



**REPORT of  
HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES**

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to  
**PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**  
**12 JUNE 2014**

**DRAFT STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH MALDON  
GARDEN SUBURB**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Members' endorsement of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework for the proposed South Maldon Garden Suburb.
- 1.2 The Garden Suburb Masterplan relates to Policy S3 and S4 of the Local Development Plan (LDP).

**2. AREA FOR DECISION / ACTION**

- 2.1 The Council's approach to accommodating growth requirements in the District in the period up to 2029 has been based on an assessment of development capacity, environmental and infrastructure constraints, land availability, local opportunities and advice from statutory and non-statutory bodies and organisations. It has also taken into account consultation responses received. This has led to a strategy that has concentrated development in the District's main settlements of Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Couch and the designation of two new Garden Suburbs in Maldon and Heybridge.
- 2.2 The LDP sets out important development principles to guide the development of the Garden Suburbs to ensure that they are planned and developed as high quality neighbourhoods that will enhance the character of the District and protect and enhance the environmental qualities of the surrounding area. Policy S3 sets out the requirement for a masterplan for each of the Garden Suburbs at Maldon and Heybridge to be prepared and developed in partnership between the Council, relevant stakeholders, infrastructure providers and developers / landowners. Policy S4 states that development proposals within both Garden Suburbs must be in accordance with a masterplan endorsed by the Council for the respective areas and key infrastructure requirements and development principles. Policy S4 also states that permission will be granted for development provided that they are in compliance with the broad development principles set out in the LDP.
- 2.3 **Preparation of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework for South Maldon Garden Suburb**
  - 2.3.1 Work on the masterplans for the South Maldon Garden Suburb and North Heybridge Garden Suburb is being progressed in advance of adoption of the LDP to enable key

strategic issues such as infrastructure provision, flood risk mitigation and environmental protection and management to be addressed in a coordinated manner. In accordance with Policy S3, the masterplans are being developed in partnership between the Council, developers / landowners, relevant stakeholders and the local community with independent advice provided by ATLAS (Advisory Team for Large Applications- part of the Homes & Community Agency). Masterplanning working groups have been established with landowners / developers and key infrastructure providers for each of the Garden Suburbs to progress the preparation of comprehensive Masterplan Frameworks. A Members' Briefing Group has also been established to receive regular updates on progress with development of the masterplans for the two Garden Suburbs and to act as a sounding board for emerging ideas around the masterplan concepts. Meetings have taken place with Maldon Town Council and Heybridge Parish Council to keep them up to date with progress on the masterplanning process.

2.3.2 A brief for the Strategic Masterplan Framework for South Maldon Garden Suburb was endorsed by Planning and Licensing Committee on 16 November 2013. This has subsequently been updated to reflect changes in the Pre-submission LDP and a copy is appended to Item 13 of this agenda. The Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the brief and the policies contained in the LDP which has been submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination.

2.3.3 Preparation of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework has taken into account stakeholder and public consultation and further technical studies relating to drainage, landscape, ecology, transport and access.

2.3.4 It is intended that the Draft Strategic Masterplan will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document following the adoption of the LDP.

## **2.4 Stakeholder and Public Engagement**

2.4.1 Stakeholder and public engagement has formed an integral part of the preparation of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework.

2.4.2 A stakeholder workshop was held on 24 January 2014 to gather views and ideas to feed into the vision and objectives for the Garden Suburb and spatial masterplan. The workshop was attended by representatives of local groups and organisations, infrastructure providers, District and Town Councillors, District Council Officers and developers / landowners and was facilitated by ATLAS in an impartial role. The workshop focused on key issues, vision and objectives and spatial options and a report on the outcomes has been circulated to all attendees.

2.4.3 A number of points of consensus were identified through the concept plans prepared at the workshop including:

- The need to provide green infrastructure within the development not concentrated at the edges;
- Interventions to Limebrook Way necessary to reduce its barrier effect and promote integration with Maldon town;
- Creation of multi-functional community hub;

- Soft edge needed to countryside but not necessarily through creating a green space buffer; and
  - Importance of retaining and enhancing nature reserve as a key feature.
- 2.4.4 Some points of difference emerged at the workshop. These issues have been explored through the development of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework:
- How green infrastructure is distributed throughout the neighbourhoods;
  - Location and nature of local centre- adjoining Limebrook Way or within heart of neighbourhood;
  - Location and distribution of employment uses;
  - Treatment of A414- different ideas for addressing issue of proposed relief road and its design; and
  - Need for an additional pedestrian route through the nature reserve.
- 2.4.5 A community event took place in the West Maldon Community Centre on 1 March 2014. The material presented included emerging masterplan options which were informed by the outcomes of the stakeholder workshop. A leaflet was circulated to local residents inviting them to attend the event and comment on the masterplan options. The event was promoted in both of the local newspapers; Burnham and Maldon Standard and the Essex Chronicle on Thursday 20 February 2014. A flyer was created which set out the approach to the development and also incorporated a freepost comment form for residents to post back. It provided a telephone number, website address and an email address so residents could find out more, comment and ask questions. This flyer was posted and emailed, where possible, to a stakeholder database of more than 50 local groups, companies and organisations including Maldon Town Council with a request to distribute and display. It was also sent directly to the homes of 2,000 residents closest to the site. The project team has set up a web site <http://www.southmaldongardensuburb.co.uk/>.
- 2.4.6 A total of 229 residents attended the event, with 206 residents signing in to provide their details for further information. A total of 96 respondents completed the comment forms and handed them in at the exhibition. A further nine residents have completed the comment form via the website.
- 2.4.7 Members of the project team and Maldon District Council (MDC) were available on the day to discuss the proposals with attendees and answer questions. The key topics discussed included:
- Transport and access – particularly access on to Limebrook Way and vehicle speeds and the need for and implementation of off-site improvements to the A414 at Eves Corner, Danbury and Hatfield Peverel to accommodate traffic associated with the proposed development;
  - Scale of development and impact on the character of Maldon;
  - Infrastructure – particularly the need for a new doctors and a school on the site and the timescales for delivery of these facilities and the local centre;
  - Increased pressures on car parking in the town centre;

- Ways to make cycling and walking more appealing and the need for improve public transport provision to train stations, Chelmsford and the town centre in order to encourage use of more sustainable transport modes and alleviate parking issues;
- Wildlife – protection of existing habitats, enhancement and new foraging opportunities;
- Density and design – a low density, attractive development was on the whole preferred;
- Visual amenity – there was a preference from those living to north of Limebrook Way for a green buffer along the northern edge of the development; and
- Employment – the need to create investment and new job opportunities in Maldon

## **2.5 Format of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework**

- 2.5.1 The Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework has been made available in the Members’ room, on the I Drive and on the Council’s website, and comprises the following sections:

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 The purpose of this document
- 1.3 Approach: What the document contains
- 1.4 Methodology: How the document has been prepared

### **Site and surrounding context**

- 2.1 Site location and description
- 2.2 Planning policy framework
- 2.3 Land uses
- 2.4 Local facilities
- 2.5 Access & movement
- 2.6 Landscape and visual
- 2.7 Key site features

### **Vision and objectives for garden suburb**

- 3.1 Garden Suburbs and south Maldon
- 3.2 Establishing vision and objectives for south Maldon
- 3.3 Key opportunities plan

### **Masterplan and development principles**

- 4.1 Illustrative framework masterplan
- 4.2 Land use

- 4.3 Access & movement
- 4.4 Green infrastructure
- 4.5 Character areas
- 4.6 Street hierarchy
- 4.7 Public open space and recreation
- 4.8 Climate change and sustainability
- 4.9 Residential car parking

### **Infrastructure and delivery**

- 5.1 Transport strategy
- 5.2 Requirements for planning applications
- 5.3 Planning conditions and obligations
- 5.4 Strategic phasing, management and maintenance

### **Appendices**

- A1 Workshops and community engagement
- A2 Glossary of terms

2.5.2 The Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework sets out how the key infrastructure requirements set out in Policy S4 will be delivered. This includes the following key infrastructure:

- A new 1.5 form entry primary school.
- Two new 56 place early year and childcare facilities.
- One class base expansion of existing primary school.
- Necessary contributions toward the sufficient expansion of the Plume School.
- Provision for youth and children's facilities.
- A new relief road to the north of A414 at Wycke Hill.
- Provision for Class B use employment land as identified in Policy E1

2.5.3 Provision is also made for the following key elements in accordance with Policy S4:

- New and enhanced public transport.
- New and enhanced walking and cycling routes and connections with the wider area.
- Improvements to the wider highway network to accommodate development.
- Enhanced medical provision.
- Community hub and local centre.
- Surface water mitigation and sustainable urban drainage (SUDs).
- Increased and enhanced green infrastructure network.
- A mix of housing to include affordable housing and housing appropriate to meeting the needs of an older population.

- Protection and enhancement of Maldon Wick Local Wildlife Site.
- 2.5.4 A key focus of the masterplanning work for the South Maldon Garden Suburb has been on the development of a comprehensive access strategy including the delivery of a new relief road to the north of the A414 at Wycke Hill. A number of options have been assessed in consultation with Essex County Council and key principles are set out in the draft masterplan.
- 2.5.5 Consultation has been undertaken with the Essex Wildlife Trust regarding the protection and enhancement of the Maldon Wick Local Wildlife Site. A site-wide Drainage Strategy is being developed in consultation with the Environment Agency and Essex County Council in the context of the Maldon and Heybridge Surface Water Plan. This will identify any necessary surface water mitigation measures.
- 2.5.6 Consultation has been undertaken with the relevant health bodies regarding future medical provision and the project team will continue to work with them to develop proposals in accordance with the principles set out in the draft masterplan.

## **2.7 Next Steps**

- 2.7.1 Following endorsement of the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework by the Council, a six week public consultation period will commence in accordance with the requirements for Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Subject to the Council's endorsement, it is proposed that public consultation will commence on 16 June and finish on 28 July. This will include a community consultation event on 28 June which will be widely advertised in the local area through leaflets, posters, Council's web site and adverts in local newspapers. Attendees at previous consultation events will be notified.
- 2.7.2 Following public consultation, all comments received will be reviewed and where appropriate modifications will be made to the Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework. It is currently intended that the revised Strategic Masterplan Framework and Report on Consultation will be reported back to the Planning and Licensing Committee for endorsement in the Autumn.
- 2.7.3 In accordance with Policy S4, planning permission will only be granted if the proposals are in accordance with the endorsed masterplan. The Council will not invite developers / landowners to submit planning applications until the Strategic Masterplan Framework has been endorsed by the Council following public consultation.

## **3. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS**

- 3.1 Sustainable growth and development and a vibrant local economy are key considerations in supporting the corporate goals of:
- Meeting the housing needs of the District.
  - Enabling, supporting and empowering communities to be safe, active and healthy.

- Protecting and shaping the District and balancing the future needs of the community.

#### 4. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Positive, through a plan-led approach to development.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – The progression and endorsement of the Strategic Masterplan Frameworks enables the Council to ‘front-load’ the planning of the Garden Suburbs and ensure that they are planned and delivered in a coordinated and joined up fashion.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The Strategic Masterplan Frameworks are being project managed through consultancy support. A delay in the progression of the Frameworks could result in additional costs for the Council in relation to the ongoing project management requirements.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The Strategic Masterplan Frameworks require ongoing cooperation and involvement from MDC Officers and external organisations.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Positive, the outcomes of the Masterplanning process will ensure quality built and natural environments to live, work and visit.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Council is committed to sustainable development and to improve the quality of the built and natural environment and to sustain and enhance the local economy.
- 5.2 The progression of the Masterplans is fundamental to the policy requirements within the Pre-submission LDP. Planning consent for development within the South Maldon Garden Suburb will not be permitted unless it is in accordance with a masterplan which has been endorsed by the Council.

#### 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Draft Strategic Masterplan for the South Maldon Garden Suburb for public consultation, be endorsed.

Background Papers: Draft Strategic Masterplan for South Maldon Garden Suburb (June 2014), Local Development Plan 2014-2029 as submitted for examination, Economic Prosperity Strategy 2013

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