

MALDON DISTRICT



# Draft Local Development Plan

2014-2029



## **South of Maldon Garden Suburb Brief for Strategic Masterplan Framework**

**Version 1.1  
November 2013**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Through its emerging Development Plan, Maldon District Council (MDC) is proposing to allocate a significant amount of land to the south of Maldon town for the development of a new garden suburb. In summary, this area is expected to accommodate the following development:
- a minimum of 1710 dwellings (including affordable housing)
  - 3.9ha of Class B employment land
  - a community hub / local centre
  - supporting infrastructure outlined in the Draft Development Plan policies listed in section 4 of this brief. This includes:
    - a 2.3ha site for primary education and 2 x 0.13ha sites for early years and childcare provision plus contributions
    - a 56-place early year and childcare facility
    - contributions towards the expansion of the Plume School
    - a new relief road north of the A414 at Wycke Hill
    - enhanced walking & cycling routes
    - enhanced medical provision
    - increased & enhanced green infrastructure
    - appropriate drainage & sewerage infrastructure including SuDs.
  - any other supporting infrastructure improvements & mitigation measures that may arise from further highways work currently being undertaken by Essex County Council.
- 1.2. Policy S3 of the Draft Local Development Plan requires a Masterplan to be prepared for new garden suburbs proposed in the District. Key partners are expected to work with the Council to produce the comprehensive masterplans prior to any development taking place within these areas. The masterplans will help to ensure that the areas are developed in a coordinated and holistic manner.
- 1.3. This Masterplan Brief has been co-ordinated through the LDP Developer Forum with relevant officers and in association with ATLAS (Advisory Team for Large Applications) that are part of the Homes and Communities Agency, a Government Department. This Masterplan Brief is running in tandem with the Draft Local Development Plan process. Contributors to this Masterplan Brief are Essex County Council Highways, Essex County Council Education, Essex County Council Archaeology, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Essex and Suffolk Water, Linden Homes, Dartmouth Park Estates and CEG, Ward Members, Heybridge Parish Council and Maldon Town Council.
- 1.4. MDC requires that development of the garden suburb to the south of Maldon takes place comprehensively and is of a high quality that reflects garden suburb principles. To this end it expects the landowners and development promoters of the different landholdings involved in the garden suburb area to work together to produce a comprehensive strategic masterplan that will provide an overarching framework that reflects how national and local development policies and the principles of garden suburbs will be addressed and implemented in this area of significant new growth in the Maldon District.
- 1.5. The Strategic Masterplan Framework will set out the overall development concept and development principles for this area of growth and form the basis for subsequent detailed masterplans and planning applications that are required to be submitted for individual landholdings in the area. The framework will:

- define key development principles and strategic concepts to enable a co-ordinated approach to delivering the proposed level of growth in a garden suburb context
- Provide guidance to inform detailed masterplans at the planning application stage
- Reflect and respond to the Local Development Plan policies and guidance
- Be a flexible document that will facilitate and enable the delivery of a garden suburb south of Maldon in a timely way.

1.6. MDC sees development of a Strategic Masterplan Framework for the south of Maldon garden suburb building on the work the Council has undertaken to date in planning for future growth in the District in terms of considering the best locations for it, what infrastructure it will need to deliver to sustain it and what character it will have. MDC intends to adopt the Strategic Masterplan Framework for the proposed garden suburb to the south of Maldon in due course as a Supplementary Planning Document following appropriate public consultation and adoption of the Local Development Plan. It will form the basis for assessment and determination of subsequent planning applications in this area.

#### **What is a garden suburb?**

The garden city movement harks back to Ebenezer Howard and his work in creating communities that combined the best of town and country living. The principles were first applied in the design of Letchworth and Welwyn Garden Cities. Some of the key attributes of garden cities or suburbs include:

- Providing more open space and natural areas that can support biodiversity and allow for more tree planting and landscaping. This is increasingly important in planning for a changing climate in terms of providing summer cooling and shading and allowing rainwater to infiltrate naturally.
- Creating a leafy and green character to neighbourhoods which is highly attractive and has proven popular over time. This can provide a high quality setting for a range of housing opportunities.
- Taking a comprehensive and integrated approach to development which includes not just new homes but all the facilities and services needed to support a new community including employment opportunities.
- Working with communities and new models of community ownership in the design and management of neighbourhoods. Providing the leadership and clear vision to deliver a high quality result.
- Allowing easy access both within and outside the garden suburb, allowing good connections with adjoining places and services in a range of ways.

(Summarised from 'Creating Garden City and Suburb today – a guide for Councils' TCPA March 2013)

## **2. Purpose and structure of this brief**

- 2.1 The purpose of this brief is to set out Maldon District Council's (MDC) expectations for the preparation of a Strategic Masterplan that will be required for the proposed garden suburb to the south of Maldon.
- 2.2 To assist the land owners / development promoters in preparing the Strategic Masterplan, it sets out advice and guidelines, provides details of some of the constraints that may affect the Strategic Masterplan and highlights opportunities to be exploited. The Strategic Masterplan Framework will set the parameters for and inform subsequent preparation of detailed masterplans, planning applications and design codes for individual land holdings in the garden suburb.
- 2.3 It should be noted that the highways infrastructure improvements and principles (such as any mitigation required on the wider highway network and any further mitigation identified in the vicinity of the development) will be confirmed following further work which is currently being undertaken by Essex County Council (Essex Highways) in partnership with Maldon District Council. This work, and the outcomes, are anticipated to be available in early October and will then feed into any later iterations of the masterplanning brief and the masterplanning process itself.
- 2.4 The brief also sets out MDC's expectations for community engagement in relation to the Strategic Masterplan Framework, and a suggested process for taking forward design and development proposals for this area.
- 2.5 MDC expects to work closely with landowners and development promoters in the production of a Strategic Masterplan Framework, and encourages the landowners to engage with the Council at all stages of its preparation.

### **3 Site context and analysis**

- 3.1 Plan 1 in Appendix A shows the boundaries of the area south of Maldon allocated for development in the Draft Local Development Plan. The total area allocated for the garden suburb and which will be subject to the Strategic Masterplan Framework amounts to approximately 90ha.
- 3.2 The garden suburb area lies to the south and southwest of Maldon and is separated from the town by Limebrook Way, part of a busy bypass/link road around most of the town. The area lies approximately 2km southwest of Maldon town centre. There are currently no pedestrian crossings or footways along Limebrook Way to facilitate access to the town centre. To the north of Limebrook Way lies a number of housing estates developed in the 1980s and 1990s. These do not directly face onto Limebrook Way. At the junction of Limebrook Way and the A414 is located a Morrisons supermarket and petrol station and a number of commercial and industrial uses.
- 3.3 The garden suburb area is separated by a number of features including the A414 that is a main link to Chelmsford and the redundant raised railway embankment from the former Maldon West Branch Line Route to South Woodham Ferrers that runs north-south through the site and now forms a nature reserve and pedestrian recreational route. The area is mainly level and in agricultural use with hedgerows marking field boundaries. The Lime Brook runs through the area.
- 3.4 Maldon Wycke in the northern part of the site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site.
- 3.5 There are two Public Rights of Way crossing the site and one forms the southern boundary.

### **4 Relevant policy guidance**

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the key national policy guidance for development. A key focus of the NPPF is to create high quality and sustainable new developments that are deliverable.
- 4.2 The Draft Local Development Plan sets out emerging draft policies relevant to new development in the District. This draft Plan will be subject to public consultation From August 28 to October 14 2013.
- 4.3 The following sets out some of the key emerging policies that are of particular relevance to any strategic framework for the proposed garden suburb south of Maldon. This is not an exhaustive list, and reference should be made to the draft Local Development Plan for the full set of policies.

***Draft Policy S3 : Place Shaping***

- 4.4 The Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations at Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch will be planned as high quality, vibrant and distinctive neighbourhoods that will complement and enhance the character of the District and protect and enhance the environmental qualities of the surrounding area. Development proposals for the Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations must incorporate the following principles:
- 1) A comprehensive and well planned approach that provides homes, jobs, and community facilities;
  - 2) Places where people want to live and interact through active citizenship, civic amenity and a vibrant urban life;
  - 3) A strong landscaped character that incorporates well managed open space, tree-lined streets and other landscaping and natural areas for amenity and wildlife habitat and to address the effects of climate change;
  - 4) The historic environment is instrumental in establishing landscape character and providing a sense of place and identity, and this should be recognised through the protection, management and enhancement of heritage assets;
  - 5) There will be a clear and harmonious relationship between town and country;
  - 6) High quality and detailed architecture that is characterful, innovative and adaptable;
  - 7) The local centres will act as the community focus within the garden suburbs, with a mix of shops and community uses that are well served by public transport and connected to the town centre by safe walking and cycling routes;
  - 8) There will be a network of safe and usable paths and streets for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;
  - 9) Fully integrated with the surrounding communities through shared community uses, and a variety of transport modes including walking, cycling and public transport;
  - 10) Provide for the requirements of site service and communication infrastructure, in particular high speed broadband, with minimal disruption and need for reconstruction and allow for future growth in service infrastructure; and
  - 11) Provide dwellings which meet the District's housing needs for an older population, as identified and required by the Council.

A Masterplan for the each of the Garden Suburbs at Maldon and Heybridge will be prepared and developed, in partnership between the Council, relevant stakeholders, infrastructure providers and developer / landowners.

***Extracts from Draft Policy S4 : Maldon and Heybridge Strategic Growth, that relate to land south of Maldon***

- 4.5 Strategic developments in the South of Maldon Garden Suburb and Strategic Allocations will need to deliver the following key infrastructure elements;

- A new 2.5-form entry primary school;
- A new 56-place early year and childcare facility;
- Necessary contributions toward the sufficient expansion of the Plume School;
- A new relief road to the north of A414 at Wycke Hill; and
- Provision for Class B use employment lands

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Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations within the Maldon and Heybridge area will be comprehensively planned with the quantum of development as set out in Policy S2 and E2. Permission will be given for development at the Garden Suburbs / Strategic Allocations provided that:

- Enhanced public transport provision is incorporated within the new Garden Suburbs / Strategic Allocations;
- Enhanced walking and cycling routes are included internally within the new Garden Suburbs and where appropriate Strategic Allocations and externally connected to the wider area especially the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area;
- Development can be accommodated within the capacity of the Maldon and Heybridge road network and junctions following appropriate mitigation measures and junction improvements;
- Pupil demand from the development can be accommodated within existing and / or proposed new primary, secondary and early years and childcare facilities, as well as adult community learning;
- Adequate provision is made for enhanced medical provision in cooperation with the relevant health bodies;
- Community hubs and local centres are integrated into the design and layout of development proposals;
- Flood risk management and surface water mitigation measures are integrated as an integral part of the growth areas as a whole in accordance with, but not limited to, the Maldon and Heybridge Surface Water Management Plan;
- Adequate provision is made for enhanced and comprehensive sewerage infrastructure;
- Adequate provision is made for increased and enhanced green infrastructure;
- Adequate provision is made for affordable housing;
- A significant proportion of the proposed dwellings for Maldon and Heybridge are of a form, tenure and dwelling mix that is appropriate for meeting the housing needs of an older population including the provision of bungalows, sheltered housing, extra care housing, private retirement homes and lifetime homes etc.; and
- Prior to any development a comprehensive and detailed archaeological assessment should be undertaken and

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Development proposals within either the Maldon or the Heybridge Garden Suburb areas must be in accordance with a masterplan endorsed by the Council for the respective areas.

The detailed layout of the different land use components within the Garden Suburbs will be defined through masterplans produced in partnership with the Council, relevant delivery partners and stakeholders, including developers, landowners, and parish / town councils.

4.6 Other relevant policies from the draft Development Plan and other documents relevant to informing the Strategic Masterplan are listed in Appendix C.

## 5. Place-making for the south of Maldon garden suburb

5.1 As expressed in the emerging Draft Local Development Plan, the overall aspiration of MDC is to create a high quality garden suburb that reflects its context on the edge of the attractive historic market town of Maldon. Bearing in mind the emerging policy guidance in the Draft Local Development Plan relevant to the south of Maldon garden suburb and the garden suburb characteristics summarised on page 2 of this brief, MDC has given some initial consideration to the nature of the garden suburb it wishes to see developed to the south of Maldon. The following list sets out some place-making issues and approaches that emerged at a Visioning Workshop held in May 2013 (Appendix D). The list not exhaustive or prescriptive as there may be a number of ways in which these issues can be satisfactorily addressed in demonstrating how a great place to live, work and visit can be created. Nevertheless they form a good starting point for thinking about how place-making can be addressed in the Strategic Masterplan Framework.

5.2 **Integration of the south Maldon garden suburb with the rest of the town and settlement** is an important objective in terms of ensuring that new residents have good access to local facilities and town life. In particular, the nature of Limebrook Way as a fast moving heavily trafficked road separating the garden suburb from the town is a key issue to address to improve integration between the new garden suburb and the rest of Maldon. Some ideas that emerged at the workshop about how this could be addressed are set out below but it is acknowledged that there are other ways in which the barrier-effect of Lime brook Way could potentially be addressed that will need to be explored through the masterplanning process Further work is currently being undertaken by Essex County Council which will review the impact of the development on the highways network and will review the function of Limebrook Way and any requirement for a new east-west link between the A414 and Fambridge Road. The outcome of this work will feed into any later iterations of this masterplanning brief and the masterplanning process itself.

- Limebrook Way could be redesigned as a residential street or boulevard with traffic speeds significantly calmed along its length and safe pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities provided at appropriate points to link to existing facilities and into Maldon footpaths and cycle routes. New development to the south could face onto Limebrook Way to create a more urban and enclosed feel to this redesigned street.
- Creating good new links running east-west through the entire garden suburb will help provide sustainable connections through the development.
- The location and design of the new local centre will be critical in creating a heart/hub to the new garden suburb and potentially enhancing integration between the garden suburb and the existing developments in south Maldon. Locating the local centre to the immediate south of Limebrook Way will ensure it is accessible by new and existing residents.
- Creation of new safe and attractive green corridors for movement and recreation connecting the garden suburb to Maldon in the north and villages and settlements to the south including along the redundant railway embankment and other improvements to existing off-site footpaths and cycleways

5.3 **Creation of a strong green infrastructure framework** within the garden suburb, potentially including:

- Retention and enhancement of as much of the raised redundant railway line as possible as a key green link through the site into Maldon and to the south of the garden suburb. Access to it could be enhanced by the provision of a safe pedestrian / cycle crossing where it meets Limebrook Way, potentially via a bridge crossing.
- Creating a soft landscaped southern edge to the new development that links to the redundant railway line and blends into the countryside, and where possible provides for new links to the countryside and settlements to the south where possible.
- Creating a large village green in the south-western part of the garden suburb which acts as a key focal characteristic of this part of the development, and facilitates low key sports provision for example, cricket.
- Retaining and enhancing the Lime Brook as part of the overall SUDs system and green landscape structure for the garden suburb.
- Retaining and enhancing the Local Nature Reserve on the site and enhancing access to it from the new garden suburb and southern part of Maldon District.
- Creating safe pedestrian and cycle connections via green links through the development connecting green spaces, play areas and other attractants with the new garden suburb, and also connecting to Meeson Meadows, Keeble Park and Promenade Park.
- Creating leafy green streets running through the garden suburb.
- Integrating green and blue infrastructure within the garden suburb to promote and facilitate landscaping, open space recreation, ecology and sustainable drainage solutions.
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5.4 **Effective distribution of the land uses** permitted in this garden suburb to ensure good accessibility and to contribute to the creation of different character areas, for example:

- Focussing the new commercial land uses in the north-western part of the garden suburb where they will have easy access to the road network and are close to the existing commercial areas in Maldon.
- As described above locating the local centre south of Limebrook Way where it will be accessible to new and existing residents, and providing within it a mix of small scale retail units, community facilities and complementary uses to ensure it acts as a focus for the new community
- Locating the primary school as part of or close to the local centre for ease of access by residents and ensuring it is connected to the network of footpaths and cycleway developed as part of the garden suburb.
- Providing a range of densities across the suburb to aid characterisation and variety in the housing mix including creating lower density residential areas in the southern and western parts of the garden suburb to help soften the countryside edge of the development.
- Exploring opportunities to promote self-build and custom-build housing in the garden suburb.

5.5 The Visioning Workshop report included in Appendix C sets out some ideas captured at the workshop about how this garden suburb might be structured.

5.6 A key element of garden suburb development is that of community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets. Maldon DC therefore would like to explore through the masterplanning process for the garden suburb, measures for maximising opportunities for community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of community assets within the suburb. The involvement of local community groups and interests in exploring this element will be important.

## 6. Community engagement

- 6.1 The local community should be involved in preparing the Strategic Masterplan Framework for the south of Maldon garden suburb. MDC expects that at the outset the parties will agree a community engagement strategy with MDC which details how stakeholders including statutory undertakers, the Town Council, local special interest groups, and the local community will be encouraged to take part in shaping and commenting upon the emerging Strategic Masterplan.
- 6.2 MDC expects that the community and stakeholder engagement process will start early in the preparation of the Strategic Masterplan Framework.
- 6.3 Prior to adopting a Strategic Masterplan Framework for the south of Maldon garden suburb, MDC will undertake formal public consultation on any draft Strategic Masterplan Framework prepared.

## 7. Addressing the requirements of this brief

- 7.1 MDC is keen that collaborative and effective working arrangements between the various landowning and development promotion parties in south Maldon and the Council are established early on to take forward preparation of the Strategic Masterplan Framework. The Council wishes to establish a 'development team approach' to this project with its partners and develop an overall project plan and timetable for advancing the Masterplan in a timely way.
- 7.2 MDC expects the Strategic Masterplan Framework for the growth area to the south of Maldon to be based on a robust evidence base and to include the following elements. It is acknowledged that as this is intended to be a 'strategic framework', the level of detail provided will be at an appropriate scale.
- **Site constraints plan** – a range of site survey work will be necessary to establish the key physical, natural and other constraints of this area.
  - **Contextual analysis** – this will consider the built and natural influences that should be taken into account when designing this garden suburb.
  - **Vision and development objectives** – this brief sets out some of the key factors MDC wish to see taken into account in developing a specific place-making vision and set of development objectives for the future development of this area. These will need to be tested and refined further with the landowners and development promoters following the site survey work.
  - **Opportunities plan** – this should be a response to the site survey work, contextual analysis and the agreed vision & objectives.
  - **Development concept plan(s)** – drawing on the above, this/these should demonstrate the overall development concept for this garden suburb.
  - **Land use plan** – this will demonstrate potential ways in which the distribution of land uses and key structuring elements will help deliver the vision and objectives for development of this area. It should also indicate how development density will be addressed around the garden suburb.
  - **Movement plan** – this should address movement around the site and to the wider hinterland including Maldon town including existing routes and public rights of way. It should include provision for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and motorists through a hierarchy of street types. It should be underpinned by a comprehensive Transport Assessment for the whole of the garden suburb.
  - **Landscape and ecology framework plan** – this should be informed by a co-ordinated flood alleviation study for the whole masterplan area and indicate the overall network of green space and infrastructure indicating function and nature of the green spaces and links included.
  - **Drainage framework plan** – this should indicate the overall approach to drainage and the implementation of an area-wide SUDS system.

- **Development concept and overall illustrative strategic masterplan** – this should effectively bring the concept, land use, movement, drainage and landscape and ecology plans together to provide a holistic overview of how the different components of the strategic framework will work together to create a new comprehensive garden suburb. It could also indicate key character areas to be created within the garden suburb
- **Key strategic design principles**—these should set out the key principles and parameters that will inform the creation of distinct character areas across the garden suburb and the design of key streets and spaces. They should also address the edge treatments appropriate for different edges to this suburb.
- **Infrastructure plan** – this should set out the infrastructure that will be required to support this new garden suburb and how it will be delivered in a comprehensive and timely way, acknowledging that individual landholdings are involved in delivering this comprehensive development. It should. It should also set out how subsequent planning documentation will be structured to deliver the aspirations of the Strategic Masterplan Framework and design quality required for this new garden suburb, for example, detailed masterplans for individual landholdings, outline planning application documentation, design codes.

7.3 It should be noted that this brief relates to the development of a Strategic Masterplan Framework for the proposed garden suburb to the south of Maldon. The council expects detailed spatial masterplans to be developed to accompany planning applications submitted for development in the garden suburb area. The detailed masterplans will be informed by and follow the parameters and guidance set out in the agreed Strategic Masterplan Framework, and the content and specification for those detailed masterplans will need to be agreed with Maldon District Council prior to their preparation.

7.4 In view of the requirement for comprehensive masterplanning of the South of Maldon garden suburb; there are a number of areas where Maldon DC would strongly encourage the development promoters to jointly prepare studies to inform the masterplanning process & subsequent planning applications. These are:

- Transport & movement
- Flood alleviation & drainage

7.5 With regard to educational provision, it will be helpful to refer to Essex County Council's publication 'Education Contributions Guidelines Supplement' which includes location and site criteria and highlights the need for a land compliance study. The masterplanning process should take account of the actions identified for this land and Critical Drainage Area in the Action Plan of the Maldon Surface Water Management Plan. Advice should be sought from Essex County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.

## 8. Appendices

- 8.1. Appendix A : Plan of boundary of proposed garden suburb to south of Maldon
- 8.2. Appendix B : List of relevant policies & other documents (please note that this will be attached to the final version of the Brief)
- 8.3. Appendix C : Report on MDC visioning workshop May 2013 (this is appended as a separate document)

**Appendix A: Plan of boundary of proposed garden suburb to south of Maldon from draft Local Development Plan**



