

**Question 21 – What evidence is there to demonstrate that the Tendring/Colchester Borders garden community is capable of delivering 7,000 to 9,000 dwellings?**

The October 2017 Concept Framework for the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community (EB023) provides substantive evidence that there is sufficient developable land within the broad location indicated on the Local Plan Policies Map to achieve a scale of development of that order.

As noted in our comments on Matter 6 Question 4, we do have some concerns that the Policies Map could more appropriately define the location of this Garden Community.

We also have some concerns that an assumption of an average density of 38.3 dph in EB023 is potentially a little optimistic, but equally we consider that the residential land area of 198 ha in EB023 is unduly pessimistic, and that at the Masterplanning stage, there will be opportunities to increase the residential land yield. That said, even at 35 dph, 198 ha of residential land would produce circa 7,000 homes, and hence we believe there is sufficient evidence to support a working proposition of a minimum of 7,000 units.

This Part 1 Plan is not itself of course dependent on a particular final size for the Garden Communities as long as 2,500 units can be achieved. Although Policies SP7 and SP8 do give a range for the intended ultimate size for each of the three Garden Communities, (which in the case of the Tendring/Colchester Borders is supported by evidence at this stage through EB023), it would not render this Plan unsound, in our view, if a subsequent Plan were to refine the estimate of future yield in due course.

**Question 22 – Should Policy SP8 refer to the need for a dual carriageway link between the A120 and A133?**

Although the original scheme design provided by Mersea Homes to AECOM in 2016 assumed a dual carriageway solution (for the sake of robustness with costs), we are not aware at this stage that highway testing has proven the need for a dualled road, and therefore at this stage we do not consider that the Policy should refer specifically to a dual carriageway but rather an appropriately sized carriageway.

**Question 23 – Is it appropriate for Policy SP8 to require provision of a country park along the Salary Brook valley incorporating Churn Wood?**

We believe this reference is too specific for inclusion in the Policy at this stage. The Salary Brook is a relatively steep sided valley and there is a flood risk zone associated with the Brook itself. We do not question the fact that the Salary Brook will remain as an area of open space but that does not necessarily mean that it is the only location for a Country Park. The location and form of any Country Park is best determined through the evolution of the Masterplan, rather than being set by strategic policy.

We would further note that Churn Wood is an area of privately owned woodland, that might never have public access, and so its inclusion as part of a Country Park at this stage is also premature. It will no doubt remain as woodland, but its function as part of the overall green infrastructure network should also be determined on the basis of future Masterplanning.

**Question 24 – Should Salary Brook also be designated as a Local Nature Reserve?**

The Salary Brook is currently designated as a Colchester Local Wildlife Site on the adopted Local Plan Policies Map. Our assumption is that the same designation will be carried through in to the new Local Plan.

The question of the designation of the Salary Brook raises a wider issue, however, relating to the role of the additional DPDs that Policy SP7 says are to be prepared for each of the Garden Communities, which is whether those Garden Community DPDs are to be land allocation DPDs, or design DPDs.

We assume it must be the former, because the Policies Maps that have been prepared to accompany the Part 1 plan do not define any land allocations within the Garden Communities, but only indicate their broad extent.

If the Salary Brook is excluded from the boundary of the Garden Community DPD, then any designation would fall to the Part 1 Plan to confirm. If however it is included within the boundary of the Garden Community DPD, then presumably any designation would be a matter for that DPD to sort out, not this one.

The current Issues and Options Consultation for the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community strongly suggests that the intention is for the Salary Brook to be covered under the Garden Community DPD Policies Map, rather than excluded and covered under the Part 1 Policies Map.

Please also see our response to Matter 6 Question 4 as regards the need for greater clarity on the depiction of the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community on the Policies Map.