CD3

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Reg 19 Development Plan Document

Non-Technical Summary

Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council

Final report
Prepared by LUC
May 2023

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1	Final for consultation	O Dunham	O Dunham	K Nicholls	09.05.2023

EMS566057 FS566056 OHS627041

Land Use Consultants Limited

Registered in England. Registered number 2549296. Registered office: 250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD. Printed on 100% recycled paper

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Reg 19 Development Plan Document

Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

1. This Non-Technical Summary relates to the full Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD) and should be read in conjunction with that document as well as the DPD itself.

2. This Non-Technical Summary and the full SA Report were prepared by LUC on behalf of Colchester Borough Council, Tendring District Council and Essex County Council as part of the SA of the DPD.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

3. The Councils are required by law to carry out both Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the DPD. The Councils appointed LUC to do this on their behalf.

4. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for Development Plan Documents. For these documents it is also necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the SEA Regulations (as amended). The SEA Regulations remain in force post-Brexit and it is a legal

requirement for the DPD to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation. SA and SEA are tools used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. In broad terms, SEA considers only the environmental effects of a plan while SA considers the plan's wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts. SA should meet all of the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, so a separate SEA should not be required. An approach which satisfies the requirements for both SA and SEA is advocated in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Practitioners can comply with the requirements of the SEA Regulations through a single integrated SA process – this is the process that is being undertaken by the Councils. From here on, the term 'SA' should therefore be taken to mean 'SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Regulations'.

5. The purpose of SA is to promote sustainable development by better integrating sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. It should be viewed as an integral part of good plan making and an ongoing process, involving ongoing iterations to identify and report on the potential social, economic and environmental effects of the DPD and alternatives to the DPD to consider how well sustainable development will be achieved.

6. An overview of the stages of SA is set out below.

SA Stage A: Scoping

7. The SA process began with the production of a Scoping Report for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD, which was prepared by Place Services on behalf of Tendring District Council and Colchester Borough Council.

8. The Scoping stage of the SA involves understanding the social, economic and environmental baseline for the plan area as well as the sustainability policy

context and key sustainability issues. The SA Scoping Report also sets out information about the methodology for this and later stages of the SA, in particular the 'SA Framework' - the sustainability objectives against which DPD options and policies have been appraised. The sustainability objectives making up the SA Framework, and decision-making questions used to aid assessments, are presented below.

9. A review of other policies, plans, and programmes, together with identification of the key sustainability issues facing the Garden Community area, helped to inform a review of the appraisal questions (the SA assessment criteria) included in the SA framework as a means of guiding the appraisal of the DPD and reasonable alternatives against the headline SA objectives.

SA Framework

SA Objective 1: To create safe environments which improve quality of life, community cohesion

- Does it seek to improve / supply community facilities for young people?
- Does it seek to increase cultural activities or suitable development to stimulate them? Does it seek to support cultural identity and social inclusion?
- Will there be measures to increase the safety and security of new development and public realm where residents can partake of frequent and unplanned social interactions?
- Will it support design which reduces the potential for crime or anti-social behaviour?

SA Objective 2: To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, safe home which meets their needs at a price they can afford

- Will it increase the range and affordability of housing to support the growing population and for all social groups?
- Does it respond to the needs of an ageing population?
- Does it seek to provide appropriate rural affordable housing?
- Will it deliver well designed and sustainable housing?
- Will it contribute to meeting Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements of the GTAA?
- Will it help to deliver a suitable mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet local needs?

SA Objective 3: To improve health/reduce health inequalities

- Will it ensure access to and prevent overburdening of health facilities, including primary, acute and emergency services, including through the provision of new infrastructure of this type?
- Will it ensure access to sport and recreation facilities, open space and accessible natural green space, including through the provision of new infrastructure of this type?
- Will it encourage access by walking or cycling?

SA Objective 4: To ensure and improve the vitality and viability of centres

- Does it seek to prevent loss of retail and other services or deliver these types of services in locations where they are accessible to a large number of residents?

- Does it support the creation of new viable centres while promoting and enhancing the viability of existing centres?
- Does it seek to locate development close to centres?
- Does it seek to locate development within easy public travelling distance to town centres?
- Does it seek to improve public transport networks to town centres?

SA Objective 5: To achieve a prosperous and sustainable economy that creates new jobs, improves the vitality and viability of centres and captures the economic benefits of international gateways

- Will it improve the delivery of a range of employment opportunities to support the growing population?
- Will it tackle employment associated deprivation?
- Will it enhance the area's potential for tourism?
- Will it promote development of the ports?
- Will it support business innovation, diversification, entrepreneurship and changing economies while building on links to nearby employment sites?
- Does it seek to improve links to and enhance existing training and learning facilities and/or create more facilities?
- Will the employment opportunities available be mixed to suit a varied employment skills base?
- Will it provide new residents with appropriate space and infrastructure (including ultra-fast broadband) as to allow for homeworking?

SA Objective 6: To value, conserve and enhance the natural environment, natural resources, biodiversity and geological diversity

- Will development have a potential impact on a national, international or European designated site (SPA, SAC, Ramsar, SSSI)?
- Will it maintain and enhance sites otherwise designated for their nature conservation interest?
- Will it conserve and enhance natural/semi natural habitats, including those that are not presently designated?
- Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to indigenous BAP priority species?
- Will it result in biodiversity net gain?

SA Objective 7: To achieve more sustainable travel behaviour, reduce the need to travel and reduce congestion

- Will it increase and/or improve the availability and usability of sustainable transport modes, including infrastructure for electric vehicles?
- Will it seek to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation other than private vehicle?
- Will it support the viability of existing public transport and lead to the integration of different transport modes?
- Will it improve rural public transport?
- Does it seek to increase the uptake or viability of walking and cycling as methods of transportation, through new infrastructure or integration?
- Will it support an increased level of self-containment in the area through the incorporation of services and facilities and employment floorspace to meet a high proportion of residents needs in the locality?

SA Objective 8: To promote accessibility, ensure that development is located sustainably and makes efficient use of land, and ensure the necessary infrastructure to support new development

- Will it contribute positively to reduce social exclusion by ensuring access to jobs, shopping, services and leisure facilities for all?
- Does it seek to concentrate development and facilities where access via sustainable travel is greatest?
- Does it seek to minimise congestion at key destinations / areas that witness a large amount of vehicle movements at peak times?
- Would the scale of development require significant supporting transport infrastructure in an area of identified need?
- Will it ensure adequate school places (through expansion / new facilities) and early years provision to support growth as well as supporting good access to these types of facilities?
- Will it ensure the required improvements to utilities infrastructure?
- Will it ensure access to and necessary increases in capacity to GP services?
- Will it ensure access to and necessary increases in capacity to acute healthcare services?
- Will it provide a suitable amount of sports, recreational, leisure and open space facilities?

SA Objective 9: To conserve and enhance historic and cultural heritage and assets and townscape character

- Will it protect and enhance designations, features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas?

- Will it have a negative impact on the significance of a designated historic environment asset or its setting?
- Does it seek to enhance the range and quality of the public realm and open spaces?
- Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land?
- Does it encourage the use of high quality design principles to respect local character?
- Will / can any perceived adverse impacts be reduced through adequate mitigation?

SA Objective 10: To make efficient use of energy and reduce contributions to climatic change through mitigation and adaptation

- Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption?
- Will it lead to an increased generation of energy from renewable sources?
- Will it encourage greater energy efficiency?
- Will it improve the efficient use of natural resources, minimising waste and promoting recycling?
- Will it support the siting and design of development as to adapt to climatic change through measures such as the incorporation of green infrastructure, building orientation and choice of materials?

10. The contribution promoting more sustainable modes of transport can make to limiting carbon emissions is addressed through SA objective 7: sustainable travel.

SA Objective 11: To improve water quality and address water scarcity and sewerage capacity

- Will it lead to no deterioration on the quality of water bodies?
- Will water resources and sewerage capacity be able to accommodate growth?
- Does it seek to support the recycling of rainwater and greywater?

SA Objective 12: To reduce the risk of fluvial, coastal and surface water flooding

- Does it promote the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new developments and will their integration be viable?
- Does it seek to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding (fluvial, coastal, surface water) and where this is not possible ensure that development is safe?
- Does it seek to avoid increasing flood risk (fluvial, surface water, groundwater) in areas away from initial development?

SA Objective 13: To improve air quality

- Will it improve, or not detrimentally affect air quality along the A12, A120 or A133?
- Will it help to limit traffic within AQMAs within Colchester and surroundings?
- Does it seek to improve or avoid increasing traffic flows generally?

SA Objective 14: To conserve and enhance the quality of landscapes

- Will landscapes sensitive to development be protected?

- Will it lead to rural expansion or development outside development boundaries/limits that increases coalescence with neighbouring settlements?
- Is the scale / density of development in keeping with important and valued features of the local landscape and the existing rural character of the site and surrounding small settlements?
- Will it help to conserve and enhance existing natural landscape features within the site?
- Will it help to conserve and enhance the existing rural urban fringe and support the integration of development within the natural context?

SA Objective 15: To safeguard and enhance the quality of soil and mineral deposits

- Will it avoid the loss of high quality agricultural land?
- Will it avoid the sterilisation of mineral deposits / is the site within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA)?
- Will it support or lead to the remediation of contaminated land, avoiding environmental pollution or exposure of occupiers or neighbouring land uses to unacceptable health risk?
- Will it support the efficient use of land resources, by achieving appropriate densities of development thereby limiting the need for the development of greenfield land?

SA Stage B: Developing and Refining Options and Assessing Effects

11. Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation

responses and the SA can help to identify where there may be other ‘reasonable alternatives’ to the options being considered for a plan.

12. The SA can help decision makers by identifying the potential positive and negative sustainability effects of each plan option being considered, and therefore where there are opportunities to enhance positive effects and avoid or reduce negative ones.

13. The SA findings are not the only factors taken into account when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Factors such as public opinion, deliverability, conformity with national policy will also be taken into account by plan-makers when selecting preferred options for their plan.

14. The first consultation to inform the DPD was the Issues and Options Consultation in 2017 where the SA Scoping Report was consulted upon at the same time. In addition to reporting the usual information on the intended scope and level of detail of the SA, it also presented an appraisal of the various elements of the DPD as drafted for consultation at that stage. The work undertaken on the DPD in 2017 has effectively been overtaken by adoption of the Section 1 Local Plan. The draft DPD effectively represented a restarting of the plan preparation process, rather than an evolution from the previously consulted upon options. As such, a recounting of the options presented in the SA work undertaken prior to the work for the draft DPD and a summary of prior findings, is not included in the full SA report or this Non-Technical Summary.

15. In determining the approach for the spatial distribution of development at the Garden Community (Policy 1 in the draft DPD), the Councils, taking into account both technical evidence and the views expressed through public engagement, undertook a comprehensive masterplanning process informed by work from masterplanners Prior + Partners. The work undertaken was used to arrive at and subsequently considered a range of alternative options and approaches. These included strategies that involved development expanding over a wider footprint onto land south of the A133 and/or east of the new link road as well as development at the lower and higher end of the 7,000 to 9,000 home range set out in the adopted Section 1 Local Plan.

16. The Councils also considered different ways of accommodating higher and lower densities of development across different parts of the site, alternative approaches to ‘green buffers’ around the edge of the site and different approaches to accommodating ‘centres’, identifying locations for employment and routing the Rapid Transit System through the site. The Councils also considered different approaches to recognising the special character of Crockleford Heath, and different levels of protection that could be given to the land and property in that area.

17. Further options identified as part of the consultation on the draft DPD have also been subject to SA at this stage. Further details are provided in Chapter 4 of the full SA Report about each of these options and their expected effects.

18. Appendix E of the full SA report presents an audit trail of the options considered for the Reg 19 DPD and the reasons for selecting or rejecting each option for inclusion in that document.

SA Stage C: Preparing the SA Report

19. This Non-Technical Summary and the accompanying full SA Report explain the process that has been undertaken to date in carrying out the SA of the Garden Community DPD. The report presents the findings of the appraisal of the plan, highlighting any likely significant effects (both positive and negative, and taking into account the likely secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term and permanent and temporary effects).

SA Stage D: Consultation on the DPD and this SA Report

20. The Councils are inviting comments on the DPD and the SA Report. Comments received will be submitted to the Inspector, alongside the DPD, the SA Report and the rest of the evidence base.

SA Stage E: Monitoring and Implementation of the DPD

21. Recommendations for monitoring the likely significant social, environmental and economic effects of implementing the DPD are set out in Chapter 6 of the full SA Report.

Appraisal Methodology

22. The findings of the SA are presented as colour coded symbols which illustrate the likely effects of each option on each of the SA objectives. The full SA Report presents these findings along with a justification for the effect identified, where appropriate. The use of colour coding and symbols allows for likely significant effects (both positive and negative) to be easily identified, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key to symbols and colour coding used in the SA of the DPD

Symbol and Colour Coding	Meaning
++	The option or policy is likely to have a significant positive effect on the SA objectives.
++/-	The option or policy is likely to have a mixture of significant positive and minor negative effects on the SA objectives.
+	The option or policy is likely to have a minor positive effect on the SA objectives.
0	The option or policy is likely to have negligible or no effect on the SA objectives.

Symbol and Colour Coding	Meaning
?	It is uncertain what effect the option or policy will have on the SA objectives.
-	The option or policy is likely to have a minor negative effect on the SA objectives.
--/+	The option or policy is likely to have a mixture of minor positive and significant negative effects on the SA objectives.
--	The option or policy is likely to have a significant negative effect on the SA objectives.
+/-	The option or policy is likely to have a mixture of positive and negative effects on the SA objectives.

23. Where a potential positive or negative effect is uncertain, a question mark was added to the relevant score (such as +? or -?) and the score has been colour coded as per the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (such as green, yellow or pink).

SA Findings

Vision and Objectives

24. Table 2 shows a summary of the SA findings for the Garden Community DPD five key vision themes. The Vision is included to be relatively high level and aspirational in nature. It provides an image of the Garden Community once it is built out as a place where better ways of living, working and playing can be achieved. The Garden Community is to be a place where a high quality of placemaking is achieved, where development allows for improvements in biodiversity and local character, while also providing appropriate infrastructure and a suitable level of transport connections to meet the needs of local people. The vision for each theme is supported by a number of principles and

objectives. The achievement of the principles and objectives in the DPD will ultimately be dependent upon the requirements of the policies in the document and from this, the conformity of development proposals for the Garden Community with these requirements. As such, a proportionate and relatively light touch approach to the assessment of the principles and objectives has been taken. Table 4.2 in the full SA report presents a summary of the compatibility or incompatibility of the principles and objectives in relation to each SA objective. The key vision themes are as follows:

- Key vision theme “Nature” addresses the outdoor natural environment of the Garden Community, including green infrastructure, and how this will benefit both people and wildlife.
- Key vision theme “Buildings, Places and Character” addresses the delivery of well-designed homes and spaces for a range of activities and employment opportunities.
- Key vision theme “Community and Social Infrastructure” addresses community health and wellbeing though the provision of community spaces, schools and sport and leisure facilities as well as infrastructure stewardship.
- Key vision theme “Movement and Connections” addresses mobility measures such as active travel routes and the prioritisation of rapid public transit.
- Key vision theme “Sustainable Infrastructure“ addresses sustainable living, including the provision of green infrastructure and the incorporation of building solutions which will support sustainable lifestyle choices for the Garden Community’s residents.

Table 2: Summary of SA effects for the Key Vision Themes

Key Vision Themes	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15
Nature	+	-	+	0	-	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0
Movement and connections	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
Community and social infrastructure	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
Buildings, places and character	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0
Sustainable infrastructure	0	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0

Policies

25. Table 3 shows a summary of SA findings for the policies contained in the DPD. Note that this is a high-level overview only and should be read alongside the appraisals set out in the full SA report. The policies are listed below, in the same order as they appear in the DPD:

- Policy 1: Land uses and spatial approach
- Policy 2: Requirements for all new development
- Policy 3: Nature
- Policy 4: Buildings, places and character
- Policy 5: Economic activity and employment
- Policy 6: Community and social infrastructure
- Policy 7: Movement and connections
- Policy 8: Sustainable infrastructure
- Policy 9: Infrastructure delivery and impact mitigation

Table 3: SA findings for the policies in the Garden Community DPD

SA Objectives	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15
1: Land Uses and Spatial Approach	++	++	++/-	++	++	--/+?	++/-	++	+/-	++	--?	+/-	++/-	++/-	--
2: Requirements for All New Development	+	0	+	0	0	--/+?	+	+	+?	+?	+?	+	+?	+	+?
3: Nature	+	-	+	0	-	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+
4: Buildings, Places and Character	+	++	+	+	+	--/+?	+	+	+?	0	+?	+?	0	+?	+/-
5: Economic Activity and Employment	0	+	+	++	++	--?	++	++	-?	0	-?	-?	+/-?	-?	-?
6: Community and Social Infrastructure	++	0	++	++	+	--/+?	++	++	+?	+?	0	0	+	+?	0
7: Movement and Connections	+	0	++	+	+	--/+?	++/-	++	+?	+	+?	+?	++/-	+?	-
8: Sustainable Infrastructure	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	++	+	+	0	+
9: Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Overall Effects of the DPD Against the SA Objectives

26. In addition to assessments for individual policies, the SA also includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the plan as a whole, as well as consideration of effects in combination with other development in the surrounding area. The results of this cumulative effects assessment are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Summary of likely Cumulative Effects for the DPD

SA Objective	Cumulative Effects for the DPD
1. Safety and community cohesion	++
2. Housing	++
3. Health	++
4. Vitality and viability of centres	++
5. Economy	++
6. Biodiversity and geological diversity	+/-?
7. Sustainable travel	++/-
8. Services and infrastructure	++
9. Historic environment and townscape	-?
10. Energy efficiency and climate change	++
11. Water resources and quality	+?
12. Flood risk	+

SA Objective	Cumulative Effects for the DPD
13. Air quality	++/-
14. Landscape	+
15. Soils and minerals resources	--?

In-Combination Effects

27. The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will not be delivered in isolation from development proposals covering the surrounding area. The effect of delivering new development will often be transmitted across administrative boundaries. As such it is important to consider the in-combination effects of delivering additional new residential development in Tendring District and Colchester Borough.

28. Permissions and local plan allocations for larger scale residential developments in the vicinity of the Garden Community site in Tendring District and Colchester Borough have been identified and considered in the full SA report due to the potential effects as a result of delivering these sites in-combination with the Garden Community. In summary, although sites in Colchester and Tendring will likely increase traffic congestion on the existing road network, the Garden Community will also provide the area with additional services and facilities and will improve the active travel network within the area. As such, there are considered to be no significant, additional effects beyond those recorded in the policy assessments and cumulative effects assessment of the full SA report.

Monitoring

29. The SEA Regulations require that monitoring is undertaken in relation to the significant effects of implementing the Plan in question. Since effects which the

SA expects to be minor may become significant and vice versa, monitoring measures have been proposed in relation to all of the SA objectives in the SA Framework. Suggested monitoring measures are presented in Chapter 6 of the full SA Report.

Conclusions

30. Chapter 7 of the full SA Report sets out the final conclusions of the SA of the Reg 19 DPD. In summary, the DPD seeks to accommodate large scale growth to meet the local housing need in a manner that will support good access to services and facilities. It will also help achieve a high level of sustainability in terms of building standards, promotion of sustainable travel and incorporation of greenspace to promote benefits relating to biodiversity as well as local character and resident's health and wellbeing. The development will face challenges, most notably with regards to impacts on the local environment in terms of landscape, wildlife and historic value. Adverse effects relating to loss of higher value soils are likely to prove particularly difficult to avoid given the location of the site and the requirement for land take for development and infrastructure provision. Nevertheless, once the policy safeguards in the DPD are taken into account, the magnitude of such negative effects is likely to be reduced. Taken as a whole, therefore, the DPD sets out a positive plan for the achievement of the Garden Community. The policies of the plan set a high standard which development will be required to meet, and it is considered consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

Next Steps

31. This Non-Technical Summary and the full SA Report will be available for consultation alongside the Garden Community DPD for six weeks from May 2023. Following this consultation, the Councils will consider whether to propose any modifications to the DPD. The DPD, any proposed modifications to this, other supporting and submission documents, including this SA and responses

received during the consultation, will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.

LUC
May 2023

Report produced by LUC

Bristol
12th Floor, Colston Tower, Colston Street, Bristol BS1 4XE
0117 929 1997
bristol@landuse.co.uk

Cardiff
16A, 15th Floor, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Rd, Cardiff CF24 0EB
0292 032 9006
cardiff@landuse.co.uk

Edinburgh
Atholl Exchange, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG
0131 202 1616
edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

Glasgow
37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ
0141 334 9595
glasgow@landuse.co.uk

London
250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD
020 7383 5784
london@landuse.co.uk

Manchester
6th Floor, 55 King Street, Manchester M2 4LQ
0161 537 5960
manchester@landuse.co.uk

landuse.co.uk

Landscape Design / Strategic Planning & Assessment
Development Planning / Urban Design & Masterplanning
Environmental Impact Assessment / Landscape Planning & Assessment
Landscape Management / Ecology / Historic Environment / GIS & Visualisation