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Additional Sustainability Appraisal of North Essex Local Plan Section 1: Summary of Draft Findings

Prepared by LUC
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Summary presents the draft findings of the Additional Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the alternatives to providing growth in the North Essex Authorities (NEA) Plan Area.
- 1.2 The Additional SA of the North Essex Section 1 Local Plan followed a two stage process:
 - Stage 1 appraised strategic sites that could form part of alternative spatial strategies for the Section 1 Local Plan.
 - Stage 2 appraised alternative spatial strategies.
- 1.3 The SA of the strategic sites, which has fed into the SA of the spatial strategies, has been undertaken in a consistent and objective way, using assumptions for the SA objectives that have been applied in the same way for all strategic sites, using the same evidence base.
- 1.4 In carrying out the SA of the spatial strategies, an element of professional judgement has been required to interpret the findings of the individual strategic sites when combined into a spatial strategy, and taking into account existing commitments, Section 2 allocations, and strategic infrastructure.
- 1.5 In order to provide further context and evidence for the SA work, we carried out a review of academic research and guidance on urban form, which sought to identify the sustainability advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to delivering growth.
- 1.6 It should be noted that Quality Assurance checks of the Additional SA work are still being carried out, which may mean that there are some amendments and refinements to be made to these draft findings, which will be reflected in the final Additional SA Report. However, it is not considered that these will result in any fundamental changes to our conclusions.

2 Stage 1 – SA of Strategic Site Alternatives

- 2.1 At the outset of the Additional SA work, LUC felt it was necessary not only to appraise alternative new settlement proposals, but also to consider alternatives to new settlements. The Inspector specifically requested that proportionate growth be appraised, and LUC felt it was appropriate to explicitly consider urban extensions as alternatives to new settlements, in order to provide a complete and comprehensive SA.
- 2.2 The NEAs identified 26 sites that could be considered to be 'strategic' in size to be subject to SA. The sites were (NEAGC = North Essex Authorities' Garden Community; ALTGC = Alternative Garden Community; SUE = Strategic Urban Extension; VE1 = Village Extension; C – CAUSE sites):
- NEAGC1 West of Braintree
 - NEAGC2 Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (Marks Tey)
 - NEAGC3 Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community
 - ALTGC1 Land West of Braintree
 - ALTGC2 Land east of Silver End
 - ALTGC3 North West Coggeshall (Monks Wood)
 - ALTGC4 Land at Marks Tey Option One
 - ALTGC5 Land at Marks Tey Option Two
 - ALTGC6 Land at Marks Tey Option Three
 - ALTGC7 Land at East of Colchester Option One
 - ALTGC8 Land at East of Colchester Option Two
 - ALTGC9 Land at East of Colchester Option Three
 - ALTGC10 Land at East of Colchester Option Four
 - ALTGC11 Langham Garden Village
 - SUE1 Land at Halstead
 - SUE2 Land East of Braintree (including Temple Border)
 - SUE3 Land south east of Braintree
 - SUE4 Land south of Haverhill
 - VE1 Land at Kelvedon
 - VE2 Land at Coggeshall
 - VE4 Weeley Garden Village
 - VE5 Tendring Central Garden Village
 - C1 CAUSE Alresford
 - C2 CAUSE Great Bentley
 - C3 CAUSE Weeley
 - C4 CAUSE Thorpe-le-Soken
- 2.3 It should be noted that:
- VE3 (which was the combination of the four CAUSE sites) was, instead, considered as four separate sites C1-C4 under Stage 1 of the SA, then as a coherent whole under Stage 2 of the SA.

- ALTGC1 was subject to initial SA but was not taken any further as it was too similar to NEAGC1.
 - ALTGC4 and ALTGC5 were subsequently merged into one site, ALTGC4.
 - VE2 was subject to initial SA but the NEAs subsequently determined that there is no longer capacity for strategic development as part of the site is consented and the smaller, unconsented residual is appropriately assessed as an option for the Section 2 Local Plans.
- 2.4 The SA was carried out using a set of assumptions applied to each SA objective, in order to ensure consistency in the appraisal process. An initial SA using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) was undertaken, and this was then supplemented by more detailed appraisal of each site.
- 2.5 The detailed appraisal was informed by information included in site information forms (SIFs). The SIFs, which were drafted by the NEAs, were provided to each promoter of a site in order to give them the opportunity to validate or amend the information prepared by the NEAs. The NEAs sought to minimise any further changes to the SIFs, restricting these to clarifications, and aspects of deliverability. The information included the infrastructure that could be anticipated to be delivered as a component of development at each site, in addition to housing.

Summary of findings of the SA of alternative strategic sites

- 2.6 The overall performance of the alternative strategic sites against the SA objectives found that the difference between them was not that great. There were no sites that performed extremely well against all the criteria and no sites that performed extremely poorly.
- 2.7 For example, all of the sites could involve the development of potential mineral resources and best and most versatile agricultural land, and all could have a potential effect on heritage assets and biodiversity assets. Although there was some variation in the potential for effects between sites, the scale of the sites could provide scope for mitigation.
- 2.8 In summary, no 'showstoppers' were found at this stage of assessment, which meant that it was concluded that no individual sites could be ruled out on the basis of the SA alone.

3 Defining Spatial Strategy Alternatives

- 3.1 Taking into account the findings of Stage 1 of the SA, the NEAs proceeded to define alternative spatial strategies to be subject to SA during Stage 2 of the Additional SA process.
- 3.2 The spatial strategy alternatives are set out in the NEA document 'Selection of Spatial Strategy Alternatives', a copy of which is included at **Appendix 1** of this Summary. This document sets out seven principles which the NEAs established to guide the selection of spatial strategy alternatives to be subject to Additional SA. These are:
- Principle 1: Meet the residual housing need within the plan period
 - Principle 2: Test the alternatives suggested by the Local Plan Inspector
 - Principle 3: Reflect relative housing need and commuting patterns in any alternative strategy
 - Principle 4: Ensure alternative strategies are coherent and logical
 - Principle 5: Ensure alternative strategies are reasonable
 - Principle 6: Strategic sites will deliver a minimum of 2,000 homes within the plan period to 2033
 - Principle 7: All strategy options will deliver social infrastructure
- 3.3 As a result of applying these principles, some of the potential strategic sites from the assessment (due to various reasons, as set out in **Appendix 1**) were removed by the NEAs from inclusion in any of the alternative spatial strategies :
- ALTGC1 Land West of Braintree
 - ALTGC2 Land east of Silver End
 - ALTGC5 Land at Marks Tey Option Two (merged with ALTGC4)
 - ALTGC8 Land at East of Colchester Option Two
 - ALTGC9 Land at East of Colchester Option Three
 - ALTGC10 Land at East of Colchester Option Four
 - ALTGC11 Langham Garden Village
 - SUE4 Land south of Haverhill
 - VE2 Land at Coggeshall
 - VE4 Weeley Garden Village
- 3.4 The remaining strategic sites were included in alternative spatial strategies, along with proportionate growth alternatives.
- 3.5 In order to meet principle 3, the housing provision was split across the plan area on an west / east basis, to reflect that the relationship between Colchester and Tendring is different to that between Colchester and Braintree and, that in effect, the choice of strategy for the west of Colchester was not reliant on the choice of strategy to the east of Colchester to a significant degree, and *vice versa*. Breaking down the North Essex area in this way made comparisons between strategies easier and, in our view, more logical.
- 3.6 Taking all the above into account, the following 17 alternative spatial strategies set out in **Table 3.1** were appraised (note that Spatial Strategy West 4 has two variants at different scales of growth). It is considered that these represent an appropriate range of spatial strategies, in that they both respond to the advice of the Inspector and are suitable for the purposes of SA.

Table 3.1: Spatial strategy alternatives

WEST OF COLCHESTER	EAST OF COLCHESTER
(Whole of Braintree and most of Colchester) Target of approximately 5,000 additional homes up to 2033	(Tendring and eastern part of Colchester) Target to deliver approximately 2,500 additional homes up to 2033
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proportionate (percentage-based) growth 2. Proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth 3. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC 1] + Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC 2] 4. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC 3] + Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC 2] West 4a: smaller scale of West of Braintree [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC 3] + smaller scale of Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] 5. Monks Wood GC [ALTGC 3] + Colchester/Braintree Borders GC [NEAGC 2] 6. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC 1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC 3] 7. East of Braintree [SUE 2] + Kelvedon [VE 1] 8. Land at Halstead [SUE 1] + proportionate growth. 9. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + proportionate growth 10. Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] + proportionate growth 11. Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + proportionate growth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proportionate (percentage-based) growth 2. Proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth 3. Tendring Colchester Borders GC [NEAGC 3] 4. Colchester North-East Urban Extension [ALTGC 7] 5. Tendring Central Garden Village [VE 4] 6. CAUSE Metro Plan [C1, C2, C3 & C4]

4 Stage 2 – SA of Spatial Strategy Alternatives

The approach to the SA of alternative spatial strategies

- 4.1 The majority of the alternative spatial strategies comprised different combinations of the strategic sites appraised in Stage 1 of the SA. The SAs of the alternative spatial strategies were informed by the SA of the strategic sites carried out in Stage 1, including information included in the SIFs. Each alternative spatial strategy included information on employment and the strategic infrastructure that would be needed to support delivery of the strategy.
- 4.2 With respect to the proportionate growth alternatives, or those alternatives where a strategic site was combined with an element of proportionate growth, a greater element of professional judgement was required, particularly for the spatial strategy alternative whereby each settlement would grow at the same percentage (18%), because specific sites were not identified. However, the SA for these alternatives was based on clear descriptions of how much development would go to each settlement, which provided a reasonable basis for coming to judgements.

Plan period versus fully built out scenarios

- 4.3 The SA has assessed the Section 1 Local Plan alternative spatial strategies both within the plan period (i.e. to 2033) and when fully built out (no specified end date, but likely to be several years, if not decades, beyond the end of the plan period). This makes direct comparisons between the alternative spatial strategies difficult, because some (e.g. proportionate growth) will be delivered by 2033, whereas others that include major strategic sites will continue well beyond 2033. In a sense, this is comparing ‘apples and pears’.
- 4.4 It should be noted that, although some spatial strategies only allocate development to the end of the plan period, development is, in reality, likely to continue beyond 2033. However there is no spatial strategy for this post-2033 development, although it could be presumed that development would continue in the same vein. The effects of the spatial strategies that involve major strategic sites will not be fully felt until well after the end of the plan period. Similarly, temporary effects related to their construction (e.g. noise and disturbance) are likely to be experienced over many years.
- 4.5 In addition, it should be noted that existing commitments and allocations in the Section 2 Local Plans already make up over 80% of the total housing required to be delivered within the plan period (approximately 35,600 of 43,200 homes). In this respect, those spatial strategies that seek to deliver the remaining approximate 7,500 homes within the plan period and no more could be considered too small in scale to be strategic. Conversely, although all spatial strategy alternatives seek to deliver the required additional 7,500 homes in the plan period, some could go on to deliver potentially as much as 35,500 additional homes beyond the plan period. In fact, taking into account the 7,500 they will deliver within the plan period, they could total a similar amount of housing that is planned for through the Section 2 Local Plans.
- 4.6 The Section 2 Local Plans already seek to focus development at existing settlements within North Essex, through Policy SP2 of the Section 1 Local Plan, according to settlement scales, sustainability and existing role. In this respect, some of the settlements are already likely to experience significant housing growth, such as:
 - Colchester (18% growth).
 - Braintree (22%).
 - Clacton-on-Sea (10%).
 - Witham (22%).
 - Halstead (11%).

- Manningtree, Lawford & Mistley (25%)
 - Kelvedon with Feering (42%).
 - Hatfield Peverel (16%).
 - Alresford (28%).
 - Elmstead Market (24%).
 - Great Bentley (27%).
 - Thorpe-le-Soken (24%).
 - Weeley (57%).
 - Eight Ash Green (31%).
 - Rowhedge (21%).
 - Tiptree (22%).
- 4.7 This provides the context for the additional SA work, and the consideration of further growth, both within the plan period and beyond.

Pros and cons of different urban forms

- 4.8 The review of research undertaken with respect to urban form, which looked at the in-principle pros and cons of new settlements, urban extensions and dispersed development provided some useful indicators as to how these different types of urban form compare in sustainability terms. This found that:
- Dispersed development, which bears many similarities with the proportionate (percentage-based) growth spatial strategy alternative appraised in the Additional SA, performs less well across a range of criteria than new settlements or urban extensions, for example in relation to travel patterns and modes of transport and the delivery of affordable housing.
 - New settlements and urban extensions can perform similarly, depending upon where they are located, and how they are designed and delivered.
- 4.9 For new settlements to perform well in sustainability terms, it is critical that the infrastructure is provided in the early stages of development in order to avoid unsustainable travel behaviours becoming embedded before sustainable transport alternatives become available, and to develop a sense of community cohesion. New settlements can involve a significant amount of embodied carbon by having to develop 'from scratch', although new settlements can be designed to be efficient in carbon terms, including inclusion of renewable energy and encouraging low carbon behaviours, such as sustainable modes of transport. Larger new settlements are more likely to attract economic activity.
- 4.10 Urban extensions can make use of existing infrastructure, or expansions to existing infrastructure, rather than having to start from scratch. If well integrated with the settlements they are attached to, they can offer immediate access to a range of existing jobs, services and facilities, although they can lack a sense of place. Larger urban extensions can also deliver their own services and facilities, economic activity, and the design features associated with new settlements with respect to sustainable travel and reduced carbon.
- 4.11 Viability and deliverability issues can affect both new settlements and urban extensions, but tend to be more pronounced with new settlements unless appropriate funding and governance structures are put in place. Dispersed development may have less in the way of upfront investment, but on the other hand can lead to an accumulation of development with insufficient investment in supporting services, facilities and infrastructure.
- 4.12 In terms of guiding principles, the research found that new settlements are likely to perform best when they are in close proximity to thriving towns and cities in order to share infrastructure and access to jobs and services during the early stages. On the other hand, there is a risk that such new development can draw resources and investment away from the towns and cities with which they are associated.

- 4.13 Of critical importance is that new strategic development should be located in areas with high public transport accessibility, for example along well-served bus corridors, and in close proximity to railway stations and other transport interchanges. The potential to extend existing networks, making better use of existing mainline stations or disused lines, and additional branches (e.g. rapid transit systems) through new neighbourhoods are considered to help make new strategic development more accessible and more successful.
- 4.14 In terms of design, connectivity is important, and the need to avoid severance by major roads and roundabouts. While landscape buffers and green space are to be encouraged, they should not threaten permeability and connectivity with surrounding land uses.
- 4.15 It is acknowledged in the research that the achievement of ‘self-containment’ is an unrealistic ambition given the choice of modes of transport available to modern communities, but that if developments are of a sufficient scale, they can provide for many of the everyday needs of residents within the development, reducing the incentive to travel elsewhere. This can be helped by designing compact developments, which incorporate a mix of uses.
- 4.16 It is interesting to note that the Additional SA of the spatial strategy alternatives for North Essex largely mirrors the findings of the research. The proportionate growth alternatives, based on a simple percentage increase in growth of each settlement, performed relatively poorly against the SA objectives, whereas many of the new settlement and urban extension alternatives performed similarly. In some respects this is not surprising, because the strategic scale of development proposed under these alternatives is such that they are capable of including a range of services and facilities, including jobs, as well as supporting infrastructure.

Summary of findings of the SA of alternative spatial strategies

West of Colchester

- 4.17 As described above, the proportionate (percentage-based) growth spatial strategy alternative (West 1) performs less well across a number of the SA objectives than the other spatial strategy alternatives, and therefore can be considered less sustainable.
- 4.18 The remaining spatial strategy alternatives perform similarly, albeit with some differences between them:
- It is considered that the spatial strategy alternatives will all be capable of delivering the residual housing requirement (approximately 7,500 homes) within the plan period, and those that extend beyond the plan period will continue to deliver new homes for many years to come. This includes appropriate provision for affordable housing, and a mix of types and tenures, in line with North Essex policy objectives (SA objective 2). The only exception to this is West 2, being proportionate (hierarchical growth), which would require the delivery of 4,500 to 5,000 dwellings as an urban extension to the east of Braintree, which may be challenging to deliver within the plan period.
 - All spatial strategy alternatives are likely to have significant adverse effects on the existing communities affected by the large-scale developments, primarily because of the considerable change of character around existing settlements. However, several of the spatial strategy alternatives are considered to deliver significant positive effects when the new communities are delivered, due to their being designed as coherent settlements in their own right, with a range of services and facilities (SA objective 1).
 - The health benefits will tend to be delivered beyond the plan period, as the level of housing becomes sufficient to accommodate health care facilities at 4,500 dwellings (SA objective 3).
 - Given the scale of development proposed, all of the spatial strategy alternatives will be of sufficient size to incorporate local centres (SA objective 4) and employment land and other jobs (SA objective 5).
 - All of the spatial strategy alternatives could have adverse effects on biodiversity, and for West 3, West 4, West 4a, West 5, West 6, West 10, and West 11 this could be significant depending upon mitigation (SA objective 6). It should be noted that West 3, West 4, West 4a, West 5 and West 10 are located very close to Marks Tey Brick Pit SSSI, although being a geological SSSI it should be possible to mitigate and manage adverse effects. All spatial strategies

include development within SSSI 'Impact Risk Zones', whereby Natural England should be consulted for potential impacts, although this does not mean that they cannot be mitigated.

- With respect to shorter journeys, the majority of spatial strategy alternatives will have significant positive effects in the long-term as services and facilities, and jobs, are provided on site, although those strategies which involve building near existing facilities and services, or the provision of Rapid Transit System could achieve this within the plan period (SA objective 7).
- With regard to longer journeys, it is considered that those spatial strategy alternatives that include both access to a railway station, particularly on the Great Eastern mainline, as well as investment in a Rapid Transit System, will result in significant positive effects in the longer term (SA objective 7). This is because commuting patterns suggest that the primary commuting destinations for residents of Braintree are Chelmsford, Colchester, Uttlesford and London, and that Braintree, Chelmsford and London represent three of the top four commuting destinations for residents of Colchester. Therefore, those spatial strategy alternatives that include relatively easy access to a choice of sustainable transport modes (rail and rapid transit) perform most strongly.
- All of the spatial strategy alternatives could potentially have a significant negative effect on heritage assets (SA objective 9). In many instances, the heritage assets include Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings either within the site or in close proximity.
- Although all of the spatial strategy alternatives are considered to have minor positive effects on carbon, this is primarily with respect to delivery on site, rather than from traffic. From a traffic perspective, those sites that perform strongest against SA objective 7 are also likely to perform strongest with respect to transport related carbon emissions (SA objective 10).
- None of the spatial strategy alternatives were identified as having significant effects with respect to water (SA objective 11), flood risk (SA objective 12) or air quality (SA objective 13).
- All of the spatial strategy alternatives were considered to have potentially significant adverse effects with respect to landscape (SA objective 14).
- All of the spatial strategy alternatives were considered likely to have potentially significant adverse effects with respect to minerals and likely to have significant adverse effects with respect to soils (SA objective 15).
- In many instances, there was uncertainty with respect to the effects identified as it may be possible to include mitigation, given the scale of the strategic sites that form components of many of the alternative spatial strategies, depending upon how development is designed and delivered.

4.19 In light of the findings of the SA, there is little to choose between the spatial strategies in terms of significant effects at the strategic scale (other than West 1, as noted above). However, the following observations using professional judgement may help to distinguish between them a little more than the objective, assumptions-led SA has achieved:

- The research into urban form suggests that access to good sustainable transport links and services is critical to the achievement of sustainability, and it also makes sense to work with established patterns of travel but seek to achieve changes in travel mode. Those strategies that combine both development focused on railway stations, particularly the Great Eastern mainline, and provision for Rapid Transit, are therefore likely to perform well.
- Those spatial strategies that do not include easy access to rail, especially to the Great Eastern mainline, could be considered to perform less well. For example, Halstead is not well connected in sustainable transport terms, and is not in the major commuting corridors, so those spatial strategies that include significant additional development at Halstead may be considered less sustainable than some of the other spatial strategies.
- On the other hand, those spatial strategies that focus a significant proportion of development along the Great Eastern mainline, for example West 3, West 4, West 5, West 7 and West 10, could, when coupled with development already committed or allocated in the Section 2 Local Plans, lead to the perception of continued urbanisation of the Great Eastern mainline/A12 corridor. Consultations during the SA have also highlighted the lack of capacity on the mainline services to accommodate more passengers at peak times.

- Some strategies rely on Rapid Transit to be successful, including West 3, West 4 and West 4a, West 5, West 6, West 9 and West 11. We understand that developments in the order of 2,500 homes should enable Rapid Transit to begin to become viable, and that as the number of homes increases, services can become more frequent, viability improves, and extensions to the Rapid Transit System (RTS) can be considered. However, it should be noted that this is based on informal advice from the NEA's transport consultants and in the absence of formal evidence is subject to uncertainty.
 - Braintree is already earmarked for 22% growth in the plan period, through commitments and Section 2 allocations. Urban extensions to the east of Braintree, such as in spatial strategies West 2, West 7, West 8, West 9, West 10 and West 11 would increase this growth further. It should be noted that these strategies would result in the first encroachment of development east of the A120 Braintree bypass, and the bypass itself could act as a barrier to integration of new development with the town.
 - The scale of development proposed, in particular under spatial strategy alternatives West 3, West 4, and West 5, is very significant (over 25,000 additional homes when fully built out). Once fully built out, each of these spatial strategies would provide more houses than there currently are in the town of Braintree (even before taking into account planned growth through commitments and Section 2 allocations). It is recognised that large scale development is more likely to attract investment, but it is also more likely to change the character of this part of North Essex. Primarily rural areas would become a chain of settlements linking into the existing settlements. This would particularly be the case for those strategies, such as West 4, which would see considerable development along the A120 corridor. It is also difficult to judge what the impacts may be on the existing settlements, which could either be positive (e.g. providing further support for jobs, services and facilities) or negative (e.g. diverting investment away from the existing settlements to new settlements).
- 4.20 With all the spatial strategies, given the scale of development proposed, there is considerable risk. If for any reason they are not delivered as planned, for example through lack of government funding, or changing market conditions, then delivery may not happen as quickly as anticipated, quality could be compromised, and some aspects may not be delivered as wished. For example, there may be choices to be made with respect to the delivery of affordable housing, a full range of services and facilities, open space, sustainable transport infrastructure and services. This is not to say that these will not be delivered, but simply to observe that development on this scale does carry the risk that its full sustainability potential may not be realised in practice. Much will depend upon funding and governance.
- 4.21 Summaries of the assessment findings for the sites West of Colchester within the plan period (**Table 4.1**) and when fully built out (**Table 4.2**) are included below.

Table 4.1: Summary of SA scores for spatial strategies west of Colchester within the plan period

	SA objective														
	SA1: Communities	SA2: Homes	SA3: Health	SA4: Centres	SA5: Economy	SA6: Biodiversity	SA7: Travel	SA8: Infrastructure	SA9: Heritage	SA10: Climate	SA11: Water	SA12: Flood risk	SA13: Air quality	SA14: Landscape	SA15: Minerals & soils
Strategy	--?/?	++?	--/0?	--	-	-?	--?/-?	+?	--?/?	+?	-?/?	0	0/-?	-?	--?/-
West 1	--?/+	-?	+?/-	++	++	-?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 2	--?/+	++	+/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 3	--?/+	++	+/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 4	--?/+	++	+/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 4a	--?/+	++?	+/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 5	--?/+	++	+/0	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/0	--?	--?/-
West 6	--?/++	++	+/-	++	++	--?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 7	--?/+	++	+/-	+	++	-?	+?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 8	--?/+	++	+/-	++	++	-?	+?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/-?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 9	--?/+	++	+?/-	++	++	-?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 10	--?/++?	++?	+/-?	+	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 11	--?/+	++	+?/-	++	++	--?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-

Table 4.2: Summary of SA scores for spatial strategies west of Colchester when fully built out

	SA objective														
	SA1: Communities	SA2: Homes	SA3: Health	SA4: Centres	SA5: Economy	SA6: Biodiversity	SA7: Travel	SA8: Infrastructure	SA9: Heritage	SA10: Climate	SA11: Water	SA12: Flood risk	SA13: Air quality	SA14: Landscape	SA15: Minerals & soils
Strategy	West 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West 3	--?/++	++	++/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 4	--?/++	++	++/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 4a	--?/++	++?	++/-	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 5	--?/++	++	++/0	++	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/0	--?	--?/-
West 6	--?/++	++	++/-	++	++	--?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 7	--?/+	++	++/-	+	++	-?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 8	--?/+	++	+/-	++	++	-?	+?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/-?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 9	--?/+	++	+?/-	++	++	-?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-
West 10	--?/++?	++?	+/-?	+	++	--?	++?/++?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
West 11	--?/+	++	+?/-	++	++	--?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	0	0/0?	--?	--?/-

East of Colchester

- 4.22 East of Colchester, the choice of strategies is more straightforward. As previously described for West of Colchester, proportionate (percentage) growth East of Colchester (East 1) also performs less well across a number of the SA objectives than the other spatial strategy alternatives, and therefore can be considered less sustainable. Similarly, proportionate (hierarchy) growth (East 2) does not perform well because it would lead to considerable development at Brightlingsea, which is not a sustainable location for strategic growth due to its poor accessibility and environmental sensitivities. Notably it would also fail to deliver sufficient housing within the plan period.
- 4.23 With respect to the remaining spatial strategies (East 3, East 4, East 5 and East 6):
- In the longer term, the effects on existing communities and also the effects arising from the new communities would be similar in terms of significance (SA objective 1).
 - All would deliver the homes required in the plan period (SA objective 2).
 - In terms of access to health care, East 3, East 4 and East 5 perform better than East 6 in the longer term, because they will provide for a scale of development sufficient to accommodate a health care facility (SA objective 3). On the other hand, East 5 could be subject to significant adverse effects from noise pollution.
 - East 3 and East 4 are considered to perform more strongly with respect to access to local centre facilities (SA objective 4) at the end of the plan period, however East 6 also performs well after the plan period.
 - East 3 and East 4 are considered to perform more strongly with respect to the economy (SA objective 5) at the end of the plan period, however East 5 also performs well after the plan period.
 - East 3 and East 5 are anticipated to perform better than East 4 and East 6 with respect to biodiversity (SA objective 6).
 - The main advantage of East 6 when fully built out is with respect to longer journeys and easy access to railway stations (SA objective 7) which is reinforced by the strong commuting relationship between Tendring and Colchester. This would also feed into effects on carbon emissions from traffic (SA objective 10). On the other hand, the rural locations could lead to longer journeys by car for those journeys where rail is not a realistic choice. For shorter journeys, East 3 and East 4 perform most strongly.
 - All of the spatial strategy alternatives could potentially have a significant negative effect on heritage assets (SA objective 9).
 - None of the spatial strategy alternatives were identified as having significant effects with respect to water (SA objective 11), flood risk (SA objective 12) or air quality (SA objective 13).
 - All of the spatial strategy alternatives were considered to have potentially significant adverse effects with respect to landscape, with the exception of East 3, where the landscape impact was considered to be potentially minor (SA objective 14).
 - All of the spatial strategy alternatives were considered to have potentially significant adverse effects with respect to minerals and likely to have significant adverse effects with respect to soils (SA objective 15).
 - In many instances, there was uncertainty with respect to the effects identified as it may be possible to include mitigation, taking into account the scale of the strategic sites, and how development is designed and delivered.
- 4.24 East 3 is the Garden Community proposed in the Section 1 Local Plan. Its main disadvantage compared to some of the other spatial strategies is that it is not on a rail link and as a result a Rapid Transit connection to Colchester and beyond is proposed. It is, though, close to the University of Essex, albeit separated by the A133 dual carriageway. The site is also separated from the urban area of Colchester by Salary Brook Local Nature Reserve, which will help to retain distinctiveness between the communities and act as a resource for both existing and new communities, but may act as a barrier to integration.

- 4.25 Although East 4 performs as well as some of the alternative spatial strategies for the East of Colchester, it would, in effect result in the complete surrounding of Bullock Wood SSSI by development, adding to the development that already exists to the west of this ancient woodland SSSI. In terms of maintaining ecological networks, and potential disturbance effects, this is considered to be a particularly significant risk. It also has no rail link into Colchester.
- 4.26 In many respects, East 5 performs as well as East 3, although no better. It has the advantage of an existing employment area on site, and would retain its own distinctiveness being separated by some distance from Colchester town. Its location on the A120 and its distance from Colchester could encourage a high proportion of journeys by car.
- 4.27 East 6 is designed to operate as a chain of settlements along the Clacton to Colchester rail route, with stations within walking distance and use of rail facilitated by proposed increases in the frequency of services. The chain of settlements would support one another, as well as link into Colchester as the main commuting destination. In this respect it has many advantages, although the rural location of the four settlements could encourage car journeys, notwithstanding the opportunity to travel by train. In other respects, this spatial strategy does not perform any better than the alternatives. It is being promoted by local people rather than landowners or developers, which suggests that it may have a groundswell of support, but it is less certain whether it is deliverable in practice, and therefore there are risks attached.
- 4.28 Summaries of the assessment findings for the sites East of Colchester within the plan period (**Table 4.3**) and when fully built out (**Table 4.4**) are included below.

Table 4.3: Summary of SA scores for spatial strategies east of Colchester within the plan period

Strategy	SA objective														
	SA1: Communities	SA2: Homes	SA3: Health	SA4: Centres	SA5: Economy	SA6: Biodiversity	SA7: Travel	SA8: Infrastructure	SA9: Heritage	SA10: Climate	SA11: Water	SA12: Flood risk	SA13: Air quality	SA14: Landscape	SA15: Minerals & soils
East 1	--?/?	--	--?/0	-	+	--?	-?/-?	-?	--?/?	+?	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
East 2	--?/?	--	?/0	++	++	--?	++?/-?	-?	--?/?	+?	0/?	0	0/-?	--?	-?/-
East 3	--?/++	++	+/-	++	++	-?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/0?	0	0/-?	-?	--?/-
East 4	--?/++	++	+/-	++	++	--?	++?/+?	+?	--?/0	+	0/0?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
East 5	--?/++	++?	+?/-	+	+	-?	+?/-?	+?	--?/?	+	0/0?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
East 6	-?/+	++	+/0?	+	?	--?	?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	-?	0/0	--?	--?/-

Table 4.4: Summary of SA scores for spatial strategies east of Colchester when fully built out

Strategy	SA objective														
	SA1: Communities	SA2: Homes	SA3: Health	SA4: Centres	SA5: Economy	SA6: Biodiversity	SA7: Travel	SA8: Infrastructure	SA9: Heritage	SA10: Climate	SA11: Water	SA12: Flood risk	SA13: Air quality	SA14: Landscape	SA15: Minerals & soils
East 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
East 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
East 3	--?/++	++	++/-	++	++	-?	++?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	0/-?	0	0/-?	-?	--?/-
East 4	--?/++	++	++/-	++	++	--?	++?/+?	+?	--?/0	+	0/0?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
East 5	--?/++	++?	+?/-	+	++	-?	++?/-?	+?	--?/?	+	0/0?	0	0/-?	--?	--?/-
East 6	--?/++	++	+/0?	++	+?	--?	+?/+?	+?	--?/?	+	-?/?	-?	0/0	--?	--?/-

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The SA of alternative strategic sites showed that many performed similarly against the SA objectives.
- 5.2 With respect to alternative strategic spatial strategies, the clearest conclusion is that those spatial strategies that rely solely on proportionate growth (percentage) are the poorest performing, but for others the differences are much more finely balanced. No spatial strategies stood out as performing much more strongly than the others. None of the spatial strategies are without challenges with respect to environmental assets, such as biodiversity, heritage, minerals and the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- 5.3 To the west of Colchester, the choice of strategy is complicated. Those alternatives that include urban extensions (e.g. to Braintree or Halstead) offer the opportunity to be integrated with existing settlements. However, east of Braintree would be severed from Braintree by the Braintree eastern bypass which represents an important eastern limit to the town. Halstead has no rail service and is not in the key commuting corridors.
- 5.4 The other alternatives tend to offer different combinations of new settlements and/or extensions of existing smaller settlements. Those that are associated with the Great Eastern mainline offer use of existing infrastructure and sustainable access to key commuting destinations including Colchester, Chelmsford and London (although concerns have been expressed by local people of the capacity of this route to cater for additional demand at peak times). The opportunity to introduce a coherent and integrated RTS system to cater for other commuting routes, particularly east-west and to Stansted could be of considerable benefit since these routes are currently poorly served by more sustainable modes of transport. Therefore those alternatives that offer a combination of both access to existing rail and investment in RTS perform strongly in sustainable transport terms.
- 5.5 To the east of Colchester, it appears to be a choice between three alternatives. East 1, being proportionate (percentage) growth does not perform well compared to the alternatives. East 2 does not perform well because it would lead to considerable development at Brightlingsea, which is not a sustainable location for strategic growth due to its poor accessibility and environmental sensitivities. East 4 has potentially significant biodiversity issues due to its potential impact on Bullock Wood SSSI. This leaves East 3 (the Garden Community on the Colchester/Tendring Borders), East 5 (Tendring Central Garden Village), and East 6 (the CAUSE Metro Plan).
- 5.6 East 6 offers the considerable advantage of being on an existing railway line which links into important commuting destinations for people in Tendring (Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea, Kirby Cross, Frinton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze). Taken together, the four constituent growth locations along the railway line form a critical size to support a range of services and facilities, although individually they do not. They are also rural in character, and all four settlements are earmarked for considerable growth through existing commitments and Section 2 Local Plan allocations.
- 5.7 East 3 and East 5 offer similar opportunities to develop a coherent development that incorporates a good range of services and facilities. Both have the drawback of not being on a rail route, although East 3 offers the opportunity to be connected to Colchester and beyond by RTS and is close to the university. East 5 has the advantage of an existing employment area and good connections to the strategic road network.
- 5.8 It is therefore not possible to come to a definitive conclusion that any one strategy, whether west of Colchester or east of Colchester, is the most sustainable option. The advantage of the Section 1 Local Plan as it stands is that it provides clear direction for strategic development to accommodate North Essex over many decades to come and therefore more certainty in terms of coherence and investment, including in new transport infrastructure, services and facilities. However, some of the alternatives offer opportunities to deliver similar benefits.

- 5.9 It should be noted that the scale of development proposed in the Section 1 Local Plan is considerable and will change the character of parts of North Essex, and the effects on the role and function, and relationship between the new and existing settlements is uncertain – if they complement and support one another, then this would be of benefit, but if they compete for investment and resources this could be a dis-benefit. Some of the other alternatives propose a similar scale of development and therefore offer similar opportunities and risks. The alternatives that propose lower amounts of growth would be less likely to alter the character of North Essex and relationships between settlements, but on the other hand may be less likely to attract the scale of investment of the larger scale alternatives. In addition, in the longer-term, it is likely that there will continue to be a need for more development, and so in future years (planning to well beyond the plan period), similar decisions will need to be made about where the additional growth should go. Under the larger scale alternatives, this decision will already have been made.
- 5.10 Finally, it is worth mentioning that the pace of change of technology, the introduction of 'smart city' thinking, and planning for climate change (both in terms of a net zero carbon future, and adaptation to the effects of climate change), could result in changes in the way that we live our lives that are difficult to anticipate given our embedded lifestyles and, in particular, our reliance on fossil fuels and the private car. It is therefore important that any strategy is future proofed and flexible enough to accommodate these changes as and when they arise.

LUC

1 July 2019

Appendix 1

'Selection of Spatial Strategy Alternatives' document prepared by NEAs

Selection of Spatial Strategy Alternatives

The Stage 1 assessment of individual site-based options suggests that many of the alternatives perform similarly against the various sustainability criteria and for the majority of sites, there are no alternatives that stand out as being particularly desirable or undesirable. The consequence of this outcome for Stage 2 of the assessment is that there are theoretically a significant and unwieldy number of permutations in which different sites could be combined to form an overall spatial strategy for North Essex. For every site option to be combined with every other potential alternative site and then tested as a spatial strategy in its own right would be an unmanageable task and therefore it is important to apply some common sense judgement to determine what a reasonable number of alternative options would be, based on some reasonable planning principles. Indeed the Local Plan Inspector states in his 8th June 2018 letter, in paragraph 118: *"It is not feasible to test every possible option through SA. Reasonable planning judgements have to be made on what to include. That is recognised in the legal requirement for reasons to be given for the selection of alternatives for assessment."*

From the round table discussions involving different stakeholders held as part of the ‘check and challenge workshop held on 29th March 2019, a number of key principles, ideas, arguments and factors arose from the discussions. As taken from the record of the check and challenge workshop prepared by LUC, these included:

- Considering demographics, housing need and travel to work patterns to provide the right homes in the right places and to enable choice.
- Ideally each authority should seek to meet its own individual housing needs with their own area rather than crossing boundaries.
- Maximising the opportunities for sustainable travel and alternative means of travel including public transport, electric vehicles and cycles – focussing development on rail links where possible.
- Aspiring to achieve self-containment/self-sufficiency within new settlements but with strong connectivity to other settlements.
- Considering local attributes and settlements’ strengths and weaknesses in terms of infrastructure and environmental capacity.
- Treating viability, deliverability and cost benefit analysis as key determining factors.
- Utilising existing infrastructure capacity where it exists and only considering new settlements when the opportunities for proportionate growth around existing settlements have been exhausted.
- Avoiding scales of development that place additional burden on existing infrastructure without the means to increase infrastructure capacity.
- Empowering communities to plan the growth in their area (e.g. through Neighbourhood Planning) and ensuring communities are well informed.
- Promoting development that supports health provision and the prevention of ill health through health facilities and quality recreational space.
- Considering the impact on various environmental assets including heritage, landscape and biodiversity.
- Considering impact on the vitality and viability of existing town centres, especially if new centres are proposed as part of new developments.

- Considering the potential for new technologies to alter the way people work and commute in the future, including superfast broadband, 5G and driverless vehicles.
- Providing for a mixture of smaller and larger developments to ensure that both short term needs and longer-term strategic needs are met.
- Exploring opportunities for developments in locations with poor services and facilities where they could help to improve those assets for the benefit of all residents.
- Promoting long-term strategic developments that can deliver new infrastructure through economies of scale and a planned approach.
- Considering targeted (as opposed to proportionate) growth in certain areas where it would meet key objectives.
- Planning for strategic-scale growth, but not at the scale currently proposed as part of the Garden Communities.
- Developing a plan that only includes proposals to deal with housing need up to 2033 only.
- Ensuring there are sufficient guarantees over the timing and funding of infrastructure as part of any strategy.
- Expanding existing settlements in a sequential order until they meet their optimum size in terms of maximising self-containment and self-sufficiency.
- Directing development to locations that will support and deliver key transport links and key transport improvements to help tackle congestion problems. Maximising the use of previously developed brownfield land. Avoiding the coalescence of villages through the safeguarding of landscape buffers.
- Locating development close to employment opportunities and locations where new employment sites are likely to be viable.
- Directing more development towards the east and the more deprived areas of Tendring to help stimulate their regeneration.
- Considering large urban extensions where they can deliver rapid transit services to existing jobs, shops, services and facilities.
- Making sure the cumulative impacts of the development are taken into account.
- Assessing the West of Braintree Garden Community in combination with proposals for growth in Uttlesford.

These ideas have all been taken into account along with the Local Plan Inspector's specific comments both by LUC in developing the methodology for the additional Sustainability work and by the NEAs in developing an overarching set of principles to guide the planning judgement that has been applied in the selection of a reasonable set of spatial strategy alternatives for assessing. These seven principles are set out below.

Principle 1: Meet the residual housing need within the plan period

As a basic principle, any spatial strategy alternative should, as a minimum, meet the objectively assessed housing need for housing in North Essex for the remainder of the plan period to 2033 plus a reasonable level of flexibility (as is currently the case) to guard against the prospect of certain sites not coming forward for development when expected – whether that is through a strategy that identifies sites for the plan period only, or a strategy that identifies larger strategic sites that will deliver homes both within the plan period and beyond.

As set out in Policy SP3 in the Section 1 plan, the total minimum housing requirement for the period 2013 to 2033 is 43,720 – a figure that has already been found to be based on sound evidence by the Local Plan Inspector and of which approximately 11,000 have already been built in the period 2013-2019. Between 2019 and 2033, approximately 31,000 homes are expected to be delivered across North Essex on existing sites with planning permission and on sites allocated in Section 2 Local Plans. For the purposes of the further Sustainability Appraisal Work, it is assumed that the Section 2 allocations will be found to be sound through the examination process; and that together with existing planning permissions, they will deliver the above-mentioned 31,000 homes within the plan period and there is no intention to deallocate any of these sites. Site allocations in the three Section 2 Local Plans have been the subject of separate Sustainability Appraisals which will be examined, in due course, through the future Section 2 examinations.

Taking into account the above planning permissions and Section 2 allocations, the residual requirement for housing in the plan period to 2033 (for which additional sites are required) currently sits at around 2,000 homes. Whilst, in the context of the overall housing need this is relatively modest requirement, it is common planning practice to ‘over-allocate’ land for development to keep to a minimum the risk of the housing need not being met within the plan period because of certain sites failing to come forward for development when expected - for a range of unpredictable reasons. In the current Section 1 Local Plan, the strategy includes proposals for three Garden Communities that, together, are expected to deliver 7,500 in the period to 2033 – meeting and residual requirement for the plan period and incorporating a healthy level of over-allocation whilst also providing locations for longer-term growth beyond the plan period and into subsequent plan periods.

Therefore in testing alternative options to the current strategy, those alternatives must also aim to deliver an equivalent 7,500 homes (approximately) up to 2033 for them to be comparable.

Principle 2: Test the alternatives suggested by the Local Plan Inspector

In his letter of 8th June 2018, the Local Plan Inspector Mr. Clews provided some clear advice as to the alternative options that should be tested through the Sustainability Appraisal. In paragraph 125 of his letter, the Inspector suggested that the alternatives should include, as a minimum:

- Proportionate growth at and around existing settlements
- CAUSE’s Metro Town proposal
- One, two or more GCs (depending on the outcomes of the first-stage assessment)

It is therefore important that these alternatives form part of the assessment.

Proportionate growth at and around existing settlements has been tested as part of the further Sustainability Appraisal work in two forms: a) a ‘percentage-based’ distribution of growth that sees each defined settlement (irrespective of their position in the settlement hierarchy) accommodating the same

percentage increase in new housing relative to their existing size and dwelling stock; and b) and ‘hierarchy-based’ distribution which actively prioritises growth around the larger settlements further up the settlement hierarchy which are generally best served by shops, jobs, services and facilities. These proportionate growth options seek only to deliver housing required to the end of the plan period to 2033 and can incorporate development sites of any scale necessary to meet that requirement. The purpose of testing proportionate growth scenarios is to determine whether or not there is any need for the North Essex Authorities to bring forward proposals for stand-alone settlements, Garden Communities or any other more strategic development proposals within this plan period.

CAUSE’s Metro Town (now ‘Metro Plan’) concept is also part of the further Sustainability Appraisal work and, as a strategy, aims to focus growth on land around existing railway stations on the Colchester to Clacton branch line, namely at the villages of Alresford, Great Bentley, Weeley and Thorpe le Soken – all within the Tendring District. It is important that this concept is tested in combination with other options.

Different numbers and combinations of Garden Communities are also now tested in the further Sustainability Appraisal work including, notably, the Monks Wood proposal by Lightwood Strategic at a scale of development which reflects the site promoter’s aspirations.

Principle 3: Reflect relative housing need and commuting patterns in any alternative strategy

The North Essex area contains three local authorities for which housing need has been assessed as part of the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs Study. Through the current proposals in both the Section 1 and Section 2 Local Plans, the distribution of housing growth reflects, broadly, the relative housing needs of the three authorities i.e. that housing need is greater towards the west. These relative housing needs in turn also reflect commuting patterns and how they vary across the North Essex – for example a strong relationship of commuting from Tendring to Colchester for work and, to the west, the relationships between Braintree and Colchester with one-another and more widely with Chelmsford, London and Stansted.

Any alternative spatial strategy should also take the relative housing need and commuting patterns into account for them to be based upon reasonable evidence and logic. For example, there would be little sense in pursuing a spatial option that places all of the 7,500 homes currently proposed through Garden Communities in just one of the three districts because it would ignore the respective housing needs and the commuting patterns of the other two. There would also little sense in promoting a strategy that does not acknowledge or reflect important transport corridors in North Essex such as the A12, the A120 and/or rail connections.

To ensure all alternatives respect relative housing needs and commuting patterns, and to help distil the options down to a manageable number for testing, it is proposed that the North Essex area be divided into two notional sub-areas – namely 1) the area west of Colchester including Braintree and the western part of

Colchester borough and urban area; and 2) the area east of Colchester including Tendring district and the eastern part of Colchester borough and urban area. In accordance with the housing need and commuting patterns it would be reasonable to discount concentrating development at one end of the North Essex area and to expect any spatial strategies to broadly deliver around 5,000 dwellings west of Colchester and 2,500 east of Colchester.

Looking more closely at the residual housing requirements of the three individual authorities, Braintree, Colchester and Tendring are required to deliver an objectively assessed need derived requirement of 14,320, 18,400 and 11,000 homes between 2013 and 2033 respectively – a rough percentage split of 33%, 42% and 25%.

Between 2013 and 2019, actual dwelling completions in each authority were approximately 2,500, 5,500 and 3,000 respectively (11,000 in total) and the amount of development already expected to be delivered within the remainder of the plan period to 2033 through existing planning permissions, Section 2 Allocations and windfall sites in each authority amounts to approximately 11,000 12,000 and 8,000 respectively (31,000 in total). That leaves a ‘residual’ or remaining housing need within each authority (for which additional site allocations would be required) of approximately 2,000 i.e. 1,000 in Braintree (14,320 – 2,500 – 11,000); 1,000 in Colchester (18,400 - 5,500 – 12,000); and 0 in Tendring (11,000 – 3,000 – 8,000). In percentage terms, the split of this residual requirement is approximately: 50% Braintree, 50% Colchester and 0% Tendring as summarised, in very broad terms, in the table below.

Table 1

District	Objectively assessed housing requirement 2013-2033	Actual dwelling stock increase 2013-2018	Dwellings expected 2018-2033 from existing planning permissions, Section 2 allocations and windfall sites	Residual requirement 2013-2018 for which additional allocations are required	% split of the residual requirement by district
Braintree	14,320	2,500	11,000	1,000	50%
Colchester	18,400	5,500	12,000	1,000	50%
Tendring	11,000	3,000	8,000	0	0%

However, the current allocation in the Local Plan across the three authorities incorporates a healthy level of flexibility to provide a buffer for under delivery and to guard against the possibility that, for one reason or another, certain sites might not deliver as planned. This flexibility amounts to some 5,500 homes on top of the residual need of 2,000 which accounts for the 7,500 currently planned for through the three Garden Communities). If that 5,500 homes is allocated to the three authorities in proportion to their overall housing need (i.e. applying the 33:42:25 split), it would give 1,800 extra to Braintree, 2,300 to Colchester and 1,400 to Tendring (roughly 13% flexibility for each district over and above their respective OAN requirements).

For the Section 1 allocation of 7,500 homes to genuinely reflect the objectively assessed housing needs of each of the three authorities, it would need to be distributed as follows:

- Braintree: 2,800 ($1,000 + 1,800$)
- Colchester: 3,300 ($1,000 + 2,300$)
- Tendring: 1,400 ($0 + 1,400$)

If these figures are applied to the notional division of North Essex in west of Colchester and east of Colchester by simply dividing the Colchester figure in half, it would allocate the housing as follows:

- West of Colchester: 4,450 (made up of 2,800 at Braintree and 1,650 derived from half of Colchester's number)
- East of Colchester 3,050 (made up of 1,400 for Tendring and 1,650 derived from the other half of Colchester's number).

This would suggest that the current allocation of 5,000 homes to the two Garden Communities west of Colchester and 2,500 homes to the single Garden Community east of Colchester is broadly reflective of objectively assessed housing needs and it would therefore follow that any strategy that deviates significantly from this 2:1 ratio does not reflect the evidence of housing need. This general principle of testing options that reflect relative levels of need is also reflected, indirectly, in the Inspector's comments within paragraph 114 of his 8th June 2018 letter where he says "*it is difficult to see the logic of assessing Monks Wood as an alternative to [the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community] CBBGC and to [the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community] TCBGC, but not to [West of Braintree Garden Community] WoBGC, when appraising combinations of three GCs.*" The logic behind assessing comparable options to the west of Colchester separately from comparable options to the east therefore appears to be in line with the Inspector's thinking.

Principle 4: Ensure alternative strategies are coherent and logical

For a strategy to be genuinely strategic, it should follow a coherent logic rather than being cobbled together from a 'mix and match' of different concepts and approaches. For example, a strategy for North Essex that incorporated entirely different approaches to growth in each of the three constituent authorities would not reasonably constitute a coherent strategy and would bring into question the benefit of having a joint strategic plan for North Essex. Neither would it be logical to have a strategy that, on the whole, follows the A120 corridor or other key transport corridors but in one location takes an entirely different path that does not reflect such corridors. As a general principle therefore, there ought to be some sensible logic behind any alternative strategy put forward for testing through the Sustainability Appraisal rather than an unnecessary assessment of every conceivable permutation of sites.

Principle 5: Ensure alternative strategies are reasonable

If there is limited evidence to suggest that an option is likely to be delivered, it begs the question whether that option is reasonable. For example, if a site or sites have been put forward as an alternative concept but there is no evidence of any developer or land-promoter involvement or there are significant unresolved questions about the form of development, its infrastructure requirements or the willingness of landowners to bring a scheme forward, there is little sense in treating it as a reasonable alternative to what is currently proposed in the Local Plan. If an assumingly unreasonable site option had emerged from the Stage 1 assessment as performing notably stronger against the sustainability criteria than other alternatives, there may have been a case for investing more time and effort into working with the promoters to work the proposal up into a feasible scheme – however, the conclusion of the Stage 1 assessment has shown that this is not the case and that no one option performs significantly better or significantly worse than another. On this basis, it would not be unreasonable to discount options from the next stage of the process on the basis that the current evidence shows them to be unreasonable. The responses (or lack of response) from site promoters to the method scoping statement consultation, check and challenge workshop and deliverability and viability consultation has helped inform any decisions as to whether certain options are reasonable.

Principle 6: Strategic sites will deliver a minimum of 2,000 homes within the plan period to 2033

With the exception of the proportionate growth scenarios where sites of any size could be combined in order to deliver the residual housing requirement, all the strategy options involving specific strategic sites assume that those sites will deliver a minimum of 2,000 homes within the remainder of the plan period up to 2033.

Principle 7: All strategy options will deliver social infrastructure

All spatial strategy options will deliver the following infrastructure: early years, primary & secondary schools, youth centre provision, open space, bus services, local centre facilities, healthcare facilities and community meeting spaces.

Sites to be discounted from the Stage 2 Assessment

The following list of sites tested as part of the Stage 1 assessment are proposed not to be carried forward into the Stage 2 assessment where different combinations of sites are tested as alternative spatial strategies . The main reasons for sites being discounted at this stage relate to either a lack of evidence to suggest there are reasonably deliverable proposals being advanced through the plan-making process at this time, or a lack of evidence to demonstrate that

they are reasonable options in practical planning terms. Some sites have been discounted because they overlap or form part of a larger site that is being carried forward into Stage 2 or, following responses to the engagement with site promoters, it has been decided to merge certain sites together.

Table 2

Site	Reason for discounting
ALTGC1 Land West of Braintree	This is a smaller part of the West of Braintree Garden Community but is not being actively promoted by any landowners or developers at the size of 2,000 dwellings. This option was therefore merged with NEAGC1.
ALTGC2 Land east of Silver End	This site is an eastern extension to Silver End village which is a larger village with a selection of civic and retail services, as such it is not expected that the proposal would be stand-alone. The site is promoted for 1,800 dwellings but large enough to be able to accommodate 2,500 dwellings, these proposals incorporated the route of the A120 (options 4/5 along) with a grade-separated junction as the primary access and it is not likely that existing junctions on the A12 and A120 could accommodate anticipated traffic growth without severe highway impact. Due to the proposal's limited scale, interdependence on Silver End, reliance on the delivery of the new A120 route and lack of clarity on new junctions, this site has been discounted.
ALTGC5 Land at Marks Tey Option Two	This site refers to land west of Marks Tey and is a subsection of the alternative Garden Community being independently promoted by L&Q, Cirrus Land and Gateway 120. The landowner has no desire to subdivide their scheme therefore this site was combined with ALTGC4 to form the full alternative Garden Community proposal. This was assessed through stage 1 as ALTCG4 thus ALTGC5 does no need to be carried forward to the Stage 2 assessment in its own right.
ALTGC8 Land at East of Colchester Option Two	Site not being actively promoted by any landowning party unlike the adjoining ALTGC7 which is being promoted by Gatesby Estates and is more likely to be a deliverable option. There are also concerns about achieving suitable road access and achieving a development of significant dwelling capacity that is also sensitive to the undulating landscape around the valley of Salary Brook.
ALTGC9 Land at East of Colchester Option Three	Forms the northern part of the current Garden Community proposal at NEAGC3 but is unlikely to be a desirable development on its own as it would fail to achieve desired links to the University of Essex and would not facilitate or incorporate the full A133/A120 link road which is a key component of the Garden Community scheme. The AECOM Report on Infrastructure, Planning, Phasing and Delivery suggests that the northern part of the Garden Community would most likely be developed in later phases most likely beyond the current plan period.
ALTGC10 Land at East of Colchester Option Four	Forms the southern part of the current Garden Community proposal but is unlikely to be a desirable development on its own as it would not facilitate or incorporate the full A133/A120 link road thereby lacking direct access to the strategic road network. It is likely that development would cause severe traffic problems for areas East of Colchester Town Centre which already operate at capacity. This option has been discounted in favour of the full development proposed

Site	Reason for discounting
	on the scale of NEAGC3 which would deliver the full link road.
ALTGC11 Langham Garden Village	Site no longer being actively promoted by its original proponent and considered to be an illogical northward extension to Colchester that breaches the strong defensible boundary formed by the A12 Colchester Bypass and threatens the sensitive landscape of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty crossing the Essex/Suffolk border.
SUE4 Land south of Haverhill	Haverhill located outside of the Braintree district and the land in question at extreme north west corner of the Braintree thus there is poor compliance with the principle of developing along the A120 growth corridor. Any strategic development would have to take place in co-operation with West Suffolk Council. However West Suffolk Council is only just embarking on the preparation of a new Local Plan and is exploring issues and options – so plan making timetables for the two authorities are not currently aligned.
VE2 Land at Coggeshall	Envisioned by the LPA as a group of village extensions capable of achieving 2,000 dwellings in total. One of the larger sites (Cogg182) was granted outline permission in 2018 meaning that there is no longer capacity for a strategic scale development at this location.
VE4 Weeley Garden Village	Multiple ownership, no interest from landowners to work together to deliver a comprehensive scheme. Major development at Weeley considered as an option by Tendring District Council as part of its Section 2 Local Plan. Strategic growth at Weeley best tested as part of the CAUSE Metro Plan concept which involves different landowners and forms part of a more cohesive strategy involving other villages along the Colchester to Clacton branch line.

Sites to be included in Stage 2 Assessment

The following list of sites tested as part of the Stage 1 assessment are proposed to be carried forward into Stage 2 where they will be assessed in different combinations, with explanations given.

Table 3

Site	Explanation
NEAGC1 West of Braintree	This is one of the three current Garden Community proposals in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan – against which alternative proposals are to be tested.
NEAGC2 Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community (Marks Tey)	This is one of the three current Garden Community proposals in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan – against which alternative proposals are to be tested.
NEAGC3 Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community	This is one of the three current Garden Community proposals in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan – against which alternative proposals are to be tested.

Site	Explanation
ALTGC3 North West Coggeshall (Monks Wood)	scheme be tested at an alternative at 5,000 and 7,000 homes (IED011, para123), Lightwood have confirmed through consultation responses that their evolved scheme stands at 5,500 dwellings.
ALTGC4 Land at Marks Tey Option One	Forms part of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community and also independently promoted by L&Q, Cirrus Land and Gateway 120. AECOM Report on Infrastructure, Planning, Phasing and Delivery suggests that the land around ALTGC 4 and ALTGC 6 could form part of the earlier phases of development and could therefore be the areas of land likely to be preferred if a ‘smaller’ version Marks Tey development was to progress. Proposed that ALTGC 4 and ALTGC 6 be tested as part of an option that includes a greater number of ‘smaller Garden Communities’ (alongside Monks Wood and West of Braintree – see ‘West 4’ below).
ALTGC6 Land at Marks Tey Option Three	Forms part of the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community and also independently promoted by L&Q, Cirrus Land and Gateway 120. AECOM Report on Infrastructure, Planning, Phasing and Delivery suggests that the land around ALTGC 4 and ALTGC 6 could form part of the earlier phases of development and could therefore be the areas of land likely to be preferred if a ‘smaller’ version Marks Tey development was to progress. Proposed that ALTGC 4 and ALTGC 6 be tested as part of an option that includes a greater number of ‘smaller Garden Communities’ (alongside Monks Wood and West of Braintree – see ‘West 4’ below).
ALTGC7 Land at East of Colchester Option One	Site being actively promoted by Gatesby Estates and is effectively an urban extension to north east Colchester. Should be tested as a reasonable alternative to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and other alternatives proposed for the area east of Colchester.
SUE 1 Land at Halstead	Some of this land could form part of an urban extension to Halstead under a proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth option despite poor compliance with the principle of developing along the A120 growth corridor. The site would be capable of delivering dwellings beyond the plan period in reasonable proximity to the Tier 2 settlement of Halstead.
SUE2 Land East of Braintree (including Temple Border)	Could be considered both under a proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth option (with SUE 3) or as a strategic urban extension option in its own right given its proximity to the Tier 1 settlement of Braintree.
SUE3 Land south east of Braintree	Could be considered both under a proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth option (with SUE 3) or as a strategic urban extension option in its own right given its proximity to the Tier 1 settlement of Braintree.
VE1 Land at Kelvedon	Some of this land could form part of an urban extension to Kelvedon to be tested alongside urban extensions to Braintree as a ‘strategic urban extension’ option, particularly as it aligns well with the A120 and A12 growth corridor.
C1, C2, C3, C4 CAUSE Metro Plan	Local Plan Inspector specifically requires the Metro Plan concept to be tested as a spatial strategy alternative. It is a logical concept which aims to focus growth on land around existing railway stations on the Colchester to Clacton branch line, namely at the villages of Alresford, Great Bentley, Weeley and Thorpe le Soken – all within the Tendring District. In taking housing need and commuting patterns into account, the option would be tested as an alternative to the

Site	Explanation
	Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and other alternatives proposed for the area east of Colchester.
VE5 Tendring Central	Scheme being actively promoted by Edward Gittins. Development in this location has been considered by Tendring District Council and discounted in the past, but the latest version is a larger development which does relate well to the A120 growth corridor and should be tested as a reasonable alternative to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and other alternatives proposed for the area east of Colchester (such as Metro Plan).

Proposed Spatial Strategy Options (Table 4)

WEST OF COLCHESTER (Whole of Braintree and most of Colchester) Target of approximately 5,000 additional homes up to 2033	EAST OF COLCHESTER (Tendring and eastern part of Colchester) Target to deliver approximately 2,500 additional homes up to 2033
<p>1. Proportionate (percentage-based) growth <i>[Resulting in a thin distribution of growth across both urban and rural settlements]</i></p> <p>2. Proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth <i>[Resulting a strong focus for growth on Braintree, Halstead and Hatfield Peverel]</i></p> <p>3. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] <i>[As currently proposed in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan]</i></p> <p>4. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] and West 4a: smaller scale of West of Braintree [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + smaller scale of Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] <i>[Options involving three Garden Communities including Monks Wood]</i></p> <p>5. Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + Colchester/Braintree Borders GC [NEAGC2] <i>[An alternative combination of two Garden Communities]</i></p> <p>6. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] <i>[Another alternative combination of two Garden Communities]</i></p> <p>7. East of Braintree [SUE2] + Kelvedon [VE1] <i>[A non-Garden Community option proposing focussed growth at Braintree and Kelvedon]</i></p> <p>8. Land at Halstead [SUE1] + proportionate growth. <i>[One alternative Garden Community alongside proportionate growth at existing settlements]</i></p>	<p>1. Proportionate (percentage-based) growth <i>[Resulting in large increases in development at coastal towns]</i></p> <p>2. Proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth <i>[Resulting in major development around Brightlingsea]</i></p> <p>3. Tendring Colchester Borders GC [NEAGC3] <i>[As currently proposed in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan]</i></p> <p>4. Colchester North-East Urban Extension [ALTGC7] <i>[Strategic urban extension across the Colchester/Tendring border]</i></p> <p>5. Tendring Central Garden Village [VE5] <i>[New settlement at Frating at the A133/A120 interchange]</i></p> <p>6. CAUSE Metro Plan [C1, C2, C3 & C4] <i>[Development focussed on railway stations along the Colchester to Clacton branch line at Alresford, Great Bentley, Weeley and Thorpe le Soken]</i></p>

WEST OF COLCHESTER (Whole of Braintree and most of Colchester) Target of approximately 5,000 additional homes up to 2033	EAST OF COLCHESTER (Tendring and eastern part of Colchester) Target to deliver approximately 2,500 additional homes up to 2033
<p>9. West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + proportionate growth [One alternative Garden Community alongside proportionate growth at existing settlements]</p> <p>10. Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] + proportionate growth [One alternative Garden Community alongside proportionate growth at existing settlements]</p> <p>11. Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + proportionate growth [One alternative Garden Community alongside proportionate growth at existing settlements]</p>	

Descriptions of the Options

West 1: Proportionate (percentage-based) growth

The rationale behind each of the proportionate growth scenarios (West 1 & 2 and East 1 & 2) is to test the potential for accommodating the development currently expected to be delivered through Garden Communities within the current plan period on land in and around existing settlements – thus avoiding the need to establish any new ‘stand-alone’ settlements or other strategic-scale developments, at least until 2033. The Inspector has specifically requested that this option is assessed as part of the further SA work to help demonstrate whether or not a strategy involving the creation of new settlements is justified in the current plan period.

Under this particular option, it is envisaged that all defined settlements in North Essex across all three authorities, regardless of their position within the Local Plan settlement hierarchies would accommodate a pro-rata share of the remainder of the North Essex housing requirement for the period 2019 to 2033 including an element of flexibility – a level of approximately 40,000 homes. This represents an approximate 18% increase in dwelling stock above 2019 levels and under this percentage-based approach, each defined settlement would accommodate an 18% increase in housing over 14 years (2019-2033).

Taking into account homes already expected on sites with planning permission or otherwise allocated in Section 2 plans, many of the existing settlements would not need to accommodate any additional housing as they are already expected to achieve or exceed their 18% dwelling stock quota through existing proposals. There are however some settlements that would be expected to accommodate additional housing allocations under this percentage-based proportionate approach to achieve the remainder of the requirement. For the settlements in the area west of Colchester, these are summarised, in broad terms, in the table below.

Table 5.1

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Halstead	200-300	N/a		
Colchester				
Coggeshall				
Black Notley				
Rayne				
Sible Hedingham				

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Earls Colne	50-99 (each)	N/a		Section 2 Local Plans to be retained and, where necessary, expanded.
Finchingfield				
Castle Hedingham				
Gosfield				
Panfield				
Wethersfield				
Aldham	1-49 (each)	N/a		The very thin spread of additional growth, particularly across smaller villages, would result in numerous developments of insufficient scale to accommodate new facilities such as schools or health centres. Such infrastructure might need to be delivered through pooled financial contributions towards expanding existing facilities or delivering new shared facilities for which land would need to be identified and acquired.
Birch				
Easthorpe				
Great Wigborough				
Layer Breton				
Little Horkestey				
Messing-Cum-Inworth				
Mount Bures				
Peldon				
Salcott				
Wormingford				
Bures Hamlet				
Great Bardfield				
Great Yeldham				
Steeple Bumpstead				
Ashden				
Audley End				
Belchamp Otten				
Belchamp St Paul				
Belchamp Walter				
Blackmore End				
Bradwell				

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Bulmer				
Bulmer Tey				
Colne Engaine				
Cornish Hall End				
Cressing				
Foxearth				
Gestingthorpe				
Great Maplestead				
Great Sailing				
Greenstead Green				
High Garret				
Helions				
Bumpstead				
Lamarsch				
Little Maplestead				
Little Yeldham				
Nounsley				
Pebmarsh				
Ridgewell				
Rivenhall				
Rivenhall End				
Shalford				
Shalford Church End				
Stambourne				
Chapelend Way				
Stambourne Dyers End				
Stinstead				
Sturmer				
Surrex				

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
(Coggeshall)				
Terling				
Tilbury Juxta Clare				
Topplesfield				
White Colne				
White Notley				
Wickham St. Paul				

For the area west of Colchester, a percentage based growth strategy would result in a very thin spread of development through the various settlements with only Halstead having to accommodate additional allocations of 200+ dwellings and six other settlements accommodating 100+. The total amount of development generated through this percentage-based approach would deliver approximately 3,000 homes which is around 2,000 short of what might be expected from the area west of Colchester when applying principle 3 above. This indicates that the proportionate percentage-based approach would shift the majority of the additional development to Tendring and East Colchester, as can be seen under the East 1 option, albeit not to the extent by which such a strategy might be seen as altogether unreasonable.

West 2: Proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth

Under this option, it is envisaged that development would be allocated to settlements in North Essex across all three authorities according to their position within the settlement hierarchy with the aim of directing growth towards the most sustainable locations.

Policy SP2 in the Section 1 Local, which sets out the spatial strategy for North Essex, states that existing settlements will be the principal focus for additional growth across North Essex within the Local Plan period with development being accommodated within or adjoining settlements according to their scale, sustainability and existing role both within each individual district and, where relevant, across the wider strategic area. Under this hierarchy-based growth strategy, this principle is extended to deliver the full housing requirement for North Essex instead of part of the proposed growth being delivered through Garden Communities.

The hierarchy-based strategy involves 50% of the 40,000 homes between 2019 and 2033 going to the larger 'Tier 1' settlements of Colchester and Braintree; 20% to 'Tier 2' settlements such as Clacton, Harwich, Witham and Halstead; and 10% to 'Tier 3' settlements such as Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross; Manningtree, Lawford & Mistley, Brightlingsea, Kelvedon and Hatfield Peverel. The remaining 15% would be delivered around smaller 'Tier 4' and 'Tier 5' settlements but with growth already accounted for through existing planning permissions and Section 2 housing allocations.

The Inspector has specifically requested that proportionate growth is assessed as part of the further SA work to help demonstrate whether or not a strategy involving the creation of new settlements is justified in the current plan period. Hierarchy based proportionate growth is a different interpretation to the proportionate growth option outlined under West 1. Appraising two different approaches ensures that proportionate growth has been properly and fully explored. For the settlements in the area west of Colchester, the hierarchy-based distribution of growth is summarised, in broad terms, in the table below.

Table 5.2

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment Assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Land east of Braintree [SUE2]	4,500-5,000	N/a	The proposals for the Braintree site includes the provision of a range of leisure, employment and retail uses to complement the relocation of Braintree Football Club to the site. Approximately 10 hectares of B-use employment land in total is suggested as	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport, and Colchester• Millennium slipways at Galleys Corner Roundabout are required to provide additional capacity for initial phases (funded and expected to be constructed June
Hatfield Peverel	800 (each)	N/a		

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment Assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Halstead			<p>being deliverable as part of the Braintree scheme alongside 5,000 dwellings.</p> <p>Smaller employment sites of around 2ha could be delivered alongside each of the developments at Hatfield Peverel and Halstead.</p>	<p>2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New route of A120 to provide a free-flow link in place of the Galley's Corner roundabout. • RIS funded A12 upgrading 2022 to 2025 • Bypass for Halstead

Like the percentage-based proportionate growth scenario, the hierarchy-based model results in many of the existing settlements not needing to accommodate any additional housing as they are already expected to achieve their share of the new homes increase through existing proposals. Unlike the percentage-based approach, however, the settlements that would be expected to accommodate additional housing allocations are fewer in number – meaning less of a ‘thin spread’ of development, but the scale of required growth in the affected settlements much greater, particularly for Braintree and, to a lesser extent, Hatfield Peverel and Halstead.

This approach would deliver around 6,000-6,500 additional homes in the area the west of Colchester which is substantially greater than the 5,000 that would be expected under a strict application of Principle 3 above. This demonstrates that a hierarchy-based approach shifts the focus of development to the west – mainly because Braintree is categorised as a Tier 1 settlement even though its existing dwelling stock and current proposals for development are significantly smaller than that of Colchester.

West 3: West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2]

This option reflects what is already included in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan with development at two new Garden Communities, one west of Braintree and one on the Colchester/Braintree border around Marks Tey. In the submitted plan, each of these Garden Communities is expected to deliver 2,500 new homes within the remainder of the plan period to 2033. In terms of their long-term dwelling capacity, the Colchester Braintree borders proposal will potentially be more than double the size of that west of Braintree.

Under this option, the two garden communities are of a sufficient mass and distance from each other, and other town centres, to be capable of developing as standalone communities. The connection of the proposed garden communities, along the A120 corridor, means that RTS is an option. The Concept Feasibility Study (EB/008) provides evidence that 2,500 dwellings can be delivered in each garden community within the plan period. The two garden communities proposed will deliver a total of 5,000 dwellings to the west of Colchester within the plan period, as justified under principles 1 and 3. The total dwellings figure, which is within the range in the Submission Local Plan, is taken from evidence in the North Essex Local Plan (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment Update report by Hyas Associates and thus reflects the most up to date position in respect of viability assumptions.

Table 5.3

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
West of Braintree GC NEAGC1	2,500	10,000	Evidence base document entitled 'Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For West of Braintree, it suggests approximately 9ha by 2033, 26ha by 2050 and 43ha by 2071. For the Colchester/Braintree Borders, it suggests 4ha by 2033, 19ha by 2050 and 37ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that West of Braintree will likely deliver 43ha of employment land and Colchester/Braintree borders 37ha.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted• RTS links to Colchester and Braintree, with potential to link to London Stansted Airport.• Strategic improvements to Marks Tey Railway Station.• New junctions. Widening, and rerouting of A12.• Bypass for A120.
Colchester/Braintree GC NEAGC2	2,500	21,000		

West 4: West of Braintree [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2] and West 4a: smaller scale of West of Braintree [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC 3] + smaller scale of Colchester/Braintree GC [NEAGC2]

Under these options, there would be three new garden communities to the west of Colchester each of a smaller size overall than those proposed in the Section 1 Local Plan, but each expected to deliver around 2,000 homes in the remainder of the plan period to 2033. The three smaller garden communities would be west of Braintree, the Monks Wood site being promoted by Lightwood Strategic and at Marks Tey. The Inspector specifically requested that a range of options including more or fewer garden communities, including the Monks Wood proposal, are tested as he felt that these would be reasonable scenarios that the previous SA had failed to cover.

Under these scenarios, it is anticipated that each of the three locations – all well related to the existing A120, could reasonably deliver 2,000 dwellings (in line with Principal 6 explained above) i.e. around 6,000 in total for the area west of Colchester – slightly higher than the 5,000 expected from the two Garden Communities currently proposed in the Section 1 Local Plan. This reflects the likely delivery within the plan period of 2,500 dwellings for each site as evidenced in the Concept Feasibility Study for West of Braintree and Braintree Colchester boarders GCs and the viability and deliverability site information form for Monks Wood, but adding in an element of flexibility as three garden communities are proposed.

The size of each proposed garden community under this option is less than options involving 1 or 2 garden communities because, whilst planning for longer term development through the delivery of garden communities this option, if taken forward, will be combined with development to the east of Colchester. An option involving a lower scale of development enables the SA to draw out the different effects, both positive and negative, from smaller and larger garden communities.

The total dwellings figures for West 4 for West of Braintree is within the range in the Submission Local Plan and is taken from evidence in the North Essex Local Plan (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment Update report by Hyas Associates Ltd. The total dwellings figure for Marks Tey is within the range in the Submission Local Plan and includes land that is being independently promoted by L&Q, Cirrus Land and Gateway 120. The AECOM Report on Infrastructure, Planning, Phasing and Delivery suggests that this land could form part of the earlier phases of development and could therefore be the areas of land likely to be preferred if a smaller version Marks Tey development was to progress. The total dwellings figure for Monks Wood reflects the scale of development being promoted as set out in the viability and deliverability site information form.

The total dwelling figures for West 4a for each of the three sites is 5,500. This allows the NEAs to consider the likely sustainability effects of smaller scale development and facilitates a direct comparison of these three sites.

Table 5.4

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
West of Braintree GC NEAGC1	2,000	10,000	Evidence base document entitled 'Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For West of Braintree, it suggests approximately 9ha by 2033, 26ha by 2050 and 43ha by 2071. For the Colchester/Braintree Borders, it suggests 4ha by 2033, 19ha by 2050 and 37ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that West of Braintree will likely deliver 43ha of employment land and Colchester/Braintree borders 37ha.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted • RTS links to Colchester and Braintree, with potential to link to London Stansted Airport. • Strategic improvements to Marks Tey Railway Station. • New junctions. Widening, and rerouting of A12. • Bypass for A120. • Sustainable transport link to Kelvedon Station • District centres
Colchester/Braintree GC NEAGC2	2,000	17,000		
Monks Wood ALTGC3	2,000	5,500	25h.2a for B 'uses' has been identified in the master plan /land use budget plan that underpins the Alder King Viability Report for Monks Wood (March 2019) at 5,500 homes. Estimated that 11ha would be delivered in the plan period up to 2033. 16.2ha has been identified for Retail /District/Local Centre 'A' uses. Upper floors can provide alternative or additional B1 space to that within the 25.2ha referred to above	

Table 5.4a

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
West of Braintree GC NEAGC1	2,000	5,500	Evidence base document entitled 'Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For West of Braintree, it suggests approximately 9ha by 2033. For the Colchester/Braintree Borders, it suggests 4ha by 2033. It is suggested that these figures are doubled to 18 and 8ha respectively to correspond with the fully built out scenario of 5,500 homes at each development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted • RTS links to Colchester and Braintree, with potential to link to London Stansted Airport. • Strategic improvements to Marks Tey Railway Station. • New junctions. Widening, and rerouting of A12. • Bypass for A120. • Sustainable transport link to Kelvedon Station • District centres
Colchester/Braintree GC NEAGC2	2,000	5,500		
Monks Wood ALTGC3	2,000	5,500	25h.2a for B 'uses' has been identified in the master plan /land use budget plan that underpins the Alder King Viability Report for Monks Wood (March 2019) at 5,500 homes. 16.2ha has been identified for Retail /District/Local Centre 'A' uses. Upper floors can provide alternative or additional B1 space to that within the 25.2ha referred to above	

West 5: Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3] + Colchester/Braintree Borders GC [NEAGC2]

Under this option, there would be two Garden Communities to the west of Colchester but the Garden Community West of Braintree would be substituted with the Monks Wood proposal from Lightwood Strategic so the strategy would include Monks Wood and the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community at Marks Tey. The focus of growth would therefore shift eastwards along the A120 corridor towards Colchester but further away from Braintree and Stansted.

This option would assume 2,500 homes being built at each of the two Garden Communities within the plan period to 2033 – delivering an equivalent number of homes to that already proposed through the Garden Communities in the Section 1 Local Plan. Longer-term however, a total of 26,500 homes are proposed.

Table 5.5

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Monks Wood GC ALTGC3	2,500	5,500	25h.2a for B 'uses' has been identified in the master plan /land use budget plan that underpins the Alder King Viability Report for Monks Wood (March 2019) at 5,500 homes. Estimated that 11ha would be delivered in the plan period up to 2033. Likewise, 16.2ha has been identified for Retail /District/Local Centre 'A' uses. Upper floors can provide alternative or additional B1 space to that within the 25.2ha referred to above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted • RTS links to Colchester and Braintree, with potential to link to London Stansted Airport. • Strategic improvements to Marks Tey Railway Station. • New junctions. Widening, and rerouting of A12. • Bypass for A120. • Sustainable transport link to Kelvedon Station • District centres
Colchester/Braintree GC NEAGC2	2,500	21,000	Evidence base document entitled 'Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For the Colchester/Braintree Borders, it suggests 4ha	

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
			by 2033, 19ha by 2050 and 37ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that Colchester/ Braintree borders scheme will likely deliver 37ha.	

West 6: West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] + Monks Wood GC [ALTGC3]

Under this option, there are two garden communities: the Colchester Braintree Borders Garden Community at Marks Tey would be substituted with Monks Wood and would delivered alongside the Garden Community West of Braintree. The focus of growth would therefore shift westwards along the A120 corridor away from Colchester and more towards Braintree with the majority of development being within the Braintree district.

This option would assume 2,500 homes being built at each of the two Garden Communities within the plan period to 2033 – delivering an equivalent number of homes to that already proposed through the Garden Communities in the Section 1 Local Plan. Longer-term however, 15,000 homes are proposed.

Table 5.6

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Monks Wood GC ALTGC3	2,500	5,500	25h.2a for B 'uses' has been identified in the master plan /land use budget plan that underpins the Alder King Viability Report for Monks Wood (March 2019) at 5,500 homes. Estimated that 11ha would be delivered in the plan period up to 2033. Likewise, 16.2ha has been identified for Retail /District/Local Centre 'A' uses. Upper floors can provide alternative or additional B1 space to that within the 25.2ha referred to above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted • RTS links to Colchester and Braintree, with potential to link to London Stansted Airport. • Strategic improvements to Marks Tey Railway Station. • New junctions. Widening, and rerouting of A12. • Bypass for A120. • Sustainable transport link to Kelvedon Station • District centres
West of Braintree NEAGC1	2,500	10,000	Evidence base document entitled 'Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For West of Braintree, it suggests approximately 9ha by 2033, 26ha	

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
			by 2050 and 43ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that West of Braintree will likely deliver 43ha of employment land.	

West 7: East of Braintree [SUE2] + Kelvedon [VE1]

Under this option, there would be no stand-alone Garden Communities to the west of Colchester at all. This non-Garden Community option would be different to the proportionate growth scenarios in that it would involve targeted growth in the form of two strategic urban extensions – one to the east of Braintree and one to Kelvedon – both within Braintree district. The focus of growth would therefore move away from Colchester with development to the west at Braintree and further south along the A12 corridor at Kelvedon.

Traditionally growth has been delivered across the NEAs through planned urban extensions to existing settlements, this option is a continuation of this approach. Both options are proposed to deliver 2,500 dwellings each within the plan period and a further 2,500 dwellings each beyond the plan period. Whilst the Inspector did not specifically request that non-garden community options are appraised as part of the Additional SA, the NEAs consider that the appraisal and consideration of urban extensions as a spatial strategy option will provide a useful comparison to the options involving garden communities. Land east of Braintree and land at Kelvedon have been selected as these sites meet the principles outlined above.

Table 5.7

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Land east of Braintree SUE2	2,500	5,000	The proposals for the site includes the provision of a range of leisure, employment and retail uses to complement the relocation of Braintree Football Club to the site. Approximately 10 hectares of B-use employment land in total is suggested as being deliverable as part of the Braintree scheme alongside 5,000 dwellings of which 5ha would be achieved in the plan period to 2033 alongside 2,500 dwellings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport, and Colchester • Millennium slipways at Galleys Corner Roundabout are required to provide additional capacity for initial phases (funded and expected to be constructed June 2020). • New route of A120 to provide a free-flow link in place of the Galley's Corner roundabout. • The delivery of the Kings Dene scheme (Kelvedon) is not contingent upon the prior (or eventual) construction of the dualled A120 or the 'Option D' alignment, nor does it prejudice the delivery of this alignment. • RIS funded A12 upgrading 2022 to
Land at Kelvedon VE1	2,500	5,000	The proposals for Kings Dene include the provision of up to 36ha of employment land for B use class employment use (B1, B2 and B8). This land is to be provided in a highly accessible location to the south west of the	

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
			site between the A12 and railway line. To complement the proposed employment land provision, opportunities also exist to provide B1 and non B class employment generating uses around the rail station as part of mixed used district centre and within local centres.	<p>2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative route from Coggeshall Road through the site to the A12 south west of Kelvedon. This provides the opportunity to remove through traffic from the restricted centre of Kelvedon and connect the Coggeshall traffic directly to the new A12 junction.

West 8: Halstead (SUE1) and proportionate growth

This option and the following three options, all involve development of one garden community alongside further proportionate growth. Each of the proposed garden communities to the west of Colchester that are included in the ‘Sites to be included in Stage 2 Assessment’ table are options (West 8, 9, 10 & 11).

The Inspector asked for a range of garden community options to be appraised, including 1, 2 or more garden communities. As the housing requirement to the west of Colchester under Principle 3 is for approximately 5,000 dwellings in the plan period and one strategic site [i.e. at Halstead] is only realistically capable of delivering 2,500 dwellings in the plan period, the remaining development would be delivered through proportionate growth around existing settlements. The total dwellings for site SUE1 at Halstead reflects what the site promoter believes is achievable on the site, as set out in the viability and deliverability site information form.

The proportionate growth for other settlements west of Colchester follows the ‘hierarchy-based’ approach as explained under the West 2 option which, when compared to the ‘percentage-based’ approach (which spreads development very thinly across rural settlements) is considered to be the more sustainable approach. Where a strategic site is being proposed alongside proportionate hierarchy-based growth, the amount of development proposed under proportionate growth is set at half of what is proposed under option West 2. Essentially, this option would direct development to Halstead, Braintree and, to a lesser extent, Hatfield Peverel and would deliver approximately 5,500 homes which reflects, broadly the scale of growth required west of Colchester to meet housing needs in line with Principle 3.

Table 5.8

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Land at Halstead [SUE1]	2,500	8,000	Yes, please refer to accompanying note to site information form. The site provides an opportunity to enhance accessibility to (and/or expand) the Bluebridge Industrial Estate. 2ha of employment land suggested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full Halstead Bypass• Restore and restore dismantled railway Colchester Road to Tidings Hill as a new cycle and pedestrian route.• RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport, and Colchester• Millennium slipways at Galleys Corner Roundabout are required to provide additional capacity for initial phases (funded and expected to be constructed June 2020).• New route of A120 to provide a free-flow link in place of the Galley's Corner
Land east of Braintree [SUE2]	2,500	N/a		
Hatfield Peverel	400	N/a	The proposals for the Braintree site includes the provision of a range of leisure, employment and retail uses to complement the relocation of Braintree Football Club to the site. 5ha of employment land suggested alongside 2,500 homes.	

			<p>Smaller employment sites of around 1ha could be delivered alongside development at Hatfield Peverel.</p>	<p>roundabout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RIS funded A12 upgrading 2022 to 2025 • Bypass for Halstead
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West 9: West of Braintree GC [NEAGC1] and proportionate growth

This option involves development of one garden community and proportionate growth. Each of the proposed garden communities to the west of Colchester that are included in the ‘Sites to be included in Stage 2 Assessment’ table are options (West 8, 9, 10 & 11).

The Inspector asked for a range of garden community options to be appraised, including 1, 2 or more garden communities. As the housing requirement to the west of Colchester is for approximately 5,000 dwellings in the plan period and the West of Braintree Garden Community is only capable of delivering 2,500 dwellings in the plan period, proportionate growth is also required under this option to make up the remainder. That remainder under this option is formed by applying half the development expected under the hierarchy based approach to proportionate growth as set out per West 2. The total dwellings figure, which is within the range in the Submission Local Plan, is taken from evidence in the North Essex Local Plan (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment Update Report by Hyas Associates (June 2019).

The proportionate –hierarchy-based growth that would be delivered alongside the Garden Community would result in a strong focus of development around Braintree with major developments to the east and the west. This option could deliver around 6,000 homes which reflects, broadly the scale of growth required west of Colchester to meet housing needs in line with Principle 3.

Table 5.9

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
West of Braintree GC NEAGC1	2,500	10,000	Evidence base document entitled ‘Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For West of Braintree, it suggests approximately 9ha by 2033, 26ha by 2050 and 43ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that West of Braintree will likely deliver 43ha.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted. • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport, and Colchester • Millennium slipways at Galleys Corner Roundabout are required to provide additional capacity for initial phases (funded and expected to be constructed June 2020). • New route of A120 to provide a free-flow link in place of the Galley’s Corner roundabout. • RIS funded A12 upgrading 2022 to 2025
Land east of Braintree [SUE2]	2,500	N/a		
Hatfield Peverel	400 (each)	N/a		
Halstead			Smaller employment sites of around 1ha	

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
			could be delivered alongside development at Hatfield Peverel and Halstead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bypass for Halstead

West 10: Colchester/ Braintree Borders garden community [NEAGC2] and proportionate growth

This option involves development of one garden community and proportionate growth. Each of the proposed garden communities to the west of Colchester that are included in the ‘Sites to be included in Stage 2 Assessment’ table are options (West 8, 9, 10 & 11).

The Inspector asked for a range of garden community options to be appraised, including 1, 2 or more garden communities. As the housing requirement to the west of Colchester is for approximately 5,000 dwellings in the plan period and the Colchester/Braintree Borders Garden Community is only capable of delivering 2,500 dwellings in the plan period, proportionate growth is also required under this option to make up the remainder. That remainder under this option is formed by applying half the development expected under the hierarchy based approach to proportionate growth as set out per West 2. The total dwellings figure, which is within the range in the Submission Local Plan, is taken from evidence in the North Essex Local Plan (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment Update Report by Hyas Associates (June 2019).

Table 5.10

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Colchester/ Braintree Borders garden community NEAGC2	2,500	21,000	Evidence base document entitled ‘Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For the Colchester/Braintree Borders, it suggests 4ha by 2033, 19ha by 2050 and 37ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that the scheme will likely deliver 37ha. The proposals for the Braintree site includes the provision of a range of leisure, employment and retail uses to complement the relocation of Braintree Football Club to the site. 5ha of employment land suggested alongside 2,500 homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Stansted • RTS links to Colchester and Braintree, with potential to link to London Stansted Airport. • Strategic improvements to Marks Tey Railway Station. • New junctions. Widening, and rerouting of A12. • Millennium slipways at Galleys Corner Roundabout are required to provide additional capacity for initial phases (funded and expected to be constructed June 2020). • New route of A120 to provide a free-flow link in place of the Galley’s Corner roundabout. • RIS funded A12 upgrading 2022 to
Land east of Braintree [SUE2]	2,500	N/a		
Hatfield Peverel	400 (each)	N/a		
Halstead				

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
			Smaller employment sites of around 1ha could be delivered alongside development at Hatfield Peverel and Halstead.	<p>2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bypass for Halstead

West 11: Monks Wood [ALTGC3] and proportionate growth

This option involves development of one garden community and proportionate growth. Each of the proposed garden communities to the west of Colchester that are included in the ‘Sites to be included in Stage 2 Assessment’ table are options (West 8, 9, 10 & 11).

The Inspector asked for a range of garden community options to be appraised, including 1, 2 or more garden communities. As the housing requirement to the west of Colchester is for approximately 5,000 dwellings in the plan period and the Monks Wood development is considered capable of delivering 2,500 dwellings in the plan period, proportionate growth is also required under this option to make up the remainder. That remainder under this option is formed by applying half the development expected under the hierarchy based approach to proportionate growth as set out per West 2. The total dwellings reflect what the site promoter believes is achievable on the site, as set out in the viability and deliverability site information form.

Table 5.11

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Monks Wood ALTGC3	2,000	5,500	25ha for B ‘uses’ has been identified in the master plan /land use budget plan that underpins the Alder King Viability Report for Monks Wood (March 2019) at 5,500 homes. Estimated that 11ha would be delivered in the plan period up to 2033. Likewise, 16.2ha has been identified for Retail /District/Local Centre ‘A’ uses. Upper floors can provide alternative or additional B1 space to that within the 25.2ha referred to above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RTS links to Braintree Town, Braintree Freeport and Colchester Sustainable transport link to Kelvedon Station Realignment and upgrading of A120 route and junctions to accommodate traffic generated. Millennium slipways at Galleys Corner Roundabout are required to provide additional capacity for initial phases (funded and expected to be constructed June 2020).
Land east of Braintree [SUE2]	2,500	N/a	The proposals for the Braintree site includes the provision of a range of leisure, employment and retail uses to complement the relocation of Braintree Football Club to the site. 5ha of employment land suggested alongside 2,500 homes. Smaller employment sites of around 1ha could be delivered alongside development at Hatfield Peverel and Halstead.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New route of A120 to provide a free-flow link in place of the Galley’s Corner roundabout. RIS funded A12 upgrading 2022 to 2025 Bypass for Halstead
Hatfield Peverel	400 (each)	N/a		
Halstead				

East 1: Proportionate (percentage-based) growth

For the area east of Colchester, the percentage-based proportionate approach to growth (explained in more detail under West 1 above) would generate the need for additional housing allocations in the following locations:

Table 5.12

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Clacton	1,000-2,000	N/a		
Harwich	500-999 (each)	N/a		
Frinton/Walton				
Brightlingsea	300-499	N/a		
West Mersea	200-299 (each)	N/a		
Wivenhoe				
St. Osyth	100-199 (each)	N/a		
Thorrington				
Little Clacton	50-99 (each)	N/a		
Dedham				
Ardleigh				
Bradfield				
Kirby-le-Soken				
Little Oakley				
Dedham Heath				

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Abberton and Langenhoe	10-49 (each)	N/a		The thinner spread of additional growth across the smaller villages, would result in numerous developments of insufficient scale to accommodate new facilities such as schools or health centres. Such infrastructure might need to be delivered through pooled financial contributions towards expanding existing facilities or delivering new shared facilities for which land would need to be identified and acquired.
Boxted				
Beaumont-Cum-Moze				
Great Bromley				
Great Holland				
Little Bentley				
Little Bromley				
Ramsey Village				
Tendring				
Wix				
Wrabness				
East Mersea				
Fingringhoe				

Under this percentage-based approach to proportionate growth, settlements to the east of Colchester would be delivering approximately 5,000 additional dwellings which is significantly above the 2,500 level proposed in the current Colchester/Tendring Garden Community and the proportion of growth that might be expected in applying principle 3. That said, the level of additional development is not wholly unreasonable in the context of the overall housing need – although a shift to the east does bring about questions over the ability for lower-value areas such as Clacton and Harwich to generate sufficient market demand to deliver the additional growth and also the environmental impacts of directing growth towards more sensitive locations on the coast. Because many of the rural settlements to the east of Colchester are already expected to deliver their fair share of growth through existing proposals, the focus for additional development under this option would indeed be on settlements around the coast, both in Tendring and in Colchester.

In the Section 2 Local Plan for Tendring, a significant amount of land around Clacton is already earmarked for new development and would be capable, in physical terms, of accommodating 1,000 to 2,000 additional homes – however the Section 2 plan makes conservative assumptions about how much development is realistically achievable on those sites within the plan period to 2033 and thus much of the strategic growth that is currently expected to take place beyond 2033 would somehow need to be accelerated under this scenario to achieve higher built-out rates in the period up to 2033. Key road infrastructure projects in north Clacton and on the A133 at Frating would need to be delivered early to enable an accelerated rate of development.

The other coastal towns that would be affected by this growth scenario would be Harwich, Frinton/Walton, Brightlingsea West Mersea and Wivenhoe – all of which are environmentally sensitive in landscape and ecological terms (with close proximity to the European Designated sites) and physically constrained by the coast and peripheral locations. Brightlingsea and West Mersea are both served only by one road in and out with no rail services and an infrequent bus service. Wivenhoe is the subject of an adopted Neighbourhood Plan which limits the contribution of additional development it could make within the plan period to 2033.

East 2: Proportionate (hierarchy-based) growth

For the area east of Colchester, the hierarchy-based growth scenario would only deliver around 1,500 homes against the 2,500 proposed at the Tendring/Colchester Garden Community.

Table 5.13

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Brightlingsea	900-1,000	N/a	Existing Section 2 Local Plan allocations for the Harwich area would need to deliver faster than currently anticipated. Additional employment land circa 3-4ha would be required at Brightlingsea to achieve a level of self-containment – particularly given the town's transport limitations.	Major transport infrastructure improvement for Brightlingsea would be required to enable it to accommodate such a high level of additional development and this might involve re-opening the historic railway line to Wivenhoe or constructing a second access road to the town.
Harwich	300-400	N/a		
Frinton/Walton	100-299	N/a		

This approach would only deliver around 1,500 additional homes in the area east of Colchester which is lower than the 2,500 that would be expected when applying Principle 3 and what is proposed at the proposed Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community.

Brightlingsea is the settlement that would be most greatly affected because it is town in the settlement hierarchy but one where growth has been limited due to its significant physical and environmental constraints and because of its limited transport network. A development of some 900-1,000 homes in this location would require the development of greenfield sites that are sensitive in landscape terms and within close proximity to the Colne Estuary which is an internationally designated wildlife site. It would also bring into question the adequacy of the current transport provision which is limited to a single road (the B1029) in and out of the town, a limited bus service and no rail provision. The re-opening of the historic branch line between Brightlingsea and Wivenhoe would be a popular choice, but would be extremely expensive in relation to the scale of development being proposed and the necessary engineering works would no doubt bring great disturbance to the Colne Estuary wildlife. Similarly the construction of a new road into Brightlingsea would be cost prohibitive and environmentally damaging – when weighed up against the amount of housing that would realistically be achieved.

East 3: Tendring Colchester Borders GC [NEAGC 3]

This option reflects what is already included in the submitted Section 1 Local Plan with development at a Garden Community, east of Colchester. In the submitted plan, this Garden Community is expected to deliver 2,500 new homes within the remainder of the plan period to 2033. In terms of overall dwelling capacity, the Tendring Colchester borders garden community proposal will deliver 7,500 dwellings which is within the range in the Submission Local Plan and taken from evidence in the North Essex Local Plan (Strategic) Section 1 Viability Assessment Update (DRAFT) (Hyas Associates Ltd, May 2019) report and thus reflects the most up to date position.

Table 5.14

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Tendring/ Colchester Borders GC NEAGC3	2,500	7,500	Evidence base document entitled 'Reconciliation of Cebr and Cambridge Econometrics Employment Scenarios and Floorspace Requirements for the North Essex Garden Communities – Cebr note for the North Essex Authorities recommends employment land figures for the Garden Community proposals. For the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community, it suggests approximately 7ha by 2033, 21ha by 2050 and 25ha by 2071. Totally built out, it is suggested that the scheme will likely deliver 21ha.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTS links to Colchester Town with potential to link to Braintree and London Stansted Airport.• A120 to A133 link road with new junctions.

East 4: Colchester North-East Urban Extension [ALTGC 7]

Under this option, there would be no stand-alone Garden Community to the east of Colchester at all. This non-Garden Community option would be different to the proportionate growth scenarios in that it would involve targeted growth in the form of a strategic urban extension to the north-east of Colchester. This site could deliver 2,500 dwellings within the plan period and an additional 1,500 dwellings beyond the plan period.

Traditionally growth has been delivered across the NEAs through planned urban extensions to larger settlements, this option is a continuation of this approach. Whilst the Inspector did not specifically request that non-garden community options are appraised as part of the Additional SA, the NEAs consider that the appraisal and consideration of urban extensions as a spatial strategy option will provide a useful comparison to the options involving garden communities. This site has been selected as an option as it is being actively promoted and is effectively an urban extension to north-east Colchester.

Table 3.16

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Colchester North-East ALTGC7	2,500	4,000	None as the site is within walking distance to existing employment provision, including but not limited to, Severalls Business Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bullock Wood, which borders part of the site's western boundary, is a SSSI and ancient woodland. The site promoter recognises that this would require a minimum 15m stand off from built development which can be sensitively designed to incorporate this stand off.• Link road between Ipswich Road and Harwich Road.• RTS links to Colchester

East 5: Tendring Central Garden Village [VE 5]

This option involves the delivery of a Garden Community in Tendring district, adjacent to the A120 but detached from Colchester and Clacton. The site information form confirms that 2,500 dwellings can be delivered within the plan period, with a further 2,500 dwellings beyond the plan period. This is an alternative garden community to the proposed garden community in the Submission Local Plan and is the only alternative garden community proposed east of Colchester.

Table 5.15

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Tendring Central Garden Village VE5	2,500	5,000	In addition to the existing employment areas (Penguin Books, Manheim Auctions etc.): B1, B2 & B8 : 29.85 ha. Village Centre: 4.59 ha.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project includes delivery of omnidirectional access between the A120 and A133 at the Oasis (Trunk Road) Junction.• Community Woodland <p>The site information form states that improvements to the B1029 to a new Metro Plan Station at Thorrigton will be delivered. This assumption can, however, only be made under options involving both Tendring Central and the Metro Plan but should not be considered under this option, which involves Tendring Central only.</p>

East 6: CAUSE Metro Plan [C1, C2, C3 & C4]

The Inspector has indicated that CAUSE's Metro Plan should be appraised as a spatial strategy option. This option represents both a short term and long term alternative to the garden communities proposed by the NEAs and the alternative garden community proposed under option East 5. Within the plan period, 2,800 dwellings are suggested, based on an average of 700 new homes being delivered at each of the four settlements and which will provide the East Colchester requirement with added flexibility. The longer term option, proposes 8,000 dwellings, which is comparable in scale to the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community.

Table 5.16

Proposal/site	Dwellings to 2033	Total dwellings	Employment assumptions	Strategy-specific infrastructure assumptions
Alresford CAUSE	700	2,000	CAUSE's 1000 home appraisal allows for 6.5% employment land, the same proportion as for West Tey. In addition there will be agglomeration benefits arising from the excellent connectivity between Colchester, Clacton and the Metro villages which will create local jobs better than standalone settlements connected mainly to London. The Metro settlements will also provide support for existing businesses in adjacent villages. Based on above assumptions, employment land expectations are approximately 8ha each at Alresford and Great Bentley, 9ha at Weeley and 12ha at Thorpe le Soken.	Increased frequency of trains utilising the Colchester to Clacton/Walton branch line – as advised by CAUSE's transport advisor.
Great Bentley CAUSE	700	2,000		Early years, schools and health provision would be delivered in a way that be accessed via the branch line services. It would be expected that each settlement would deliver a new primary school and early years facility, but only one new health facility and one new secondary school would be delivered and these would be located at one or two of the villages concerned – potentially the two central villages of Great Bentley and Weeley.
Weeley CAUSE	700	2,000		
Thorpe le Soken CAUSE	700	2,000		

Given the multitude of ownerships within the 800m circle around the four railway stations, the amalgamation and acquisition of the necessary land to deliver schools and health facilities would one of the main infrastructure challenges facing this strategy.