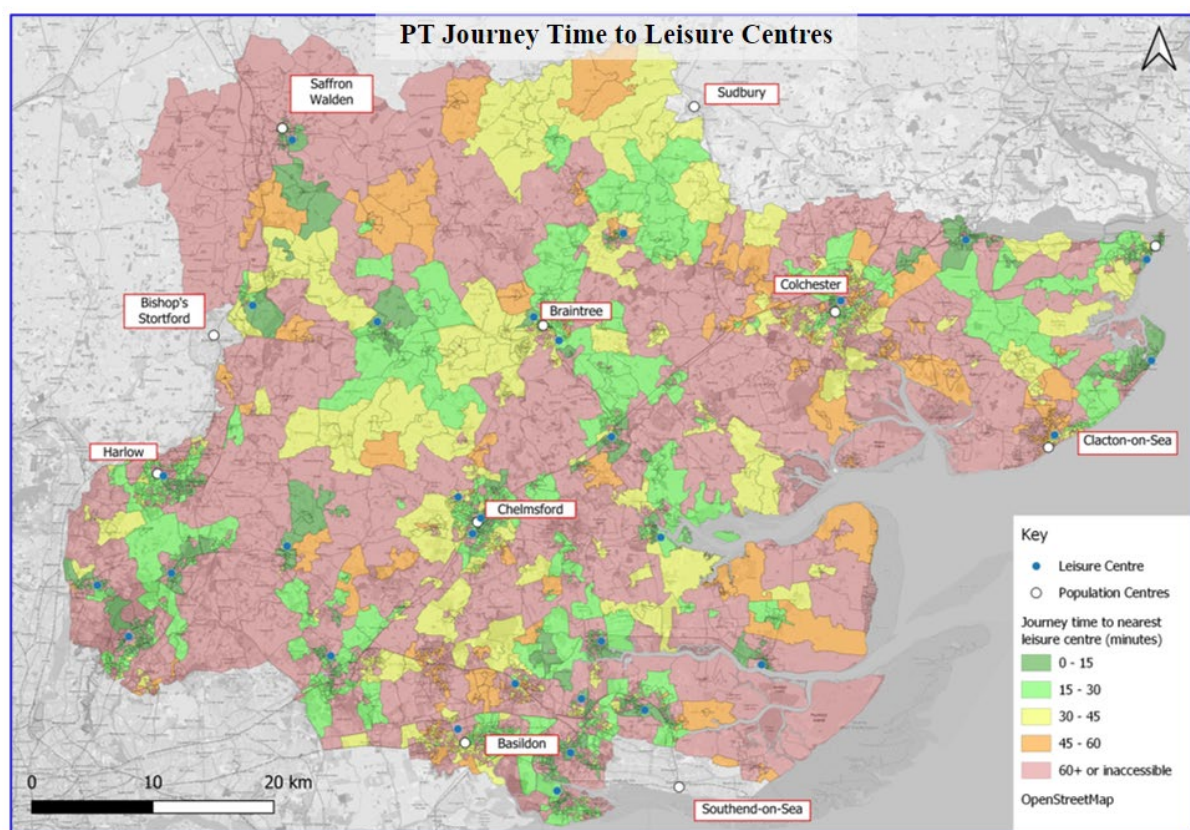
Though leisure centres are important hubs for local community activity, accessibility to them is difficult across Essex.

Along with local retail centres, leisure centres can serve as an important hub for community activities, particularly for encouraging car-free activities, and have a significant role to play in creating sustainable communities.

Leisure centres can encourage use of local facilities by providing appropriate, high quality walk / cycle infrastructure and include high provision of green infrastructure compared to town centres.

The map below illustrates that there are significant areas in Castle Point that present difficult accessibility by public transport to nearby leisure centres.

Figure 25: Accessibility by Public Transport to Leisure Centres



Source: Essex County Council data, 2022

Accessibility by Public Transport to Rail and Tube Stations in Context

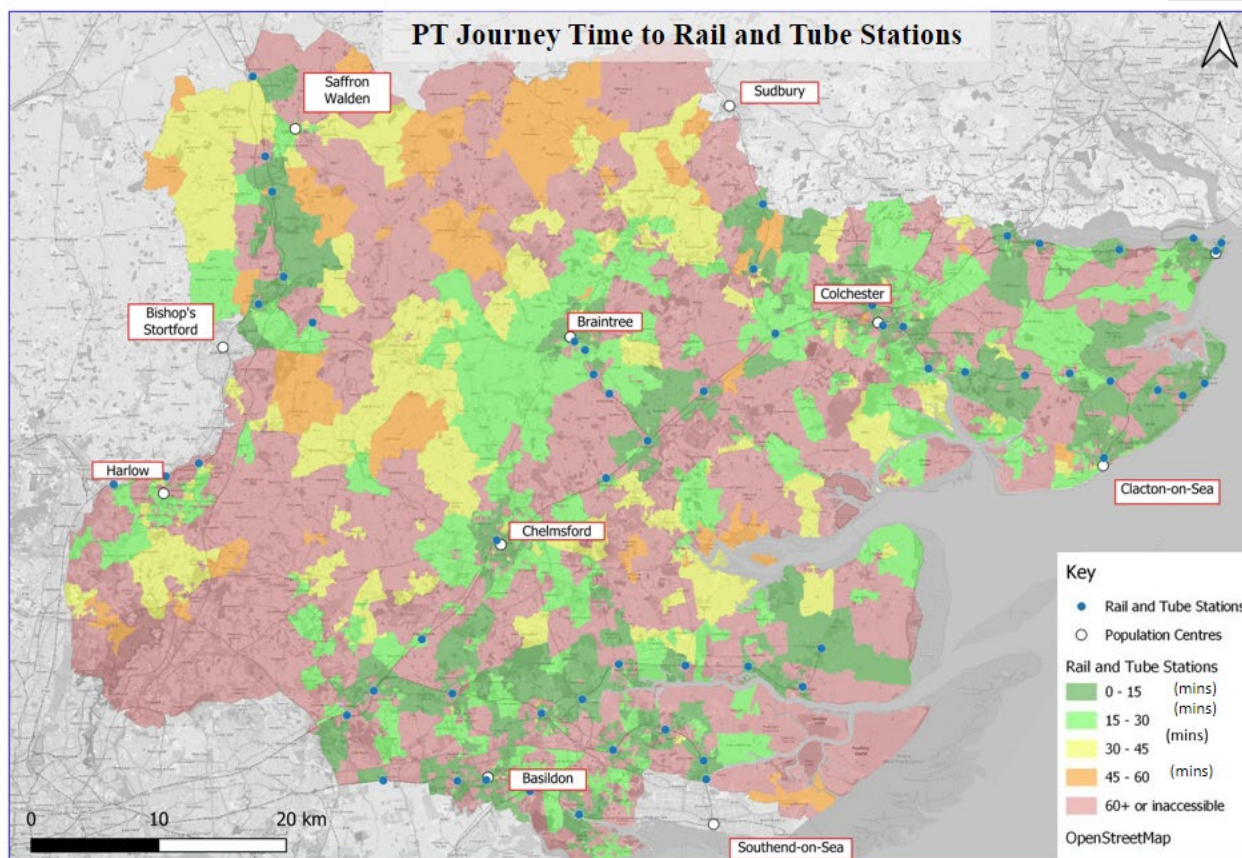
Even where rail and tube stations are present, last mile journeys to /from stations are made difficult by gaps in local transport networks.

Public transport journey times to stations of more than 30 minutes adds considerable lengths to the rail commute itself, resulting in increased car usage to access stations.

Ideally stations should be located in or next to existing communities, with accessible, inclusive and well-integrated walking and cycling networks and safe cycle parking to

encourage active travel including to surrounding rural areas. There are opportunities to promote Transit Orientated Developments (TODs) closer to existing stations. There is one rail station in Castle Point Borough, Benfleet Station which is located in South Benfleet and provides rail access into Southend and London. From the map below is it noticeable that there are areas in Castle Point that present as having difficult access to the Benfleet Station.

Figure 26: Castle Point Public Transport Journey Time to Rail and Tube Stations in Context to the Essex County

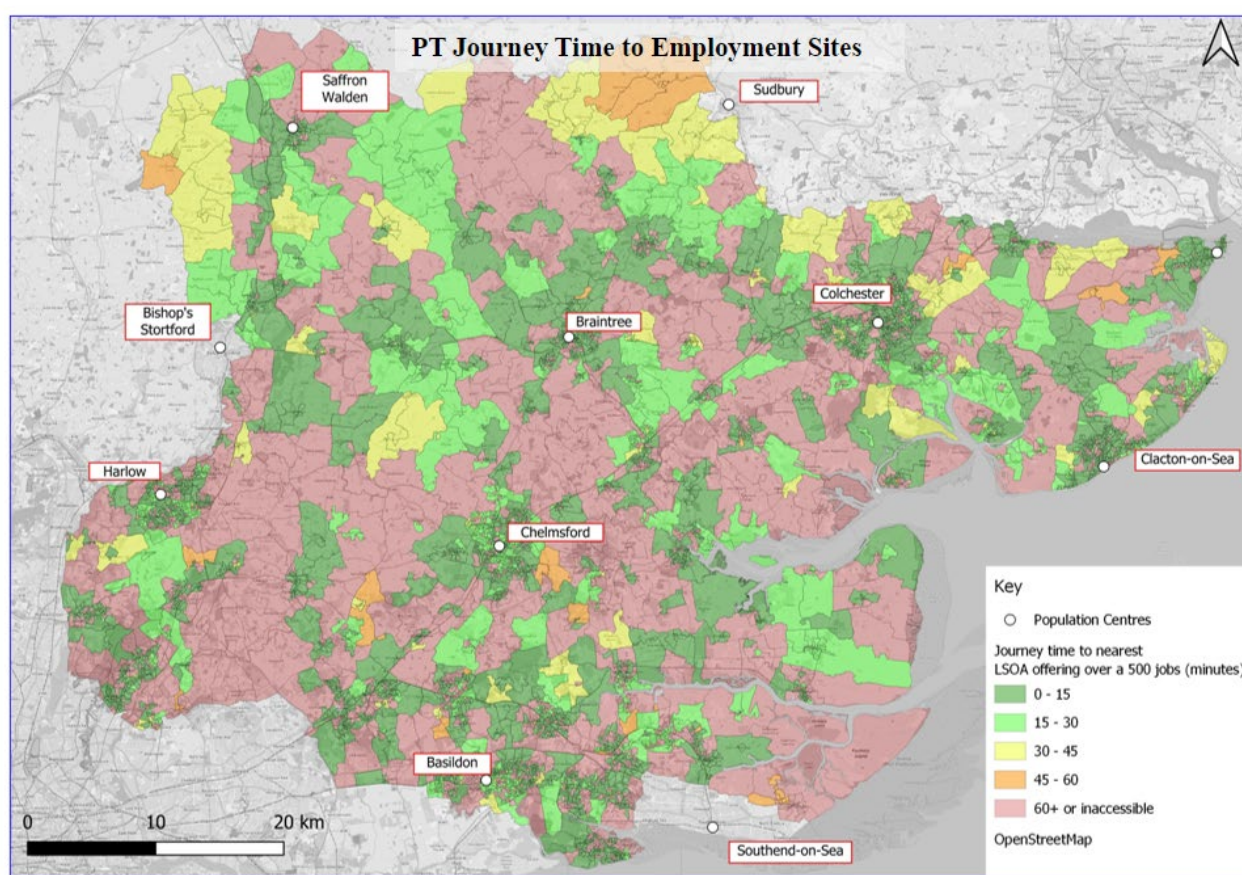


Source: Essex County Council data, 2022

Accessibility by Public Transport to Employment Sites in Context

The map below illustrates that there are generally considerable swathes of area in Essex that are inaccessible by public transport to reach key employment centres which could pose unreachable job opportunities. From the map below it is noticeable that there are areas in Castle Point that present difficult travel time accessibility by public transport.

Figure 27: Public Transport Journey Time to Employment Sites in Context



Source: Essex County Council data, 2022

6.3 Road Safety

Table 36: All Casualties (by Collision) by District in 2022

	All	Car	Motor cycles	Pedal Cycles	Pedestrians	Other	Killed / Seriously Injured
Basildon	234	147	31	14	27	15	48
Braintree	332	213	35	24	43	17	74
Brentwood	186	134	17	6	16	13	35
Castle Point	97	53	12	8	17	7	26
Chelmsford	426	259	47	46	42	32	87
Colchester	388	226	54	36	46	26	75
Epping Forest	428	272	54	31	42	27	104
Harlow	130	77	19	10	13	11	26
Maldon	123	72	15	9	9	18	41
Rochford	96	54	11	8	20	3	14
Tendring	331	189	47	24	44	27	100

Thurrock	324	192	22	37	35	38	70
Uttlesford	206	206	21	9	7	13	64
Essex	3,593	2,195	416	294	425	260	826

Source: Safer Essex Roads Partnership, 2022 data

In 2022 Castle Point saw a total of 97 individuals who were either slightly (71) or seriously (26) injured. There were no fatalities recorded for 2022. When compared to other Essex Local Authorities Castle Point shares with Harlow the second lowest incidences of killed or seriously injured due to collision.

6.4 Summary

Without the new Castle Point Plan, car dependency will continue to be high, and sites may be in inaccessible locations with no easy access to public transport. The longer journeys to services and facilities and employment sites will mean that it will be difficult to encourage residents to undertake journeys by alternate modes of transport. Without the new Castle Point Plan development is more likely to come forward at less connected locations and locations where there is limited potential to support improvements for sustainable transport. This type of approach is likely to entrench the existing propensity towards using cars for journeys in the Borough.

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Residents of the borough have higher than average ownership of cars and vans.</p> <p>More commuters using the train on average, compared to the national and regional statistics.</p> <p>Residents who commute to work using a car is greater than regional and national averages.</p> <p>Greatest outflow of population for work is generally to London.</p>	<p>Ageing population requires an adaptable approach to new transportation options.</p> <p>Population increase could encourage private car purchases, leading to further congestion, and pollution.</p> <p>The new Castle Point Plan provides an opportunity to promote sustainable and active transport through measures such as supporting infrastructure that will increase network connectivity and new technologies such as those related to electric vehicles.</p> <p>It can also help direct development to the most sustainable locations and promote mixes of use that will encourage travel by more active modes.</p>	<p>Must adapt as an area to vehicle improvements, electric and autonomous etc.</p>

<p>Greatest inflow of population for work is from Southend.</p> <p>The Borough has second lowest number of road accidents, leading to death or serious injury in the county.</p>		
--	--	--

7. Cultural Heritage

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

Valletta Treaty, The European Convention for the Protection of Architectural Heritage of Europe, and the UNESCO World Heritage Convention

At the international level, the new Castle Point Plan should have regard to the Valletta Treaty which sets out that the conservation and enhancement of archaeological heritage is one of the goals of urban and regional planning policy. The European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe defines 'architectural heritage' and requires that the signatories maintain an inventory of it and take statutory measures to ensure its protections. Furthermore, conservation policies should be integrated into planning systems and other spheres of government influence. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention promotes co-operation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations.

At this time, the UK has submitted the East Coast Flyway as a proposed Natural World Heritage Site to UNESCO. The East Coast Flyway is globally important for migratory waterbirds and for its nearly contiguous complex of ecologically connected and immensely variable coastal wetlands.

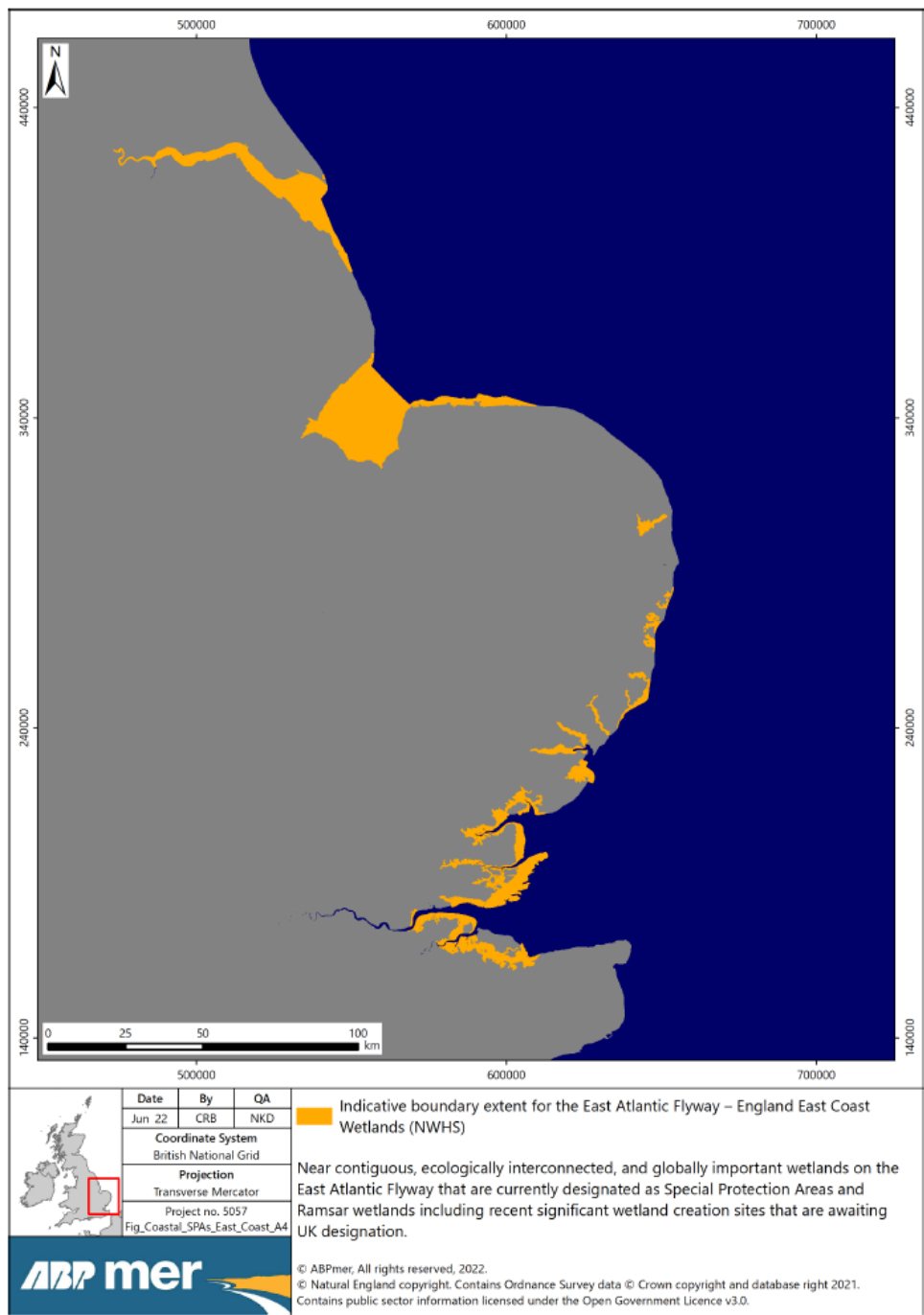
These East Coast Wetlands, include many exceptional, extensive and biodiverse habitats located across a range of dramatic and dynamic estuaries as well as open coast ecosystems and support over 155 different bird species most of which migrate internationally along the East Atlantic Flyway (EAF) which extends from the Arctic to South Africa.

The extent and boundary of the proposed Natural World Heritage Site (NWHS) is largely defined by a series of existing protected nature conservation areas, designated for their international importance, including 21 Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for avian interest, 21 Ramsar Convention Wetlands of International Importance and 19 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats and non-avian species, plus six nationally designated Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). These sites are also underpinned by other national designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

The area within the proposed boundary contains almost 170,000 hectares (ha) of coastline including large expanses of coastal grazing marsh and c85,000 ha of intertidal including c17,500 ha of saltmarsh habitat, some reedbeds and c67,500 ha of mudflats and sandflats.

Part of the proposed World Heritage Site is in Castle Point.

Figure: 28: Proposed World Heritage Site – East Coast Flyway



Proposed World Heritage Site – East Coast Flyway

NPPF (2023)

The new Castle Point Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF which sets out as part of its environmental objective the protection and enhancement of the built and historic environment. The framework also states that plans should include a positive

strategy for “the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay and other threats.” Such a strategy is required to take into consideration the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and bringing them into viable use as well as the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.

Heritage Statement 2017

The Government’s Heritage Statement²² describes out how it will support the heritage sector and help to protect and care for heritage and the historic environment. The document notes the potential to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage so that more people can enjoy and benefit from it.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Legislation for the grading for building works, most notably in relation to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is provided for in the Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act introduced special controls for the demolition, alteration or extension of buildings, objects or structures of particular architectural or historic interest, as well as Conservation Areas.

7.1 Recorded Archaeological Sites and Finds in Castle Point Borough

The most complete information relating to the cultural heritage of the Borough is recorded on the Historic Environment Record maintained by Essex County Council.

There are no historic assets in the Castle Point Borough identified by Historic England as being at risk due to neglect, decay or development, or are vulnerable to becoming so as at 2022²³.

7.1.1 The Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest

The existing Local List is based upon Appendix 11 of the 1998 Adopted Local Plan; this contains a total of 37 records. There are 8 records for Benfleet, 10 records for Canvey Island, 16 records for Hadleigh and 3 records for Thundersley.

Since adoption of the 1998 Local Plan, three records have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and another site removed entirely. One record has been designated as a Grade II listed building and one record has been demolished.

Local List Review 2024

²² [The Heritage Statement 2017, Department for Culture, Media and Sport \(2017\)](#)

²³ Heritage at Risk – East of England Register 2022, Historic England

The Council has since identified that a review of the Local List (non-designated heritage assets) 1998 is required. Between May and November 2023, a Local List of Heritage Assets Nominations public consultation was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Castle Point Plan. This consultation provided an opportunity for local residents and other stakeholders to nominate buildings that they valued for their historic, architectural, or cultural importance. The feedback from this consultation will be used by the commissioned historic environment specialists to help inform their review of the Local List.

At the time of preparing this SA Scoping Report the Council have commissioned historic environment specialists (Place Services) to undertake a review of the Local List, and to review any additional buildings or structures that were nominated by local residents for inclusion on the Local List. This review is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

Local List Review 2024 Methodology

The methodology proposed an assessment of each submitted nomination. The assessment will be based on a set of criteria for assessing buildings.

Table 37: Criteria for Assessing Buildings

Criterion	Description
Asset type	Although local heritage lists have long been developed successfully for buildings, all heritage asset types, including monuments, sites, places, areas, parks, gardens and designed landscapes may be considered for inclusion.
Age	The age of an asset may be an important criterion, and the age range can be adjusted to take into account distinctive local characteristics or building traditions.
Authenticity	Buildings should be recognisably of their time, or of a phase in their history. If they have been unsympathetically altered, the change should be easily reversible. A building which is substantially unaltered, or retains the majority of its original features, qualifies under this criterion.
Rarity	Appropriate for all assets, as judged against local characteristics.
Architectural and Artistic Interest	The intrinsic design and aesthetic value of an asset relating to local and/or national styles, materials, construction and craft techniques, or any other distinctive characteristics.
Group Value	Groupings of assets with a clear visual design or historic relationship.
Archaeological Interest	The local heritage asset may provide evidence about past human activity in the locality, which may be in the form of buried remains, but may also be revealed in the structure of buildings or in a designed landscape, for instance. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
Historic Interest (including Social and Communal Interest)	A significant historical association of local or national note, including links to important local figures, may enhance the significance of a heritage asset. Blue Plaque and similar schemes may be relevant. Social and communal interest may be

Criterion	Description
	regarded as a sub-set of historic interest but has special value in local listing. As noted in the PPG: 'Heritage assets ... can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity'. It therefore relates to places perceived as a source of local identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence, contributing to the 'collective memory' of a place.
Designed Landscape	The interest attached to locally important historic designed landscapes, parks and gardens which may relate to their design or social history.
Landmark / Townscape	An asset with strong communal or historical associations, or because it has especially striking aesthetic value, may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.

Source: Castle Point Borough Council Local List of Heritage Assets Nominations consultation, November 2023

7.2 Listed Building & Conservation Area

Castle Point has 36 listed buildings and churches within the Borough. This includes 3 grade I listed and 2 grade II* listed. Additionally, the Borough features two designated Conservation Areas, these being:

- Florence gardens in Hadleigh, which aims to protect a series of bungalows which were once part of a Salvation Army Home Farm Colony, a conservation appraisal and management plan has been prepared for the area, which must be considered in the new Castle Point Plan.
- The conservation in South Benfleet around the medieval settlement remains and the Grade I listed church, a conservation appraisal and management plan are being prepared for the area, which must be considered in the new Castle Point Plan.

7.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

The built environment of Castle Point Borough features seven Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

- Roman Saltern, 260m southeast of great Russell Head Farm, Canvey Island
- Heavy anti-aircraft gun site, 170m southwest of the junction of cedar road and west crescent
- Heavy anti-aircraft gun site, 380m east of the Northwick farm
- Hadleigh castle: an enclosure castle and an associated dam and mill
- Heavy anti-aircraft gun site on sandpit hill
- Roman Fort (near Hadleigh)
- Romano-British site north of pound wood, Thundersley

7.4 Historic Parks and Gardens

Historic England does not list any historic parks and gardens in the Borough.

7.5 Summary

The historic environment is considered a finite resource. It cannot be replaced and is susceptible to decline over time as historic features experience degradation and decay. However, cultural heritage as a whole can evolve and change, and features which are not currently considered a valued part of the historic environment may become so in the future, either due to their uniqueness, past use, or historic or cultural significance.

New development and infrastructure and environmental pressures, such as extreme weather and flooding, present the greatest risk to cultural heritage assets in the Borough. The requirement for development and infrastructure and the likelihood for many environmental pressures are likely to continue regardless of whether or not the New Castle Point Local Plan progresses. The planning and listed buildings consent regime set out through national legislation will help to limit particularly adverse effects in relation to development that might otherwise affect heritage assets. However, without the new Castle Point Plan development is more likely to come forward at locations of increased sensitivity for the historic environment.

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>There are 7 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Castle Point.</p> <p>There are 58 records on the Local List.</p> <p>Most designated heritage assets would be protected without the Castle Point Plan.</p> <p>Proposed East Coast Flyway as a Natural World Heritage Site</p>	<p>Ensuring heritage assets do not become 'at risk'.</p> <p>Inappropriate, poorly located development, as well as climate change may harm the setting of designated and undesignated heritage assets, and areas of historical and cultural interest in Castle Point.</p> <p>The new Castle Point Plan provides an opportunity to update planning policy in the Borough to reflect changes in local circumstance and ensure the protection and enhancement of the Borough's historic assets (including their settings) from inappropriate development.</p>	<p>Green Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Link to London National Park City</p>

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
	<p>New policy can also support improved accessibility to and interpretation of distinctive features of local heritage.</p> <p>There is potential for new policy to support any vacant heritage assets being brought back into appropriate uses.</p> <p>There is potential for new policy to support any proposed heritage sites.</p>	

8. Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The 25 Year Environment Plan²⁴

The 25 Year Environment Plan sets out government policy to help the natural world regain and retain good health. Key areas related to biodiversity are set out in the plan around which actions are to be focussed. These include:

- Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes:
 - Develop a Nature Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that have been lost from the countryside.
- Securing clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans:
 - Achieve a good environmental status of the UK's seas while allowing marine industries to thrive and complete our economically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas.
- Protecting and improving our global environment:
 - Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.
 - Support and protect international forests and sustainable agriculture.

Overview of The Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. It also establishes the Office for Environmental protection which will act as an impartial and objective body for the protection of the environment. The Act sets out legislation which covers local air quality management frameworks and the recall of motor vehicles.

State of Nature Report 2019²⁵

The State of Nature report provides an overview of the health of the county's wildlife and how human impacts are driving sweeping changes in the UK. It considers 50 years of monitoring to see how nature has changed since the 1970s. At the national level during this period, there has been a reported 13% decline in the average

²⁴ [A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, HM Government, 2019](#)

²⁵ [State of Nature, National Biodiversity Network, 2019](#)

abundance of wildlife in the UK, with key drivers for change being agricultural productivity, climate change and increasing average temperatures, urbanisation and hydrological changes. The report finds that on average, metrics suggest that decline in species abundance and distribution of species has continued in the UK throughout the most recent decade.

NPPF Environmental Objective

A requirement of the NPPF's (2023) environmental objective is that the planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural environment including helping to improve biodiversity and using natural resources prudently. In support of this aim the framework states that Local Plans should "identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks" and should also "promote the conservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."

The NPPF requires that plans should take a strategic approach in terms of "maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries".

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

A HRA Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment has been previously undertaken for the 2018 withdrawn Local Plan. A HRA requires a process of steps and tests for plans or projects that could potentially affect Habitats sites. A HRA will demonstrate how the *Plan* or *Project* is compatible with EU obligations. This earlier Assessment Screening stage predicted the following sites to have a Likely Significant Effect arising from the Plan (withdrawn) (without considering mitigation:

- Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site
- Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site
- Foulness SPA and Ramsar site
- Dengie SPA and Ramsar Site
- Essex Estuaries SAC
- Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site
- Outer Thames Estuary SPA

The Council has commissioned a further HRA Scoping Report (published for consultation January 2024), and Assessment to be undertaken to support the new Castle Point Plan (due for completion Autumn 2024). More detail is set out on the HRA Scoping Report further below.

8.1 Biodiversity Action Plans and Assessments

8.1.1 Biodiversity Action Plan

The Essex Biodiversity Action Plan³ (EBAP) set out 25 species and 10 habitat action plans covering Essex. The Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (EBAP) 2011 comprised of initiatives relating to 11 habitat types. These were:

- Arable Field Margins
- Hedgerows
- Traditional Orchards
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland
- Lowland Meadows
- Lowland Heathland
- Ponds
- Floodplain and Coastal Grazing Marsh
- Lowland Raised Bog
- Reedbeds
- Coastal Salt Marsh

In addition to the above, wet woodlands are BAP habitats and will be taken into consideration alongside the listed BAP species and habitats in the SA/SEA of relevant policies and sites in the Castle Point Plan.

8.1.2 Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment 2019

The Strategic Biodiversity Assessment followed a review of Local Wildlife Sites in the Borough in 2019, to consider a strategy to build an effective local ecological network with regard to relevant national and local policy, guidance and strategy at that time.

The Assessment set out suggested strategic principles to underpin a biodiversity strategy in the Borough to conserve and enhance biodiversity by:

- Protecting and enhancing existing sites with nature conservation designations: SPA, SAC, Ramsar, SSSI, LNR, LoWS, LoGS.
- Recognising and improving the connections between such sites.
- Creating new habitats for biodiversity.

- Where possible, enhancing the biodiversity value of land outside of recognised ecological networks.

The Assessment established five biodiversity priorities in the Borough as set out below in order of significance:

1. Protect existing sites for nature conservation from negative impacts.
2. Maintain and enhance the existing designated sites to achieve favourable condition.
3. Increase the size of designated sites by creating adjacent habitat.
4. Create additional habitat for biodiversity where it will give the best results.
5. Improve the ecological connections between sites within and beyond the Borough.

Table 38: Local Wildlife Sites Opportunity Areas for Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

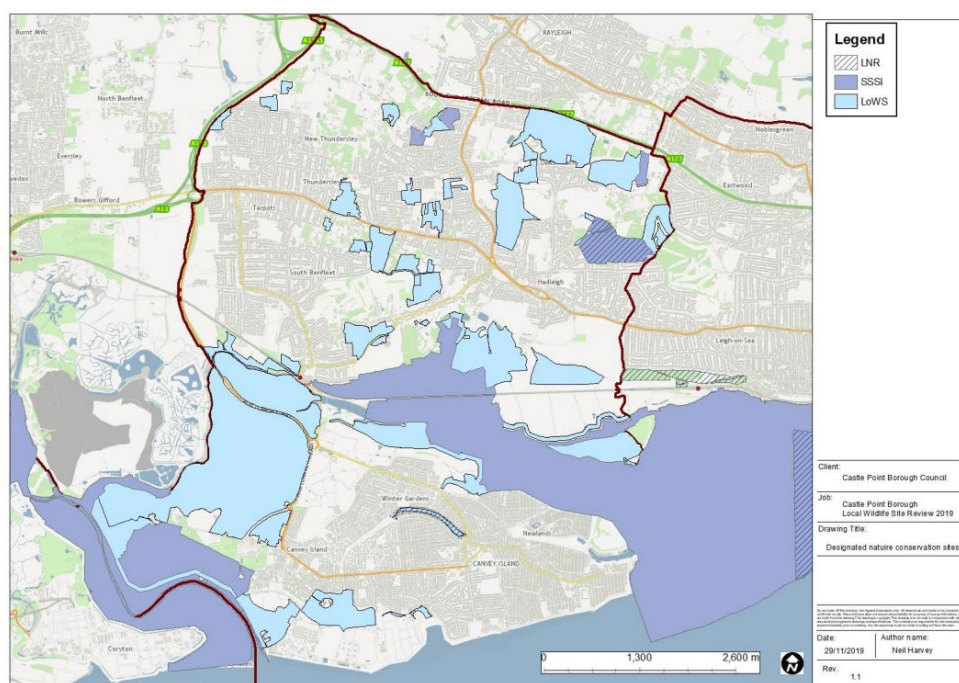
CPT4	West Canvey Marshes	Habitat outside of the RSPB reserve could be enhanced by improving water levels and managing for conservation outcomes.
CPT5	Canvey Village Marsh	Management could be improved if focused on nature conservation outcomes.
CPT6	Benfleet Sewage Works	Scrub management needed to restore open grassland.
CPT9	Kents Hill Wood	Active woodland management is needed.
CPT10	Coombe Wood	Conservation management would maintain the site's value.
CPT11	Mount Road Wood	Active woodland management is needed to diversify structure, along with restoration of open habitats.
CPT12	Vicarage Hill	Extensive scrub management is needed to re-establish open grassland habitat.
CPT13	Reeds Hill Pasture	Management could be improved if focused on nature conservation outcomes.
CPT14	Thundersley Glen	Better grassland management would enhance the site for biodiversity and thinning is needed to maintain open habitats. Invasive species should be removed.
CPT16	The Chase Paddocks	The western paddocks would benefit from lighter grazing. The eastern paddock needs scrub management to maintain the grassland area.
CPT18	Shipwrights Wood	Active woodland management is needed to maintain the conservation value of the wood, including the removal of Cherry Laurel.
CPT20	Coopers Wood	Management is needed to maintain the open grassland of the glade.
CPT21	Thundersley Great Common Wood	Active woodland management is needed to maintain the conservation value of the wood, including the removal of Cherry

		Laurel.
CPT23	Thundersley Plotland	Many habitat blocks could be managed more favourably for biodiversity, including the removal of invasive non-native species.
CPT36	Northwick Farm and Sea Wall	Management is needed to preserve the balance of scrub to open habitats. The seawall needs more frequent cutting.
CPT37	Benfleet Marsh	A reduction of management pressure would improve the plant community and control over water levels would also help to recreate Coastal Grazing Marsh habitat
CPT38	Brick House Farm Marsh	A nature conservation management strategy including maintenance of an open mosaic would enhance this site.
CPT40	Thundersley Brickfields	A nature conservation management strategy including maintenance of an open mosaic would enhance this site.
CPT43	Badger Hall Woods	Active woodland management is needed to maintain the conservation value of the wood

Source: Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment, Place Services (2019)

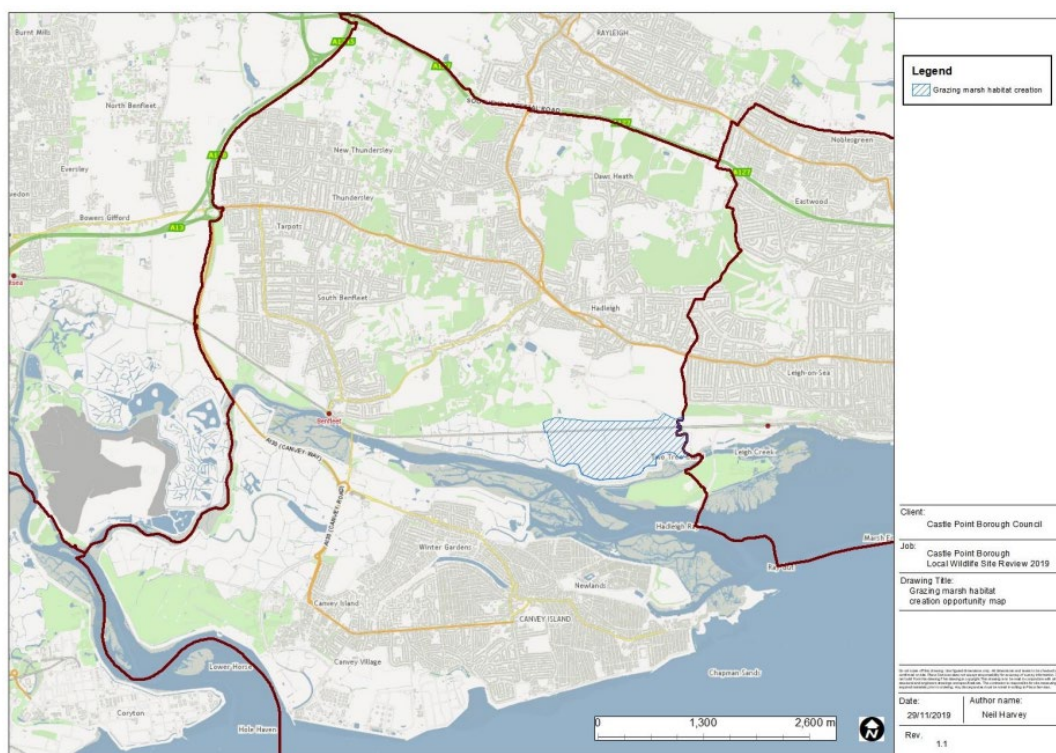
Table 38 sets out Local Wildlife Sites where habitat restoration or enhancement through improved management are necessary and which could be achieved as a Biodiversity Net Gain project.

Figure 29: Designated nature conservation sites



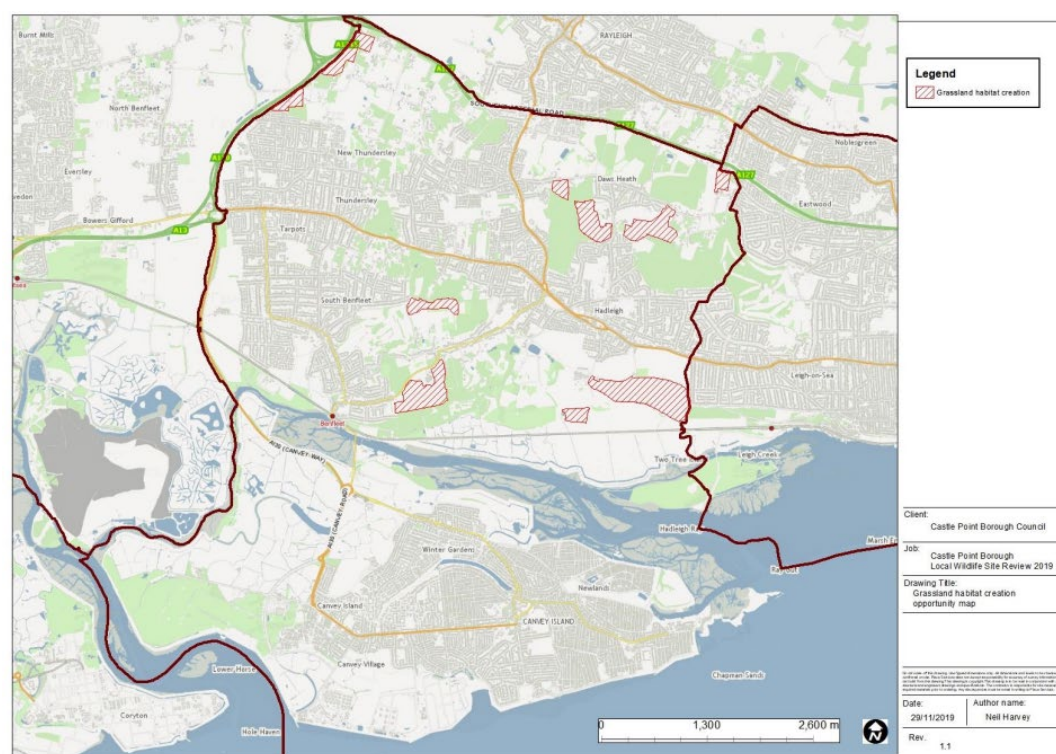
Source: Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment, Place Services (2019)

Figure 30: Grazing Marsh creation opportunity map



Source: Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment, Place Services (2019)

Figure 31: Grassland habitat creation opportunity map



Source: Castle Point Borough Strategic Biodiversity Assessment, Place Services (2019)

8.1.3 Castle Point Local Wildlife Site Review 2024

The Council has commissioned specialist consultants (Place Services) to undertake a Borough wide review of Local Wildlife sites to inform green infrastructure planning, local planning, and the delivery of biodiversity net gain using the latest DEFRA Metric²⁶ for each site assessed to ensure a biodiversity net gain baseline assessment. This review is to be completed April 2024.

8.2 Designated Sites

Natural England records show that there are no international or European designated sites within Castle Point. Nationally designated sites include 6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). There are also 43 locally important nature conservation areas which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWSs). The LoWSs within the Borough have a total area of 872.1 hectares.

The 6 SSSIs are:

- Benfleet and Southend Marshes
- Canvey Wick
- Garrolds Meadow
- Great Wood and Dodds Grove
- Holehaven Creek
- Thundersley Great Common

Table 39 sets out the percentage of area meeting the Public Service Agreement levels. There has been no further updated information by Natural England since 2018.

Table 39: Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest

SSSI name:	% Area meeting PSA target of favourable or unfavourable recovering condition
Benfleet and Southend Marshes	92.26%
Canvey Wick	100.00%
Garrolds Meadow	100.00%
Great Wood and Dodd's Grove	100.00%
Holehaven Creek	100.00%
Thundersley Great Common	100.00%

²⁶ The DEFRA Metric is a statutory metric to be used when measuring biodiversity value for the purposes of Biodiversity Net Gain. It measures all types of habitat.

Source: Data taken from Natural England, June 2018

There is a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target of at least 95% of all nationally important wildlife sites being brought into favourable condition. 5 of the 6 sites in Castle Point are meeting this target. Those not, are Benfleet and Southend Marshes.

In addition to designated sites, consideration should also be given to non-designated site value in regard to ecology on a site- by-site basis in order to protect, connect and enhance species and habitats, including those that are protected. This could include greenfield sites and areas of habitat considered to enrich appreciably the habitat resource within the context of local areas, such as species-rich hedgerows, municipal parklands or individual veteran trees.

8.2.1 Essex Coastal Recreational Avoidance and Mitigations Strategy

The Essex Coastal Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) is a joint initiative between 11 Essex Local Planning Authorities to identify and mitigate for the recreational impacts new homes will have on the international and nationally protected sites along the Essex Coast. The RAMS was implemented at the beginning of 2019.

A Supplementary Planning Document to support the RAMS Strategy was published in May 2020. This document provided the legal basis for the RAMS including the level of developer contributions being sought for strategic mitigation.

8.3 Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services

Green Infrastructure (GI) includes land uses such as parks, river corridors, open spaces, playing fields, nature reserves and woodlands, as well as allotments, street trees and private gardens. GI provides the following services, sometimes referred to as 'ecosystem services'²⁷:

- Places for outdoor wellbeing, aesthetics, relaxation, play, exercise and learning.
- Wildlife habitat for the benefit of the wildlife itself and the services provided by species such as pollination of crops, disease regulation and nutrient cycling.
- Climate change benefits - for example flood regulation, carbon storage in soil and plants and cooling urban heat islands.
- Local food production - in allotments, gardens and through agriculture.

²⁷ Ecosystem services are defined as 'The benefits people obtain from ecosystems.'

- Production of sustainable resources such as timber and fuel.
- Regulating soil nutrients and reducing the impacts of pollution.
- Provision of water resources.

Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020

A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Essex²⁸ was published in 2020 in order to fully understand and maximise the benefits of GI in the County. The purpose of the Strategy is to protect, create, improve and connect Green Infrastructure to combat climate change and improve the environment of Essex.

South Essex Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure Study 2020

The South Essex Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure Study 2020²⁹ sets out the inspired vision for green and blue infrastructure across South Essex, and provides high level objectives, strategic opportunities, and policies. The intention of the South Essex GBI is to steer, and be supported by, individual local plans.

8.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain is the principle of development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, through a hierarchy of avoiding impact in the first instance, then minimising, restoring and, as a last option, creating new habitat elsewhere. It thereby contributes to the integrity of green infrastructure and ecosystem services.

The Environment Act 2021 and Biodiversity Net Gain

The Environment Act was brought in to halt decline of species by 2020 and introduces a mandatory minimum 10% biodiversity net gain within development to ensure development improves or creates new habitats for nature. This means that developers must deliver the biodiversity net gain of 10% to result in a more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

Castle Point Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supplementary Planning Document January 2024

Castle Point Council have prepared a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in which they have recently consulted (January 2024) with local residents and stakeholders. The SPD sets out guidance on planning for and delivering BNG, as well as the Council's expectations for BNG, to assist developers, planning applicants, decision makers and landowners with development proposals. The SPD outline:

- What is Biodiversity, BNG, and its importance.

²⁸ Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, ECC, 2020

²⁹ South Essex Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, ASELA, 2020

- Legislation and political drivers.
- Biodiversity Metrics.
- BNG good practice principles.
- Links to other planning
- Summary of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Castle Point Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report 2023

Castle Point Council published the SEA and HRA Screening Report 2023 for consultation (January 2024) with residents and stakeholders alongside the BNG SPD consultation. The purpose of the Screening Report was to assess whether or not the BNG SPD required a SEA in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plan and Programmes Regulations and whether or not it required a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

SEA is a tool used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives.

Conclusions of the Screening Report

The SEA outcome of the Report concluded that the BNG SPD would result in positive, long-term effects in relation to biodiversity protection and enhancement, and that none of the effects would be significant to require an assessment of the significant environmental effects of the plan.

The HRA outcome of the report also concluded that the BNG SPD would result in positive, long-term effects in relation to biodiversity protection and enhancement, and that the BNG SPD would not cause significant effects that could cause and adverse effect on the integrity of Habitat Site. The Report considered that a full HRA was not required.

8.5 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
The Plan area is in close proximity to a number of SPAs.	Opportunities for recreation. Contribution to Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.	Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>From the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (EBAP) there are 25 species, and 10 habitat action plans covering Essex.</p> <p>There are 6 SSSIs in Canvey Island. 5 of these 6 are meeting quality target of 100% favourable or unfavourable recovering condition.</p> <p>There is an Essex Coastal Recreational Avoidance, Disturbance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and SPD</p> <p>There are 43 Local Wildlife Sites.</p> <p>A BNG SPD has been prepared and positively screened and consulted upon.</p>	<p>Potential for declining biodiversity in Castle Point due to need for growth in the Borough aligned development without action, as well as climate change.</p> <p>Opportunities to encourage biodiversity net gain via statutory protections.</p> <p>Without a new Castle Point Plan, it is possible that development could be sited inappropriately and adversely impact biodiversity sites.</p> <p>A new castle Point Plan will provide opportunities to incorporate updated policy to support the management, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in connection with new development in Castle Point. New policy also provides an opportunity to manage the sensitivities of biodiversity sites and networks, e.g., locating development away from the most sensitive locations and providing for new green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>There will also be opportunities for policy to support the achievement of biodiversity net gain at new development in line with the national policy approach and to support the achievement of the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy.</p>	<p>Link to London National Park City.</p>

9. Landscapes

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The new Castle Point Plan should support development that contributes to responsible use of land resources and their quality, therefore protecting the health and well-being of residents in Castle Point and its surroundings from being put at unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil pollution and other impacts.

The NPPF (2023) includes as part of its overarching objective of protecting the natural environment, recognition for the value of landscape. Planning policies are required by the framework to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits to be secured from natural capital. Great weight is to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). As part of the approach to achieving well-designed places the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments “are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting”.

Improving the beauty of nature is included as one of the environmental goals set out in the 25 year Environment Plan. The Plan seeks to enhance beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment and to ensure that people can enjoy the country’s landscapes and beauty.

9.1 Landscape Features

Landscape Character Assessment 2003

A landscape character assessment was undertaken of Essex in 2003. Castle Point falls into two character areas, the Thames Estuary and South Essex Coastal Towns.

The natural characteristics are as follows: wide estuary mouth extending to open sea, flat low lying land southeast of Basildon and around Canvey, steep sloping escarpments and ridges, extensive tidal mudflats/sands and fringe saltmarsh, large scale landscape and strong sense of exposure, expansive views, dynamic landscape (tide and weather), rough low grazing marsh, extensive coastal grazing marsh.

Artificial landscape features are as follows: Canvey island (low lying land, street grid pattern, drainage dykes within the built form), rough low grazing marsh, pylons and overhead lines prominent between Basildon and Benfleet, heavy boat traffic, seawalls and dykes, low quality intrusive commercial shed development is common, large oil refineries and oil and gas storage tanks, landfill sites nearby or within the Borough.

Essex Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation 2007

The 2007 Characterisation study was undertaken to serve as a tool for the management and enhancement of the historic environment. The study reveals the sensitivity, diversity and value of the historic environment resource within the Essex Thames Gateway area including Castle Point Borough and is intended to facilitate the development of positive approaches to the integration of historic environment objectives into spatial planning.

The study compiled Historic environment Character Zones to enable the identification of potential impacts on the historic environment from development, and the highlighting for the need for informed conservation, enhancement and mitigation, but also providing the framework for engagement.

Figure 34: Historic Environmental Character Zones in the Essex Thames Gateway Study Area

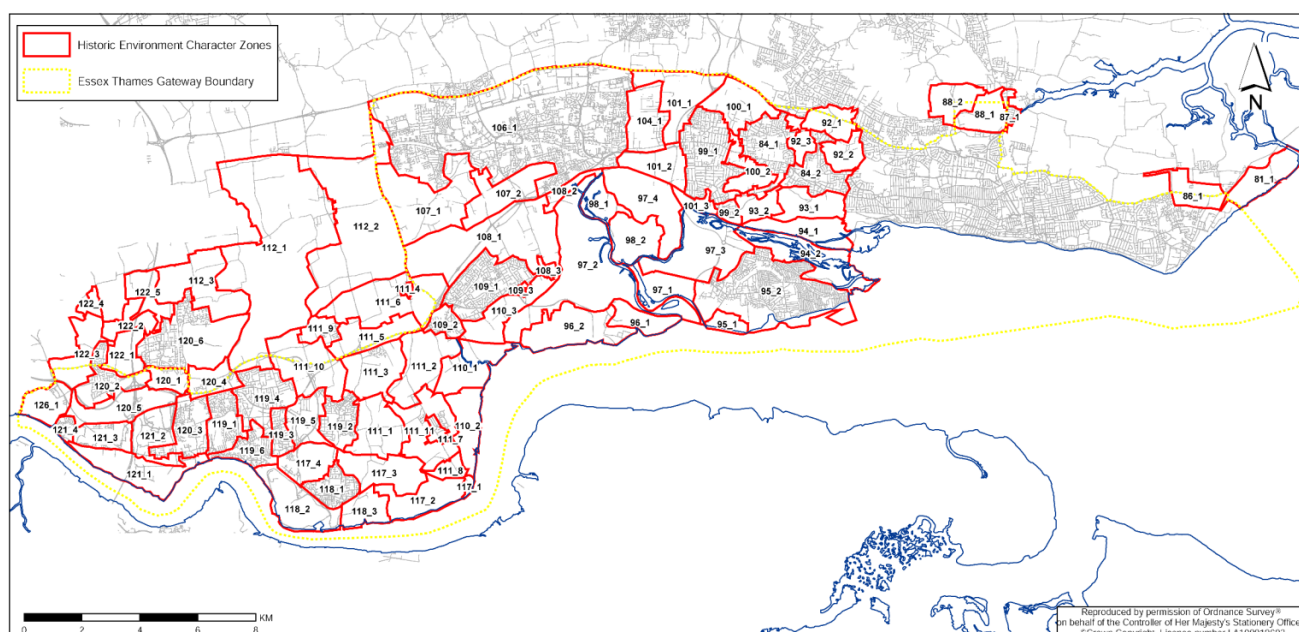


Fig. 1 Historic Environment Character Zones within the study area. Only those zones from Rochford District, for which parts are within the Essex Thames Gateway boundary, have been included. The remainder of Rochford District has been covered by the "Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project" (ECC 2005)

Source: Essex Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation 2007, ECC

Historic Environment Characterisation Zones

Table 40: Historic Environment Characterisation Zones within / bounding with Castle Point Borough

Location / Name	HECA Zone Reference	Description Summary
Thundersley	84_1	Encompasses the built up area of Thundersley, engulfing the ancient, dispersed settlement pattern and late 19 th and early 20 th century plotland development.

Location / Name	HECA Zone Reference	Description Summary
Hadleigh	84_2	Encompasses the built up area of Hadleigh, which has absorbed the pre-existing historic village and the surrounding field systems into a 20 th century urban development.
Daws Heath and Pound Wood	92_1	Contains an area of open ground and ancient woodlands south of Rayleigh and on the outskirts of Southend Urban area. Evidence for Romano-British settlement and land-use.
Hadleigh Great Wood	92_2	Contains Great Wood, an area of ancient woodland, now a nature reserve. Retains much of its pre-20 th century character in its field systems. It is bounded to the east by Southend urban area, and by Hadleigh to the south and west,
West Wood	92-3	Contains an area of ancient woodland lying between Thundersley and Hadleigh, as well as small, ancient irregular field enclosures that have also survived largely intact.
Hadleigh Castle	93-1	Contains the historically significant 13 th century Hadleigh Castle, has an open rural character with a dispersed settlement pattern and some mixed woodland. It is topographically distinct, comprising largely undeveloped land rising steeply above the marshes and Thames Estuary. Archaeological deposits from a range of periods have been identified.
Round Hill	93_2	Open rural character with dispersed settlement and mixed woodland. It is a topographical distinct unit of land comprised of largely undeveloped rising ground above the marshes and Thames. There has been minimal archaeological assessment but is likely to contain significant preserved deposits.
Hadleigh Marsh	94_1	Includes the western part of Two Tree Island, on the north side of Benfleet Creek and Hadleigh Ray. Comprises reclaimed land, marsh and mudflat. Present and former grazing marsh with considerable potential to contain significant archaeological and paleo-environmental deposits, especially in the intertidal zone.
Benfleet Creek	94_2	Comprises Benfleet Creek and Hadleigh ray and the saltmarsh and reclaimed marsh to the south. Considerable potential to contain significant archaeological and paleo-environmental deposits, especially in the intertidal zone.
Canvey Island Industrial	95_1	Consists of 20 th century oil and gas storage facility. Evidence of late and medieval historic activity. Iron age.

Location / Name	HECA Zone Reference	Description Summary
		Romano-British red Hill saltworking site and medieval moated site are recorded on this zone.
Canvey Island Urban	95_1	Long history of occupation and land use. Long history of exploitation of marshland resources. Pre-existing landscape features such as creeks and embankment are preserved in the present form of the urban development. Evidence of late prehistoric and medieval activity.
Canvey Marshes	97_3	Relatively undisturbed landscape of marshland, enclosed into field systems for marsh grazing ant an early date. Potential to contain substantial archaeological resources.
Bowers Marshes	97_4	South-west of South Benfleet, contains relatively undisturbed landscape of marshland that was enclosed into field systems for marsh grazing at an early date, has retained much of its integrity and character due to lack of development.
South Benfleet	99_1	Comprises most of the built-up area of South Benfleet, dating from late 19 th and 20 th centuries, which was built on an area of ancient small rectilinear fields.
South Benfleet Historic Core	99_2	Consists of the historic core of South Benfleet, dating from the Anglo-Saxon period as well as the area immediately around it. Considerable archaeological potential in term of both below-ground deposits and historic buildings.
Thundersley Rural	100_1	Consists of semi-rural area of land that has retained a large proportion of its historic field system fossilised within a complex pattern of plotland boundaries. There is extensively secondary woodland.
Thundersley Woods	100_2	Consists of a combe between the urban areas of South Benfleet and Thundersley. Mostly covered with woodland and scrub with a golf course in the south west. Potential for survival of archaeological deposits within this relatively undeveloped zone.
Bowers Hall	101_2	Lies on rising ground above Boers Marshes, characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern with several medieval moated sites.
Benfleet Marsh	101.3	Comprises present and former grazing marsh on the urban edge of Benfleet. There is significant disturbance through the construction of a railway and sewage works, but significant open areas with archaeological potential survive.

Source: Essex Thames Gateway Historic Landscape Characterisation, 2007, ECC

Living Landscapes in Castle Point

Living landscapes embrace important landscape features, such as river valleys and estuaries, and clusters of connected LoWS and other sites recognised for their conservation significance, but they also include the areas on between, including residential and industrial areas. In some locations living landscapes overlap into adjoining authorities.

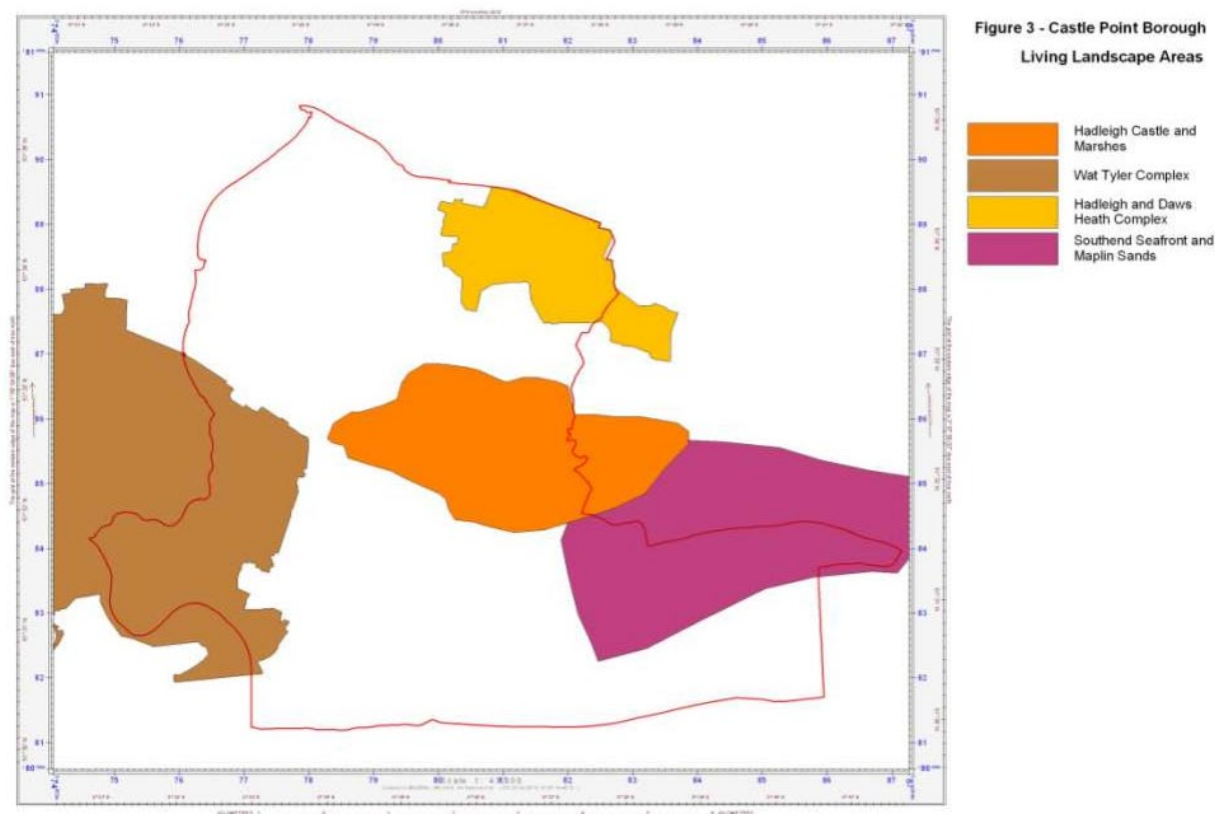
Living landscape areas in Castle Point include:

- Wat Tyler Complex
 - West Canvey Marshes
 - Canvey Village Marsh
 - Benfleet Sewage Works
 - Northwick Farm and Sea Wall
 - Canvey Wick SSSI
- Hadleigh Castle and Marshes
 - Coastal habitats mostly to the south of the railway line
 - Mosaics of dry grassland, scrub and woodland to the north
 - Castle Farm Grasslands
 - Hadleigh Castle Grasslands
 - Includes Benfleet and Southend SSSI and Two Tree Island West
- Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex
 - Mosaic woodland and grassland
 - West Wood
 - Little Haven Nature Reserve
 - Pound Wood
 - Great wood
 - Dodd's Grove SSSI
 - Belfairs Park Wood
- Southend Seafront and Maplin Sands
 - Takes in small part of the Castle Point Borough
- Thundersley Woodlands
 - Small scale than other Living Landscape areas

The above areas share an historical connection and provide a largely contiguous block of ancient woodland with younger woodlands showing an ancient influence. The area is somewhat constrained by residential development, but some opportunities exist for improved management and expansion.

Source: Castle Point Borough Local Wildlife Sites Review 2012

Figure 35: Castle Point Borough Living Landscape Areas



Source: Castle Point Borough Local Wildlife Sites Review 2012

Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex Living Landscape and Vision

The Hadleigh and Daws Heath Complex living landscape covers 470 ha, comprising woodland (including ancient woodland), open land and built-up areas, and provides a “vital green lung for the residents of Hadleigh, Rayleigh, Thundersley, Southend-on-Sea and Rochford³⁰.

The woods and open land provide continuous public access from Little Haven Nature Reserve and West Wood in the west to Belfairs Park in the east. Informal recreation across the landscape includes, walking, cycling and horse riding. There is a need to further improve access and recreational provision while not damaging important areas for wildlife³¹.

The vision is to conserve, enhance and reconnect sites of value to wildlife and people, while increasing business opportunities within the local economy³².

The complex contains nine Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) and three Nature Reserves:

³⁰ Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010

³¹ Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010

³² *ibid*

Figure 36: Hadleigh and Daws Living Landscape Wildlife and Nature Reserves

Local Wildlife Site (LoWs)	Habitat	Area
Cottage Plantation and Rag Wood	Ancient Woodland	6.74 ha
Little Haven Complex/Tile Wood	Mosaic of Ancient Woodlands, hedgerows, hay meadows and rough grassland (EWGS)	48.62 ha
Coxall Wood	Ancient Woodland	0.837 ha
Pound Wood	Ancient Woodland (EWGS)	22.54ha
Oakwood Reservoirs	Acid Grassland	3.41ha
Belfairs Park Wood	Mosaic of habitats including Ancient Woodland	15.76ha
West Wood	Ancient Woodland	33.12ha
Belfairs Golf Course	Mosaic of closely mown grassland	26.2ha
Belfairs Park Wood	Ancient Woodland	20.08ha

Nature Reserves

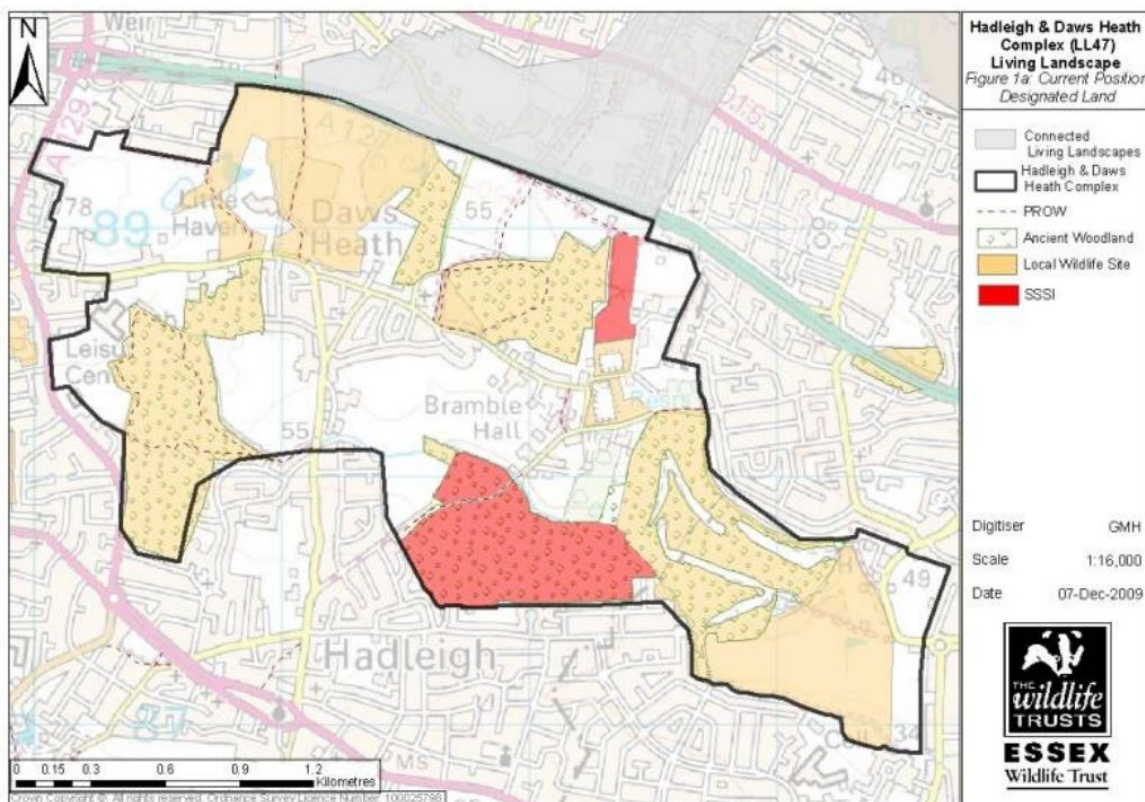
Little Haven (40.47 ha) – Woodland and hay meadow complex with ancient coppiced hedgerows

Pound Wood (22.26 ha) – Ancient Woodland

Tile Wood (6.88 ha) – Ancient Woodland

Source: Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010

Figure 37: Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Complex



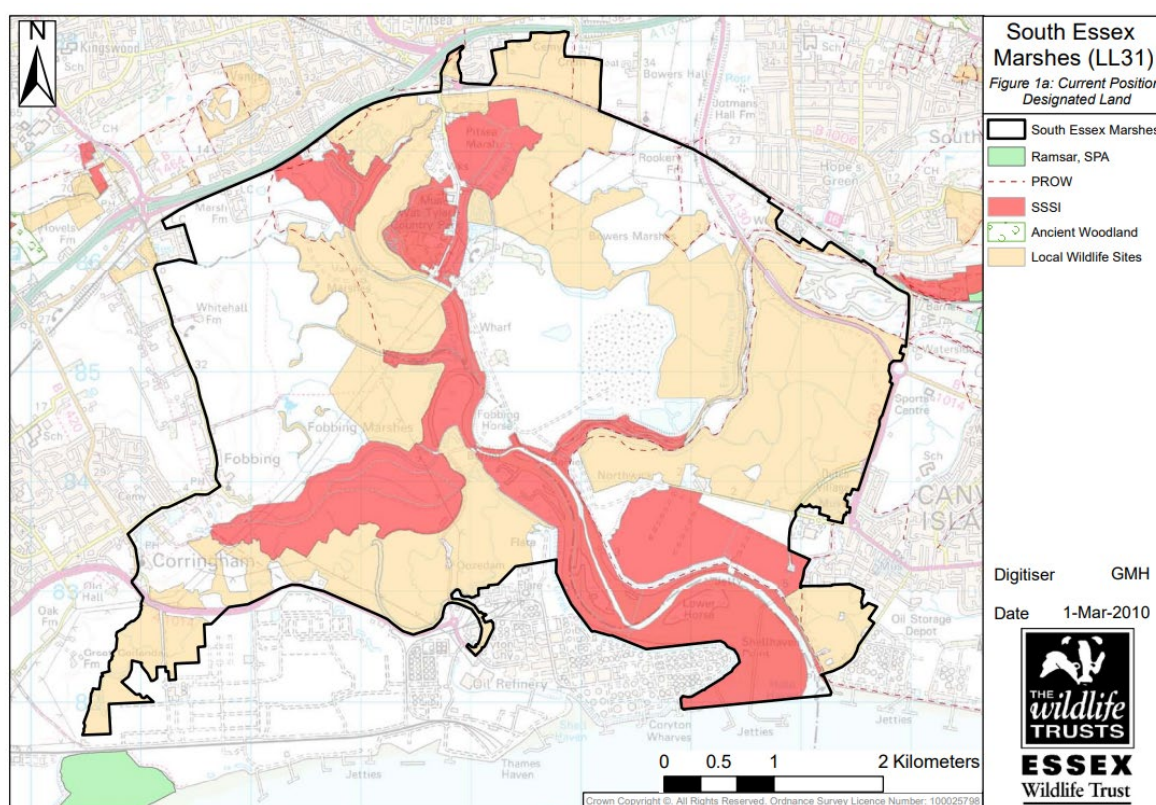
Source: Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010

Central South Essex Marshes Living Landscape and Vision

The central South Essex Marshes living landscape covers 25 sq. km and is described as “*sustainable wetlands of international importance*”³³. The landscape is adjacent to the River Thames with significant tributaries. The RSPB and the Port of London Authority have a partnership agreement to jointly develop a conservation management framework for the Thames. The South Essex Marshes form a significant and integral part of the wider Thames estuary. Access integrates with the Thames footpath.

The vision is to enhance the landscape of the South Essex Marshes to create a high quality environment, rich in wildlife and accessible to people, creating a living landscape which is resilient and sustainable, for the wellbeing of the local community and local economy³⁴.

Figure 38: South Essex Marshes Living Landscape



Source: Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010

³³ Hadleigh and Daws Heath Living Landscape Vision, Essex Wildlife Trust, 2010

³⁴ ibid

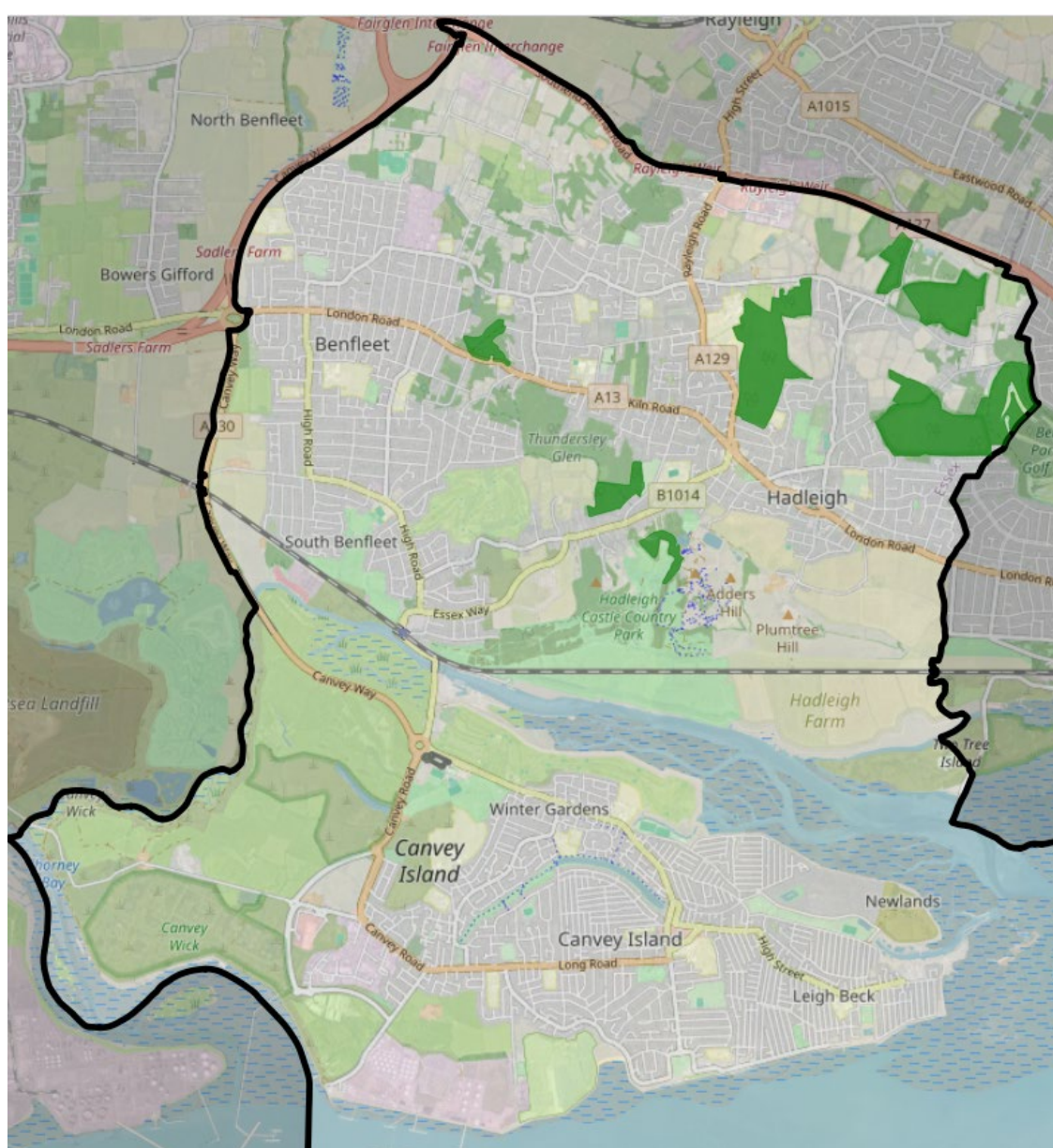
9.1.1 Ancient Woodland

Ancient woods are areas of woodland that have persisted since 1600. They are relatively undisturbed by human development. As a result, they are unique and complex communities of plants, fungi, insects and other microorganisms.

The larger ancient woods that remain in the Borough, in particular around Daws Heath area, are for the most part under sympathetic conservation management but are at risk of increasing recreational pressure.

Figure 31 illustrates the areas of ancient woodland (dark green areas) within Castle Point Borough.

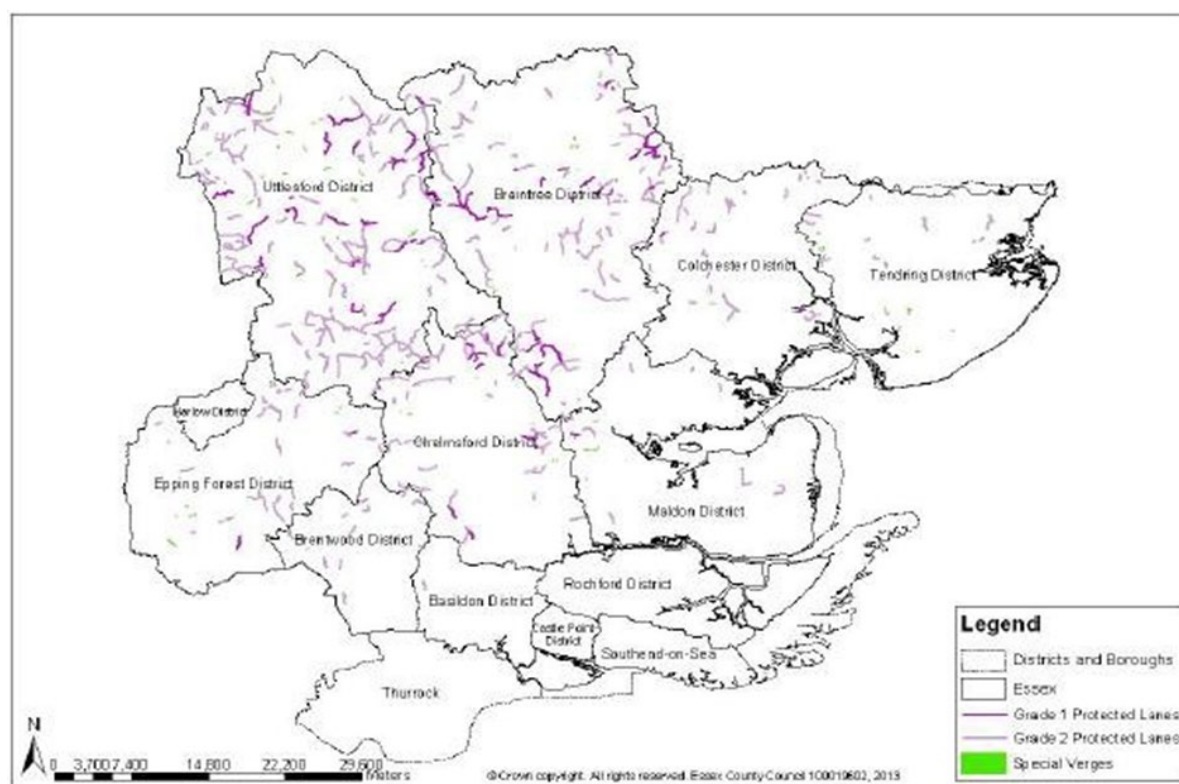
Figure 39: Ancient Woodland in Castle Point



Source: Castle Point Borough Council Mapping

9.1.2 Protected Lanes & Special Verges

Figure 40: Protected Lanes and Special Verges in Essex



Source: Essex County Council, 2013

9.2 Agricultural Land Classification

The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)³⁵ system classifies agricultural land in five categories according to versatility and suitability for growing crops. As shown in Figure 25, Castle Point contains areas of Grade 3 Agricultural Land which means good to moderate quality agricultural land with moderate limitations.

³⁵ Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales, 1988

Figure 41: Agricultural Land in Castle Point



Green - Grade 3 Agricultural Land

Agricultural land is very rarely associated with farming in the Borough. The costs associated with yields have reduced the amount of arable farms in the Borough. Limited cropping occurs in the east of the Borough, most goes unused or is used for grazing. Much of the farmland is being promoted for housing developments.

9.3 Previously Developed Land

The NPPF (2023) states that strategic policies should set out a clear strategy to meet local needs in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed land or 'brownfield land'. Furthermore, policies should "support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land".

Contaminated Land

In accordance with Section 78R of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council is required to maintain a public register of contaminated land, which serves as a permanent record of all regulatory action undertaken to ensure remediation of any site that has been classified as contaminated. There are currently 16 record entries on the Castle Point Register of Contaminated Land³⁶.

Castle Point has 53 sites (as of April 2024) on its Brownfield Land Register³⁷ which are as follows:

Site Name and Address	Min.Net Dwellings
Vallee Casa, 62 Hill Road, Benfleet	6
166-168 Kiln Road, Benfleet	7
Job Centre, 140 Furtherwick Road, Canvey Island	12
84 Vicarage Hill, Benfleet	2
Site adjacent to Pauls Court, Meppel Avenue, Canvey Island	5
20 Haresland Close, Hadleigh	3
The Island Site, High Street / London Road, Hadleigh	54
Admiral Jellicoe Public House, 283 High Street, Canvey Island	14
Outpatients centre, Long Road, Canvey Island	10
343 Rayleigh Road, Thundersley	10
125-127 High Street, Canvey Island	14
4-12 Park Chase, Hadleigh, Benfleet	25
Prout Industrial Estate (Canvey Supply), Point Road, Canvey Island	27
Benfleet Tavern Public House, High Road, Benfleet	14
West of Venebles Close, Canvey Island	24
87-97 High Street, Benfleet	14
Prout Industrial Estate (Canvey Supply), Point Road, Canvey Island	50
Briar Cottage, Leige Avenue, Canvey Island	11
Rear of 179-181 Church Road, Thundersley	40
Haystack car park, Long Road, Canvey Island	14
Thames Loose Leaf, 289 Kiln Road, Hadleigh	12
Halfords, 543-557 Rayleigh Road, Thundersley	32
320 London Road, Hadleigh	20
High Road, Tarpots Town Centre, Benfleet	40
286 London Road, Benfleet	9
Maharaja Restaurant, 358 London Road, Benfleet	6
61-69 Hart Road, Thundersley	2
210 & 212 High Road, Benfleet	4
191-193 High Road, Benfleet	14
Stafford Court Care Home, Venables Close, Canvey Island	0
364 London Road, Hadleigh	9
54 Beech Road, Hadleigh	14

³⁶ <https://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/public-register-of-contaminated-land/>

³⁷ The Brownfield Land Register identifies previously developed sites within the Borough that have been assessed as being suitable for housing led development.

Site Name and Address	Min.Net Dwellings
Walsingham House, Lionel Road, Canvey Island	32
246-250 High Road, Benfleet	11
Garden World Plants Ltd, Canvey Road, Canvey Island	57
Nashlea Farm, Poors Lane, Benfleet	7
Chase Nurseries, The Chase, Thundersley, Benfleet	19
117-123 London Road, Benfleet	10
351-359 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	19
363 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	6
244-258 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	50
387 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	4
555 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	6
Hollywood, Great Burches Road, Thundersley, Benfleet	4
39-43 High Street, Canvey Island	11
341-347 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	34
599-601 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	2
Ash House 340-342 London Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet	8
The Monico Bar And Restaurant 1-3 Eastern Esplanade, Canvey Island	8
Hobson And Sons Ltd Kenneth Road, Benfleet	30
1-5 High Street, Benfleet	5
Land Rear Of 316 - 320 High Road, Benfleet	7
Land at Chapman Sands, Canvey Island	7

9.4 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Castle Point falls into two character areas, the Thames Estuary and South Essex Coastal Towns.</p> <p>There are 5 Living Landscape areas identified within the Borough.</p> <p>There are 53 brownfield sites on the Brownfield Register with 824 minimum net dwellings.</p> <p>Very little agricultural land is used for farming</p> <p>There are no protected lanes in the Borough.</p>	<p>Opportunities to use the brownfield sites ahead of any sites in the greenbelt.</p> <p>Contribution to Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.</p> <p>Recreational pressure - increased use of coastal pathways.</p> <p>Pressure from development – including new housing and infrastructure developments such as transport improvements.</p> <p>Harm to trees.</p> <p>The new Castle Point Plan provides opportunities to</p>	<p>Green Infrastructure Strategy.</p> <p>Link to London National Park City.</p> <p>Recreational pressure - increased use of coastal pathways.</p> <p>Pressure from development – including new housing and infrastructure developments such as transport improvements.</p> <p>Harm to trees.</p>

There is limited ancient woodland in the Borough. Daws Heath in particular contains a number of ancient woodlands connected by a network of hedgerows.	ensure that the variation in landscape character is taken into account in the design and siting of development to support its long-term protection and enhancement.	
--	---	--

10. Water Environment

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The new Castle Point Plan should support development that contributes to responsible use and protection of water resources and their quality, therefore protecting the health and well-being of residents in Castle Point and its surroundings from being put at unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on how planning can take account of the impact of new development on water quality, as well as the delivery of adequate water and wastewater infrastructure.

Water Stress

Anglian Water is responsible for water supply and sewerage in Castle Point Borough and across the East of England, which includes East Anglia. East Anglia as a whole has been identified as the most water-stressed region in the country and has the lowest average rainfall in the UK. In the Essex Water Strategy, 2024 (ECC) it is estimated that by 2050 the East of England will experience a public water supply shortage of around 730 million litres of water per day, equal to over a third of the predicted future need.

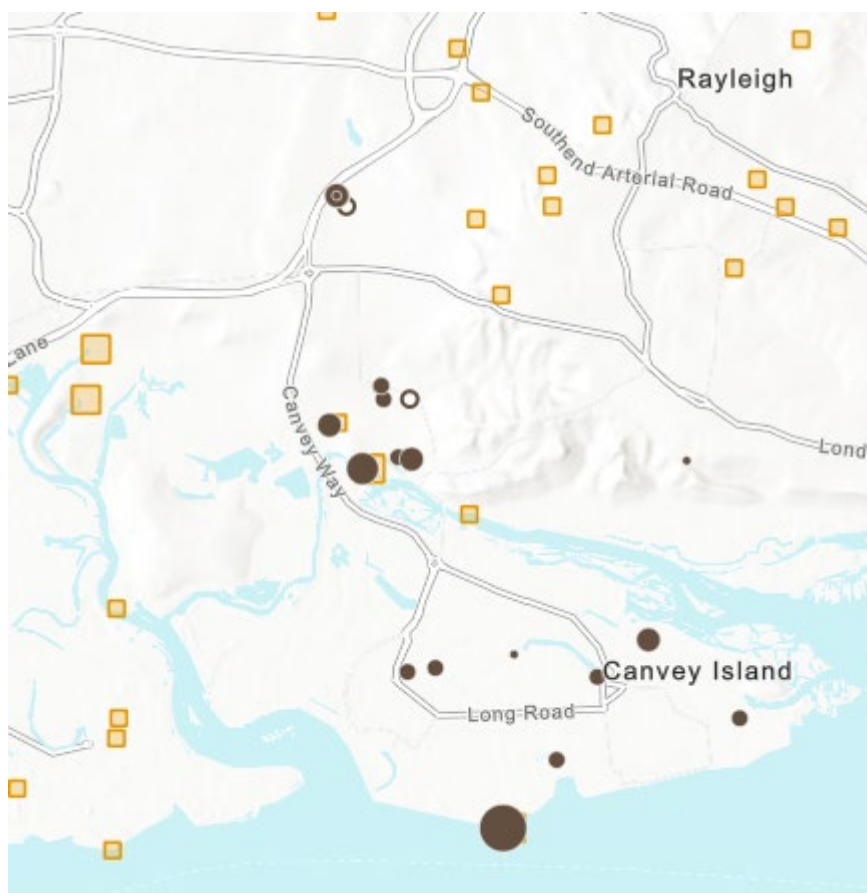
In the Essex County, “only three fifths of the drinking water consumed comes from the county itself – the rest has to be imported from elsewhere”³⁸.

Sewerage Discharge

The Rivers Trust has produced a map of sewerage network discharges and overflows of untreated sewerage and storm water in England which was last updated in 2023. In 2023, water companies discharged raw sewerage into rivers and coastal waters in England 579,581 times, a significant increase on the previous year (372,533). Monitoring was carried out in 2023 at 21 of the 23 storm overflows for a total duration of 2,538 hours. These incidents contributed to pollution within the Borough’s waterways. It is uncertain whether the situation is improving or deteriorating as monitoring of storm overflows is not consistent (see Figure 42).

³⁸ Water Strategy for Essex, 2024, ECC

Figure 42: Rivers Trust map of sewerage network discharges and overflows of untreated sewage and storm water in 2023³⁹.



10.1 Water Courses

There are four main rivers located within Castle Point Borough: Prittle Brook, Benfleet Hall Sewer, Kersey Marsh Sewer and Hadleigh Marsh Sewer.

Canvey Island is divided from the mainland area of Castle Point Borough by Benfleet Creek. The Southern side of the Island is bordered by the River Thames and the remaining sides of Canvey are bordered by the Holehaven Creek and East Haven Creek.

Anglian Water is the water and water recycling company serving over six million customers across the East of England. On Canvey Island, Anglian Water is the organisation responsible for the foul sewerage network. Anglian Water also own and maintain a number of surface water drainage systems on the Island.

Castle Point Borough Council owns the lake and a number of other drainage features on the Island and is the organisation that is responsible for local planning. Castle Point Borough Council is also the authority who manages social housing on

³⁹ [The Rivers Trust map of sewerage network discharges for Castle Point, 2023](#)

the Island, making them a riparian owner of some private drainage, and they offer advice and support on flood recovery.

The Environment Agency (EA) is the organisation with overall responsibility for strategic flood risk management in England. On the Island the EA are responsible for the management of flooding from designated main river watercourses and the sea, as well as holding regulatory powers of enforcement over tidal and main river flood defences.

Essex County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority covering Canvey Island. They coordinate local flood risk management activities and flood response. Essex County Council Highways Department is also the authority responsible for the ownership and management of the highways drainage network. As well as these responsibilities, Essex County Council hold powers to regulate ordinary watercourses through consents and enforcement.

10.2 Water Quality

Each River Basin District across England has a management plan⁴⁰, which has been formed to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Castle Point falls into the Thames District. Under the Directive, the UK must ensure that there is no deterioration in the quality its water bodies, and that all water bodies improve to reach 'good ecological status' as soon as possible. The management plan details the issues relating to water quality and how to address them.

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015>

Figure 43: Pressures and significant water management issues presenting waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status) in the Thames river basin district

Table 32: Pressures preventing waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status) in the Thames river basin district

Pressure	Agriculture and rural land management	Industry	Mining and quarrying	Navigation	Urban and transport	Water Industry	Local & central government	Domestic general public	Recreation	Waste treatment and disposal	Other	No sector responsible	Sector under investigation	Total
Abstraction and flow	6	5	1	3	5	58	1	0	0	0	7	24	0	110
Chemicals	21	5	0	1	14	3	0	0	0	0	6	0	1	51
Biochemical oxygen demand	1	0	0	0	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	8
Dissolved oxygen	48	8	0	2	56	68	3	11	0	0	3	24	0	223
Ammonia	2	2	0	0	47	62	1	3	0	0	2	0	3	122
Fine sediment	59	2	2	1	28	6	2	0	1	0	3	4	2	110
Invasive non native species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	0	18
Nitrate	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7
Phosphate	166	6	0	0	151	352	0	32	0	1	26	10	13	757
Physical modification	54	3	1	23	196	41	95	2	54	0	46	3	9	527

Table 33: Significant water management issues preventing waters reaching good status and the sectors identified as contributing to the impact (reasons for not achieving good status) in the Thames river basin district

Significant water management issue	Agriculture and rural land management	Industry	Mining and quarrying	Navigation	Urban and transport	Water Industry	Local & central government	Domestic general public	Recreation	Waste treatment and disposal	Other	No sector responsible	Sector under investigation	Total
Physical modifications	79	4	0	24	237	43	116	3	56	0	55	0	14	631
Pollution from waste water	11	22	0	1	30	499	0	58	0	1	19	0	1	642
Pollution from towns, cities and transport	1	5	0	0	275	18	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	304
Changes to the natural flow and level of water	14	6	1	5	3	70	2	0	1	0	8	0	0	110
Invasive non-native species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	21
Pollution from rural areas	297	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	303
Pollution from abandoned mines	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

Source: Thames river basin management plan, Environment Agency, 2015

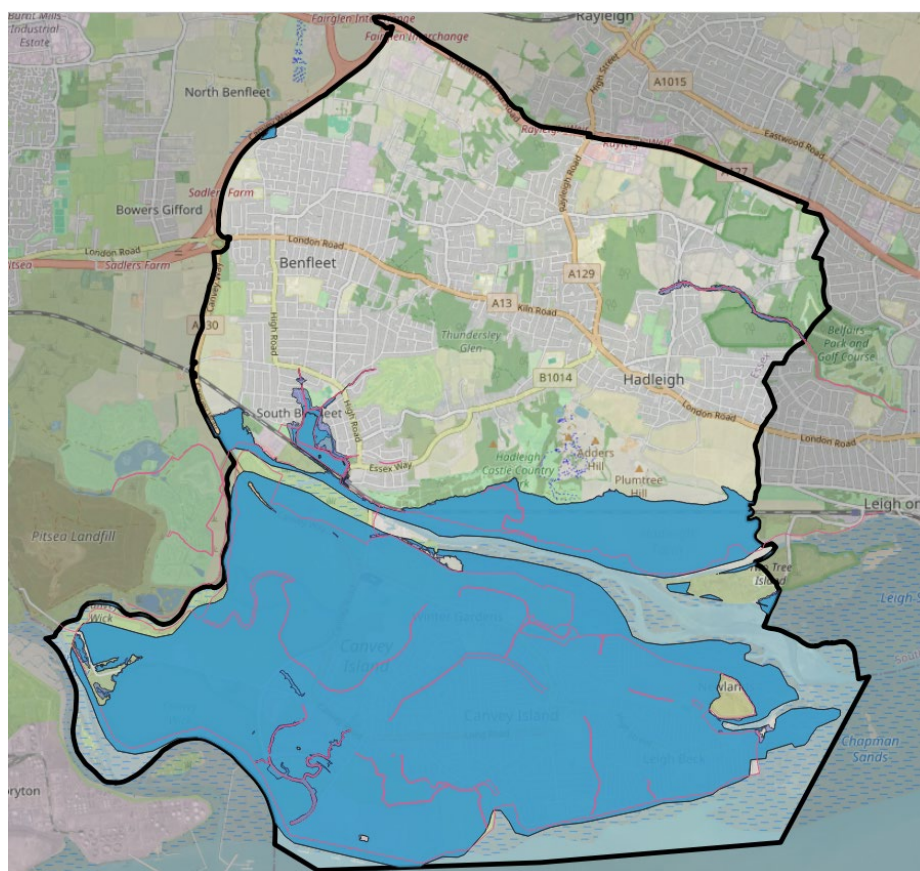
Beneath the River Basin District, catchment management plans are produced. In Essex, the Essex Rivers Hub⁴¹ works with partners and communities to protect and enhance rivers and watercourses. There are currently no catchment plans or projects for the rivers in Castle Point.

10.3 Flood Risk

The most recent South Essex Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment states that the majority of the Castle Point Borough (56%) is defined as Flood Zone 1 within the north of the Borough, 39% is located within Flood Zone 3 and 5% is defined as Flood Zone 2 to the south of the Borough.⁴² Tidal flooding is identified as the most significant flood risk to the Borough, in particular Canvey Island and Hadleigh Marshes are at residual risk of flooding if its defences were to fail or to be overtopped. If this were to happen, floodwaters would propagate rapidly across Canvey Island and low lying areas of the mainland providing challenges for warning and evacuation of those affected.

A review of the South Essex Flood Risk Assessment is being prepared (completion due 2024) to assess the impacts on Castle Point only, to provide a comprehensive picture of flood risk in Castle Point having regard to all potential sources of flooding.

Figure 44: Flood Zones 2 and 3 within Castle Point Borough Map



⁴¹ <http://www.essexrivershub.org.uk/>

⁴² [South Essex Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment AECOM April 2018](#)

Source: Castle Point Borough Council Mapping

Canvey Island and South Benfleet are also at highest risk of surface water flooding, with a high probability of surface water flooding across the Borough as a whole. A combination of topography and drainage capacity in particular affect Canvey and South Benfleet, with recent surface water flooding events having occurred in the two areas.

Fluvial flood risk is mostly associated with the Prittle Brook and Benfleet Hall Sewer. Due to higher ground and embankments the flood risk associated with the Prittle Brook is minimised to a narrow corridor. The Benfleet Hall Sewer meanwhile benefits from being able to flood South Benfleet Playing Fields, which are designated as a reservoir under the Reservoirs Act. Nonetheless in both instances there are homes at risk of inundation in extreme circumstances.

Due to the combined surface water and tidal risks on Canvey a Multi-Agency Partnership produced the Canvey Island 6-Point Plan⁴³. This aims to increase the resilience of Canvey Island's communities and businesses to flooding as follows:

Point	Description
Point 1 – Property level flood protection	Both of the detailed investigations into flooding on the island recommended urgent action, to protect properties (both homes and businesses) from the impacts of surface water flooding. Action, Property level flood protection for circa. 15k homes (circa. 40k residents). Cost, £500,000. Impact, High.
Point 2 – Canvey Lake	The Section 19 Flood Investigation Report, published by Essex LLFA in September 2014, recommended a thorough investigation into the capacity available in the Canvey Lake. The lake, strategically located in the centre of the Island, forms part of the Island's surface water drainage system and so ensuring it is kept in a good condition and able to receive surface water during storm events is vital. Action, Dredge, re-profile and maintain Canvey Lake. Cost, £2,000,000. Impact, High.
Point 3 – Increasing capacity of the drainage infrastructure	Detailed work has been underway for the last two years, building an Integrated Urban Drainage (IUD) model. This sophisticated computer model has given the MAP a much greater insight into the capacity and capability of the current drainage network on the Canvey Island. Now complete, the model allows the team to run complex scenarios highlighting the impact of rainfall events of differing scales. Action, Increased drainage Infrastructure capacity. Cost, £16,000,000. Impact, High.
Point 4 – Building resilient and informed communities	The MAP and other key stakeholder on Canvey Island have, for a long time, held the view that collaboration is the key to managing the risks of surface water flooding. Great strides have been taken to bring together stakeholder organisations and this has paid dividends. However, more needs to be done to inform, educate and engage local communities. The MAP would like to invest £2m to build long term resilience on the Island. Action, Canvey Resilient Communities Programme. Cost, £2,000,000. Impact, Medium.

⁴³ [8 Canvey Island 6-Point Plan \(Multi-Agency Partnership, November 2015\)](#)

Point	Description
Point 5 – Innovation in flood management technologies	There are many new technologies now available on the market that could be installed to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding on Canvey Island. The MAP would like to invest £2m of funding into systems that would increase early warning of flood events and speed up the response to such events. Action, Development of new innovative technologies. Cost, £2,000,000. Impact, Medium.
Point 6 – Investment in green surface water storage	The MAP is keen to explore what options are available to increase the amount of 'green' surface water storage across the Island. This would provide additional storage for excess rainwater in storm events, reducing the amount of water that hits the drainage network at the same time. Some early options being explored including re-profiling the Winter Gardens Primary School playing fields to reduce their level by 1m, and the installation of attenuating water butts at properties located in the most 'at risk' areas on the Island. All public space will be reviewed for its ability to hold back rain water. Action, Investment in 'Green Infrastructure'. Cost, £2,000,000. Impact, Medium.

Essex County Council has a Surface Water Management Plan in place for the remainder of the borough.

10.4 Summary

Baseline Summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Increased demand on water resources and sustainability of water supply.</p> <p>Increased requirement for wastewater treatment.</p> <p>Negative impacts on water quality through inappropriate development.</p> <p>Climatic change and possible more extreme weather events.</p> <p>Deterioration of the wildlife in estuaries and rivers.</p>	<p>Development must not give rise to a deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>The new Castle Point Plan will provide the opportunity to ensure that development is located and designed to take into account the sensitivity of the water environment.</p> <p>New development over the plan period will also need to be considerate of existing pressures on wastewater infrastructure and the potential for supporting any new infrastructure needed.</p> <p>Associated with water quality and biodiversity, that a suitable amount of recreational land must be incorporated into development.</p>	<p>Development must not give rise to a deterioration in water quality.</p> <p>Associated with water quality and biodiversity, that a suitable amount of recreational land must be incorporated into development.</p>

Baseline Summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Changes in leisure activities affecting the coasts and estuaries.</p> <p>The impact of increased tourism including the England Coastal Path, free swimming, kayaking.</p>		

11.Climate and Energy

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

Low Carbon Economy

The new Castle Point Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which includes as part of its environmental objective a requirement to mitigate and adapt to climate change, “including moving to a low carbon economy”. The NPPF also states that the “planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.” To achieve these aims new development should be planned to ensure appropriate adaptation measures are included (including green infrastructure) and should be designed, located and oriented as to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on how to identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in the planning process to address the impact of climate change. Guidance is also provided about how to take account of and address the risks associated with flooding and coastal change.

11.1 Energy Consumption and Emissions

Table 41: Energy Consumption

Resource	Castle Point (GWh)	% of Total Energy Consumption	East of England (GWh)	% of Total Energy Consumption
Coal	4.8	0.38	2,581.4	1.96
Manufactured Fuels	2.2	0.17	238.1	0.18
Natural Gas	577	45.5	42,051.9	31.93
Electricity	259.6	20.47	27,272.2	20.71
Petroleum Products	398.5	31.42	56,402.6	42.83
Bioenergy and Wastes	26.19	2.06	3,150	2.39
Total	1268.29	100	131,696.20	100

Source: BEIS, updated 2015

Castle Point Borough consumes more energy from unrenewable sources as a percentage of their consumption compared to the East of England as a whole. Just under half of the Borough's 1268.29GWh energy consumption is from Natural Gas at 45.5%.

Table 42: Energy consumption from renewable sources

Local Authority	Percentage of Total Energy Consumption from Renewable Bioenergy and Waste Sources	Local Authority	Percentage of Total Energy Consumption from Renewable Bioenergy and Waste Sources
Basildon	0.11%	Epping Forest	0.12%
Braintree	0.39%	Harlow	0.07%
Brentwood	0.10%	Maldon	0.92%
Castle Point	0.14%	Rochford	0.24%
Chelmsford	0.24%	Tendring	0.39%
Colchester	0.27%	Uttlesford	0.57%

Source: DECC, updated 2014 data

As at 2014, 0.14% of Castle Point Boroughs total energy consumption came from renewable sources, a relatively low percentage compared to the other districts with Essex. There has been no further update since 2014.

Table 43: CO2 emissions by source 2021

	Industry and Commercial (kt)	Domestic (kt)	Transport (kt)	Total (kt)
Castle Point	38.8	132.83	96.88	286.51
Essex	1,120.46 (17.82%)	2,138.9 (34.03%)	3,025.17 (48.13)	6,284.53
East of England	#	#	#	#

#: data not easily accessible

Source: Government data – UK greenhouse gas emissions: local authority and regional, 2024

In Castle Point Borough, the industry and commercial sector produces the smallest amount of carbon dioxide at 20.52% while domestic produces the most at 48.5%. When compared to Essex more emissions of CO2 are produced by transport in the County as a whole.

Table 44: Reduction of CO2 emissions per capita

Area	% per capita reduction of CO2 since 2005	Area	% per capita reduction of CO2 since 2005
Basildon	20.9%	Epping Forest	19.4%
Braintree	18.7%	Harlow	25.0%
Brentwood	16.0%	Maldon	21.4%
Castle Point	14.6%	Rochford	18.5%
Chelmsford	11.4%	Tendring	11.5%
Colchester	20.0%	Uttlesford	21.3%
		Essex	17.6%

Source: DECC, 2013 data

Castle Point Borough has reduced the annual amount of CO2 being emitted per capita by 14.6% relative to the 2005 baseline. This is lower than the Essex average.

11.2 Climate Change

Global Warming

Climate change presents a global risk, with a range of different impacts likely to be felt within Castle Point across numerous receptors. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on global warming outlines that, under emissions in line with current pledges under the Paris Agreement, global warming is expected to surpass 1.5 °C, even if these pledges are supplemented with very challenging increases in the scale and ambition of mitigation after 2030. This increased action would need to achieve net zero CO₂ emissions in less than 15 years⁴⁴.

Regional Warming

According to UK Climate Projections under a medium emission scenario the temperature in the East of England had a 67% likelihood of increasing between 1 and 2°C by 2020. By 2050, the temperature is predicted to increase to between 2 and 3°C across the region. Mean summer precipitation had a 67% likelihood of decreasing by up to 10% across the whole region by 2020 and by 2050 the south of the East of England will see decreases by up to 20%. In contrast the mean winter precipitation was predicted to increase by up to 10% across the region by 2020. By 2050 much of the region is expected to see a mean winter precipitation increase of between 10 and 20% apart from a band in the centre of the region which is expected to witness increases of between 20 and 30%. Source: Met Office UKCP (2014).

Essex Climate Action Commission

The Essex Climate Action Commission was set up to advise about tackling climate change. It was launched in May 2020 for an initial term of two years and has since been extended for a further three years. The commission will run until 2025.

The initial purpose of the Essex Climate Action Commission was to set out recommendations on tackling the climate crisis. This included devising a roadmap to get Essex to net zero by 2050. The Commission has made recommendations with a plan to:

- Reduce the county's greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050, in line with UK statutory commitments.
- Make Essex more resilient to climate impacts such as flooding, water shortages and overheating.

The Essex Climate Action Commission have made recommendations to planning in the following areas:

⁴⁴ IPCC (2019). IPCC Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C. (see <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15>)

- Land Use and Green Infrastructure
- Energy
- Built Environment
- Transport

The recommendations made in the areas above now form the basis of the Commission's Climate Action Plan 2021⁴⁵.

11.3 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Castle Point has a low percentage of total energy consumption from renewable bioenergy and waste sources.</p> <p>In Castle Point Borough domestic practices produces the most at carbon dioxide at 48.5% - a percentage lower than the county average.</p>	<p>To ensure more energy efficient homes. Without the new Castle Point Plan, sustainable design and construction techniques may not be adopted in new build development.</p> <p>There is potential for the Borough to be subject to more frequent extreme weather events as well as increasing potential for flood risk as a result of climate change. A new Castle Point Plan could support the incorporation of appropriate adaptation measures through design. This may include tree planting and shelter in the public realm to allow people to take refuge from the effects of extreme weather events.</p> <p>Without the new Castle Point Plan, sites for development may be located in areas that are prone to the effects of climate change, such as in areas with a higher chance of flooding.</p> <p>Without the new Castle Point Plan, development sites may be located in inaccessible locations that increase reliance on private vehicles, although the shift to electric vehicles may help reduce emissions associated with private vehicles.</p> <p>The Council will continue to have an obligation to reduce carbon emissions with or without the new Castle Point Plan.</p>	<p>To ensure more energy efficient homes.</p> <p>There is potential for the TGSE area to be subject to more frequent extreme weather events as well as increasing potential for flood risk as a result of climate change.</p>

⁴⁵ Essex Climate Action Plan, ECC, 2021

12.Air

12.1 Air Quality

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The new Castle Point Plan should support development that contributes to the protection of air quality, therefore protecting the health and well-being of residents in Castle Point and its surroundings from being put at unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on how planning can take account of the impact of new development on air quality.

Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often less affluent areas.

Air Quality Strategy for England 2023

Each council carries out regular reviews and assessments of air quality in their area. This is done against standards and objectives in the Air Quality Strategy for England which sets out national air quality objectives for the protection of human health.

Local authorities are required to submit Annual Status reports to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Annual Status Reports provide an overview of air quality within the area, identify actions that have been undertaken to improve air quality and to consider new air quality monitoring data. Councils compile these reports in accordance with the Local Air Quality Monitoring (LAQM) Policy and Technical Guidance.

Castle Point Air Quality Annual Status Report 2023⁴⁶

The most recent Report for Castle Point Council is the 2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report which sets out that the Council measured “no” exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives in 2022. The Report also set out that “*There are no new developments that will have a significant impact on air quality*”. The Report did, however, state that “*Castle Point Borough Council should consider developing a Local Air Quality Strategy*.”

The main source of pollution in the Borough is road traffic emissions from major roads, notably the A13, A127, as well as along London Road and Canvey Way, and

⁴⁶ https://cdn.cms42.com/essexair/castle-point/Files/Reports/Castle_Point_2023_ASR.pdf

A130. Additionally, key junctions like A127 Rayleigh Weir and A13/A130 Sadlers Farm junction contribute to the pollution levels.

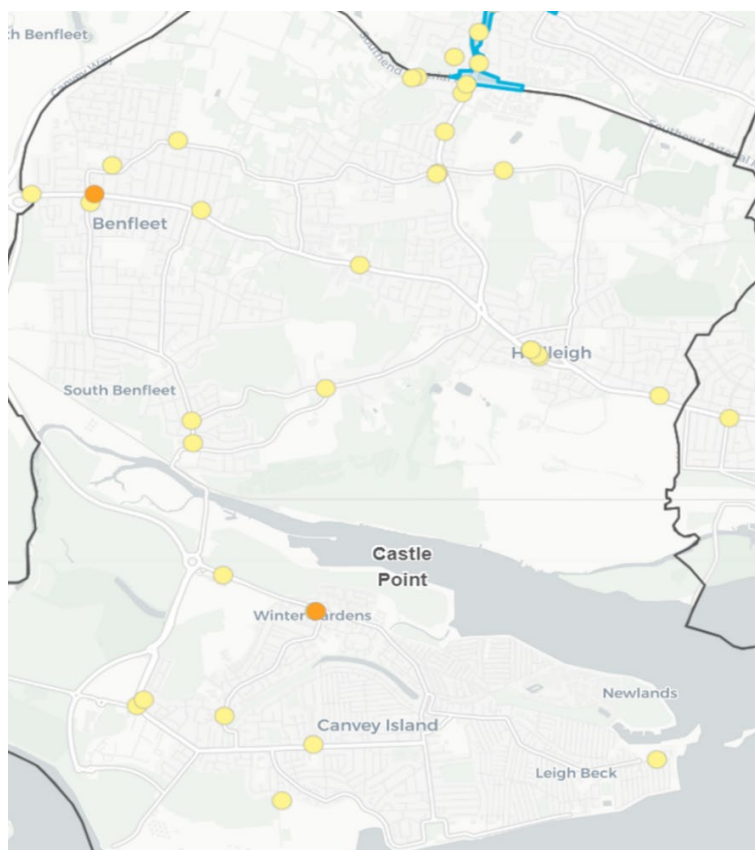
A key pollutant arising from traffic is Nitrogen Dioxide. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a gaseous air pollutant that forms when fossil fuels are burned at high temperatures. It is one of the main precursors of ozone, particulate matter, and acid rain. It can irritate and inflame the respiratory tract and increase the risk of asthma and other respiratory diseases. NO₂ levels in the air vary with emission sources, weather conditions, and sunlight.

Nitrogen dioxide is monitored using diffusion tubes at 30 monitoring locations across the borough and there is also a continuous analyser site which provides real-time nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide monitoring information. The ongoing monitoring shows a clear trend in decreasing NO₂ emissions over time. Ignoring 2020, where levels were abnormally low due to lockdown restrictions NO₂ emission levels have reduced across the borough since 2018 reflecting the impact of newer cars with cleaner engines on air quality. As the number of electric cars increases, local NO₂ levels should decline further over time.

Castle Point Borough Council does not currently monitor PM_{2.5} concentrations.

At the time of preparing this SA Scoping Report the Council has not declared any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Generally, air pollution is low in Castle Point. Results from the monitoring points across the Borough suggest that air quality is improving.

Figure 45: Map of Monitoring Locations in Castle Point Borough



Key to Air Quality Monitoring Locations:

Pollution Level ($\mu\text{g m}^3$)

Low: < 30

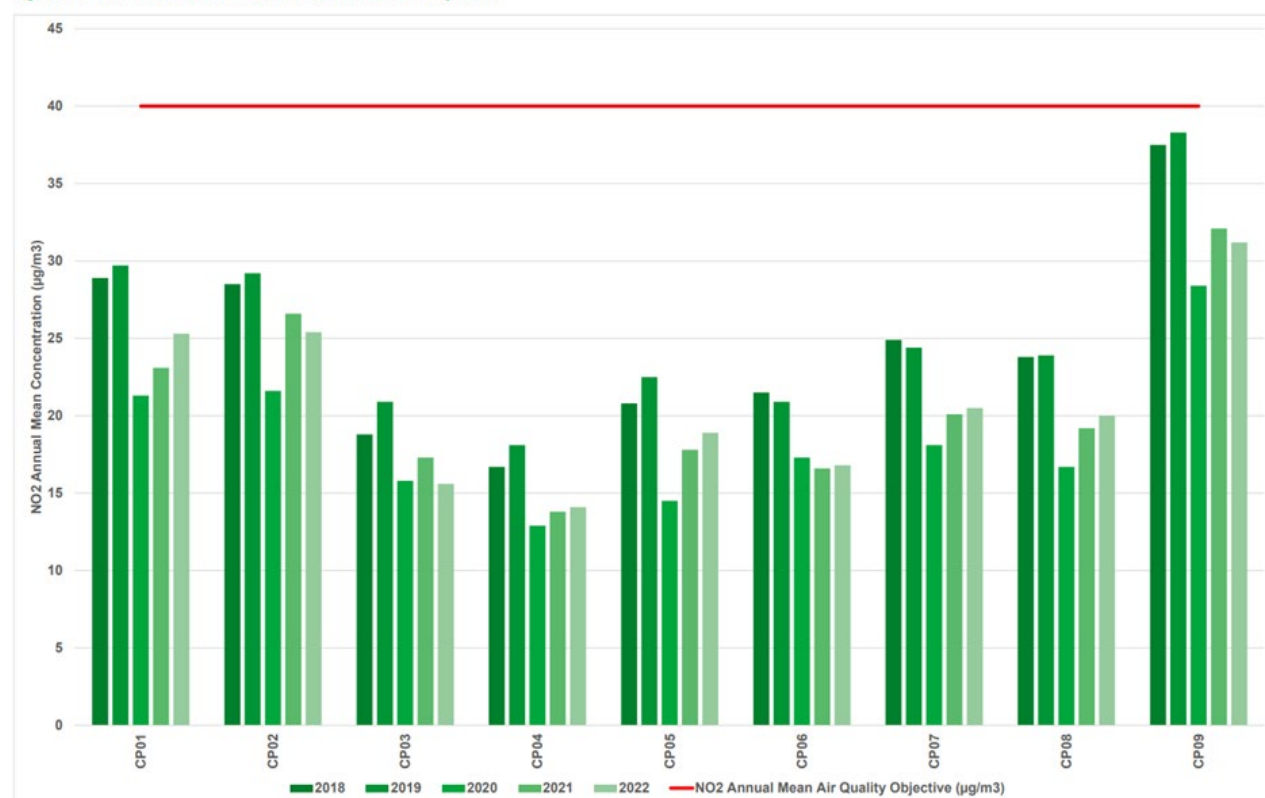
Medium: $30 < 36$

High: $36 < 40$

Source: Essex Air Quality Map⁴⁷

Figure 46: Trends in Annual Mean NO₂ Concentrations in Canvey Island

Figure A.1 – Trends in Annual Mean NO₂ Concentrations in Canvey Island

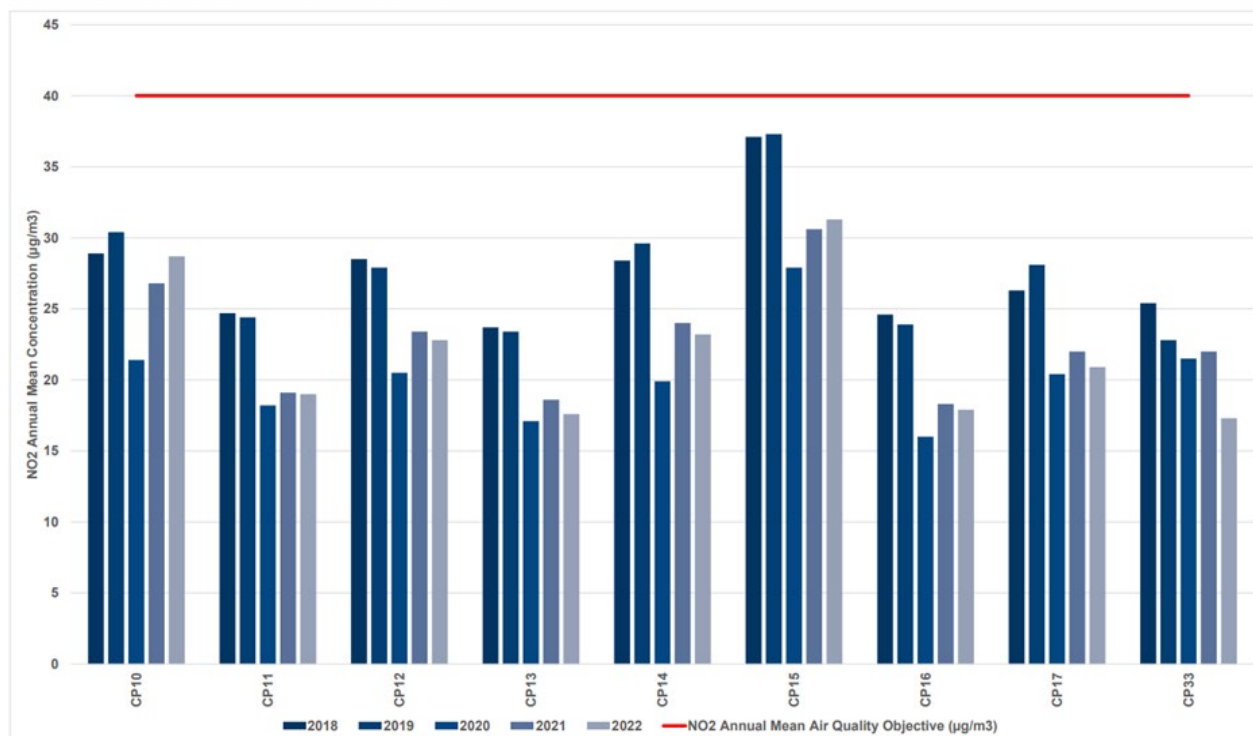


Source: www.essex.org.uk

⁴⁷ [Essex Air Quality Map www.essex.org.uk/map](http://www.essex.org.uk/map)

Figure 47: Trends in Annual Mean NO2 Concentrations in Benfleet

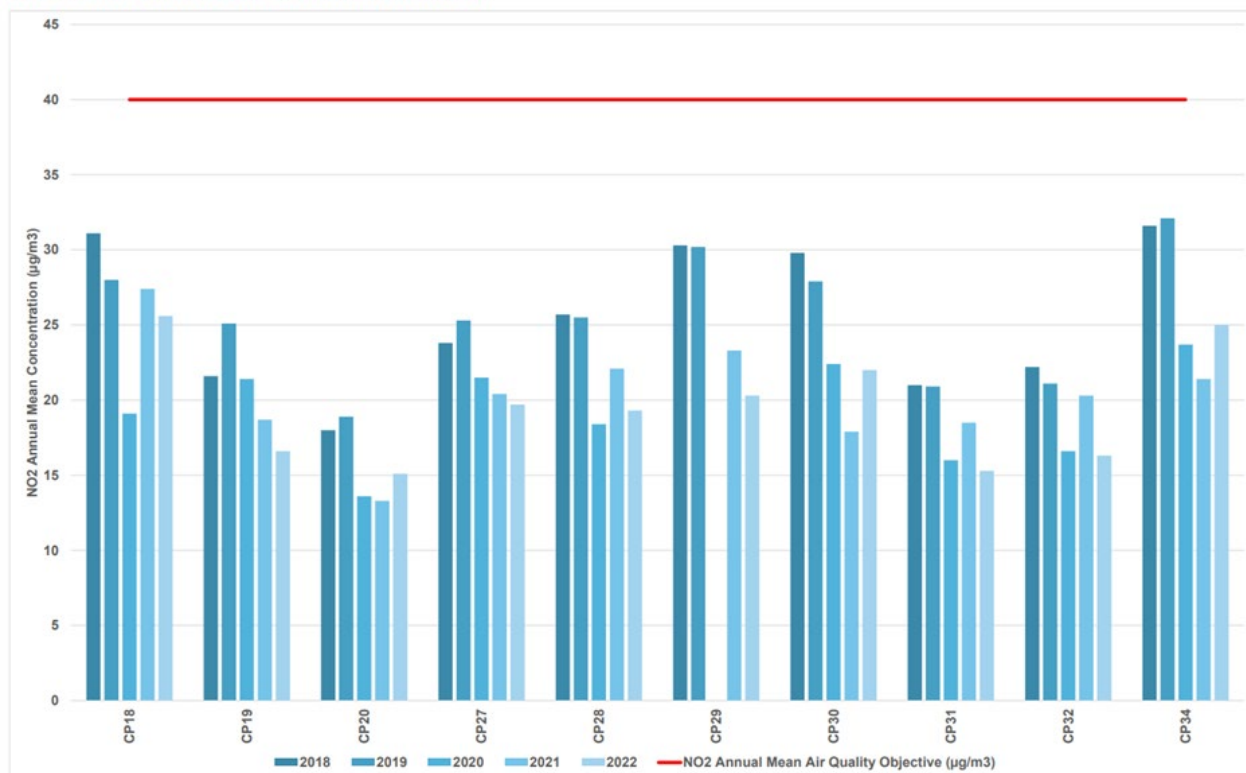
Figure A.2 – Trends in Annual Mean NO2 Concentrations in Benfleet



Source: www.essex.org.uk

Figure 48: Trends in Annual Mean NO2 Concentrations in Thundersley

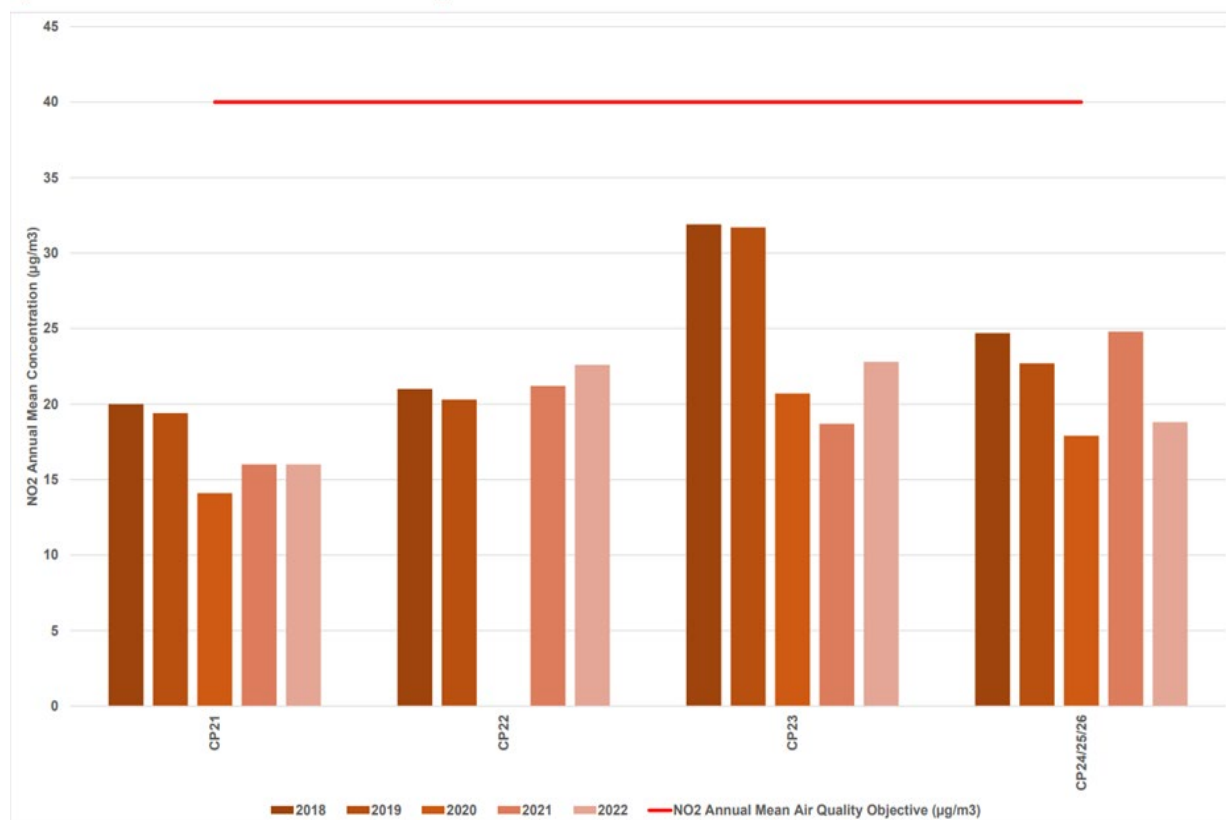
Figure A.3 – Trends in Annual Mean NO2 Concentrations in Thundersley



Source: www.essex.org.uk

Figure 49: Trends in Annual mean NO2 Concentrations in Hadleigh

Figure A.4 – Trends in Annual Mean NO2 Concentrations in Hadleigh



Source: www.essex.org.uk

12.2 Noise

Ambient or environmental noise is defined as noise which is either unwanted or harmful. It is created by human activities and includes noise emitted by transport including road traffic and air traffic, as well as from sites of industrial activity. There are a number of busy roads in the Borough, and these generate ambient noise which can impact people living or working nearby.

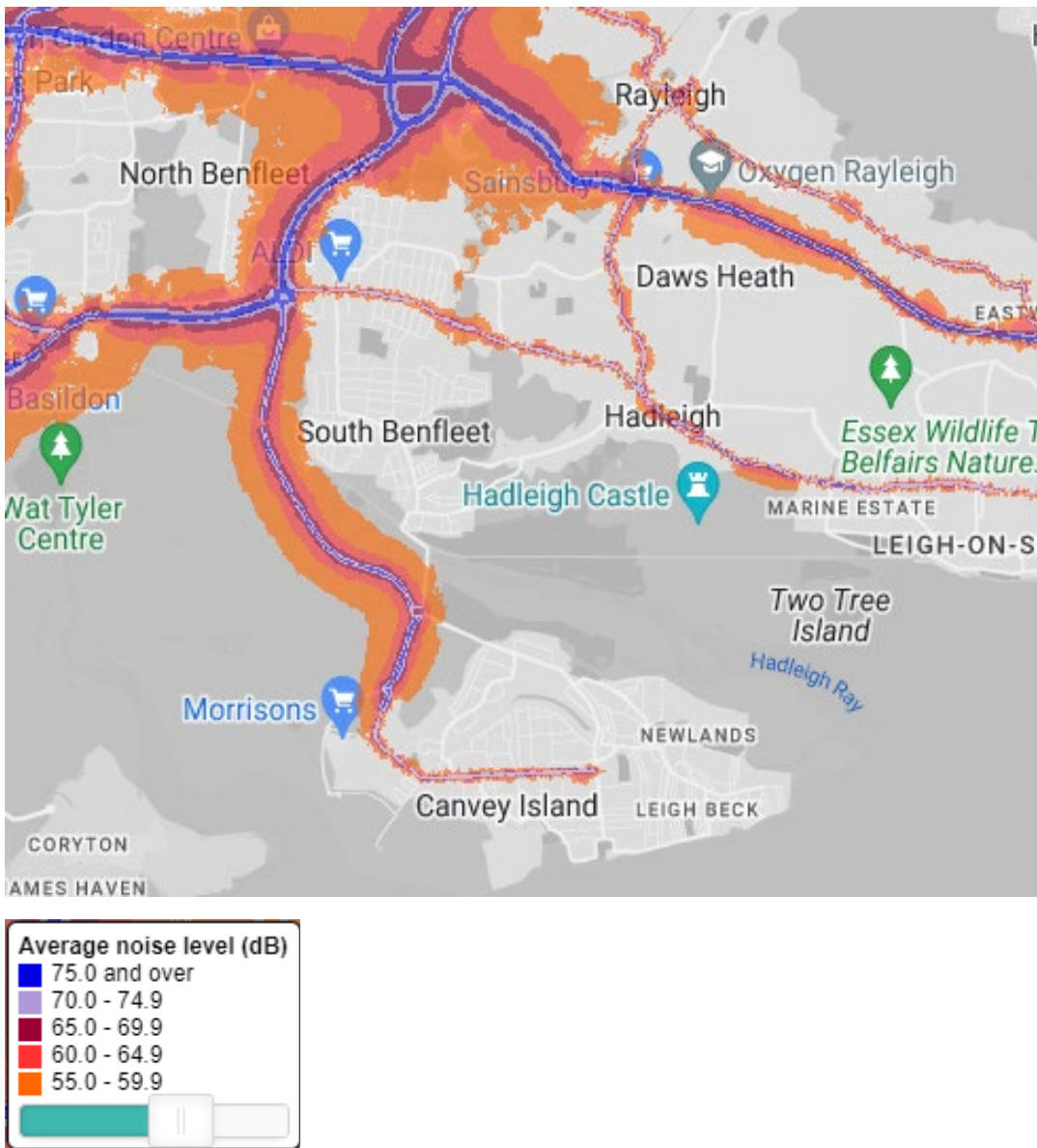
Table 45: Summary of terms used

Term	Explanation
dB(A)	A unit of sound pressure level, adjusted in accordance with the A weighting scale, a scale which takes into account the increased sensitivity of the human ear at some frequencies.
Lden	Day-evening-night noise indicator. It is the noise indicator for overall annoyance
Lnight	Night-time noise indicator between the hours of 2300 – 0700 hours. It is the noise indicator for sleep disturbance

Source: Taken from EU Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and Defra

Large areas of land around the Borough's strategic roads have noise impacts at 55-75 dB.

Figure 50: Road Traffic Noise in Castle Point Borough Map



Source: <http://extrium.co.uk/noiseviewer.html>

12.3 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
The main source of air pollution in the Borough relates to road traffic emissions, particularly from the principal roads in the Borough, the A13, A127 and A130. There is also pollution from commercial,	Development should strike a balance between connectivity and potential noise and air quality impacts through effective mitigation.	Development should strike a balance between connectivity and potential noise and air quality

<p>industrial and domestic sources, and potential transboundary pollution sources, such as the power stations along the Thames Estuary and the oil refinery in Thurrock.</p> <p>Large areas of land around the Borough's strategic roads have noise impacts at 55-75 dB.</p>	<p>Recent national policies and emergence of new technologies are likely to improve air pollution, e.g., through cleaner fuels/energy sources.</p> <p>The new Castle Point Plan provides an opportunity to contribute to improved air quality in the Borough through the sustainable siting of development and the promotion of alternative travel modes to the motorised vehicle, in line with national policy aspirations.</p>	<p>impacts through effective mitigation.</p> <p>Recent national policies and emergence of new technologies are likely to improve air pollution, e.g., through cleaner fuels/energy sources.</p>
--	--	---

13. Material assets (including soil, minerals, and waste)

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The new Castle Point Plan should support development that contributes to responsible use of land resources and their quality, therefore protecting the health and well-being of residents in Castle Point and its surroundings from being put at unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of waste pollution.

The waste hierarchy, in accordance with the Revised Waste Framework Directive, specifies the promotion of waste prevention, and material and energy recovery (e.g., direct re-use, recycling and treatment to make new objects) prior to disposal.

13.1 Local Authority Collected Waste

Essex Waste Partnership

The Essex Waste Partnership (EWP) work together to ensure cost-efficient and sustainable household waste management is delivered across Essex. Essex County Council (ECC) are the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), this includes looking after the majority of recycling centres in Essex. The district, city and borough councils are the Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs), responsible for services such as kerbside collections.

There is a significant amount of waste collected by the Waste Collection Authorities, of which Castle Point Borough Council is one, via direct kerbside collections (household waste), litter and street cleaning. In addition, for a fee, local authorities collect some waste from small commercial enterprises.

With further development and an increase in population, waste arisings are likely to increase. Each year over 700,000 tonnes of waste are thrown away by households in Essex, about half a tonne for each resident, with 56% of waste recycled. With around 1.5 million residents in Essex and the number of households in Essex set to increase in the next 20 years, the waste produced in Essex is also set to rise. Landfill, gate fee tax and other costs mean that throwing waste away is costing around £155 per tonne⁴⁸.

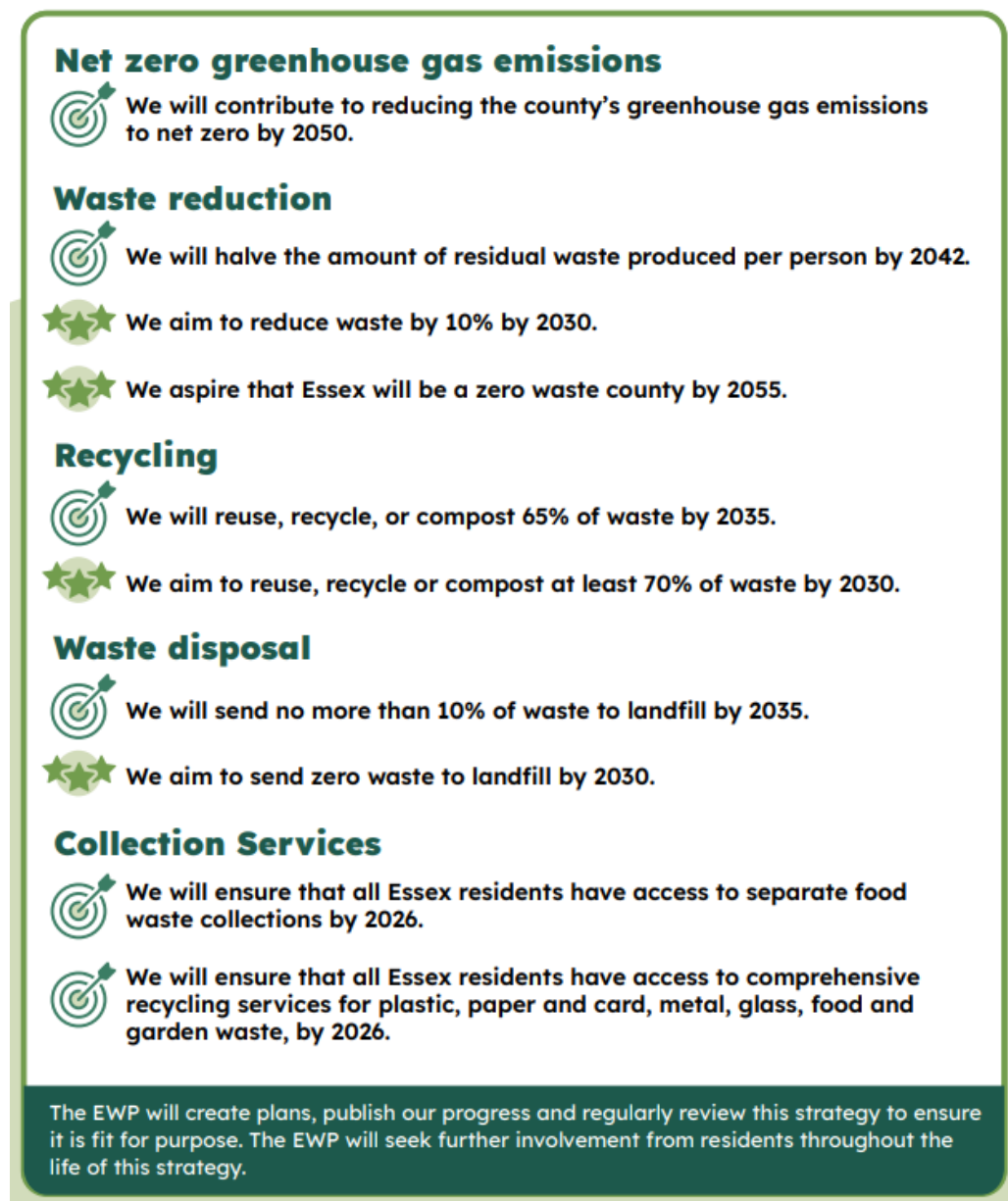
Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy

At the time of preparing this SA Scoping Report Work is currently being carried out to renew and refresh the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS). A

⁴⁸ Essex County Council, Love Essex.org, Essex Waste Partnership, 2024

Draft Waste Strategy⁴⁹ for the period 2024 – 2054 was published for consultation in September 2023 setting out targets' ambitions and aspirations:

Figure 51: Draft Waste Strategy for Essex 2024 – 2054 targets, ambitions and aspirations



⁴⁹ Draft Waste Strategy for Essex 2024-2054, ECC (2023)

Table 47: Local Authority Collected Waste 2019/20

Authority	Household Waste to Landfill (Tonnes)	Household Waste Reused or Recycled (Tonnes)	Household Waste Composted (Tonnes)	Total Household Waste (Tonnes)	Total Recycled or Composted (%)
Castle Point Borough Council	16,021	8,001	7,905	31,928	49.8%
WCA Total	264,383	132,353	136,846	533,582	50.5%
Plus Essex CC Recycling Centres		18,336			
Essex Total	298,251	201,243	157,085	656,579	54.6%

Source: Essex Climate Action Commission: Waste Management Technical Annex, 2021

13.2 Transfer Facilities

Six transfer facilities have been granted planning permission within Essex and Southend, to support a materials recovery facility, in Basildon. These will, once constructed, accept waste from the Waste Collection Authority vehicles directly from kerbside collection. Here waste will be bulked up, ready for transportation to Basildon.

Table 48: Local Authority Collected Waste Transfer Facility Status as of 2014 /2024

Transfer Facility	Planning Permission reference/date	Throughput (Tonnes Per Annum, tpa)	Expected / Actual Construction Start Date	Expected Operation Start Date
Harlow To serve Harlow and Epping Forest	ESS/38/11/HLW 23/09/2011	55,000	April 2013	Operational
Gt Dunmow To serve Uttlesford	ESS/18/12/UTT 22/06/2012	29,400	Build start date yet to be agreed following Judicial	Operational

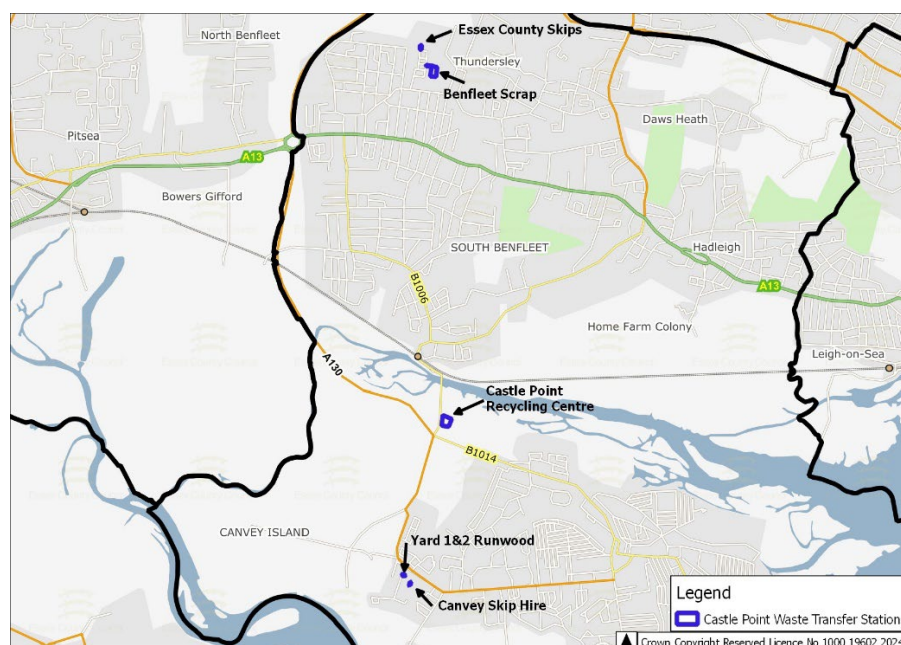
Transfer Facility	Planning Permission reference/date	Throughput (Tonnes Per Annum, tpa)	Expected / Actual Construction Start Date	Expected Operation Start Date
			Review proceedings	
Chelmsford To serve Chelmsford and Maldon	ESS/31/13/CHL 13/08/2013 (amended permission ESS/65/12/CHL)	90,000	Build start date August 2014	Operational
Braintree To serve Braintree	ESS/23/13/BTE 26/07/2013	115,000	October 2013	Operational
A120 (west) To serve Colchester and Tendring	ESS/16/13/TEN 28/06/2013	115,000	October 2013	Operational
Southend To serve Southend	Existing Site	67,900	An existing waste management site within Southend BC since 1968, but requires alterations for this use	
Total LACW Transfer Throughput		428,550 tpa		

Source, Essex County Council ,2024

Waste Transfer Stations in Castle Point Borough

There are five waste transfer stations in the Castle Point Borough.

Figure 52: Waste Transfer Stations in Castle Point Borough Map



Source: Essex County Council 2024

13.3 The Adopted Waste Local Plan for Essex and Southend-on-Sea 2017

The Adopted Waste Local Plan 2017, as published by Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea as the combined Waste Planning Authority, does not allocate any sites within Castle Point Borough.

a. Waste Miles

There are two distinct types of imports and exports concerning waste, firstly the localised cross boundary movement of waste and the long distance waste travel. The localised cross boundary movements of waste usually occur between adjacent waste planning authorities because the closest waste facility for the arisings is just over the authority boundary. An example, of this could be waste arising in the South Benfleet area of Castle Point in Essex being transported in to a facility in the London Borough of Havering, as this represents fewer 'waste miles'.

b. Anaerobic Digestion (AD)

In Essex, there are currently no active waste fed AD plants. It is likely that the Waste and Local Planning Authorities will receive further applications for waste, 'energy crop' fed AD facilities respectively as the technology advances, and barriers are removed in line with the AD strategy and action plan.

c. Commercial and Industrial Waste (CD & I)

This is that waste arising from wholesalers, catering establishments, shops and offices (in both the public and private sector), factories and industrial plants. It can include a number of materials such as food, paper, card, wood, glass, plastics and metals. Increases in growth in these sectors as a result of the Castle Point Plan may require an increase in facilities to manage such waste. These can include biological treatment facilities, such as composting (in the first instance), or non-hazardous landfill facilities.

d. Construction, Demolition and Evacuation Waste (CD & E)

This is waste that is biologically stable and does not undergo any significant physical, chemical or biological transformations. This can be in the form of certain types of:

- Construction wastes (e.g., surplus supplies of bricks specifically required for a single project).
- Demolition wastes (e.g., used material resulting from demolition activities); or
- Excavation wastes (e.g., usually consisting of soils and stones which cannot be used beneficially, such as from tunnelling projects or 'overburden' from removing soils from an area in preparation for mineral excavation).

Essex County Council, as the WPA for Essex, has identified a shortfall in available capacity for this waste stream by 2031/32. There is a requirement for an additional 1.27 million tonnes per annum of Construction, Demolition and Excavation waste recovery capacity by 2031/32, which would remove the need to allocate inert landfill capacity completely. It is estimated that without development of increased CD&E Waste recovery capacity (as specified above), there would be a need for inert landfill totalling approximately 16 million tonnes (or 10.64 million cubic metres) if no CD&E recycling facilities were brought forward. This waste is a direct result of growth, and the relationship between the Waste Local Plan and the Castle Point Borough Local Plan are intrinsically linked in this regard.

e. Summary

Baseline Summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
<p>Castle Point recycles / composts less of its waste than the WCA and Essex averages.</p> <p>There are no extraction sites or mineral deposits safeguarded by the MPA within Castle Point.</p>	<p>Increase in development and greater CD&E waste arisings.</p> <p>Increasing population generating more waste.</p> <p>Any large regeneration and infrastructure projects will generate more waste.</p> <p>New Castle Point Plan will provide an opportunity to ensure sufficient land is available in appropriate locations for waste management facilities.</p> <p>Recycling trends since 2018/19 suggest the recycling rates will continue to increase.</p>	<p>Increase in development and greater CD&E waste arisings.</p> <p>Increasing population generating more waste.</p> <p>Any large regeneration and infrastructure projects will generate more waste.</p> <p>Recycling trends since 2018/19 suggest the recycling rates will continue to increase.</p>

14. Minerals

The following section presents the most relevant information identified for the purposes of the new Castle Point Plan.

The new Castle Point Plan should support development that contributes to responsible use of land resources.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on how planning can address mineral extraction and the related application process.

14.1 The Adopted Minerals Local Plan 2014

It should be noted that the existing Minerals Plan 2014 is currently under review with a draft replacement plan having been recently published for consultation. Once finalised and adopted the replacement Plan will cover the period 2025 to 2040.

Overview of Minerals in Essex

The predominant solid geology underlying the Castle Point Borough is London Clay.

The MLP summarises a number of key points regarding the geology and mineral infrastructure of the Plan Area:

- Essex has extensive deposits of sand and gravel.
- There are more localised deposits of silica sand, chalk, brickearth and brick clay.
- Marine dredging takes place in the extraction regions of the Thames Estuary and the East Coast, whilst aggregate is landed at marine wharves located in east London, north Kent, Thurrock, and Suffolk. Essex has no landing wharves of its own.
- There are no hard rock deposits in the County so this material must be imported into Essex. This currently occurs via rail to the existing rail depots at Harlow and Chelmsford.
- Essex is the largest producer and consumer of sand & gravel in the East of England. There are 20 permitted sand & gravel sites, one silica sand site, two brick clay and one chalk site.

- There are two marine wharves and four rail depots capable of handling aggregate. Construction, demolition and excavation waste is also recycled at 29 dedicated and active aggregate recycling sites (2011).
- Aggregate is both imported into Essex (hard rock, and sand and gravel) and exported (sand and gravel, primarily to London). Map 3 shows the movement of aggregate in and out of Essex.

Source: Essex County Council Adopted Minerals Plan (2014)

14.1.1 Sand & Gravel

Essex has extensive Kesgrave formation sand and gravel which was laid down during the Ice Age and in river terraces. The river terrace deposits are found not only along current river valleys, but also in historic river channels that are now dry.

The sand and gravel resources in Essex are:

- Significant in national, sub-national and local terms - Essex is one of the largest producers in the UK.
- Most geographically extensive and significantly mixed within the centre and north of Essex – namely the districts of Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester and Tendring.
- Least extensive in south east Essex where deposits appear smallest and least workable, such as in the districts of Maldon and Rochford.
- Present along the River Lea valley terraces adjoining Harlow and Epping Forest districts.
- Mixed deposits capable of being processed to supply a range of construction products including building sand, sharp sands and gravel.
- Used as a raw material to produce concrete, mortar, asphalt and construction fill which is used in the construction industry and for roads.

The majority of the sand and gravel produced in Essex (about 78%) is used within the County itself. This position looks unlikely to change over the long-term. Consequently, the main factor influencing production of sand and gravel in the future will be the need to meet the minerals demand for the whole of Essex created by major development and new infrastructure projects within Essex itself.

Source: Essex County Council Adopted Minerals Plan (2014)

14.1.2 Chalk

Chalk is one of the mainstays of ‘solid geology’ under Essex and is the oldest rock exposed at the surface. The chalk resources in Essex are:

- Extensive under the surface but outcrop only in the north west, particularly in Uttlesford District.
- Currently extracted at only one site in the form of white chalk at Newport Quarry.
- Used mostly for agricultural use, although small quantities are used by the pharmaceutical industry.
- Not associated with a land bank in Essex as it is extracted as an industrial mineral rather than as an aggregate.

Source: Essex County Council Adopted Minerals Plan (2014)

14.1.3 Policy S5 Creating a network of aggregate recycling facilities

The current Essex Local Minerals Plan (2014) sets out the policy relating to recycling facilities.

Figure 53: Policy S5 Creating a network of aggregate recycling facilities

Policy S5 Creating a network of aggregate recycling facilities

The increased production and supply of recycled/ secondary aggregates in the County is supported to reduce reliance on land-won and marine-won primary aggregates. The County's existing network of aggregate recycling facilities shall be maintained and expanded wherever appropriate. In addition:

1. Existing Strategic Aggregate Recycling Sites (SARS) identified on the Policies Map and defined in the map in Appendix 6 will be safeguarded from development that might result in their closure earlier than their permission. There is a general presumption that existing SARS should remain in operation for the life of the permission.
2. The Local Planning Authority shall consult the Minerals Planning Authority for its views and take them into account before determining development proposals that would compromise the continued operation and potential of an existing SARS.
3. Proposals for new aggregate recycling facilities, whether non-strategic or in the form of SARS, should be located on the main road network in proximity to the Key Centres of Basildon, Chelmsford, Colchester, and Harlow. Such proposals shall be permitted in the following preferred locations, provided they do not cause unacceptable highway harm, are environmentally acceptable and in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan for Essex:
 - a) on major demolition and construction sites (on a temporary basis);
 - b) within permanent waste management sites;
 - c) in commercial areas used for general industrial or storage purposes, subject to compatibility with neighbouring land-uses;
 - d) on appropriate previously developed land;
 - e) on current mineral workings and landfill sites provided the development does not unduly prejudice the agreed restoration timescale for the site and the use ceases prior to the completion of the site; and
 - f) within major allocated or permitted development areas (as set out in the Development Plan for Essex).

Source: Essex County Council Adopted Minerals Plan (2014)

The draft minerals replacement Plan 2025 -2040 sets out the proposed policy relating to recycling facilities.

Figure 54: Policy S5 Creating a Network of Aggregate Recycling Facilities and New Transshipment Sites

1) Aggregate Recycling Facilities

The increased production and supply of recycled/secondary aggregates in the County is supported to reduce reliance on land-won and marine-won primary aggregates.

All aggregate recycling sites will be safeguarded from development that might result in their closure earlier than their permission expires. There is a general presumption that existing aggregate recycling sites shall remain in operation for the life of the permission and will be safeguarded accordingly.

Where intended to be permanent, proposals for new aggregate recycling facilities shall be located in proximity to the main road network and not cause any unacceptable highway impact. Such proposals shall be permitted in the following preferred locations, when the proposal is environmentally suitable and sustainable:

- a) on demolition and construction sites (on a temporary basis);
- b) within permanent waste management sites;
- c) in commercial areas used for general industrial or storage purposes, subject to compatibility with neighbouring land-uses;
- c) on previously developed land;
- e) on current mineral workings and landfill sites, provided the development does not unduly prejudice the agreed restoration timescale for the site and the use ceases prior to the completion of the site.

2) New Transshipment Sites

- a) New wharf and rail depot development will be supported where it:
- b) has a connection to the road network rail network, or access to water of sufficient depth, to accommodate the vessels likely to be used; and
- c) demonstrates, in line with the other Policies in this Plan, that proposals do not pose unacceptable harm to the environment and local amenity.

14.2 Summary

Baseline summary	Emerging Issues for Castle Point	Emerging Issues for Thames Gateway South Essex
There are no extraction sites or mineral deposits safeguarded by the MPA within Castle Point.	N/A	N/A



Emerging Castle Point Local Plan Regulation 18 – Issues and Options

Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping Report

May 2024



Essex County Council

About us

Place Services is a leading public sector provider of integrated environmental assessment, planning, design and management services. Our combination of specialist skills and experience means that we are uniquely qualified to help public organisations meet the requirements of the planning process, create practical design solutions and deliver environmental stewardship.

Our Natural Environment Team has expertise of arboriculture, biodiversity, countryside management and ecology. This multidisciplinary approach brings together a wide range of experience, whether it is for large complex briefs or small discrete projects. We aim to help our clients protect and improve the natural environment through their planning, regulatory or land management activities. This approach ensures not only that our clients will fulfil their legal duties towards the natural environment, but they do so in a way that brings positive benefits to wildlife and people.

Address: County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH

Email: placeservicesecology@essex.gov.uk

Website: www.placeservices.gov.uk

Version	Date	Authors	Description of changes
1.0	23 May 2024	Emma Simmonds	Drafted
1.1	30 May 2024	Hamish Jackson	Review
1.2	30 May 2024	Sue Hooton	Issued
1.3	03 June 2024	Emma Simmonds	Minor amendments to abbreviations

Title of report	Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping Report to support the emerging Castle Point Local Plan (Issues and Options) May 2024
Client	Castle Point Borough Council
Client representative	Amanda Parrott
Report prepared by	Emma Simmonds

Copyright

This report may contain material that is non-Place Services copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Historic England), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Place Services is able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences or permissions, but for which copyright itself is not transferable by Place Services. Users of this report remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

Disclaimer

The material contained in this report was designed as an integral part of a report to an individual client and was prepared solely for the benefit of that client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and is not intended to nor should it be relied upon by a third party. To the fullest extent permitted by law Place Services will not be liable by reason of breach of contract, negligence, or otherwise for any loss or damage (whether direct, indirect or consequential) occasioned to any person acting or omitting to act or refraining from acting in reliance upon the material contained in the report. Loss or damage as referred to above shall be deemed to include, but is not limited to, any loss of profits or anticipated loss of profits damage to reputation or goodwill, loss of business, or anticipated loss of business, damages, costs, expense incurred or payable to any third party (in all cases whether direct, indirect or consequential) or any other direct, indirect or consequential loss or damage.

Table of Contents

Summary	7
1. Introduction	9
1.1 The Purpose of This Report	9
1.2 Emerging Castle Point Local Plan	11
1.2 Habitats (International) sites	11
2. Method and Approach	13
2.1 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects	17
2.2 Identifying Habitats sites, their Conservation Objectives and Qualifying Features to be included in HRA	18
2.3 Screening and Impact Pathways	19
2.4 Screening categorisation	27
4. The Approach and Method for the Appropriate Assessment and Integrity Test	32
4.1 Approach and Method	32
4.2 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report	35
4.3 Applying the Integrity Test	38
4.4 In Combination Effects with other Plans and Projects	38
4.5 Embedding Mitigation into the Local Plan	39
4.6 Re-applying the Integrity Test	39
4.7 Monitoring	39
4.8 Consulting Natural England	39
5. Initial schedule of other plans and strategies to be incorporated into the assessment of in-combination effects	40
5.1 Assessment of Impacts in Combination with Other Plans and Projects	40
6. Appendix	45

List of Tables

Table 1. Description and Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites11
Table 2. Stages of the Habitats Regulations Assessment Process15
Table 3. Main sources and effects of air pollutants on Habitats sites24
Table 4. Zones of Influence for Recreational Disturbance27
Table 5. Screening Categorisation27
Table 6. Habitats sites scoped in due to being located within 20 km of Borough Boundary29
Table 7. Other plans or projects considered for in combination effects40

List of Figures

Figure 1. Outline of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations14
Figure 2. Habitats sites within 20km of the Castle Point Boundary31

Appendices

Appendix 1. List Of Habitats Sites, Conservation Objectives and Vulnerabilities45

Glossary

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AEOI	Adverse Effect on Integrity (of Habitats sites)
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
CEMP	Construction Environment Management Plan
CJEU	Court of Justice of the European Union
EA	Environment Agency
EMS	European Marine Site
EU	European Union
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
Ha	Hectares
IROPI	Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
Km	Kilometre
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
MAGIC	Multi Agency Geographic Information about the Natural Environment
NE	Natural England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSIP	Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Project
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SACO	Supplementary Advice on Conservation Objectives
SIP	Site Improvement Plan
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Summary

This Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) draft Scoping report has been prepared by Place Services to support the emerging Castle Point Local Plan (Regulation 18 - Issues and Options). This report sets out the methodology for the approach to HRA scoping, screening and subsequent appropriate assessment (AA), should it be required. It also lists the Habitats sites which have been scoped in for inclusion within the HRA screening assessment, as well as the likely potential impact pathways that should be considered during the screening assessment. A list of plans and projects is also provided that may need to be considered in combination during the appropriate assessment.

The HRA screening report will be the first complete HRA stage that should be undertaken to enable Castle Point Borough Council to comply with Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The screening stage will determine whether an appropriate assessment (second stage) will be required. It is anticipated that AA will likely be required, based upon the scale of the Local Plan, its proximity to Habitats sites and reference to the previous Habitats Regulations Assessment produced for the withdrawn Castle Point Borough Pre-submission Local Plan 2018 – 2033, including proposed modifications. That HRA, by Place Services, is entitled '*New Castle Point Local Plan Pre-submission Plan 2018-2033 for Castle Point Borough Habitats Regulations Assessment (Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment), September 2020*'.

This draft HRA Scoping report sets out a list of 21 Habitats sites which are within scope for the HRA screening assessment. These are:

- Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar
- Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site
- Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site
- Dengie SPA and Ramsar site
- Essex Estuaries SAC
- Foulness SPA and Ramsar site
- Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site
- North Downs Woodlands SAC
- Outer Thames Estuary SPA (marine)
- Peters Pit SAC
- Queendown Warren SAC
- Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site
- The Swale SPA and Ramsar site

The HRA Scoping report also lists the likely impact pathways that will be considered during the screening assessment. These are:

- Direct effects through land take
- Impact to features (qualifying species) outside the protected site boundary
- Increase in disturbance, including recreational disturbance
- Changes in water quality
- Changes to water quantity
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels

This assessment reflects the geographical location of Castle Point borough and its proximity to Habitats sites. However, it has not considered any specific details of the Local Plan as they are not currently available.

It should also be borne in mind that Defra has recently published a policy paper entitled '*Smarter regulation: one year on*' which announces an intention to update their existing HRA guidance over the summer of 2024. This may ultimately influence the approach undertaken for the HRA screening and appropriate assessment.

This draft Scoping report does not need to be part of the statutory public consultation process. However, Natural England should be consulted and it should only be finalised once NE confirm this approach to be satisfactory.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of This Report

- 1.1. This scoping report sets out the approach that is anticipated to be undertaken for the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the emerging Castle Point Local Plan in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The details of the Local Plan are currently being developed and so have not been used to create this report.
- 1.2. This HRA scoping report sets out:
- The approach and methodology for screening, including impact pathways.
 - A list of the Habitats sites scoped in for further assessment and their Conservation Objectives and Qualifying Features.
 - The approach and methodology for the appropriate assessment and integrity test.
 - An initial schedule of other plans and strategies to be incorporated into the assessment of in-combination effects.
- 1.3. This report considers and draws upon the issues and recommendations that arose from the previous Habitats Regulations Assessment produced for the withdrawn Castle Point Borough Pre-submission Local Plan 2018 – 2033, including proposed modifications. That HRA, by Place Services, is entitled '*New Castle Point Local Plan Pre-submission Plan 2018-2033 for Castle Point Borough Habitats Regulations Assessment (Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment)*, September 2020'.
- 1.4. It should be borne in mind that Defra has recently published a policy paper entitled 'Smarter regulation: one year on'¹ which has announced an intention to update their existing HRA guidance over the summer of 2024. Paragraphs 72-73 are most relevant to the HRA process. It is anticipated that this HRA will assess the Local Plan after the guidance is published; therefore, this may affect the final approach and structure of the HRA to ensure that it aligns with the most up-to-date guidelines.
- 1.5. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) require the competent authorities (in this instance Castle Point Borough Council) to undertake a HRA before making a decision about permission for any plan or project that may result in an adverse effect on the integrity of an International Site² as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2023).

¹ This paper can be found at Smarter regulation: one year on (HTML version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

² Habitats site: Any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) for the purpose of those regulations and those listed in paragraph 187 of the NPPF (December 2023). This includes potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation; listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on Habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

- 1.6. In line with the Court of Justice of the European Union judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C- 323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a HRA Screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.
- 1.7. The Court judgement (CJEU Holohan C- 461/17) imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:
- 1.8. [...] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.
- 1.9. [...] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.
- 1.10. [...] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.
- 1.11. Should it be required, the HRA report will provide a (plan level) Stage 1 HRA Screening and Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 1.12. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) are commonly known as the 'Habitats Regulations'. Requirements are set out within Regulations 63 and 64 of the Habitats Regulations, where a series of steps and tests are followed for plans or projects that could potentially affect Habitats sites. The steps and tests set out within Regulations 63 and 64 are commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' process. The Government has produced core guidance for competent authorities and developers to assist with the HRA process. This can be found on the Government website ³, though as stated above, it should be noted that the Government has announced an intention to update the existing HRA guidance.
- 1.13. The HRA should demonstrate how the Plan or Project is compatible with UK obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA and forms a plan level HRA as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/habitats-regulations-assessments-protecting-a-european-site>

- 1.14. Plans and projects should only be permitted when it has been proven that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites. The legal process can allow projects that may result in negative impacts on the integrity of a site if the competent authority is satisfied that, there are no alternative solutions, the plan or project must be carried out for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) (Regulation 64). However, this will require suitable compensation to ensure that the overall coherence of the series of such sites is retained.
- 1.15. The HRA should be undertaken by the 'competent authority' - in this case Castle Point Borough Council - and Place Services has been commissioned to complete this on behalf of the Council. The HRA also requires close working with Natural England as the statutory nature conservation body.

1.2 Emerging Castle Point Local Plan

- 1.16. The emerging Castle Point Local Plan is currently at Issues and Options stage (Regulation 18); it will ultimately outline the strategy for the growth of Castle Point Borough. The emerging Local Plan will be assessed for likely impacts on Habitats sites as part of the HRA screening and appropriate assessment (if necessary) once the information becomes available.

1.2 Habitats (International) sites

- 1.17. Habitats sites is the term used in the NPPF (2023) to describe the UK network of sites of European and international designated nature protection areas. These now form part of the UK national network of sites for nature protection. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of UK's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.
- 1.18. All Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated for other species, and for Habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of the Habitats (sites) network. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites make up the Habitats sites in England. The following offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites.
- 1.19. The following table (Table 1) offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites.

Table 1. Description and Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds

found within EU countries. Example: Benfleet and Southend Marshes is an estuarine area on the Essex side of the Thames Estuary. The site is comprised of an extensive series of saltmarshes, mudflats, and grassland which support a diverse flora and fauna, including internationally important numbers of wintering waterfowl. *Legislation: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).*

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: The Essex Estuaries SAC comprises an extensive complex of estuaries and intertidal sand and silt flats, including several islands, shingle and shell beaches and extensive areas of saltmarsh. It follows the boundaries of five SSSIs: the Colne Estuary, the Blackwater Estuary, Dengie, the River Crouch Marshes and Foulness. *Legislation: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).*

Ramsar Sites (Wetlands of International Importance)

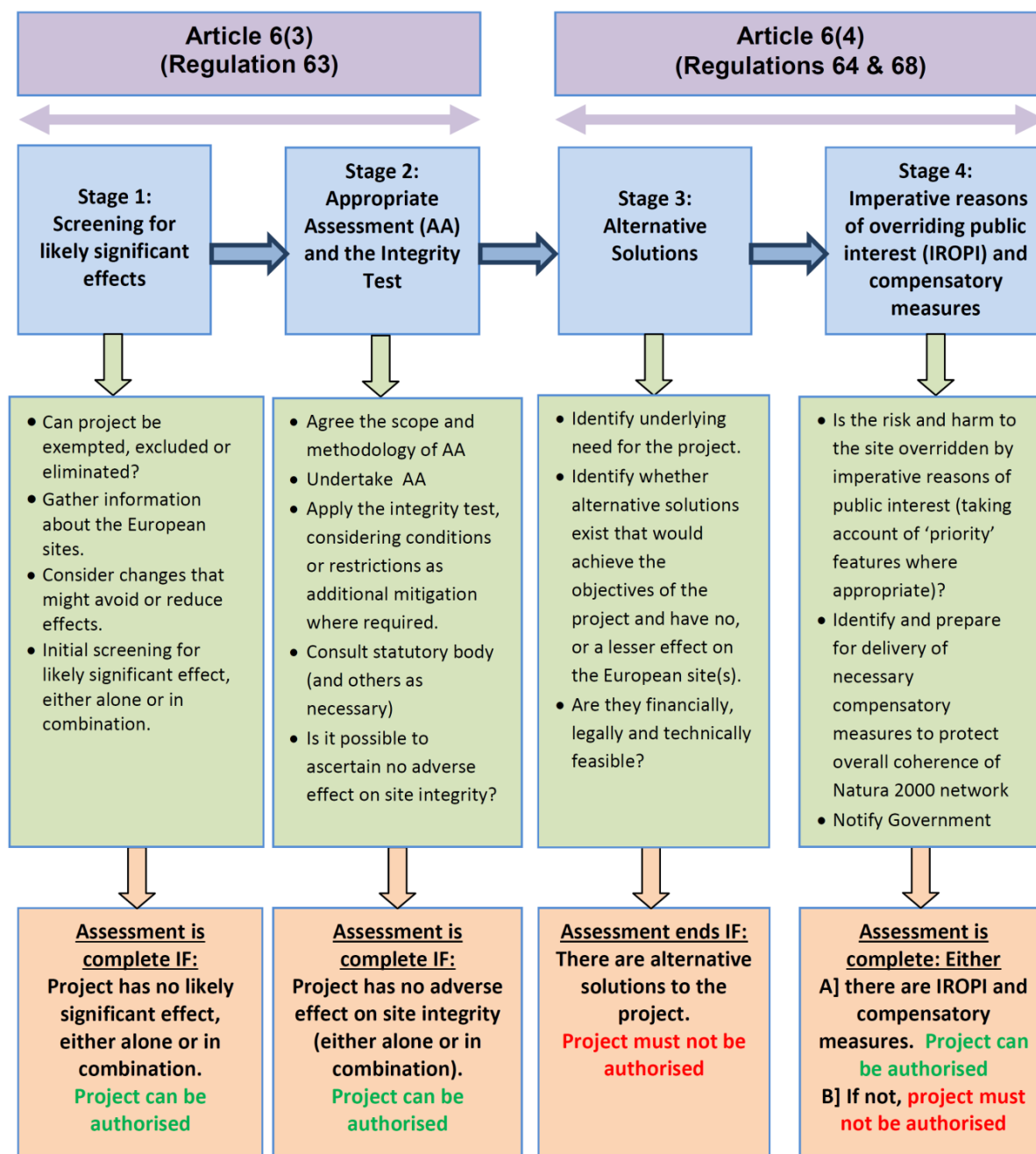
Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl Habitats. For example, Dengie Ramsar Site (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) qualifies by virtue of the extent and diversity of saltmarsh habitat present. Dengie, and the four other sites in the Mid-Essex Coast Ramsar site complex, includes a total of 3,237 ha, that represent 70% of the saltmarsh habitat in Essex and 7% of the total area of saltmarsh in Britain. Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. *Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance.*

2. Method and Approach

- 2.1.1 HRA is a statutory requirement and should be undertaken by the competent authority to ensure that plans and projects comply with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 2.1.2 HRA is the process by which the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) are implemented and ensures that plans or projects will not adversely affect Habitats sites.
- 2.1.3 The legal process does not require a fixed method, but case law has shaped the way it should be undertaken. The HRA is a sequential process and it is generally divided into four stages, which are set out below in Table 2.
- 2.1.4 Each of the stages contains a number of sequential steps, comprising the tests or procedures required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This report addresses Regulation 63 which covers the first stage, *i.e.* HRA Screening and stage 2, Appropriate Assessment.
- 2.1.5 Figure 1 below shows the recommended approach taken in the DTA Publications Handbook⁴. This has been used in the approach of this HRA, as shown in Table 2.

⁴ The DTA Publications Handbook can be found at www.dtapublications.co.uk. Place Services has a subscription to use this information.

Figure 1. Outline of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations



Extract from *The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook*, www.dtapublications.co.uk
© DTA Publications Limited (October 2018) all rights reserved
This work is registered with the UK Copyright Service

Table 2. Stages of the Habitats Regulations Assessment Process

Stage	Tasks	Outcome
Stage 1 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening (Regulation 63)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the policies and allocations. Identify potential effects to a Habitats site from the Local Plan. Assess if any significant effects on a Habitats site from the Plan, either alone or in combination, with other plans or projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where significant effects are unlikely, prepare a 'finding of no significant effect' report and Local Plan can be adopted. Where significant effects are judged likely, either alone or in combination or there is a lack of information to prove otherwise, go to Stage 2. <p><i>People over Wind (CJEU) ruling (April 2018) means that it is not possible to consider mitigation measures when screening for impacts.</i></p>
Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (AA) (Regulation 63)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List policies and allocations within scope. List Habitats sites within scope. Set out methodology of the AA and agree with Natural England. Assess the implication of the policies and allocations against the designated features and species not listed but which could be using the habitat features. Apply the integrity test. Where there may be adverse effects on the ecological integrity of Habitats sites, in view of the Site's conservation objectives, consider mitigation measures. Ensure mitigation is embedded into the Local Plan. Assess in combination effects with other plans and projects. Apply the integrity test. Where there may be adverse effects on the ecological integrity of Habitats sites, in view of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If no Adverse Effect On site Integrity (AEOI) either alone or in combination, the Local Plan can be adopted. If it is not possible to ascertain no AEOI, go to Stage 3. <p><i>Holohan CJEU ruling (November 2018) imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage.</i></p>

	<p>Site's conservation objectives, consider mitigation measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult Natural England. 	
<p>Stage 3 Assessment of alternative solutions (Regulation 64)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify whether alternative solutions exist that would achieve the objectives of the Local Plan and have no or a lesser effect on the integrity of a Habitats site(s). • If effects remain after alternative solutions been considered, consider whether the policies and/or projects should proceed with modification or the policies (and projects) be removed from the Local Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are alternative solutions to the Local Plan, it cannot be adopted without modification. • If no financially, legally or technically viable alternatives exist, go to Stage 4.
<p>Stage 4 Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) (Regulation 64)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider if the risk and harm to the Habitats site is over-ridden by Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest. • Identify and prepare delivery of compensatory measures to protect the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network and notify Government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are IROPI and compensatory measures, the Local Plan can be adopted. • If there are no IROPI and the Local Plan cannot be adopted.

2.1.6 Plans should not contain proposals that would be vulnerable to failure under the Habitats Regulations at project assessment stage, as this would be regarded as 'faulty planning'.

2.1.7 'Significant effects' has been defined through case law. A significant effect is any effect that would undermine the conservation objectives for the qualifying features of Habitats sites potentially affected, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. There must be a causal connection or link between the Local Plan and the qualifying features of the site (s) which could result in possible significant effects on the site (s). Effects may be direct or indirect and a judgement must be taken on a case-by-case basis. The decision as to whether or not a potential impact is significant depends on factors such as: magnitude of impact, type, extent, duration, intensity, timing, probability, cumulative effects and the vulnerability of the habitats and species concerned. So, what may be significant in relation to one site may not be in relation to another.

2.1.8 An effect which is not significant can be described as 'insignificant', 'de minimis' or 'trivial'- i.e. it would not undermine the conservation objectives.

- 2.1.9 A risk-based approach involving the application of the precautionary principle has been used in the assessment. A conclusion of 'no significant effect' was only reached where it was considered very unlikely, based on current knowledge and the information available, that a proposal in the Local Plan would have a significant effect on the integrity of a Habitats site.
- 2.1.10 Key advice guidance and information has also come from the following sources:
- DTA Publications Handbook: <https://www.dtapublications.co.uk/>
 - Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)
 - HRAs of neighbouring authorities Local Plans
 - Extensive experience of producing other HRAs
 - Government information regarding Habitats sites and their 'zones of influence', e.g. www.magic.gov.uk

2.1 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

- 2.1.11 The screening stage identifies whether the Local Plan may result in a Likely Significant Effect to any Habitat site, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The screening process should identify all aspects of the Local Plan that are:
- Exempt from assessment
 - Excluded from assessment
 - Eliminated from further assessment
 - Have no Likely Significant Effects, alone or in combination with other plans or projects and therefore be screened out
 - Screened in as it is not possible to rule out Likely Significant Effects. In line with the 2018 Court judgment (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17) mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment. Consequently, any aspect of the Local Plan which cannot be ruled out as having Likely Significant Effects should continue to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
- 2.1.12 Habitats sites which have been included for assessment are those which are within the IRZ for the underpinning Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) as identified on MAGIC www.magic.gov.uk.
- 2.1.13 It has been established that this Plan requires an HRA for the following reasons:
- Can the plan be exempt? - No, the Local Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to management of any Habitats sites.

- Can the plan be excluded? - No, the Local Plan cannot be excluded as it falls within the definition of being a plan within the Habitats Regulations.
- Can the plan be eliminated? - No, the Local Plan as a whole cannot be eliminated as it proposes a number of policies which may have a Likely Significant Effect on one or more Habitats site. However, individual policies can be eliminated.

2.2 Identifying Habitats sites, their Conservation Objectives and Qualifying Features to be included in HRA

- 2.2.1 The qualifying features and conservation objectives of the Habitats sites, together with current pressures on and potential threats, was drawn from the Standard Data Forms for SACs and SPAs and the Information Sheets for Ramsar Wetlands as well as Natural England's Site Improvement Plans (SIP) and the most recent conservation objectives. An understanding of the designated features of each Habitats site and the factors contributing to its integrity has informed the assessment of the potential Likely Significant Effects of the Local Plan.
- 2.2.2 Key sources of the Habitats sites information were found at:
- JNCC: <http://jncc.gov.uk/>
 - Site Designation features and Conservation Objectives- Designated Sites View: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/>
 - Site Improvement Plans, e.g.:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6270737467834368>
 - MAGIC (the Multi Agency Geographic Information website):
www.magic.gov.uk
 - "Managing Natura 2000 sites- The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC"
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/Provisions_Art_.nov_2018_endocx.pdf
- 2.2.3 The list of Habitats sites within scope, their qualifying features, conservation objectives and key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity can be found in Appendix 1 which is provided separately due to the document's large size.
- 2.2.4 A distance of 20km will be used to identify Habitats sites likely to be affected by impacts relating to Castle Point Local Plan. Beyond this distance is considered to be over precautionary, based on previous advice from Natural England. The Habitats sites scoped in are shown in Table 6.
- 2.2.5 At screening stage, the Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) will be reviewed on Magic.defra.gov.uk, which help identify whether a development is likely to impact a

Habitats site. Zones of Influence (ZOI) should also be reviewed, which are also listed on **Magic.defra.gov.uk**, as development (predominantly residential and / or tourism) within a Habitats sites ZOIs will likely result in adverse effects to site integrity.

2.3 Screening and Impact Pathways

- 2.3.1 This section of the HRA considers potential impact pathways which could connect any element of the Local Plan to Habitats sites and thus lead to a Likely Significant Effect.
- 2.3.2 Where a potential impact pathway on a Habitats site is identified, through which the Local Plan could create a Likely Significant Effect, these are considered further at screening stage. Potential impact pathways between the Plan and Habitats sites are ruled out due to distance (>20km), lack of hydrological connectivity or where the issues and key vulnerabilities are unrelated to potential impacts from the Local Plan.
- 2.3.3 A table will be provided setting out Habitats sites scoped in for Further Assessment and impact Pathways showing which pathways might be feasible. This will include interrogation of the key vulnerabilities and issues affecting these Habitats sites, as identified in the relevant Site Improvement Plans.
- 2.3.4 There are a wide range of potential impacts and the following impacts summarised below, are considered most likely to cause a Likely Significant Effect:
- Habitat loss and fragmentation / land take as a result of development.
 - Impacts on protected species outside the designated site (loss of *functionally linked land*). Impact on site features (species) which travel outside the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats sites, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
 - Increase of any type of *disturbance*, for example from *recreational use* resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects.
 - Changes in *water quality* as a result of new development and greater pressure on water treatment services.
 - Changes in *water quantity* as a result of increased surface runoff or increased groundwater extraction.
 - Changes in *air quality* such as atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, and pollution discharges from developments such as industrial developments, and waste management facilities.
- 2.3.5 The Impact Risk Zones (IRZz) including any Zone of Influence (ZOIs) for the underpinning SSSIs, which are provided on the MAGIC website

www.magic.gov.uk, will be used as a starting point in determining Likely Significant Effect on Habitats sites and spatial data will be used to determine the proximity of potential development locations to the Habitats sites.

- 2.3.6 There are many uncertainties associated with using trigger distances as there are very few standards available as a guide to how far impacts will travel. When considering the potential for effects on Habitats sites, distance itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or severity of an impact. There are other factors that will influence the relative distance at which an impact can occur, such as the prevailing wind or river flow direction. This means that development proposed in a plan that is some distance away from a Habitats site could potentially affect the site, and therefore should be considered as part of HRA screening.
- 2.3.7 Rather than rely on distance alone, best practice is to use a 'source-pathway-receptor' model which focuses on whether there is a potential link or causal connection (pathway) from the source (the direct or indirect change occurring as a result of development) by which impacts from a plan can affect the vulnerabilities/sensitivities of a Habitats site's features to the predicted changes. The pathway is the route or mechanism by which any Likely Significant Effect would be manifest in the environment and would reach the receptor (i.e. the Habitats site). Therefore, during the screening stage a number of assumptions based on professional judgement have been applied in relation to assessing the Likely Significant Effects on Habitats sites that may result from the Local Plan, as described below.
- 2.3.8 The risks of effects to occur are predicted in light of assumptions, limitations and confidence in predictions. Then, taking no account of the mitigation measures incorporated into the Local Plan, the potential effects on qualifying features are determined and assessed on whether they are likely to be 'significant'.
- 2.3.9 Each potential impact pathway is considered in more detail below.

Habitat Loss and Fragmentation / Land Take by Development

- 2.3.10 Direct or indirect impacts to a Habitats site could cause habitat loss, degradation or fragmentation.
- 2.3.11 Loss of land may have the potential to result in Likely Significant Effects to Habitats sites where the habitat affected contributes towards maintaining the interest feature for which the Habitats sites are designated.
- 2.3.12 Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site are situated within Castle Point Borough. The majority sits within Hadleigh Castle Country Park and the creek adjacent to it. However, these sites also abut the northeastern corner of Canvey Island.

- 2.3.13 Any policy which may directly affect Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site would automatically be screened in for further assessment Island.
- 2.3.14 Therefore, any direct land take and potential habitat loss and fragmentation is within scope.

Impacts on protected species outside the designated site (loss of Functionally Linked Land

- 2.3.15 Functionally linked land is land situated outside the Habitats site but which supports their designated features. Loss of land may have the potential to result in Likely Significant Effects to Habitats sites where the habitat affected contributes towards maintaining the interest feature for which the Habitats sites is designated, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
- 2.3.16 Mobile interest features listed in the relevant Habitats sites- i.e. the birds- may use off-site habitat for feeding, roosting, foraging and loafing, especially large fields comprising arable and pastoral land uses and coastal habitats. Natural England has advised that the recognised foraging distance threshold for the majority of wetland bird species is 2km from a designated site.
- 2.3.17 Therefore, any potential loss of functionally linked land is within scope.

Water Quality

- 2.3.18 An important determinant of the nature of wetland Habitats sites and the species that they support is the quality of the water that feeds them. Poor water quality can have a range of environmental impacts. Due to the very nature of watercourses, hydrological connectivity can continue for considerable distances, creating lengthy potential impact pathways.
- 2.3.19 High levels of toxic chemicals and metals can result in immediate death of aquatic life and have detrimental effects even at lower levels, including changes in wildlife behaviour and increased vulnerability to disease. Therefore, any discharge from construction sites into water sources which are functionally linked to designated sites could therefore result in a Likely Significant Effect if management plans or discharge consents from Environment Agency are not provided to support schemes.
- 2.3.20 Eutrophication, the enrichment of plant nutrients in water, increases plant growth and consequently results in oxygen depletion. In the marine environment, nitrogen is the limiting plant nutrient, so eutrophication is often associated with discharges containing available nitrogen. Algal blooms, which commonly occur due to eutrophication, increase turbidity and decrease light penetration. The decomposition

of organic wastes that often accompanies eutrophication deoxygenates water further, increasing the oxygen-depleting effects of eutrophication.

- 2.3.21 Sewage and industrial effluent discharges contribute to increased nutrients levels in Habitats sites, particularly to phosphate levels in watercourses leading into them. Some components of sewage effluent, pesticides, and industrial chemicals, are suspected to interfere with hormones, possibly having negative effects on the reproduction and development of aquatic life. Diffuse pollution, including that from urban run-off, is considered to be a major factor in the unfavourable condition of some Habitats sites. Tidal mudflats, on which many SPA bird species depend, are vulnerable to smothering by increased macroalgal growth due to treated effluent discharge and scouring by increased flow volumes.
- 2.3.22 The court judgement (R (on the Application of Preston) v Cumbria County Council [2019] EWCA 1362) indicates that local authorities have to consider impacts from the construction of sewage outfalls for applications that will have a direct impact pathway to designated sites. Therefore, local authorities will need to exercise their own judgment on applications involving the operational impacts of sewage water drainage, albeit giving due weight to the views of a body such as the Environment Agency. Consequently, project level Habitats Regulations Assessment should be undertaken by the local authority to support such schemes prior to the permission of development. As a result, any policies which involve the provision of new sewage outfalls should be identified and screened in within Habitats Regulations Assessments.
- 2.3.23 Furthermore, greater pressure on water treatment services due to new development, especially housing, may increase the risk of effluent entering aquatic environments. This is because the allocation of large numbers of new homes in certain locations may result in the capacity of existing available infrastructure being exceeded, a situation that could potentially cause service failures relating to wastewater including increased volumes of wastewater being discharged from the Water Recycling Centres or combined sewer overflows, particularly during high rainfall events.
- 2.3.24 Therefore, any potential impact to water quality is within scope.

Water Quantity

Surface Water Flooding

- 2.3.25 Development on green field locations can create impermeable surfaces which can increase surface drainage rates. This can cause changes in depth, duration, frequency, magnitude and timing of water supply or flow, which can have significant

implications for some water birds in sensitive habitats. Such changes may affect the quality and suitability of habitats used by birds for drinking, preening, feeding or roosting.

- 2.3.26 Canvey Island is flat and largely below sea level. Its flat, low-lying topography creates particular issues associated with surface water management and the ability to drain water away during heavy rainfall events.
- 2.3.27 Due to its elevated topography, tidal flood risk is less of an issue in Hadleigh and Thundersley compared to Canvey, although there are some low-lying areas still at risk in South Benfleet. Surface water flood risk however presents a more significant issue, particularly in parts of South Benfleet and Thundersley. The predominant solid geology underlying the Castle Point Borough is London Clay, which is impermeable and therefore causing rapid runoff.
- 2.3.28 Therefore, any potential impacts to water quantity (Surface Water Flooding) is within scope.

Reduced Water Resources

- 2.3.29 Housing growth may increase regional water abstraction rates, which can have serious negative impacts on Habitats sites. This is because over-abstraction can reduce water levels in rivers, causing reduced flow velocity. This can have wide ranging effects on river and wetland habitat parameters, including increased temperatures and nutrient concentrations and reduced oxygen concentrations. Such impacts can be significantly detrimental to rivers' floristic characteristics and to notable species.
- 2.3.30 Increased use of water sources by a Local Plan also has the potential to affect terrestrial habitats. Excessive abstraction from underlying aquifers could cause a lowering of the water table and affect the water quality of sensitive wetland habitats.
- 2.3.31 Therefore, any potential impacts to water quantity (Reduced Water Resources) is within scope.

Air Quality

- 2.3.32 There are number of atmospheric pollutants which can result in direct or indirect impacts to Habitats sites. These impacts are usually caused when the qualifying features are plants, soils and wetland habitats. However, some species may also be indirectly impacted from air pollution causing changes in habitat composition. The primary contributor to atmospheric pollution is transport related activities. Therefore, the main pollutants to atmospheric pollution are considered to be oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) or sulphur dioxide (SO₂) from traffic emissions. However, high intensities of agricultural practices are also considered to have a significant impact to air pollution.

Potential impacts from pollutants and their sources have been highlighted within Table 3.

- 2.3.33 The primary contributor to atmospheric pollution is transport related activities. Therefore, the main pollutants to atmospheric pollution are considered to be oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and ammonia (NH₃) from traffic emissions. However, high intensities of agricultural practices are also considered to have a significant impact to air pollution.
- 2.3.34 A distance of 200m will be used for considering Likely Significant Effects from potential air pollution. This is taken from the National Highways: Standards for Highways: Design Manual for Roads and Bridges) 5 which assumes that air pollution from roads is unlikely to be significant beyond 200m from the road itself. This HRA will therefore take into account any significant effects on receptors up to 200 metres from proposed development areas, as well as 200 metres from the major roads that would be anticipated to be required to support them.
- 2.3.35 Therefore, Atmospheric Pollution, particularly nitrogen deposition, should be considered and Air Quality has been scoped in for the HRA screening.

Table 3. Main sources and effects of air pollutants on Habitats sites

Pollutants	Source	Effects on habitats and species
Acid Deposition	SO ₂ , NO _x and ammonia all contribute to acid deposition. Although future trends in sulphur emissions and subsequent deposition to terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems will continue to decline, it is likely that increased nitrogen emissions may cancel out any gains produced by reduced sulphur levels.	Can affect habitats and species from acid rain, as well as dry deposition. Some habitats will be more susceptible depending on soil type, geology, weathering rate and buffering capacity.

5 National Highways: Standards for Highways: Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, LA 105 REV 0 Air Quality
<https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrb/search/10191621-07df-44a3-892e-c1d5c7a28d90>

Pollutants	Source	Effects on habitats and species
Ammonia (NH ₃)	Ammonia is released following decomposition and volition of animal wastes. It is naturally occurring trace gas, but levels have increased considerably within increased agricultural practices (primarily pig or poultry farming). Ammonia reacts with acid pollutants such as the products of SO ₂ and NO _x emissions to produce fine ammonium (NH ₄) containing aerosol which may be transferred much longer distances (can therefore be a significant trans-boundary issue).	Adverse effects are as a result of nitrogen deposition leading to eutrophication. As emissions mostly occur at ground level in the rural environment and NH ₃ is rapidly deposited, some of the most acute problems of NH ₃ are for small relict nature reserves located near to intensive agricultural landscapes.
Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)	Nitrogen oxides are mostly primarily produced in combustion processes, such as coal fire power stations.	Deposition of nitrogen compounds (Nitrates, nitrogen dioxide and nitrate acid), can lead to both soil and freshwater acidification. In addition, nitrogen compounds can cause eutrophication of soils and water. This alters the species composition of plant communities and can eliminate sensitive species.
Nitrogen deposition (N)	The pollutants that contribute to nitrogen deposition are derived mainly from NO _x and NH ₃ emissions. These pollutants cause acidification (see also acid deposition) as well as eutrophication.	Species-rich plant communities with relatively high proportions of slow growing perennial species and bryophytes are most at risk from Nitrogen eutrophication, due to its promotion of competitive and invasive species which can respond readily to elevated levels of N. N disposition can also increase the risk of damage from abiotic factors e.g. drought and frost.
Ozone (O ₃)	A secondary pollutant generated by photochemical reactions from NO _x and volatile organic compounds. These are mainly released by the combustion of fossil fuels in the UK has led to a large increase in background ozone concentration, leading to an increased number of days when levels across the region are above 40ppb. Reducing ozone pollution is believed to require	Concentrations of O ₃ above 40 ppb can be toxic to humans and wildlife, and can affect buildings. Increased ozone concentrations may lead to a reduction in growth of agricultural crops decreased forest production and altered species composition in semi-natural plant communities.

Pollutants	Source	Effects on habitats and species
	action at international level to reduce levels of the precursors that form ozone.	
Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Main sources of Sulphur Dioxide emission are electricity generation, industry and domestic fuel combustion. May also arise from shipping and increased atmospheric concentrations in busy ports. Total sulphur dioxide emissions have decreased substantially in the UK since the 1980's.	Wet and dry depositions of Sulphur Dioxide acidify soils and freshwater, and alters the species composition of plant and associated animal communities. The significance of impacts depends on levels of deposition and the buffering capacity of soils.

Disturbance

- 2.3.36 Disturbance concerns species, rather than habitats e.g. wetland birds. It may be limited in time (noise, source of light etc.). The intensity, duration and frequency of repetition of disturbance are therefore important parameters. The following factors can be regarded as significant disturbance.
- 2.3.37 Any event, activity or process contributing to the:
- The long-term decline of the population of the species on the site.
 - The reduction, or to the risk of reduction, of the range of the species within the site.
 - The reduction of the size of the available habitat of the species.
- 2.3.38 Factors such as noise, light, dust and vibration, litter are capable of causing significant disturbances for species, e.g. Wintering waterfowl populations.
- 2.3.39 *Managing Natura 2000 Sites* states that: "Disturbance of a species occurs on a site from events, activities or processes contributing, within the site, to a long-term decline in the population of the species, to a reduction or risk of reduction in its range, and to a reduction in its available habitat. This assessment is done according to the site's conservation objectives and its contribution to the coherence of the network."
- 2.3.40 Recreation can create increased pressure on the qualifying features of the Habitats sites scoped in. They all have bird interest and / or associated habitats which have the potential to be adversely affected by increased recreational pressure.

2.3.41 The adopted Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) has identified Zones of Influence (ZOI) for recreational disturbance, and those relevant to the Local Plan are set out in Table 4 below. The Essex Estuaries SAC overlaps with the Blackwater Estuary, Colne Estuary, Crouch and Roach Estuaries, Dengie, Foulness and Thames Estuary SPA and Ramsar sites and so follow the respective ZOIs throughout.

Table 4. Zones of Influence for Recreational Disturbance

Designated Site	Underpinning SSSIs	Zone of Influence (km)
Blackwater SPA & Ramsar Site	Blackwater Estuary SSSI	22
Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site	Benfleet and Southend Marshes SSSI	4.3
Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site	Crouch and Roach Estuaries SSSI	4.5
Dengie SPA and Ramsar site	Dengie SSSI	20.8
Foulness SPA and Ramsar site	Foulness SSSI	13
Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site	Mucking Flats and Marshes SSSI	8.1

2.4 Screening categorisation

2.4.1 The screening exercise will be recorded, using the precautionary principle. Each policy and land allocation included in the Local Plan will be categorised. A 'traffic light' system will be used to record the potential for policies and allocated sites to have a Likely Significant Effect, using the system of colours in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Screening Categorisation

Category A: Significant effects not likely
Category A identifies those policies that would not result in a Likely Significant Effect and are considered to have no adverse effect. These policies can be 'screened out' and no further assessment is required. This is because, if there are no adverse effects at all, there can be no adverse effect to contribute to in combination effects of other plans or projects.
Category B: Significant effects uncertain
Category B identifies those policies which will have no significant adverse effect on the site. That is, there could be some effect but none which would undermine the conservation objectives, when the policy is considered on its own. Given that there may be some effect this now needs to be considered

in combination with other plans or projects. If these effects can be excluded in combination, the policy can be screened out and no further assessment required. However, if the possibility of a significant adverse effect in combination cannot be ruled out there will be a Likely Significant Effect in combination, and Appropriate Assessment will be required.

Category C: Likely Significant Effect

Category C identifies those policies which cannot be ruled out as having a Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitat Site, alone, that is the effect could undermine the conservation objectives. In this case an Appropriate Assessment is triggered without needing to consider in combination effects at screening stage, although they may need to be considered at Appropriate Assessment.

3. Scoping of Habitats sites

- 3.1.1 The table below shows which Habitats sites have been scoped in, based on the 20km distance from the Borough boundary. There are 21 Habitats sites which lie within 20km of Castle Point borough boundary including some marine sites. Figure 2 below shows the geographical location of these sites in the context of the Borough boundary. This encompasses the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar Zone of Influence (ZOI) which has an evidenced ZOI of 22km.
- 3.1.2 As stated in the methodology above, these Habitats sites will be considered further at screening stage once the details of the Local Plan become available and taking into account Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) and Zones of Influence.
- 3.1.3 The list of Habitats sites within scope, their qualifying features, conservation objectives and key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity can be found in Appendix 1.

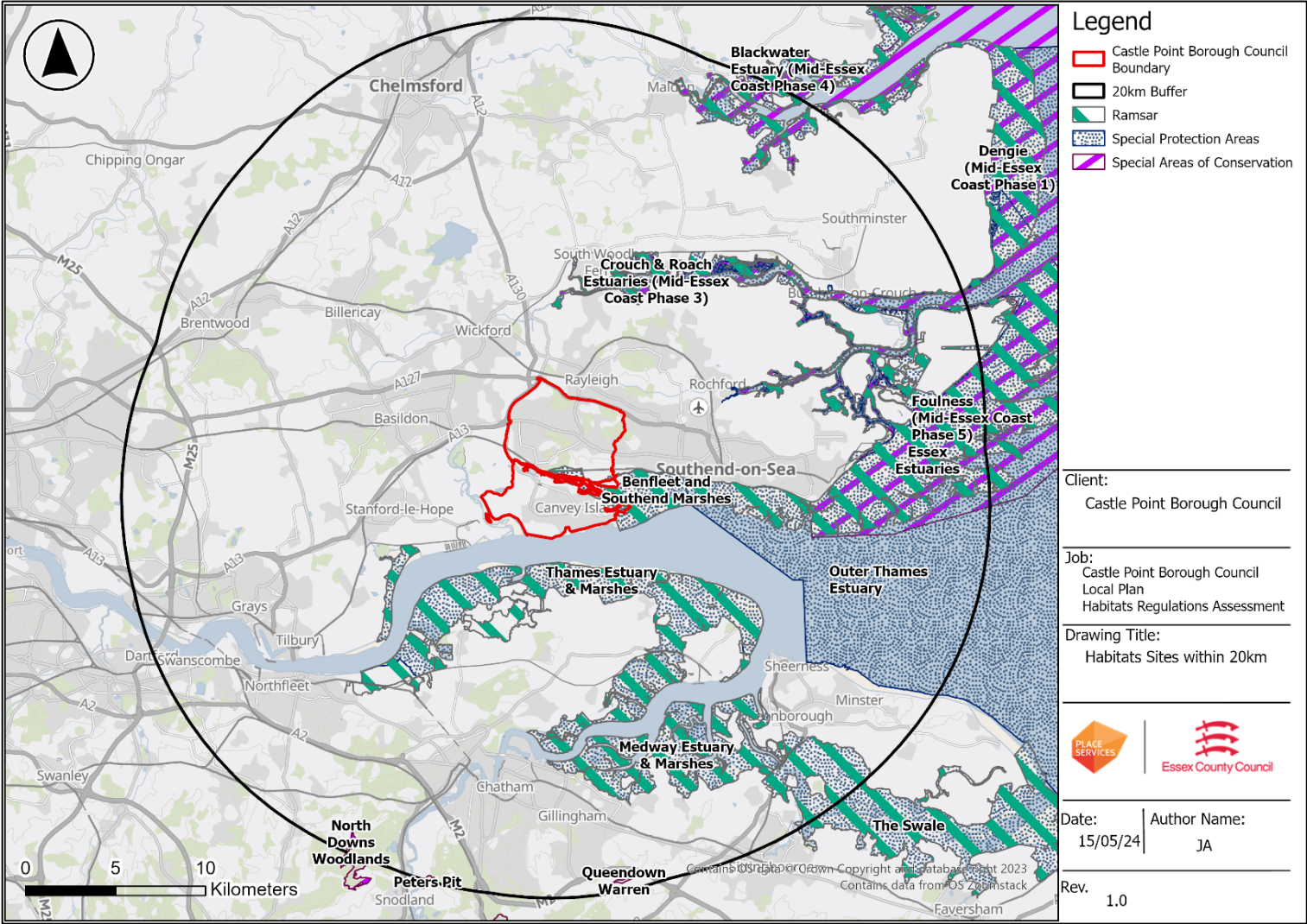
Table 6. Habitats sites scoped in due to being located within 20 km of Borough Boundary

Designated Site	Location
Blackwater Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4) SPA and Ramsar site	Estuary from Maldon to Mersea Island
Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar site	South Essex on the Thames coastline coast, including Hadleigh Ray between the north east coastline of Canvey Island and southern edge of Hadleigh Castle County Park.
Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) SPA and Ramsar site	Estuaries from South Woodham Ferrers, between Dengie Peninsular and Foulness
Dengie (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) SPA and Ramsar site	Dengie Peninsula, east of Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch
Essex Estuaries SAC	Estuaries from Clacton on Sea to Southend
Foulness (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 5) SPA and Ramsar site	Covers south east corner of Essex, near Southend

Designated Site	Location
Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site	Estuary near Sheerness (Kent)
North Downs Woodlands SAC	South and south west of Rochester (Kent)
Outer Thames Estuary SPA (marine)	Covers most marine areas near to Essex coast
Peters Pit SAC	South of Rochester (Kent)
Queendown Warren SAC	South east of Gillingham (Kent)
Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site	A small area at Mucking, Essex, 4km east (upstream) of site. Also, large amount on North Kent coast.
The Swale SPA and Ramsar site	Estuary south of the Isle of Shelley (Kent)



Figure 2. Habitats sites within 20km of the Castle Point Boundary



4. The Approach and Method for the Appropriate Assessment and Integrity Test

4.1 Approach and Method

- 4.1.1 Where any policies of the Castle Point Local Plan have been screened in as having the potential to cause Likely Significant Effects without considering mitigation measures, Castle Point Borough Council, as the competent authority, needs to progress to the second stage, i.e. undertake Appropriate Assessment.
- 4.1.2 Where it is considered at screening that the Local Plan for Castle Point may cause Likely Significant Effects, the next steps are to undertake an Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and establish whether there may be an Adverse Effect On site Integrity (AEOI) of any Habitats sites in view of their Conservation Objectives.
- 4.1.3 Some policies of the Local Plan can be used to mitigate some of the potential Likely Significant Effects which have been identified. These can be considered at Appropriate Assessment. This stage thus becomes an iterative process as avoidance and reduction measures can be incorporated in order to be able to ascertain that there is no Adverse Effect on Integrity on any Habitats site, before making a final assessment.
- 4.1.4 The Appropriate Assessment should assess all aspects of the Local Plan which can by themselves, or in combination with other plans and projects, affect the sites' Conservation Objectives of one or more Habitats sites although these are not set for Ramsar sites. The assessment must consider the implications for each qualifying feature of each potentially affected Habitats site. The focus of the appropriate assessment is therefore on the species and / or the habitats for which the Habitats site is designated.
- 4.1.5 Key vulnerabilities are set out in Appendix 1 and the Site Improvement Plans were used to obtain this information. Site Improvement Plans have been developed for each Habitats site in England as part of the 'Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS)'. Each Site Improvement Plan provides a high-level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. These can be found at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5458594975711232>.

- 4.1.6 The Appropriate Assessment stage should undertake objective scientific assessment of the implications of the Local Plan on the Qualifying Features of the listed Habitats sites using the best scientific knowledge in the field. It should apply the best available techniques and methods to assess the extent of the effects of the Local Plan on the integrity of the Habitat sites. The description of the site's integrity and the impact assessment should be based on the best possible indicators specific to the Habitat sites' qualifying features, which can also be useful in monitoring the impact of the Local Plan's implementation.
- 4.1.7 The best scientific knowledge⁶ should be used when carrying out the Appropriate Assessment in order to enable the competent authority to conclude with certainty that there will be no Adverse Effect on the Integrity of any Habitats site. This will therefore support a conclusion that is "beyond scientific doubt".
- 4.1.8 It is important that the Appropriate Assessment provides a better understanding of potential effects and can therefore assist in the identification of mitigation measures where possible to avoid, reduce or cancel significant effects on Habitats sites which could be applied when undertaking the 'integrity test'. All mitigation measures built into the Local Plan can be taken into account. The Appropriate Assessment is an iterative process, re-assessing changes and new or different mitigation measures before making its final conclusion. It must be clear which mitigation measures are being relied upon in order to meet the integrity test.
- 4.1.9 The integrity test must apply the precautionary principle. However, plan assessments are less precise than project assessments, and so it is important for the assessment process to eliminate the prospect of adverse effects integrity insofar as it is possible, given the level of specificity of this Local Plan.
- 4.1.10 In order to fulfil the above requirements, this Appropriate Assessment will therefore use the following process, and will be structured by the potential impact pathways that will be highlighted at screening stage.
- 4.1.11 Advice has been provided from the European Court of Justice regarding the 'tiering' of HRAs where there are multiple levels of plan-making, recognising that the purpose of a high-level plan is to set out broad policies and intentions without going into any detail. When the UK was first required to undertake HRA of plans, Advocate-General Kokott commented on the apparent tension between the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the intentionally vague nature of high-level strategic plans. She responded that to address this apparent tension 'It would ...hardly be proper to require a greater level of detail in preceding plans [rather than lower tier plans or planning applications] or the abolition of multi-stage planning and approval procedures so that the assessment of implications can be concentrated on one point in the procedure. Rather, adverse effects on areas of conservation must

⁶ Waddenzee ruling (C-127/02 paragraphs 52-54, 59)

be assessed at every relevant stage of the procedure to the extent possible on the basis of the precision of the plan [emphasis added]. This assessment would therefore need to be updated with increasing specificity in subsequent stages of the procedure' [*i.e.* for planning applications or lower tier plans] (Opinion of Advocate-General Kokott, 2005).

- 4.1.12 Explicitly enshrining the requirement for project-level HRA in the plans – since it is not possible to rule out adverse effects on the integrity of many Habitats sites due simply to the high-level nature of the plan policies, 'down-the-line' assessment becomes essential.
- 4.1.13 A monitoring and Iterative Plan Review (IPR) provision therefore may need to be embedded in the Local Plan. Monitoring is not mitigation; however, where there is a lack of detail over the precise effects of a plan (because, as in this case, the purpose of the plan is to set over-arching policy, not present specific proposals), an Iterative Plan Review process enables the delivery of development to be managed and the plan (and its HRA) to be updated in future reviews. It involves recognising the fact that development associated with policies in the plan will not be delivered all at once but piecemeal over the entire plan timetable. This process will involve a phased and iterative approach to plan-implementation which is linked to ongoing project developments and their associated monitoring work and with the findings from such project-level work feeding back into the next phases of plan-implementation. This is done so that results from monitoring data from consented projects and on-going research programmes can be fed into subsequent developments in order for lessons to be learnt and evidence gaps filled, thus reducing potential impacts to Habitats sites.

4.2 Policies / Allocations and Habitats Sites within Scope

- 4.2.1 Any Likely Significant Effects considered at screening stage will be carried forward for consideration at Appropriate Assessment. The policies and their potential to have adverse effects on any Habitats site through a variety of impact pathways will now be considered in more detail, for example disturbance, direct and indirect effects; extent of the effects (habitat area, species numbers or areas of occurrence); importance and magnitude (*e.g.* considering the affected area or population in relation to the total area and population size).
- 4.2.2 Key vulnerabilities of each Habitats site are set out in Appendix 1 using the relevant Site Improvement Plans.

4.3 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

- 4.3.1 As previously mentioned, in line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site. The HRA Appropriate Assessment will therefore consider mitigation measures for the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Castle Point Local Plan.
- 4.3.2 In accordance with this Judgement, all mitigation measures already built into the Local Plan can now be taken into account for the Appropriate Assessment. At this stage other policies of the Plan can be considered in order to mitigate some of the potential Likely Significant Effects which have been identified. This stage is an iterative process as avoidance and reduction measures can be incorporated in order to be able to avoid the potential impacts identified in the Appropriate Assessment or reduce them to a level where they will no longer adversely affect the site's integrity.
- 4.3.3 An example may include a requirement for Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) for new housing and employment sites which can help to mitigate for surface water flooding and prevent water pollution.
- 4.3.4 Where there may still be adverse effects on the ecological integrity of Habitats sites, in view of the Site's conservation objectives, additional mitigation measures may also need to be proposed. Generic mitigation is used where possible which may should help to address water quality, air pollution, noise, and other (non-recreational) forms of disturbance. Construction Environment Management Plans (CEMP - Biodiversity) – often a condition of consent - can help to direct seasonal working, damping down of dust and measures to alleviate noise pollution.

CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

- 4.3.5 Court rulings include CJEU Holohan C-461/17 (7 November 2018) which imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:

1. [...] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.

2. [...] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

3. [...] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

- 4.3.6 It is therefore necessary to consider species likely to be present on the Habitats sites, but for which that site has not been listed – e.g. birds which are designated features of the underpinning SSSI – and to consider the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site. Those species found outside the European designated site boundary are likely to be covered by the consideration of impacts on functionally linked land.
- 4.3.7 The designated features of the relevant underpinning SSSIs will be assessed for any additional impacts on the qualifying features that have not already been addressed within the SPA and Ramsar sites that have been screened in.

CJEU Joined Cases C-293/17 and C-294/17 Coöperatie Mobilisation for the Environment and Vereniging Leefmilieu

- 4.3.8 These Dutch cases concerned authorisations schemes for agricultural activities in Habitats sites which cause nitrogen deposition and where levels already exceeded the critical load. These are not directly connected with or necessary for the management of a Habitats site and “highlights” of the ruling include:
- 1. Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora must be interpreted as meaning that the grazing of cattle and the application of fertilisers on the surface of land or below its surface in the vicinity of Natura 2000 sites may be classified as a 'project' within the meaning of that provision, even if those activities, in so far as they are not a physical intervention in the natural surroundings, do not constitute a 'project' within the meaning of Article 1(2)(a) of Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.*

2. *Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that a recurring activity, such as the application of fertilisers on the surface of land or below its surface, authorised under national law before the entry into force of that directive, may be regarded as one and the same project for the purposes of that provision, exempted from a new authorisation procedure, in so far as it constitutes a single operation characterised by a common purpose, continuity and, inter alia, the location and the conditions in which it is carried out being the same. If a single project was authorised before the system of protection laid down by that provision became applicable to the site in question, the carrying out of that project may nevertheless fall within the scope of Article 6(2) of that directive.*

...

6. *Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that an 'appropriate assessment' within the meaning of that provision may not take into account the existence of 'conservation measures' within the meaning of paragraph 1 of that article, 'preventive measures' within the meaning of paragraph 2 of that article, measures specifically adopted for a programme such as that at issue in the main proceedings or 'autonomous' measures, in so far as those measures are not part of that programme, if the expected benefits of those measures are not certain at the time of that assessment.*

7. *Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that measures introduced by national legislation, such as that at issue in the main proceedings, including procedures for the surveillance and monitoring of farms whose activities cause nitrogen deposition and the possibility of imposing penalties, up to and including the closure of those farms, are sufficient for the purposes of complying.*

- 4.3.9 This ruling is relevant to projects which trigger appropriate assessment before any consents are issued so should be considered when identifying other plans and projects for an in- combination assessment.

(R (on the Application of Preston) v Cumbria County Council [2019] EWCA 1362)

- 4.3.10 This case relates to a High Court verdict which quashed a County Council's decision to vary a planning permission for a water company to construct a sewage outfall on a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Therefore, planning authorities and other competent authorities cannot, in appropriate assessments, simply rely on the competence of other regulators to avoid conducting their own assessments. They must instead themselves satisfy their own HRA duties. The judgement concluded:
- Regulation 63(1) provides that the trigger for making an appropriate assessment is that the relevant plan or project 'is likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats site.

Regulation 63(3) envisages consultation with the appropriate nature conservation body taking place at the stage of the appropriate assessment and accordingly after the initial view that there is likely to be significant effect has been formed. The conclusion as to whether the integrity of the relevant site will be adversely affected is to be made 'in the light of the conclusions of the assessment'.

(Regulation 63(5)) and it is at that stage that regard is to be had to the manner in which the project is to be carried out and to the conditions or restrictions which the authority is minded to impose.

(Regulation 63(6)) The effect of restrictions imposed by another regulatory body is seen as an aspect of the manner in which a project is to be carried out and so falling for consideration under Regulation 63(6) at the end of the assessment process rather than as removing the need for an appropriate assessment.

4.4 Applying the Integrity Test

- 4.4.1 Following the Appropriate Assessment and the consideration of all mitigation measures, the competent authority needs to make a judgement on whether any of the policies will have an Adverse Effect on Integrity on any Habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. This test incorporates the precautionary principle.

4.5 In Combination Effects with other Plans and Projects

- 4.5.1 The Appropriate Assessment should also include a comprehensive identification of all the potential effects of the Local Plan likely to be significant and insignificant, taking into account the combination of the effects of the Local Plan with those of other plans or projects. A series of individually modest impacts may, in combination, produce a significant impact. Cumulative impacts may only occur over time, so plans or projects which are completed, approved but uncompleted, or proposed should all be considered. The assessment should not be restricted to similar types of plans and projects.
- 4.5.2 In order to identify potential in combination effects other plans and projects which may affect the Habitats sites need to be identified. The list of county and district level plans which provide for development in Castle Point Borough, as well as Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), are identified and are set out in section 5 below.
- 4.5.3 The plans assessed will ultimately depend upon the impact pathways brought forward to AA.

4.6 Embedding Mitigation into the Local Plan

- 4.6.1 Castle Point Borough Council, as the competent authority, should consider the manner in which the Local Plan is to be implemented and any mitigation measures which could be relied upon when deciding whether it would have an Adverse Effect on Integrity, including when and how they can be embedded into the Local Plan. It needs to ensure that mitigation is embedded into the Plan through amendments to policies where necessary. It is not sufficient to rely on a general policy aimed at protecting Habitats sites. Instead, explicit caveats need to be included where there may be conflicts between a general policy to protect Habitats sites from development and another policy.
- 4.6.2 Each impact is assessed, *e.g.* air quality, water quality, disturbance, with a summary of any additional mitigation measures required to avoid Adverse Effect On site Integrity (AEOI) and any recommendations will be set out to embed mitigation into the Local Plan.

4.7 Re-applying the Integrity Test

- 4.7.1 At this stage the integrity test will be re-applied. Where there may still be adverse effects on the ecological integrity of Habitats sites, in view of the Site's conservation objectives, additional mitigation measures should be considered.
- 4.7.2 The AA will provide tables showing each potential impact pathway where it considers individual policies, how they might be mitigated and whether embedded mitigation is sufficient to avoid Adverse Effect On site Integrity.

4.8 Monitoring

- 4.8.1 Recommendations for monitoring may recommended, *e.g.* Air Quality.

4.9 Consulting Natural England

- 4.9.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, Natural England will be consulted on the Appropriate Assessment document.

5. Initial schedule of other plans and strategies to be incorporated into the assessment of in-combination effects

5.1 Assessment of Impacts in Combination with Other Plans and Projects

5.1.1 The relevant other plans to be considered in combination with Castle Point Local Plan are listed in Table 7 below:

Table 7. Other plans or projects considered for in combination effects

Title of plan or Project	Competent authority/ statutory body/plan owner	Location of report
The South East Inshore Marine Plan June 2021	HM Government/ Marine Management Organisation	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60f6f6dde90e0764ccfbd836/FINAL_South_East_Marine_Plan__1_.pdf
The Thames Vision 2050	Port of London Authority	https://pla.co.uk/thames-vision-2050
Basildon Borough Draft Local Plan	Basildon Borough Council	https://www.basildon.gov.uk/article/9107/Local-Plan-Latest-news-and-updates
Braintree District Local Plan	Braintree District Council	https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control/local-plan-2033
Brentwood Local Plan 2016-2033	Brentwood District Council	https://www.brentwood.gov.uk/adopted-local-plan
Chelmsford Local Plan, Adopted 27 May 2020	Chelmsford City Council	https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/adopted-local-plan/
Colchester Borough Council Core Strategy	Colchester Borough Council	
Maldon District Council Local Development Scheme 2023 – 2027	Maldon District Council	https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/7050/planning_policy/

Title of plan or Project	Competent authority/ statutory body/plan owner	Location of report
		9897/local_development_plan_review_2021
Southend on Sea Development Management DPD	Southend on Sea City Council	https://southend.oc2.uk/document/28
Rochford New Local Plan	Rochford District Council	https://www.rochford.gov.uk/new-local-plan
Tendring District Local Plan	Tendring DC	https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/content/localplan
Thurrock new Local Plan. Thurrock Local Development Scheme	Thurrock Council	https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/new-local-plan-for-thurrock/thurrock-local-plan . https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/localdevelopmentscheme-202309-v01.pdf
North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Plan Part 1	Braintree DC, Colchester BC and Tendring DC	https://legacy.tendringdc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/planning/Planning_Policy/Section_1/Tendring%20District%20Local%20Plan%202013-2033%20and%20Beyond%20-%20Section%201_AC.pdf
Gravesham Local Plan First Review (2014)	Gravesham Borough Council	https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/local-plan-policy/local-plan
Bearing Fruits 2031 The Swale Borough Local Plan, Adopted July 2017	Swale Borough Council	https://services.swale.gov.uk/media/files/localplan/adoptedlocalplanfinalwebversion.pdf

Title of plan or Project	Competent authority/ statutory body/plan owner	Location of report
Neighbourhood plans	Relevant District/ Borough Councils	
Essex County Council Local Transport Plan for Essex, 2011	Essex County Council	https://www.essexhighways.org/highway-schemes-and-developments/local-transport-plan
Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 (adopted 2020)	Kent County Council	https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/112585/Kent-Minerals-and-Waste-Local-Plan-2013-2030.pdf
The Thames Estuary 2100 Plan	Government/ Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/thames-estuary-2100-te2100
South Essex Outline Water Cycle Study Technical Report Final September 2011	Castle Point, Rochford, Basildon and Essex councils	https://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/general-evidence-documents/
Essex and Suffolk Water Draft Resource Management Plan 2024	Essex and Suffolk Water	https://www.eswater.co.uk/globalassets/wrmp/esw/wrmp_customer_summary_esw_v9.pdf
Anglian River Basin District River Basin Management Plan: Updated 2022	Government/ Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/anglian-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan-updated-2022

Title of plan or Project	Competent authority/ statutory body/plan owner	Location of report
Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan 2	Government/ Environment Agency	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essex-and-south-suffolk-shoreline-management-plan-2
Minerals Local Plan review 2025 to 2040	Essex County Council	https://www.essex.gov.uk/planning-land-and-recycling/planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste-planning-policy/existing
Essex CC and Southend-on-Sea BC Replacement Waste Local Plan (2017)	Essex County Council	https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration_data/files/assets.ctfassets.net/4422af64jx5x/5MMZ5nNFmOCIpF56igb0Jc/e6f7ab4cba4ed1198c67b87be7b375e7/waste-local-plan-2017-compressed.pdf
Shoeburyness Coastal Management Scheme Non-Technical Study	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	https://www.southend.gov.uk/downloads/file/5919/shoeburyness-coastal-management-scheme---non-technical-summary
London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP), December 2014	Rochford District Council and Southend on sea Borough Council	https://democracy.southend.gov.uk/Data/Place%20Scrutiny%20Committee/201412111700/Agenda/att24954.pdf
Port of Tilbury extension NSIP	Secretary of State	https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR030003
Lower Thames Crossing NSIP	Secretary of State	https://national-infrastructure-

Title of plan or Project	Competent authority/ statutory body/plan owner	Location of report
		consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/TR010032
Thurrock Flexible Power Generation NSIP	Secretary of State	https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010092
Tilbury Energy Centre (TEC) NSIP	Secretary of State	https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR030003/TR030003-000767-PoTLL_CEA%20LTC%20and%20Tilbury%20Energy%20Centre%20Paper%20for%20D3%20R4%20Final.pdf
Thames Enterprise Park (Redevelopment of Former Coryton Oil Refinery) Masterplan and outline application	Thurrock Council	https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/thames-enterprise-park-development/overview
Norwich to Tilbury (National Grid) NSIP	Secretary of State	https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/about

6. Appendix

Appendix 1. List Of Habitats Sites, Conservation Objectives and Vulnerabilities

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Benfleet and Southend Marshes Benfleet and Southend Marshes is an estuarine area on the Essex side of the Thames Estuary. The site is comprised of an extensive series of saltmarshes, mudflats, and grassland which support a diverse flora and fauna, including internationally important numbers of wintering waterfowl.				
Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA EU Code: UK9009171	2283.94	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied Brent goose; Branta bernicla bernicla (Non-breeding) • Ringed plover; Charadrius hiaticula (Non-breeding) • Grey plover; Pluvialis squatarola (Non-breeding) • Red knot; Calidris canutus (Non-breeding) • Dunlin; Calidris alpina alpina (Non-breeding) 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying 	Coastal squeeze: Coastal defences exist along much of the coastline here. Sea level rise is also occurring. It is therefore certain that if circumstances do not change, much of the supporting habitats of the SPA birds will be lost/degraded through processes such as: coastal squeeze; sedimentation rates' inability to keep pace with sea level rise; and reduced exposure (the extent and duration) of mudflats and sandflats. Public Access/Disturbance:

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterbird assemblage <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely The population of each of the qualifying features, and The distribution of the qualifying features within the site 	<p>Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities, including: boating and watersports; walking; bait-digging; fishing, and wildfowling. Some activities such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats. Public access, (especially dog walking and recreational boating) was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and this activity is still occurring. Moderate levels of disturbance in less sensitive locations may have no significant effect on the numbers of birds using the SIP area but the types, levels and locations of potentially disturbing activities are constantly changing. Managing the changes to minimise the risk of disturbance impacts will require a better understanding of which species and habitats are most susceptible, which types of activity are most disturbing, and which locations and times of year are most sensitive.</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>There is inadequate information to provide appropriate management.</p> <p>Invasive species: Non-native invasive species such as sea squirt and pacific oyster are spreading along the Kent coast and could begin to impact on the Swale. Sea squirt has been found in the Medway, and Pacific oysters are regarded as increasing in the Essex-Southend area. These species threaten habitats due to their ability to smother substrate and other sessile organisms. There is no good understanding of the overall distribution of these species in this site. Assessment is needed in key areas of ports and marinas, where introductions tend to first occur.</p> <p>Changes in species distribution: There is a decline in population size for some of the bird species on some of the SPAs (Cook et al. 2013). These are likely to be influenced by a number of factors which may vary across the four SPAs. Some of these influences are</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>site-based as described in other parts of this Plan and some relate to wider, broad-scale changes such as wintering species distributions and effects from breeding grounds outside the UK. A greater understanding of the relative importance of site-based and wider influences is required in order to identify the potential for further actions that might halt declines, restore populations or identify scenarios where it is thought unlikely that site-based measures will reverse population declines</p> <p>Fisheries- commercial marine and estuarine: The extent and impacts of fisheries on private grounds, particularly in the Swale Estuary, needs to be better understood. There are particular concerns regarding the dredging of shellfish within the SPAs which are a food source for the protected birds. Commercial fishing activities categorised as ‘amber or green’ under Defra’s revised approach to commercial</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>fisheries in European Marine Sites require assessment and (where appropriate) management. This assessment will be undertaken by Kent & Essex IFCA.</p> <p>Invasive species: Freshwater non-native invasive species such as pennywort, crassula, parrots feather etc. can engulf ditches, leading to loss of habitat for diving ducks. Although there are some mechanisms in place to ensure ditch management, more baseline information is needed, particularly on those species for which ditch management is not the solution. <i>Spartina anglica</i> may be increasing at the expense of other saltmarsh habitats with adverse implications for SPA bird roost areas in Benfleet & Southend Marshes.</p> <p>Vehicles- Illicit: The illicit use of motor vehicles (often bikes) occurs across the area. This can cause disturbance to SPA birds. This activity was identified as a medium risk during</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>the 2009 EMS risk review project and is still occurring. Whilst various mechanisms are in place to prevent the use of vehicles they are clearly not entirely effective.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds site-relevant critical loads.</p>
<p>Benfleet and Southend Marshes Ramsar site</p> <p>RIS Code: UK11006</p>	2251.31	<p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 32867 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003).</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance:</p> <p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branta bernicla bernicla; Dark-bellied brent goose <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p>	None available.	None available.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charadrius hiaticula; Ringed plover Pluvialis squatarola; Grey plover <p>Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under criterion 6.</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calidris alpina alpina; Dunlin 		
Blackwater Estuary (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4) <p>The Blackwater Estuary is the largest estuary in Essex north of the Thames and, is one of the largest estuarine complexes in East Anglia. Its mudflats, fringed by saltmarsh on the upper shores, support internationally and nationally important numbers of overwintering waterfowl. Shingle and shell banks and offshore islands are also a feature of the tidal flats. The surrounding terrestrial habitats; the sea wall, ancient grazing marsh and its associated fleet and ditch systems, plus semi-improved grassland are also of high conservation interest. This rich mosaic of habitats supports an outstanding assemblage of nationally scarce plants and a nationally important assemblage of rare invertebrates. There are 16 British Red Data Book species and 94 notable and local species.</p>				
Blackwater Estuary SPA (Mid-Essex)	4395.15	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dark-bellied brent goose; Branta bernicla bernicla (Non-breeding) 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild	Coastal Squeeze: <p>Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Coast Phase 4) EU Code: UK9009245		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common pochard; <i>Aythya ferina</i> (Breeding) • Hen harrier; <i>Circus cyaneus</i> (Non-breeding) • Ringed plover; <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> (Breeding) • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Non-breeding) • Dunlin; <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> (Non-breeding) • Black-tailed godwit; <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Non-breeding) • Little tern; <i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Breeding) • Waterbird assemblage <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely • The population of each of the qualifying features, and, • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>response to rising sea levels. As a result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened by sea level rise because most are near or below mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls.</p> <p>Public access /disturbance:</p> <p>Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission: general Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions: Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or continental scale, possibly linked to climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species: An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p> <p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very damaging to inshore marine habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Atmospheric nitrogen deposition</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.
Blackwater Estuary Ramsar site (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 4) RIS Code: UK11007	4395.15	Ramsar criterion 1 Qualifies by virtue of the extent and diversity of saltmarsh habitat present. This site, and the four others in the Mid-Essex Coast complex, includes a total of 3,237 ha that represent 70% of the saltmarsh habitat in Essex and 7% of the total area of saltmarsh in Britain. Ramsar criterion 2 The invertebrate fauna is well represented and includes at least 16 British Red Data Book species. In	None available.	None available.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>descending order of rarity these are:</p> <p>Endangered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a water beetle <i>Paracymus aeneus</i> • Vulnerable: • Damselfly; <i>Lestes dryas</i>, • Flies; <i>Aedes flavescens</i>, <i>Erioptera bivittata</i>, <i>Hybomitra expollicata</i> • Spiders; <i>Heliophanus auratus</i> and <i>Trichopterna cito</i>; <p>Rare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beetles; <i>Baris scolopacea</i>, <i>Philonthus punctus</i>, <i>Graptodytes bilineatus</i> and <i>Malachius vulneratus</i>, • Flies; <i>Campsicemus magius</i> and <i>Myopites eximia</i>, the moths <i>Idaea ochrata</i> and <i>Malacosoma castrensis</i> and • Spiders; <i>Euophrys</i>. <p>Ramsar criterion 3</p>		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>This site supports full and representative sequences of saltmarsh plant communities covering the range of variation in Britain.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 105061 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species with peak counts in winter: • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> • Dunlin; <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> • Black-tailed godwit; <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> • Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under criterion 6. 		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common shelduck; Tadorna tadorna • European golden plover; Pluvialis apricaria apricaria • Common redshank ; Tringa totanus tetanus 		
<p>Crouch & Roach Estuaries (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3)</p> <p>The Rivers Crouch and Roach are situated in South Essex. The River Crouch occupies a shallow valley between two ridges of London Clay, whilst the River Roach is set predominantly between areas of brick earth and loams with patches of sand and gravel. The intertidal zone along the Rivers Crouch and Roach is 'squeezed' between the sea walls of both banks and the river channel. This leaves a relatively narrow strip of tidal mud unlike other estuaries in the county, which, nonetheless, is used by significant numbers of birds. One species is present in internationally important numbers, and three other species of wader and wildfowl occur in nationally important numbers. Additional interest is provided by the aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates and by an outstanding assemblage of nationally scarce plants</p>				
Crouch & Roach Estuaries SPA (Mid-Essex)	1735.58	<p>Qualifying Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose; Branta bernicla bernicla (Non-breeding) 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining	<p>Coastal Squeeze:</p> <p>Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in response to rising sea levels. As a</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Coast Phase 3) EU Code: UK9009244		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterbird assemblage Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.	or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened by sea level rise because most are near or below mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls.</p> <p>Public access /disturbance:</p> <p>Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as powerboating, may produce</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission- general:</p> <p>Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions:</p> <p>Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or continental scale, possibly linked to climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p> <p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very damaging to inshore marine habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.
Crouch & Roach Estuaries Ramsar site (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 3) RIS Code: UK11058	1735.58	Ramsar criterion 2 Supports an appreciable assemblage of rare, vulnerable or endangered species or subspecies of plant and animal including 13 nationally scarce plant species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slender Hare's Ear Bupleurum tenuissimum, • Divided Sedge Carex divisa, • Sea Barley Hordeum marinum, • Golden-Samphire Inula 	None available.	None available.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>crithmoides,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lax Flowered Sea-Lavender <i>Limonium humile</i>, • Curved Hard-Grass <i>Parapholis incurva</i>, • Borrer's Saltmarsh grass <i>Puccinellia fasciculata</i>, • Stiff Saltmarsh Grass <i>Puccinellia rupestris</i>, • Spiral Tasselweed <i>Ruppia cirrhosa</i>, • One-Flowered Glasswort <i>Salicornia pusilla</i>, • Small Cord-Grass <i>Spartina maritima</i>, • Shrubby Seablite <i>Suaeda vera</i> • Sea Clover <i>Trifolium squamosum</i>. <p>Several important invertebrate species are also present on the site, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scarce Emerald Damselfly <i>Lestes dryas</i>, 		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorefly Parydroptera discomyzina, • Rare Soldier Fly Stratiomys singularior, • Large Horsefly Hybomitra expollicata, • Beetles Graptodytes bilineatus and Malachius vulneratus, • Ground Lackey Moths Malacosoma castrensis and Eucosoma catoprana. <p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 16970 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species with peak counts in winter: • Dark-bellied brent goose; Branta bernicla bernicla 		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Dengie Dengie is a large and remote area of tidal mudflat and saltmarsh at the eastern end of the Dengie peninsula, between the Blackwater and Crouch Estuaries. The saltmarsh is the largest continuous example of its type in Essex. Foreshore, saltmarsh and beaches support an outstanding assemblage of rare coastal flora. It hosts internationally and nationally important wintering populations of wildfowl and waders, and in summer supports a range of breeding coastal birds including rarities. The formation of cockleshell spits and beaches is of geomorphological interest				
Dengie SPA (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) EU Code: UK9009242	3127.23	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Non-breeding) • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Non-breeding) • Hen harrier; <i>Circus cyaneus</i> (Non-breeding) • Knot; <i>Calidris canutus</i> (Non-breeding) • Waterbird assemblage (Non-breeding) <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • the supporting processes on which the 	Coastal Squeeze: Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in response to rising sea levels. As a result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened by sea level rise because most are near or below

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
			<p>habitats of the qualifying features rely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the populations of qualifying features the distribution of qualifying features within the site 	<p>mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls.</p> <p>Public access /disturbance:</p> <p>Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission: general</p> <p>Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions:</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or continental scale, possibly linked to climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p> <p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very damaging to inshore marine habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p> <p>Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Dengie Ramsar Site (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 1) EU Code: UK9009242	3127.23	<p>Ramsar criterion 1</p> <p>Qualifies by virtue of the extent and diversity of saltmarsh habitat present. Dengie, and the four other sites in the Mid-Essex Coast Ramsar site complex, includes a total of 3,237 ha, that represent 70% of the saltmarsh habitat in Essex and 7% of the total area of saltmarsh in Britain.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>Dengie supports a number of rare plant and animal species. The Dengie has 11 species of nationally scarce plants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea Kale <i>Crambe maritima</i>, • Sea Barley <i>Hordeum marinum</i>, • Golden Samphire <i>Inula crithmoides</i>, • Lax Flowered Sea Lavender <i>Limonium humile</i>, • Glassworts <i>Sarcocornia perennis</i> and <i>Salicornia pusilla</i>, • Small Cord-Grass <i>Spartina</i> 	None available.	None available.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>maritima,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shrubby Sea-Blite Suaeda vera, • Eelgrasses Zostera angustifolia, Z. marina and Z. noltei. <p>The invertebrate fauna includes the following Red Data Book species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weevil Baris scolopacea, • Horsefly Atylotus latistriatus and • Jumping Spider Euophrys browningi. <p>Ramsar criterion 3</p> <p>This site supports full and representative sequences of saltmarsh plant communities covering the range of variation in Britain.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 43828 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Species/populations occurring at</p>		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>levels of international importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species with peak counts in winter: Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i> <p>Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under criterion 6.</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> Eurasian oystercatcher; <i>Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus</i> Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarol</i> Bar-tailed godwit; <i>Limosa lapponica lapponica</i> Red knot; <i>Calidris canutus</i> 		
Essex Estuaries <p>The Mid-Essex Coast comprises an extensive complex of estuaries and intertidal sand and silt flats, including several islands, shingle and shell beaches and extensive areas of saltmarsh. The SAC follows the boundaries of five SSSIs: the Colne Estuary, the Blackwater</p>				

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Estuary, Dengie, the River Crouch Marshes and Foulness.				
Essex Estuaries SAC EU Code: UK0013690	46109.95	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time; Subtidal sandbanks Estuaries Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats. Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand; Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand Spartina swards (<i>Spartinion maritimae</i>); Cord-grass swards Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae</i>) Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (<i>Sarcocornetea fruticosi</i>) 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely 	Coastal Squeeze: Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in response to rising sea levels. As a result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened by sea level rise because most are near or below mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls. Public access /disturbance: Breeding and overwintering

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission: general</p> <p>Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions:</p> <p>Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>continental scale, possibly linked to climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p> <p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>damaging to inshore marine habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p> <p>Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.</p>
<p>Foulness</p> <p>Foulness is part of an open coast estuarine system comprising grazing marsh, saltmarsh, intertidal mudflats and sandflats which support nationally rare and nationally scarce plants, and nationally and internationally important populations of breeding, migratory and wintering waterfowl</p>				

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Foulness SPA (Mid-Essex Coast Phase 5) EU Code: UK9009246	10968.9	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hen harrier; <i>Circus cyaneus</i> (Non-breeding) • Dark-bellied brent goose; <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> (Non-breeding) • Eurasian oystercatcher; <i>Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus</i> (Non-breeding) • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Non-breeding) • Bar-tailed godwit; <i>Limosa lapponica lapponica</i> (Non-breeding) • Red knot; <i>Calidris canutus</i> (Non-breeding) • Pied avocet; <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Breeding) • Ringed plover; <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>; (Breeding) • Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus</i> (Non-breeding) • Sandwich tern; <i>Sterna</i> 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely • The population of each of the qualifying features, and, • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	Coastal Squeeze: Coastal defences along much of the Essex coastline prevent intertidal habitats from shifting landward in response to rising sea levels. As a result, these habitats are being gradually degraded and reduced in extent, with knock-on effects on the waterbirds and other species they support. 'Managed realignment' schemes and additional intervention measures to create new areas of intertidal habitat and reduce erosion rates are being implemented but more will be needed to offset future losses. Grazing marshes in the area of the Mid Essex Coast SPAs are important for waterbirds and are also threatened by sea level rise because most are near or below mean high tide level, currently protected behind seawalls. Public access /disturbance: Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>sandvicensis (Breeding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common tern; <i>Sterna hirundo</i> (Breeding) • Little tern; <i>Sterna albifrons</i> (Breeding) • Waterbird assemblage <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>		<p>land- and water-based activities - including boating and watersports, walking, bait-digging, fishing and wildfowling - as well as low-flying aircraft. Some activities, such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats.</p> <p>Planning permission: general</p> <p>Several of the issues affecting the Essex Estuaries and the management of disturbance effects on the sites are related to each other, and addressing them is likely to require an improved overview of the relative sensitivities of different habitats, species and locations to different types of development.</p> <p>Changes in species distributions:</p> <p>Declines have occurred in the numbers of some of the waterbird species using the Essex Estuaries SIP area but these may be due to changes in their distributions or population levels at a national or continental scale, possibly linked to</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>climate change.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p> <p>An increase in Pacific oyster <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> settlement and colonisation within the European Marine Site (EMS) may result in areas of foreshore being covered in such numbers as to make them difficult to access and utilise as feeding grounds for overwintering birds. Invasive common cord grass may adversely affect other species and habitats, including feeding and roosting areas of SPA bird species.</p> <p>Fishing:</p> <p>Recreational bait digging may impact waterbirds e.g. by reducing prey availability, or damaging the intertidal mudflats and sandflats and associated communities. The extent of the activity and potential impacts on site features are not currently well understood. Certain forms of commercial fishing, e.g. bottom towed fishing gear; can be very damaging to inshore marine</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>habitats and the bird species dependent on the communities they support.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition:</p> <p>Atmospheric nitrogen deposition exceeds the relevant critical loads for coastal dune habitats used by breeding terns and hence there is a risk of harmful effects. However, on the Essex estuaries declines in the numbers of breeding terns appear to be due mainly to erosion of a man-made cockle-shingle bank (at Foulness) and to disturbance (elsewhere), rather than to over-vegetation of breeding areas caused by nitrogen deposition.</p>
<p>Foulness Ramsar site (Mid Essex Coast Phase 5)</p> <p>RISCode: UK11026</p>	10968.9	<p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>The site supports a number of nationally-rare and nationally-scarce plant species, and British Red Data Book invertebrates.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 3</p>	None available	None available

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>The site contains extensive saltmarsh habitat, with areas supporting full and representative sequences of saltmarsh plant communities covering the range of variation in Britain.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 82148 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species with peak counts in spring/autumn: • Dark-bellied brent goose; Branta bernicla bernicla • Grey plover; Pluvialis squatarola • Red knot; Calidris canutus • Species with peak counts in winter: • Bar-tailed godwit; Limosa 		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		lapponica lapponica		
Outer Thames Estuary <p>The Outer Thames Estuary SPA is located on the east coast of England between the counties of Norfolk (on the north side) and Kent (on the south side) and extends into the North Sea. The site comprises areas of shallow and deeper water, high tidal current streams and a range of mobile mud, sand, silt and gravely sediments extending into the marine environment, incorporating areas of sand banks often exposed at low tide. Intertidal mud and sand flats are found further towards the coast and within creeks and inlets inland down the Blyth estuary and the Crouch and Roach estuaries. The diversity of marine habitats and associated species is reflected in existing statutory protected area designations, some of which overlap or about the SPA.</p>				
Outer Thames Estuary SPA EU Code: UK9020309	392451.66	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red-throated diver; <i>Gavia stellata</i> (Non-breeding) • Common tern; <i>Sterna hirundo</i> (Breeding) • Little tern; <i>Sternula albifrons</i> (Breeding) 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • The supporting 	Fisheries- Commercial marine and estuarine: Commercial fishing activities categorised as ‘amber or green’ under Defra’s revised approach to commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites (EMS) require assessment and (where appropriate) management. This assessment will be undertaken by the Eastern IFCA and the Kent & Essex IFCA, and the Marine Management Organisation. For activities categorised as ‘green’, these assessments should take account of any in-combination

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
			<p>processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population of each of the qualifying features, and, • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site 	<p>effects of amber activities, and/or appropriate plans or projects, in the site. The gear types being assessed are towed demersal gear and dredges, and suction dredges for cockles as well as static/passive fishing gear methods such as set gillnets and drift netting represent potentially the most serious direct risk from fishing activity to the birds themselves. Disturbance and displacement effects may arise from boat movements associated with fishing activities. Removal of fish and larger molluscs can have a significant impact on the structure and functioning of benthic communities.</p> <p>Entanglement in static fishing nets is an important cause of death for red-throated divers in the UK waters. Netting is widespread across the sandbanks but is seasonal and occurs primarily when the Red-throated diver population is not at its peak. The scale of by-catch within the site has been assessed by the Kent & Essex</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				IFCA, and was not found to be problematic and so can be deemed to be low-risk.
Thames Estuary & Marshes A complex of brackish, floodplain grazing marsh ditches, saline lagoons and intertidal saltmarsh and mudflat. These habitats together support internationally important numbers of wintering waterfowl. The saltmarsh and grazing marsh are of international importance for their diverse assemblages of wetland plants and invertebrates				
Thames Estuary & Marshes SPA EU Code: UK9012021	4838.94	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hen harrier; Circus cyaneus (Non-breeding) • Pied avocet; Recurvirostra avosetta (Non-breeding) • Ringed plover; Charadrius hiaticula (Non-breeding) • Grey plover; Pluvialis squatarola (Non-breeding) • Red knot; Calidris canutus (Non-breeding) • Dunlin; Calidris alpina alpina (Non-breeding) • Black-tailed godwit; Limosa limosa islandica (Non-breeding) 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • The supporting processes on which the 	Coastal squeeze: Coastal defences exist along much of the coastline here. Sea level rise is also occurring. It is therefore certain that if circumstances do not change, much of the supporting habitats of the SPA birds will be lost/degraded through processes such as: coastal squeeze; sedimentation rates' inability to keep pace with sea level rise; and reduced exposure (the extent and duration) of mudflats and sandflats. Public Access/Disturbance: Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities,

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus</i> (Non-breeding) Waterbird assemblage <p>Further information can be found via Natural England's Supplementary Advice.</p>	<p>habitats of the qualifying features rely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>including: boating and watersports; walking; bait-digging; fishing, and wildfowling. Some activities such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats. Public access, (especially dog walking and recreational boating) was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and this activity is still occurring. Moderate levels of disturbance in less sensitive locations may have no significant effect on the numbers of birds using the SIP area but the types, levels and locations of potentially disturbing activities are constantly changing. Managing the changes to minimise the risk of disturbance impacts will require a better understanding of which species and habitats are most susceptible, which types of activity are most disturbing, and which locations and times of year are most sensitive. There is inadequate information to provide appropriate management.</p> <p>Invasive species:</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>Non-native invasive species such as sea squirt and pacific oyster are spreading along the Kent coast and could begin to impact on the Swale. Sea squirt has been found in the Medway, and Pacific oysters are regarded as increasing in the Essex-Southend area. These species threaten habitats due to their ability to smother substrate and other sessile organisms. There is no good understanding of the overall distribution of these species in this site. Assessment is needed in key areas of ports and marinas, where introductions tend to first occur.</p> <p>Changes in species distribution: There is a decline in population size for some of the bird species on some of the SPAs (Cook et al. 2013). These are likely to be influenced by a number of factors which may vary across the four SPAs. Some of these influences are site-based as described in other parts of this Plan and some relate to wider, broad-scale changes such as</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>wintering species distributions and effects from breeding grounds outside the UK. A greater understanding of the relative importance of site-based and wider influences is required in order to identify the potential for further actions that might halt declines, restore populations or identify scenarios where it is thought unlikely that site-based measures will reverse population declines</p> <p>Fisheries- commercial marine and estuarine: The extent and impacts of fisheries on private grounds, particularly in the Swale Estuary, needs to be better understood. There are particular concerns regarding the dredging of shellfish within the SPAs which are a food source for the protected birds. Commercial fishing activities categorised as ‘amber or green’ under Defra’s revised approach to commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites require assessment and (where appropriate) management. This</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>assessment will be undertaken by Kent & Essex IFCA.</p> <p>Invasive species: Freshwater non-native invasive species such as pennywort, crassula, parrots feather etc. can engulf ditches, leading to loss of habitat for diving ducks. Although there are some mechanisms in place to ensure ditch management, more baseline information is needed, particularly on those species for which ditch management is not the solution. <i>Spartina anglica</i> may be increasing at the expense of other saltmarsh habitats with adverse implications for SPA bird roost areas in Benfleet & Southend Marshes.</p> <p>Vehicles- Illicit: The illicit use of motor vehicles (often bikes) occurs across the area. This can cause disturbance to SPA birds. This activity was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and is still occurring. Whilst various</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>mechanisms are in place to prevent the use of vehicles they are clearly not entirely effective.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds site-relevant critical loads.</p>
<p>Thames Estuary & Marshes Ramsar site</p> <p>RIS Code: UK11069</p>	5588.5	<p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>The site supports one endangered plant species and at least 14 nationally scarce plants of wetland habitats. The site also supports more than 20 British Red Data Book invertebrates.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance; species with peak counts in winter; 45118 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003).</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):</p>	None available	None available

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringed plover; <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> • Black-tailed godwit; <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grey plover; <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> (Non-breeding) • Red knot; <i>Calidris canutus</i> (Non-breeding) • Dunlin; <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> (Non-breeding) • Common redshank; <i>Tringa totanus tetanus</i> 		

Devils Dyke

The Devil's Dyke holds an extensive area of species-rich chalk grassland of a type characteristic to chalklands of south, central and eastern England. The Dyke is an ancient linear earthwork comprising a deep ditch and high bank. It was originally colonised by plants from adjacent grassland (much of which is now arable) and remains as one of the few areas still supporting these vegetation communities. The species-rich grassland is dominated by upright brome *Bromopsis erecta* and a range of typical chalk herbs are present including salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*, dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* and rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*. Some uncommon plants such as purple milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*, bastard toadflax *Thesium humifusum* and the pasque flower *Pulsatilla vulgaris* are also present. It is the only known UK semi-natural dry grassland site for lizard orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum*.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Devils Dyke SAC EU Code: UK0030037	8.02	Qualifying features: H6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (important orchid sites). Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone, including important orchid sites)	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats • The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and • The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely 	Inappropriate scrub control: There is some scrub encroachment which is beginning to become damaging on some parts of the site and is likely to cause the notified grassland to deteriorate. Grassland vegetation management is currently managed by hand cutting as grazing cannot be carried out due to equestrian practices which have taken place for centuries. The current HLS agreement does not provide sufficient funding to allow appropriate management of the sward because of the steepness of the site. Air Pollution- impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site. This requires further investigation.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
Medway Estuary and Marshes Located in north Kent, the Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA covers an area of 46.84 km ² , including both marine and terrestrial areas. The river Medway forms a single tidal system with the river Swale, joining the Thames Estuary between the Isle of Grain and Sheerness. There is a diverse mix of intertidal habitats, including saltmarshes, mudflats, shell beaches and eelgrass beds. These habitats support a diverse range of water birds throughout the year, including breeding waders and terns in the summer and important numbers of geese, ducks, grebes and waders in winter.				
Medway Estuary and Marshes SPA EU Code: UK9012031	4,748.8	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A046a Branta bernicla bernicla; Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding) • A048 Tadorna tadorna; Common shelduck (Non-breeding) • A054 Anas acuta; Northern pintail (Non-breeding) • A132 Recurvirostra avosetta; Pied avocet (Breeding) • A132 Recurvirostra avosetta; Pied avocet (Non-breeding) • A137 Charadrius hiaticula; Ringed plover (Non-breeding) • A141 Pluvialis squatarola; Grey 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features • The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features • The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying 	Coastal squeeze: Coastal defences exist along much of the coastline here. Sea level rise is also occurring. It is therefore certain that if circumstances do not change, much of the supporting habitats of the SPA birds will be lost/degraded through processes such as: coastal squeeze; sedimentation rates' inability to keep pace with sea level rise; and reduced exposure (the extent and duration) of mudflats and sandflats. Public Access/Disturbance: Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities, including: boating and watersports; walking; bait-digging; fishing, and

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>plover (Non-breeding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A143 Calidris canutus; Red knot (Non-breeding) • A149 Calidris alpina alpina; Dunlin (Non-breeding) • A162 Tringa totanus; Common redshank (Non-breeding) • A195 Sterna albifrons; Little tern (Breeding) • Waterbird assemblage • Breeding bird assemblage 	<p>features rely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population of each of the qualifying features, and, • The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>wildfowling. Some activities such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats. Public access, (especially dog walking and recreational boating) was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and this activity is still occurring. Moderate levels of disturbance in less sensitive locations may have no significant effect on the numbers of birds using the SIP area but the types, levels and locations of potentially disturbing activities are constantly changing. Managing the changes to minimise the risk of disturbance impacts will require a better understanding of which species and habitats are most susceptible, which types of activity are most disturbing, and which locations and times of year are most sensitive. There is inadequate information to provide appropriate management.</p> <p>Invasive species: Non-native invasive species such as sea squirt and pacific oyster are</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>spreading along the Kent coast and could begin to impact on the Swale. Sea squirt has been found in the Medway, and Pacific oysters are regarded as increasing in the Essex-Southend area. These species threaten habitats due to their ability to smother substrate and other sessile organisms. There is no good understanding of the overall distribution of these species in this site. Assessment is needed in key areas of ports and marinas, where introductions tend to first occur.</p> <p>Changes in species distribution: There is a decline in population size for some of the bird species on some of the SPAs (Cook et al. 2013). These are likely to be influenced by a number of factors which may vary across the four SPAs. Some of these influences are site-based as described in other parts of this Plan and some relate to wider, broad-scale changes such as wintering species distributions and effects from breeding grounds</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>outside the UK. A greater understanding of the relative importance of site-based and wider influences is required in order to identify the potential for further actions that might halt declines, restore populations or identify scenarios where it is thought unlikely that site-based measures will reverse population declines</p> <p>Fisheries- commercial marine and estuarine: The extent and impacts of fisheries on private grounds, particularly in the Swale Estuary, needs to be better understood. There are particular concerns regarding the dredging of shellfish within the SPAs which are a food source for the protected birds. Commercial fishing activities categorised as ‘amber or green’ under Defra’s revised approach to commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites require assessment and (where appropriate) management. This assessment will be undertaken by Kent & Essex IFCA.</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>Invasive species: Freshwater non-native invasive species such as pennywort, crassula, parrots feather etc. can engulf ditches, leading to loss of habitat for diving ducks. Although there are some mechanisms in place to ensure ditch management, more baseline information is needed, particularly on those species for which ditch management is not the solution. <i>Spartina anglica</i> may be increasing at the expense of other saltmarsh habitats with adverse implications for SPA bird roost areas in Benfleet & Southend Marshes.</p> <p>Vehicles- Illicit: The illicit use of motor vehicles (often bikes) occurs across the area. This can cause disturbance to SPA birds. This activity was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and is still occurring. Whilst various mechanisms are in place to prevent the use of vehicles they are clearly</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				not entirely effective. Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds site-relevant critical loads.
North Downs Woodlands <p>This site consists of mature beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> forests and yew <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods on steep slopes. The stands lie within a mosaic of scrub, other woodland types and areas of unimproved grassland on thin chalk soils. The beech and yew woodland is on thin chalk soils and where the ground flora is not shaded dog's mercury <i>Mercurialis perennis</i> predominates. Associated with it is stinking iris <i>Iris foetidissima</i> and several very scarce species such as lady orchid <i>Orchis purpurea</i> and stinking hellebore <i>Helleborus foetidus</i>. The chalk grassland, on warm south-facing slopes, is dominated by upright brome <i>Bromopsis erecta</i> and sheep's-fescue <i>Festuca ovina</i> but supports many other plants which are characteristic of unimproved downland, including the nationally rare ground pine <i>Ajuga chamaepitys</i>.</p>				
North Downs Woodland SAC EU Code: UK0030225	287.58	Qualifying features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H6210. Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone H9130. <i>Asperulo-Fagetum</i> beech forests; Beech forests on neutral to rich soils 	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the qualifying natural 	Public Access and Disturbance: Off-road vehicles as well as all-terrain bikes are having an impact on parts of the woodland. Vehicle damage is associated with vehicles coming off the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) into the woodland. All-terrain bikes favour Yew woodland where there is no understorey and the creation of tracks by bikes is eroding soil around the roots of

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H91J0. <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles; Yew-dominated woodland* 	<p>habitats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely 	<p>Yews.</p> <p>Forestry and woodland management: Beech regeneration is insufficient to retain canopy cover in the long term. In addition, Beech saplings are susceptible to squirrel damage.</p> <p>Invasive species: Invasive Sycamore has the potential to regenerate in woodland gaps reducing overall extent of SAC feature. This is more of an issue in Beech stands than in Yew woodland where Yew tends to eventually succeed in dominating the canopy.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads.</p>

Peter's Pit

Peter's Pit is an old chalk quarry with adjoining soil-stripped fields on the North Downs, with scattered ponds situated amongst grassland, scrub and woodland. The ponds have widely fluctuating water levels and support large breeding populations of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*. The site has an undulating terrain in which many rain fed ponds, of various sizes, have developed. Those which dry up early in the season are of less interest, but five ponds are sufficiently large to support very substantial populations of amphibians,

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
particularly the great crested newt. The value of the site for newts is enhanced by the presence, around the edges and between the ponds, of areas of scrub with loose rock which serve as day and winter refuges. Aquatic vegetation provides shelter in the pond environment.				
Peters Pit SAC EU: UK0030237	28.30	Qualifying features: Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species • The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely • The populations of qualifying species, and, • The distribution of 	No current issues affecting the Natura 2000 feature(s) have been identified on this site.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
			qualifying species within the site.	
Queendown Warren <p>The grassland of this site is on the south-facing slope of a dry chalk valley. It is largely dominated by upright brome <i>Bromopsis erecta</i> and sheep's-fescue <i>Festuca ovina</i> with numerous plants characteristic of grazed but otherwise undisturbed chalk grassland. Among the more interesting species are chalk milkwort <i>Polygala calcarea</i>, squinancywort <i>Asperula cynanchica</i>, horseshoe vetch <i>Hippocrepis comosa</i> and the nationally rare meadow clary <i>Salvia pratensis</i>. The site contains an important assemblage of rare and scarce orchids, including early spider-orchid <i>Ophrys sphegodes</i>, burnt orchid <i>Orchis ustulata</i> and man orchid <i>Aceras anthropophorum</i>. It is rich entomologically and two characteristic species, the adonis blue butterfly <i>Lysandra bellargus</i> and the rufous grasshopper <i>Gomphocerippus rufus</i> occur here.</p>				
Queendown Warren SAC EU Code: UK0012833	14.28	Qualifying features: Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (important orchid sites). (Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone, including important orchid sites)	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats • The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural 	Species decline: Numbers of Early Spider-orchid have declined from 10 years ago. Trials are underway to assess the impact of rabbit grazing on the orchid population. There is also a concern with potential effects of air pollution, climate change, lack of genetic diversity or lack of pollinating insects. Habitat fragmentation: The small size and relative isolation of the site raises concern for the long-term genetic viability of some

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
			<p>habitats, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely 	<p>of the orchid populations.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site. This requires further investigation.</p>
<p>The Swale SPA and Ramsar</p> <p>A complex of brackish and freshwater, floodplain grazing marsh with ditches, and intertidal saltmarsh and mudflat. These habitats together support internationally important numbers of wintering waterfowl. Rare wetland birds breed in important numbers. The saltmarsh and grazing marsh are of international importance for their diverse assemblages of wetland plants and invertebrates.</p>				
<p>The Swale SPA</p> <p>EU Code: UK9012011</p>	6515	<p>Qualifying features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A046a Branta bernicla bernicla; Dark-bellied brent goose (Non-breeding) A149 Calidris alpina alpina; 	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining</p>	<p>Coastal squeeze: Coastal defences exist along much of the coastline here. Sea level rise is also occurring. It is therefore certain that if circumstances do not change, much of the supporting</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>Dunlin (Non-breeding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breeding bird assemblage Waterbird assemblage 	<p>or restoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. 	<p>habitats of the SPA birds will be lost/degraded through processes such as: coastal squeeze; sedimentation rates' inability to keep pace with sea level rise; and reduced exposure (the extent and duration) of mudflats and sandflats.</p> <p>Public Access/Disturbance: Breeding and overwintering waterbirds are susceptible to human disturbance from a range of land- and water-based activities, including: boating and watersports; walking; bait-digging; fishing, and wildfowling. Some activities such as powerboating, may produce physical disturbance to habitats. Public access, (especially dog walking and recreational boating) was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and this activity is still occurring. Moderate levels of disturbance in less sensitive locations may have no significant effect on the numbers of birds using the SIP area but the types, levels and locations of potentially</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>disturbing activities are constantly changing. Managing the changes to minimise the risk of disturbance impacts will require a better understanding of which species and habitats are most susceptible, which types of activity are most disturbing, and which locations and times of year are most sensitive. There is inadequate information to provide appropriate management.</p> <p>Invasive species: Non-native invasive species such as sea squirt and pacific oyster are spreading along the Kent coast and could begin to impact on the Swale. Sea squirt has been found in the Medway, and Pacific oysters are regarded as increasing in the Essex-Southend area. These species threaten habitats due to their ability to smother substrate and other sessile organisms. There is no good understanding of the overall distribution of these species in this site. Assessment is needed in key areas of ports and marinas, where introductions tend to first</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>occur.</p> <p>Changes in species distribution: There is a decline in population size for some of the bird species on some of the SPAs (Cook et al. 2013). These are likely to be influenced by a number of factors which may vary across the four SPAs. Some of these influences are site-based as described in other parts of this Plan and some relate to wider, broad-scale changes such as wintering species distributions and effects from breeding grounds outside the UK. A greater understanding of the relative importance of site-based and wider influences is required in order to identify the potential for further actions that might halt declines, restore populations or identify scenarios where it is thought unlikely that site-based measures will reverse population declines</p> <p>Fisheries- commercial marine and estuarine: The extent and impacts of fisheries on private grounds, particularly in</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>the Swale Estuary, needs to be better understood. There are particular concerns regarding the dredging of shellfish within the SPAs which are a food source for the protected birds. Commercial fishing activities categorised as 'amber or green' under Defra's revised approach to commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites require assessment and (where appropriate) management. This assessment will be undertaken by Kent & Essex IFCA.</p> <p>Invasive species: Freshwater non-native invasive species such as pennywort, crassula, parrots feather etc. can engulf ditches, leading to loss of habitat for diving ducks. Although there are some mechanisms in place to ensure ditch management, more baseline information is needed, particularly on those species for which ditch management is not the solution. <i>Spartina anglica</i> may be increasing at the expense of other saltmarsh</p>

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
				<p>habitats with adverse implications for SPA bird roost areas in Benfleet & Southend Marshes.</p> <p>Vehicles- Illicit: The illicit use of motor vehicles (often bikes) occurs across the area. This can cause disturbance to SPA birds. This activity was identified as a medium risk during the 2009 EMS risk review project and is still occurring. Whilst various mechanisms are in place to prevent the use of vehicles they are clearly not entirely effective.</p> <p>Air Pollution- risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: Nitrogen deposition exceeds site-relevant critical loads.</p>
The Swale Ramsar	6515	<p>Qualifying features:</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 2</p> <p>The site supports a number of species of rare plants and animals. The site holds several nationally scarce plants, including sea barley Hordeum marinum, curved hard-grass</p>	None available.	On-site erosion has been identified as a factor affecting the sites integrity.

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>Parapholis incurva, annual beard-grass Polypogon monspeliensis, Borrer's saltmarsh-grass Puccinellia fasciculata, slender hare`s-ear Bupleurum tenuissimum, sea clover Trifolium squamosum, saltmarsh goose-foot Chenopodium chenopodioides, golden samphire Inula crithmoides, perennial glasswort Sarcocornia perennis and one-flowered glasswort Salicornia pusilla.</p> <p>A total of at least twelve species of wetland invertebrates have been recorded on the site. These include a ground beetle Polistichus connexus, a fly Cephalops perspicuus, a dancefly Poecilobothrus ducalis, a fly Anagnota collini, a weevil Baris scolopacea, a water beetle Berosus spinosus, a beetle Malachius vulneratus, a rove beetle Philonthus punctus, the ground lackey moth Malacosoma castrensis, a horsefly Atylotus latistriatus, a fly Campsicnemus magius, a soldier beetle, Cantharis fusca, and a crane fly Limonia danica. A significant number of non-wetland British Red Data Book species also occur.</p>		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<p>Ramsar criterion 5</p> <p>Assemblages of international importance:</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47637 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003) <p>Ramsar criterion 6</p> <p>Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):</p> <p>Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grey plover, <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>, • Common redshank, <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i>, <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark-bellied brent goose, <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>, • Common shelduck, <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> • Northern pintail, <i>Anas acuta</i> 		

Site name	Area (ha)	Qualifying Features	Conservation objectives (only available for SACs & SPAs)	Key vulnerabilities / factors affecting site integrity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringed plover, <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>, • Red knot, <i>Calidris canutus islandica</i>, • Dunlin, <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>, 		



Place Services

Essex County Council

County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)333 013 6840

E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

www.placeservices.co.uk

May 2024



Essex County Council

**Castle Point Local Plan 2023 - 2043
Equality Impact Assessment Scoping Report
June 2024**

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Legal Context.....	3
3. The Purpose of the EqlA and its Scoping	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4. Methodology	4
5. Baseline assessment - Equalities Profile of Castle Point.....	4
6. Framework for assessing equality impacts	19
7. Next steps.....	22

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the scope for the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the emerging Castle Point Plan.
- 1.2 The main purpose of an EqIA is to ensure that a plan, policy or proposal has due regard to the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010. In particular, the impacts to various groups who are classified as having protected characteristics. It also ensures steps are taken to meet the needs of people whose needs are different from other people and to encourage different groups of people to participate in public life.
- 1.3 This assessment scopes the main issues that are faced by the various groups defined by the Equality Act in the borough of Castle Point. It then provides a methodology which can be used iteratively through the preparation of the Castle Point Plan to ensure that the plan and its contents fully considers its impacts to such groups and advances equality within the borough.

2. Legal Context

- 2.1 As a public sector organisation, the Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to ensure that the objectives and policies within the emerging draft Castle Point Plan provide the following:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 2.2 As defined by the Equalities Act (2010) the following are considered protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

- 2.3 Income and deprivation are not included as a protected characteristic within the Act, however, can cause inequalities within communities and therefore this has been included within this assessment.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 In preparing the scoping report the following process has been undertaken:

1. Establishing a baseline by defining equality issues for different groups in Castle Point. This draws in local evidence and provides a national context to the issues experienced by different groups.
2. Provide recommendations which can be used to assess future proposed policies or proposals.
3. Create a framework which can be used to analyse and assess the positive and negative equality impacts of policies and proposals and provide recommendations on how make positive equality implications.

4. Establishing a baseline assessment and providing recommendations

- 4.1 This section covers part 1 and 2 of the methodology.
- 4.2 An analysis for each characteristic has been carried out below. Each section provides the existing profile within the Castle Point borough, based on the latest datasets. It also draws out the key existing issues for each characteristic based on the best available information, this is drawn from national and local evidence, where possible.
- 4.3 Following the assessment of evidence, a set of recommendations have been included. These should be used in assessing future emerging plans and policies in the Castle Point Plan to see where potential inequalities can be identified and addressed in the area.
- 4.4 The characteristics have been grouped into the following categories to aid analysis:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Gender
 - Sexual orientation and relationships
 - Income and deprivation

Protected characteristic	
Age	
Scope	
This refers to a person being a particular age or being within an age group. This includes all ages, including older people, children, and young people.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>The 2021 Census population figure for Castle Point borough is 89,587 persons in 37,389 households. The Census shows that 16.9% of people are aged 15 years or younger, 57.8% of people are aged 16 to 64 years and 25.4% of people are aged over 65.</p> <p>The median age of the borough's population is 46 years old.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Cities Alive: Designing for Ageing Communities - ARUP	<p>This piece of evidence highlights four main needs that places should consider in regard to planning for older people, these are autonomy and independence, health and wellbeing, social connectedness and security and resilience.</p> <p>The report sets out strategies and actions that can be undertaken to achieve these needs, including frameworks to create more age friendly places. Planning is paramount to enabling these four needs to be achieved. This can be through multiple ways, such as providing suitable and adaptable homes for an ageing population in the right places to make services accessible, allowing for social integration.</p>
Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods - ARUP	<p>This work proposes a child friendly approach to planning. It outlines the benefits and challenges of doing so and key actions that can help achieve best planning to be inclusive of children.</p> <p>The five core challenges of urban childhood are defined as traffic and pollution; high-rise living and urban sprawl; crime, social fears, and risk aversion; isolation and intolerance; and inadequate and unequal access to the urban area.</p> <p>There are two key concepts for child-friendly urban areas. The first is everyday freedom, which gives children independent mobility. The second is children's infrastructure, which provides spaces, streets, nature, and interventions to suit children's needs. By incorporating that into placemaking, not only do children benefit but the positive impact can be seen among many other groups creating inclusive areas. Other benefits include health and wellbeing, local economy, safety, stronger communities, nature and sustainability, resilience and a catalyst for improving areas.</p> <p>The report provides several interventions that can help achieve inclusive areas for children, examples include traffic measures, play streets, community gardens and playful encounters (such as public art). It also suggests actions and opportunities for different stakeholders.</p>
Local Housing Needs	In regard to housing the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023 found that between 2023 to 2043 the older population of Castle Point is projected to grow by 3,527 persons aged 75 years or more. As of 2023,

Assessment 2023	<p>there were around 46 units of older person housing for every 1,000 older persons in Castle Point aged over 75 years, almost all being sheltered housing. The assessment found that this provision was lower than the national average and suggested that providing new sheltered housing at the national rate (120 homes per 1,000 additional population) would be a realistic target for meeting the needs of older people and creates 423 units of older persons accommodation.</p> <p>The assessment also considered the needs of those who cannot afford to buy their own homes, in most cases these are first time buyers and usually therefore younger generations. It found that the need of households aspiring to home ownership was 1,579 households in Castle Point. The cause for being unable to afford home ownership is normally due to the cost of homes in the area and saving for a deposit. Affordable housing products such as shared ownership and First Homes can in some cases help to get households into home ownership.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Castle Point Plan should address the four main needs of older people identified in the Ageing Communities ARUP work (autonomy and independence, health and wellbeing, social connectedness, and security and resilience), ensuring that policies assess whether there are further opportunities to incorporate their needs to improve policies. This could include linking to the strategies and actions set out within this evidence. • Policies should consider from the outset how they can accommodate and plan for children, by strategies set out in the ARUP work. This includes providing everyday freedom, such as child friendly activities/services within walking distances, along safe routes, this can be achieved by interventions such as suitable road crossings. Additionally, policies should seek to provide children's infrastructure such as multi-functional, playable space outside the playground in the public realm and create multi-generational facilities that open later such as community facilities and allotments. • Plan to meet the housing needs identified in Castle Point for older people. • Plan to meet the affordable housing needs identified in Castle Point to allow younger generations to purchase their first home. 	

Protected characteristic	
Disability	
Scope	
A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities, e.g., physical, sensory, mental, or learning impairment.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>The 2021 Census identifies that 17.7% (15,884 people) of people in Castle Point identified as being disabled. This is broken down by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day-to-day activities limited a lot 7.5% (6,734) • Day-to-day activities limited a little 10.2% (9,150) <p>In terms of employment, the Census also shows that 3.3% (1,774 people) of the population in Castle Point are economically inactive due to being long term sick or disabled.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Dementia and Town Planning - RTP1 2020	<p>This piece of work found that the built environment can have a substantial impact on those living with dementia. Well planned spaces can significantly improve quality of life for those living with dementia in interacting with their community and can lead to them living for longer.</p> <p>The number of people with dementia is growing in the UK and the number of people living within their own home or alone is increasing. Planning for dementia-friendly areas can help keep people in their homes for longer and enable them to live well and safely. Additionally, providing suitable housing in accessible locations can also help promote autonomy for those living with dementia.</p> <p>The built environment can positively affect social interaction. Those with dementia who stay active, physically, mentally and socially can help maintain confidence, ultimately helping to maintain health. The built environment can also provide access to local services, allowing those with dementia to live independently. Design of buildings can play a huge part in those living with dementia in helping with wayfinding and not getting lost, buildings should be clearly defined with clear lines of sight through developments. Additionally, the internal layouts of homes can positively impact dementia sufferers.</p> <p>For those living with dementia, green spaces are a valuable asset in providing spaces to allow for fitness and social interaction, positively impacting wellbeing.</p> <p>The report set out several ways that planning can help improve places for those living with dementia including dementia related design principles, integrated health guidance and appropriate local plan policies. It also sets out that planning for dementia friendly places can have benefits to the wider society, including other protected groups.</p>
The shops were only made for	This research explored the experience of those with Cerebral Palsy in their urban environments within England and impairments that they faced. It found that the experience of those with a disability was profoundly different

people who could walk': impairment, barriers and autonomy in the mobility of adults with Cerebral Palsy in urban England – Bonehill, J, Benzon.N and Shaw.J 2020	<p>to those without a disability in using services. Although mobility is possible, the difference to the non-disabled user can be uncomfortable and at times unsafe, which may lead to implications to a persons autonomy.</p> <p>In some cases, physical barriers to access included pavement blocking, including by cars parking inappropriately, street advertisement, street signs in narrow spaces, bus stops, uneven surfaces and a lack of dropped kerbs.</p> <p>The research found that barriers to accessible spaces to those with disabilities had negative impacts to their emotional wellbeing, independence and impacts to social interactions. It also created safety concerns. The shortcomings in this environment is a consequence of design failures, social stigmatisation and careless behaviour of others that caused barriers to normal use compared to those without disabilities.</p>
Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023	<p>This assessment found that in the plan period, 2023-2043, the need for adapted housing for those with disabilities is expected to be between 1,437-4,018 homes. The broad range is a consequence of uncertainty, this is based on how many will move to existing homes that have been adapted rather than new homes, there is also a cross over with the needs of older people who may seek housing specifically for older people's needs. However, the evidence indicates that planning for a minimum of 29% of housing to be M4(2) category (adaptable homes) or M4(3) category (wheelchair adapted homes) would be appropriate in Castle Point. That equates to 1,437 new homes over the plan period.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how plan-making and policies can impact those with dementia and how it can positively plan to integrate their needs into planning. • Dementia friendly spaces can be achieved through positively prepared design criteria and these should be included within the Plan. • Policies seeking to provide access to key services, provide appropriate housing and access to green spaces and social spaces can help maintain confidence with those with dementia and should be prioritised, this also has mutual benefits for needs of other groups. • Consider the needs of those with disabilities from the creation of policies and through urban design work. This could include gathering information on various needs of different disabilities e.g. physical and mental disabilities. That will enable urban design to take into account different disability needs at an early stage, overcoming potential conflicts. • Policies should seek to provide accessible travel routes to create autonomy for those with disabilities in all aspects of design to ensure inclusivity and reducing barriers. • Understand the disabilities that are affecting those from working within the borough and whether planning could help make employment opportunities more accessible. • Engage with the community to understand barriers that disabled people within the borough are currently facing and how planning can help overcome these issues. • Meet the identified needs of homes suitable for disabled people. With a minimum of 1,437 homes being provided as M4(2) category (adaptable homes) or M4(3) category (wheelchair adapted homes). 	

Protected characteristic	
Race	
Scope	
Race includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins. The fact that a racial group comprises two or more distinct racial groups does not prevent it from constituting a particular racial group.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>Castle Point has a low proportion of people from black and ethnic minority groups. The Census figures show that 3.5% of people in the borough are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME), or Other ethnic group. Within the borough there is a small Gypsy/Traveller community.</p> <p>In terms of national identity the majority of the Castle Point population identify as one of the UK identities. 2% (1,796 people) do not identify as a UK identity and 0.6% (513 people) identify as a mix of UK and non-UK identity.</p> <p>In terms of household language 0.2% (83 households) have a child (aged 3-15) who speaks English as a main language, but no adults do. Additionally, 266 households (0.7%) have nobody that speaks English as a main language.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Race Equality and Planning: A Changing Agenda – Thomas.H 2008	<p>This research sought to identify how planning should be contributing to racial equality. This work is superseded by the Equality Act 2010, which seeks to create equality for race which is considered a protected characteristic. However, there are some aspects of this work which appear to be relevant still in how planning can help create racial equality.</p> <p>For example, it highlights the historic discrimination against the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller ethnic groups, highlighting that the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers haven't always been met.</p> <p>Another example of how places can help promote equality, is the inclusion of different cultures within urban spaces. This allows people to understand the potential cultural differences between races and differences through shared spaces. Allowing different cultures to work cohesively within the same area, such as through cultural events or the use or implementation of different religious buildings, promotes understanding.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of shared spaces to allow education of cultural differences to help create cohesive environments. • Ensure the housing needs of Gypsy and Travellers are met within the Castle Point Plan. • Monitor policies and proposals on race equality through the plan making process to improve equality. 	

Protected characteristic	
Religion or belief	
Scope	
Religion means any religion, this includes a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief, a belief also includes a reference to a lack of any specific belief structure.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
The 2021 Census shows that 48.6% of the borough's population is Christian, 43.5% identified as having no religion. Small proportions of the remainder of the population are Muslim (0.8%), Jewish (0.7%), Hindu (0.5%), Buddhist (0.3%) and Sikh (0.1%). 5.1% of the population did not answer and 0.4% identified with other religions.	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Local Housing Needs Assessment – ORS 2023	<p>Since 2016 Canvey Island has seen a growth of a community of Haredi Jews, who have moved out of London. This evidence document identified specific housing and infrastructure needs amongst the Canvey Island Haredi community to produce higher quality of life, and management of the development of the community. Traditionally Haredi Jews tend to live in close communities because of the need for infrastructure to enable an orthodox religious way of life. They usually have large families and therefore seek larger homes. Certain religious events also require certain design characteristic of homes, most notably additional plumbing for sinks to help with food preparation, in some instances this can include two kitchens. Traditionally and culturally, most Haredi women do not drive, and many men do not drive. Consequently, there is a lower level of car ownership and use in the Haredi community, and a lower need for car spaces.</p> <p>Based on a number of assumptions in the document, it is expected that during the plan period the number of families in the Haredi community could increase by between 250 - 325 families. Based on the 2021 Census data, there were approximately 110 Jewish families (around 600 people) in the borough. There is also potential for more inward migration from elsewhere to increase the Haredi population on Canvey Island.</p> <p>The growth in the Haredi community to 2043 means an increase requirement for larger size housing of all tenures as well as synagogues, schools and maternity services.</p>
Faith Groups and the Planning System – AHRC Faith and Place Network 2015	This document outlines a series of recommendations resulting from discussions with the Faith and Place Network (FPN). This report looked at ways to help different faith groups work together and work with the planning system. Relevant comments include the potential for shared faith spaces, and participation in the planning system from different groups, to understand community needs, and proactive engagement from the local authority can help involve more groups into plan making.
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities to provide a mix of housing types and community facilities to meet the needs of the Haredi community. This can include larger homes with internal variations to traditional housing, such as two kitchens. • Population levels of the Haredi community should be monitored through the plan period in 5 year periods, as current population projections are estimates. 	

- Assess the needs of the Haredi community throughout the formation and implementation of policies. Further engagement with the Haredi community should be sought to understand needs further.
- Engage with different religious groups to understand their needs in terms of spaces and how they can integrate further with the community, with opportunities to use shared spaces where possible.

Protected characteristics	
<p>Gender, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex • Gender reassignment • Pregnancy and maternity 	
Scope	
<p>Sex This is someone being either male or female.</p> <p>Gender reassignment A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. A reference to a transsexual person is a reference to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity This includes those who are pregnant, breastfeeding or have recently given birth.</p>	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>Sex The 2021 Census identifies that within the borough 51.6% of the population is female and 48.4% of the population is male.</p> <p>In 2022, it was found that the gross weekly pay of women working in Castle Point was £434.40 per week, compared to men which was £716.70 per week. This highlights a large difference between earnings between genders. Women's weekly pay in Castle Point was also lower than the regional average (£569.40 per week) and the national average (£587.70). (Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk))</p> <p>Gender reassignment The 2021 Census asked specifically about gender identity. In response to this, 197 people (0.26% of residents) aged 16 and over selected their gender identity as one of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender identity different from the sex registered at birth but no specific identity given • Trans woman • Trans man • Non-binary • All other gender identities <p>4.7% of people did not answer this question.</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity In 2021 there were 9.6 births per 1,000 of the borough's population.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Cities Alive: Designing Cities that work for Women – ARUP 2022	This research found key four thematic areas that can be used to influence how urban areas can be planned and designed which would make them more inclusive of and welcoming for women. These include safety and security; justice and equity; health and wellbeing; and enrichment and fulfilment. The report provides a variety of strategies and actions that can be utilised to achieve more inclusive places for women, many of these have additional benefits to other groups.

	<p>In terms of safety and security, unsafe streets or the perception of unsafe streets can reduce mobility of women, especially during certain times of the day and may cause them to use alternative routes or not travel at all, which can impact their economic and educational opportunities through lack of appropriate safe travel routes. Strategies to improve this through planning could include creating safe streets and public spaces through design, provide safer mobility experiences and increase awareness of violence, this could be through street art and events.</p> <p>The built environment affects women's experiences of justice and equality in several ways, this report identified that limited gender equality in legislation and urban governance, limited voices in decision making and leadership, gender-blind data and urban planning and unequal access to land tenure all contributed to women's experiences. Strategies to improve the justice and equity of women in urban areas could include mainstreaming gender responsive planning in policies, supporting women participating in urban governance at all levels, support the collection of gender disaggregated data and protecting women's right to land and property.</p> <p>In regard to health and wellbeing the impacts to women vary from place to place but research found the following main issues that impede women's health and wellbeing. These include inadequate public spaces, green areas, and active mobility; inadequate healthcare facilities and services; inadequate water, hygiene and sanitation facilities; and inadequate accommodation and care homes.</p> <p>The research also found that green spaces often lack toilet and changing facilities. As well as a lack of privacy and stigma and cultural concerns around breast or chest-feeding can cause many women, non-binary people and transgender men to feel embarrassed when breast or chest-feeding in public, or even to be asked to stop or relocate. In the UK, more than one in three parents avoid breast or chest-feeding in public, and six out of ten attempt to hide the activity where they can. This can lead to isolation, feelings of shame, and a reduction in breast or chest-feeding rates amongst parents.</p> <p>Strategies for improving health and wellbeing for women in urban areas could include creating inclusive, active and restorative public spaces, increase access to physical and mental healthcare, enhance access to hygiene and sanitation facilities and provide adequate accommodation and housing models.</p> <p>Lastly, the built environment can hinder a women's enrichment and fulfilment in many ways, the key issues are prejudice and obstacles to education, employment and technology; lack of diverse and flexible uses of public space; inadequate leisure, social and cultural facilities; and poor sense of belonging, identity and freedom. Strategies to help overcome this are recommended as provide accessible and inclusive workplaces and schools, design for diverse and flexible use of public spaces, provide safe and inclusive leisure and cultural spaces and use the built environment to uplift women and recognise their history.</p>
--	--

Local Housing Needs Assessment – ORS 2023	<p>In relation to the Haredi community on Canvey Island, engagement was undertaken with the community. This assessment found that due to the high number of births within the community and traditionally the mother staying with their newborn child for a week or two after the birth that improved maternity or a mother and baby unit within the area supporting this would be beneficial. Currently Southend Hospital is the closest maternity unit.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to find the views of all genders within the preparation of the Plan to influence policies. • Policies should be prepared and adapted through the plan making process with the aim of delivering on the four thematic areas identified within the ARUP designing cities that work for women (safety and security; justice and equity; health and wellbeing; and enrichment and fulfilment) work by incorporating the strategies set out within the report where relevant. • Further evidence related to pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment should be included within further assessments, where they become available. • Opportunities should be sought to understand the variation in pay between genders within Castle Point and seek to equalise pay where possible, through improving employment opportunities for women. • Potential for improvements to maternity health in the area would be beneficial, particularly in relation to the Haredi community. • Further evidence should be explored for inequalities faced in the gender reassignment characteristic, this should be fed into the full equality impact assessment with recommendations on how to incorporate positive outcomes. 	

Protected characteristic	
<p>Sexual orientation and relationships include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual orientation • Marriage and civil partnership 	
Scope	
<p><i>Sexual orientation</i> Sexual orientation means a person's sexual orientation towards a person of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex, or persons of either sex.</p> <p><i>Marriage and civil partnership</i> A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.</p>	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p><i>Sexual orientation</i> The majority of the population in Castle Point identify with being straight or heterosexual (92.3%). 0.8% (624 people) identify as being Gay or Lesbian, followed by Bisexual (0.6% - 448 people), 35 people identified as pansexual (0.0%), 17 people identified as asexual (0.0%), 2 people identified as queer (0.0%) and 50 people identified as 'other' sexual orientations (0.1%). (Census 2021)</p> <p><i>Marriage and civil partnership</i> In 2021, just under one in two people (49.2%) said they were married or in a registered civil partnership, compared with 53.2% in 2011. The percentage of adults in Castle Point that had divorced or dissolved a civil partnership increased from 8.7% to 9.1%.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
<p>Blog – All spaces should be queer spaces – Simon Shtebunaev 2023</p> <p>Scottish Planner - Safer Places – Kathie Pollard 2017</p>	<p>Simon Shtebunaev reviewed many issues faced by those in the LGBTQ+ community and reflected on how planning can help to create inclusive spaces. Planning for inclusive spaces, which seek to eliminate microaggressions faced by many in the LGBTQ+ community should be sought. This could include spaces which have a clear stance on inclusivity, allowing people to be themselves and providing multiple uses, allowing different groups to mix, without fear of judgement. This could include multi-use facilities such as cafes, bars, working spaces, galleries etc.</p> <p>There are also similarities between the inclusivity of spaces between gender and fears associated with public spaces and safety including sexual harassment and intimidation. Different sexual orientations can face different discriminations in such spaces and well planned, inclusive, safe, LGBTQ+ friendly spaces can help integration between different groups. Not only public spaces can help reduce inequalities but also providing inclusive communal spaces such as community centres and locker rooms.</p> <p>Engagement in planning with various groups in the LGBTQ+ community can help achieve the best possible outcomes for those within this group and achieve more inclusive spaces.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was limited information found on the equalities of marriage and civil partnership, further evidence should be explored for this characteristic and fed into the equality impact assessment. 	

- Seek to obtain responses from those in the LGBTQ community throughout the plan making process.
- Seek opportunities to enhance safety in public environments and communal spaces taking into account those with different sexual orientations.
- Provision of mixed use community spaces can help different groups integrate and reduce segregation.

Characteristic	
Income and deprivation	
Scope	
<p>Income and deprivation within areas are ranked by the index of multiple deprivation across areas. The areas within the UK are then ranked with those scoring highly having negative income and deprivation scores, based on multiple factors including income, employment, skills, health, crime and environment.</p>	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>According to the index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019), Castle Point is within the 50% of least deprived areas in England and ranks as 4th in the county for overall deprivation. Castle Point is one of the 3 areas in Essex which moved down in their rank of average since 2015.</p> <p>Castle Point borough as a whole is less deprived than the national average, however there are pockets of deprivation, notably parts of Canvey Island where child poverty is double the levels for England with 35.9% of children living in poverty. Of the 57 neighbourhoods in Castle Point 5 were among the 20% most income-deprived, these were all located on Canvey Island, most notably to the west of the Island, with more pockets to the south, along the seafront adjacent to Furtherwick Road. The borough also has 7 neighbourhoods that were in the 20% least income-deprived, these neighbourhoods were located around the Benfleet Road area and to the east of Benfleet Station. This data highlights the large disparity in terms of income-deprived areas within the borough.</p> <p>Of Castle Point residents aged 16 years and over, 54.0% said they were employed (excluding full-time students) in 2021, down from 55.4% in 2011.</p> <p>In 2021, just over 1 in 50 people (2.2%) said they were unemployed, compared with 3.1% in 2011. The percentage of retired Castle Point residents increased from 27.9% to 29.1%. In 2021 29.1% of the population were retired and 2.9% were students, the remaining economically inactive (10.3%) were due to long term illness or disability, looking after home, or family or other reasons.</p> <p>The largest employment for residents within Castle Point in 2021 were wholesale and retail (14.9%), construction (14.5%) and human health and social work activities (11.7%).</p> <p>In terms of education, 23.9% of residents aged 16 or over in 2021 had no qualifications, 13% had level 1 entry qualifications, 17% had level 2 qualifications, 6.8% had apprenticeship level, 17% had level 3 qualifications and 18.5% had level 4 qualifications or above. Comparably, Castle Point ranked lower than the national average for those with GCSE's in English and Maths at 72.9% compared to 75.2% nationally. Additionally, the national average for those with level 3 qualifications or above was at 60.4% nationally compared to 44.6% locally, this highlights a huge difference between the local education attainment level compared to the national average.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Essex County Council 2019	<p>Essex County Council completed an assessment of the needs within Castle Point on a range of issues which relate to income and deprivation in 2019. It found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2017/18 that 19.2% of pupils in Reception class in Castle Point were classed as overweight or obese. The sample of pupils in Year 6 showed that 33.6% of pupils in this year group were classed as overweight or obese.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of residents aged over 18 years, 65.11% were classified as overweight or obese in 2016/17. This is higher than the whole of Essex (63.56%) and England (61.29%) and was ranked as the 4th highest prevalence across the Essex Districts. • The percentage of current smokers aged over 18 years was 21.49%. This was highest prevalence compared to the other Districts in Essex, and significantly higher than Essex as a whole (13.84) and England (14.87). • Castle Point has the 4th highest estimated prevalence of any mental health disorder among children aged between 5 to 16 years across the Districts of Essex in 2015, with a prevalence of 8.89%. • The prevalence of depression and anxiety among persons aged over 18 years in NHS Castle Point and Rochford CCG in Essex was 12.47%. • In 2017/18 Castle Point had the 4th highest rate of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm among persons of all ages, with a rate of 155.06.
Local Housing Needs Assessment – ORS 2023	<p>This assessment sought to establish the current need for affordable housing. Part of this includes those who cannot afford housing. This includes those who are currently housed in temporary accommodation, those that are homeless and people in a reasonable preference category on the housing register.</p> <p>Those that cannot afford current housing in 2023 is noted at 643 households, this is likely to rise to 1,133 households by 2043.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to reduce health inequalities in the borough, in particular areas on Canvey Island where health inequalities are higher. This should include physical and mental health improvements. • Meet the affordable housing needs identified to provide suitable accommodation of those who cannot currently afford suitable housing. • Opportunities to provide more higher paid employment within the borough. • Opportunities to improve and provide access to a wide range of education and skills should be explored. • Opportunities to provide spaces for skills development and entrepreneurial spaces should be explored. • Improve access to healthy foods and enhance education on healthy food choices, especially for younger people. • Improve access and enhance open spaces and recreation opportunities. 	

5. Framework for assessing equality impacts

- 5.1 Section 4 outlines the baseline profile of Castle Point for the different characteristics and sets out recommendations on how the Castle Point Plan can help to reduce inequalities between the different groups. This section provides a framework to assess emerging plans, policies and proposals ensuring that the work set out above and recommendations given can be incorporated into the plan, providing positive outcomes.
- 5.2 This framework should be used iteratively through the plan making process to achieve the best outcomes.
- 5.3 As new evidence emerges the baseline assessment can be updated where relevant. Table 5.1 provides a framework for this allowing for new recommendations to be fed into the assessment. This should be updated at multiple stages in the plan making process.

Table 5.1: Assessment of new evidence

Characteristic	Updated baseline	
	New evidence since scoping report	Further recommendations
Age		
Disability		
Race		
Religion or belief		
Gender		
Sexual orientation and relationships		
Income and deprivation		

- 6.2 It may be unlikely that all the recommendations set out in this document can be incorporated into the plan, however it provides an opportunity for plans, proposals and policies to be amended where necessary to improve equality outcomes.
- 6.3 The framework below should be used to assess equality impacts providing a score. Table 5.2 provides the scoring and judgement which should be used within table 5.3.

Table 5.2: Scoring criteria

Possible impact	Basis for judgement
++	Strong prospect of there being significant positive impacts
+	Strong prospect of there being minor positive impacts
?	Possibility of either positive or negative impacts, or general uncertainty

0	No impact
N/A	Not applicable to the scope or context of the appraised content
-	Strong prospect of there being minor negative impacts and mitigation would be possible
- -	Strong prospect of there being significant negative impacts with mitigation unlikely to be possible (pending further investigation)

Table 5.3: Framework for assessing equality impacts

This table should use the scoring criteria above to assess a policy or proposal.

Key

A = Age

D = Disability

R = Race

R&B = Religion or belief

G = Gender


S = Sexual orientation and relationships

I = Income and deprivation

Policy / Proposal	Possible impact to characteristic							Commentary	Recommendation
	A	D	R	R&B	G	S	I		
<i>Example Affordable housing Policy</i>	++	?	?	?	?	?	++	<i>Policy seeks to meet identified affordable housing needs and has a positive impact to older people and those who have been unable to afford suitable housing.</i>	<i>Affordable housing should include at least 29% for adaptable homes to meet the needs of those with disabilities</i>

6. Next steps

6.1 The diagram below sets out the next stages of the EqlA and the Castle Point Plan process.

	Castle Point Plan	Equality Impact Assessment	
	Evidence gathering and options development September 2023 - June 2024	Stage A: Create and consult on the scope of the equality impact assessment.	
	Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) Summer 2024		
	Developing the Plan June 2024 - December 2024	Stage B: Update and refine the scope or content of the equality impact assessment post consultation, where necessary. Reconsult consultation bodies following changes, if necessary.	
		Stage C: Assess draft policies and proposals as they emerge through the plan preparation providing recommendations for equality improvements before finalisation of the draft plan.	
	Publication of the Plan (Regulation 19) January 2025 - March 2025	Stage D: Seek representations on the equality impact assessment through consultation.	
	Submission April 2025	Stage E: Submit equality impact assessment alongside the Castle Point Plan to be examined and where necessary update to reflect any proposed modifications	
Examination June 2025 - December 2025			
Adoption March 2026	Stage F: Post adoption reporting and monitoring. Assess equality impacts post adoption.		



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – CP Plan Issues and Options Engagement – Special Council – 17 July 2024

Stage	Title	Purpose
1	Preliminary Assessment	Initial assessment of possible impact.
2	Equality Risk Assessment	Scoring to assess the level of risk.
3	Equality Impact Assessment – Addressing Impact	Level of detail depends on risk assessment scoring but any removal or reduction in service must go through Stage 3.
4	Sign Off	Approval and decision-making details.
5	Implementation	Action Plan to implement and minimise impact.

Stage 1 – Preliminary Assessment

Question	Response/Consideration
1.1 Decision being assessed	Engagement on the Issues and Options document for the Castle Point Plan, and associated documents

Question	Response/Consideration
1.2 Lead Officer	Amanda Parrott – Assistant Director for Climate and Growth
1.3 What are the aims or function of the service or policy?	<p>To undertake engagement on the issues that should be addressed through the Castle Point Plan, which will be the statutory development plan for the area, and the potential options for addressing those issues.</p> <p>Additionally, there are statutory documents that must be prepared to inform and accompany a development plan. Consultation on the scope of these statutory documents will be undertaken alongside the engagement on the issues and options.</p>
1.4 Which policies relate to the delivery of this service?	<p>The engagement is being undertaken pursuant to Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012, as amended. These regulations set out minimum consultation requirements.</p> <p>The Statement of Community Involvement establishes the local requirements around engagement on planning policy matters. These requirements mirror the minimum requirements set out in the regulations previously mentioned.</p> <p>The Local Development Scheme establishes the programme for preparing the Castle Point Plan. This indicates that a period of engagement lasting 8 weeks will take place over the summer of 2024.</p> <p>An Engagement Strategy for the Castle Point Plan was approved by the Castle Point Plan Board in early 2023. This establishes the requirement for broad and effective engagement at each stage in the development of the plan.</p>
1.5 Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected?	<p>The audiences for the engagement are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residents • All businesses located in Castle Point • Statutory consultation bodies • Local service and infrastructure providers • Local community and special interest groups • Local construction companies

Question	Response/Consideration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landowners and developers
1.6 Will removing, reducing or changing this service/policy lead to members of the community being treated less favourably and so contribute to inequality?	The way in which the engagement is approached will determine whether participation is broad or narrow in terms of the people who respond.

Equality Aims – consider how the decision meets the three Equality Aims listed in the Equality Act.

Aim	How does the proposal / policy / service meet the equality aim?
To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	<p>The proposed engagement approach has been designed to provide multiple means of finding out about the engagement and participating in the engagement.</p> <p>In terms of promotion, two mailings will be delivered to all homes in the borough, whilst those on the Council's local plan mailing list will receive a third notification directly to their email. This will be supported by a multi-media campaign that will use demographic monitoring and targeting to broaden reach.</p>
To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	<p>In terms of participation, the principal means will be digital which will broaden participation with younger residents. The engagement portal used is compliant with web accessibility rules.</p> <p>This will be supplemented with the availability of information and hard copy forms in libraries to enable those without digital access to participate.</p> <p>There will also be a series of community workshops across the borough in DDA compliant public venues. These workshops are scheduled to take place both in the afternoon and evening, and online, to enable people with different working and caring responsibilities to participate at a time most suited to them.</p> <p>As appropriate, meetings with specific groups within the community will also be arranged to encourage engagement, where the monitoring of responses shows low levels of participation from that group.</p>

	The approach therefore seeks to eliminate discrimination in terms of access and ensure that there is a range of opportunities to participate which provides people with and without protected characteristics to engage.
To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not	Engagement activities and responses will be moderated to ensure that any discriminatory or hateful comments are minimised or removed.

Stage 2 – Equality Risk Assessment - Protected Characteristic Groups

Place an 'X' in against either 'positive impact', 'negative impact', 'no impact' for each protected characteristic group

2.1 Assess the Equality Risk

	Age	Disability	Gender	Race	Sexual Orientation	Religion	Gender Reassignment	Marriage/Civil Partnerships	Pregnancy/ Maternity
Positive impact	x	x	x	x		x			x
Negative impact									
No impact					x		x	x	

2.2 Conclusion – if there is 'No Impact' for all of the protected characteristics then stages 3 – 5 do not have to be completed

Consideration has been given to ensuring that eliminating discrimination and promoting equality are embedded in the engagement on the Issues and Options for the CP Plan. There are therefore no equality risks associated with this decision.

It should be noted that part of the engagement is on the scope for the Equality Impact Assessment for the CP Plan itself. This will be reported alongside the plan presented for publication and submission in early 2025.

Stage 3 – Equality Impact Assessment – Addressing Impact

Question	Response/Consideration
3.1 What is the reason for the proposed decision/change?	"[Add Reasons]"
3.2 What consultation activity has been undertaken or is planned?	"[Add details]"
3.3 Service Users – What methods are used to monitor the characteristics of service-users with protected characteristics?	"[Add details of users (number/type/frequency etc)]"
3.4 Referring to Stage 2, which 'protected characteristic' group(s) are most likely to be affected by this change? Describe any negative impacts identified in more detail. Outline ways in which negative or positive impacts will be addressed?	"[Add details]" "[Add details]" <i>This could include, for example, signposting alternative service providers, acting as facilitator and communicating the changes</i>
3.5 If the decision involves a service/policy being reduced/removed will this lead to missed opportunities to promote equality of opportunity?	"[Yes, No, N/A - if Yes, include explanation]"

3.6 What outcome does this assessment suggest we take? Select one option and action to be taken

Option	Outcome	Tick Selected Option	Explanation
1	Continue with proposed changes No discrimination or adverse impact identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	"[Enter text]"
2	Continue with proposed changes Suitable adjustments to lessen the impact identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	"[Enter text]"
3	Continue despite adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality	<input type="checkbox"/>	"[Enter text]" Justification must be included and consideration of the plans in place to reduce the impact
4	Stop and rethink Actual or potential discrimination identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	"[Enter text]"

What plans are in place to monitor the actual impact of the proposal?

"[Add detail]"

Stage 4 – Sign-off

	Details
Director/Assistant Director approved by:	Amanda Parrott – Assistant Director Climate and Growth
Date:	21/06/2024
Member Approval (Date and Title of Committee):	
Committee Decision:	

Stage 5 – Implementation

5.1 Referring to **Stages 1 (preliminary assessment)**, **Stage 2 (equality risk assessment)** and **Stage 3 (equality impact assessment)** please list what tasks/actions you will take to minimise the impact of this change.

Task	Outcome	Lead	Resources	Deadline
CP Together delivered to all households	All residents notified	Mykela Smith	In place	w/c 22 July
Email notifications to Local Plan mailing list	Self-selecting residents receive additional notification	Amanda Parrott	In place	w/c 22 July
Business Newsletter to business mailing list	Self selecting businesses receive additional notification	"[Enter text]"	"[Enter text]"	"[Enter text]"
Postcard sent to all households and businesses	All residents and businesses notified	Amanda Parrott	In place	w/c 12 August
Media Buying with audience targeting	Broaden reach through targeted media buying approach	Caroline Adlem	Outsourced to media buying company	Throughout period
Community Engagement Sessions across the borough	Opportunity for participation by non-written means	Amanda Parrott	In place	Throughout period

Task	Outcome	Lead	Resources	Deadline
Documents and hard copy forms in libraries	Opportunity for non-digitally enabled people to participate	Amanda Parrott	In place	By 22 July with stock checks throughout period
Online consultation portal	Opportunity for participation for all those with digital means	Amanda Parrott	In place	By 22 July
Monitoring participation and adjusting	Broaden participation	Amanda Parrott / Caroline Adlem	In place with media buying outsourced	Throughout period