

Welcome

Welcome to the Consultation Event for Brierley Paddocks, land south of East Road.

City & Country is in the process of preparing an application that seeks to deliver residential development and community facilities in line with Colchester Borough Council's emerging Local Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan Group has also been working to identify the needs and desires of the local community, which they have kindly shared with us. We are here today to discuss the merits of incorporating these as part of the proposals for Brierley Paddocks and understand the views that you, the local residents, have on the form and location of the proposed development.

Our intention is to submit an Outline Application in the coming months. By submitting it in Outline, the application will look to establish the scale and nature of the development and set the parameters for which the more detailed proposals will be required to conform.

These detailed proposals will be put forward at a later date and will try to take onboard comments from this and further events, as well as those of the key stakeholders including the Town Council, Local Planning Authority and the Neighbourhood Plan Group, amongst others.

Members of our team are on hand to answer your questions and provide details of how you can comment on the proposals.



The Site

The aerial photograph below shows the site outlined in red. It is located south of East Road in West Mersea, Mersea Island. It is currently in agricultural use, known locally as Brierley Paddocks.



West Mersea is a sustainable location and provides a very attractive area for people to live and work. The location is highly accessible being within 12 miles of the A12 and the A120, and less than 9 miles from Colchester with links to London Liverpool Street.

The area has a full range of services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents including retail, employment, education, medical, sport and leisure opportunities.

This site would be a natural extension to the existing settlement.

Planning Context

The current Colchester Borough Council Local Plan is out of date; however, the Council is at an advanced stage in the preparation of a new Local Plan.

The emerging Local Plan identifies West Mersea as one of three Rural District Centres, as it is one of the largest of the Borough's sustainable settlements that provides essential services and facilities to both the local community and the surrounding area. The Council considers that West Mersea is suitable for growth during the Plan period up to 2033.

City & Country has promoted Brierley Paddocks as part of Colchester Borough Council's Local Plan process to address this identified need for development.

At the first stage of the emerging Local Plan process, the site was allocated for 200 dwellings, however, in the second iteration this was reduced.

The emerging Local Plan, now states that the following mixed-use development at Brierley Paddocks will be supported by the Council:

- i. 100 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to be compatible with surrounding development
- ii. A satisfactory vehicular access
- iii. New public open space; and
- iv. Community facilities if identified in the Neighbourhood Plan

Residents may be aware that another site in West Mersea has also been proposed for residential development at Dawes Lane for 100 new dwellings; public open space; and recreational facilities. This results in a total allocation of 200 dwellings for West Mersea.

Progress on the emerging Local Plan has stalled due to concerns raised by the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State regarding justification of the Garden Settlements. Further work is now required by the Council and adoption of the Local Plan is now anticipated to be mid-2020 at the earliest.

In the interim, West Mersea may become vulnerable to speculative applications on other sites, on the basis that the Council must be able to demonstrate a continuous five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. An early application and grant of consent at Brierley Paddocks could help the local community resist such proposals.

It is recognised that the site is allocated for 100 dwellings in the emerging Local Plan submitted for Examination. However, development for a greater number of houses would ensure the most efficient use of the land, in accordance with national planning policy. The site provides an opportunity for and can accommodate more development than currently identified in the emerging Local Plan.

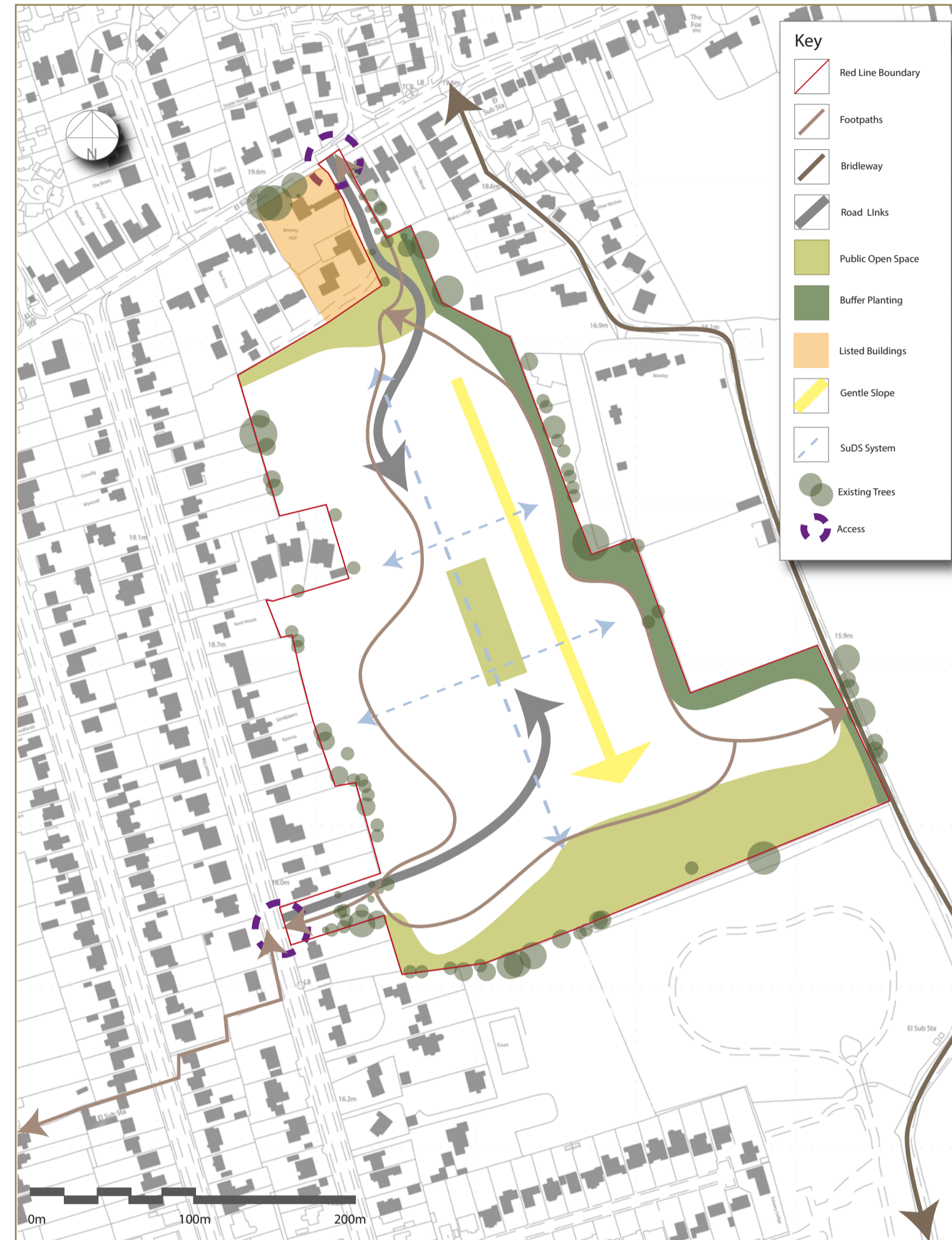
This position is supported by its initial allocation by the Council for 200 dwellings.



The Proposals

An outline planning application is currently being prepared for the demolition of an existing property at 43 Seaview Avenue and the creation of 201 dwellings and community facilities.

Technical work undertaken to date has identified the following site characteristics, constraints and opportunities, as identified on the plan below.



The existing boundary hedgerow and tree planting along the eastern boundary will be retained and enhanced, with additional native hedgerow and tree species introduced.

New residential properties will be closely connected to the linear park and will have links to the wider countryside. There are two potential points of vehicular access into the site; one from East Road and one from Seaview Avenue.

The plan below provides an illustrative landscape and development layout:



Below are some illustrative sketches to show how the scheme could look. They have been influenced by the character of the existing town with the use of local vernacular and traditional materials.



Technical Studies

A series of specialist reports have been produced to understand the site and its parameters for redevelopment. These allow a balanced judgement to be made on the amount and type of change acceptable on a site and its potential impact on the existing infrastructure. These can be summarised as follows:

Transport Assessment (TA) - This considers the impact of the development proposals on the local highway network, including access into and out of the site, traffic numbers and their impact on the highway and junctions. This has been undertaken for the site and has concluded that:

- The site is in a convenient location for public transport
- Vehicle and cycle parking will be provided in line with policy requirements
- The required visibility can be achieved for road users at both access points
- Comprehensive trip generation analysis and a capacity assessment have been undertaken and concluded that the proposals will not have a significant or material detrimental impact on the operation of the local highway network or highways safety.

Ecology - A site walkover and initial surveys of species and habitats within the local area and site have been undertaken. The site is currently in agricultural use and therefore there is potential for ecological improvement as part of the proposal.

Arboricultural Assessment - A survey of the trees on site, each in terms of their height, age, species and condition has been undertaken. The survey report concludes that the proposed development would have no material effect on the health of the existing trees.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) - This document assesses the development proposals in context with the surrounding area and concludes that the proposed redevelopment of Brierley Paddocks will not introduce anything which is uncharacteristic to the existing views experienced within the local area. In addition, the existing and proposed landscaping and areas of planting throughout the site will further strengthen and mitigate views of the site.

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy - The site is located in flood zone 1 and is therefore classified as having 'low' probability of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared to ensure that development will not increase the risk of flooding either within the site or to the surrounding local area. It also includes a strategy for sustainably managing surface water run-off and drainage from the site



Community Benefits and Facilities

Community Benefits

Development on Brierley Paddocks has the potential to provide a number of community benefits for the area. We are in continued discussions with the Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan Group to ensure we can deliver:

- Newly accessible landscaped open space
- New play spaces for children
- Delivery of a mix of new dwellings, from starter homes to family homes, that are needed in the local area
- Provision of affordable housing
- Financial contributions towards education and health facilities
- Cycle and pedestrian links to the immediate area, linking the development to the surrounding area



Community Facilities

The site has sufficient space to provide Community Facilities as envisaged by the emerging Local Plan. From discussions with the Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan Group it is anticipated that the following options have the most potential:

Health Centre

The GP Practice on the Island is looking to expand to meet the needs of existing and future residents and Brierley Paddocks has been identified as a suitable location. The site has the space to accommodate a larger surgery and as part of our proposals we have allocated a parcel of land to provide this essential service.

Start-up Commercial Units

The survey undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group has identified a need for some small business or office units to allow start-up companies to flourish and prosper.

Renewable Energy Project

City & Country has been in discussions with Amphora, a company owned by Colchester Borough Council, regarding the potential for a renewable heat project. This would see the houses and any other uses on the site being heated by a heat pump and shared ground loop. Initial investigations into the feasibility of this suggests that a minimum of 200 homes will be needed to make this project viable.

Starter Homes/ Discounted homes

Starter homes and discounted market housing are a type of affordable housing where the properties are sold at least 20% below local market value to eligible people. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Gifted Properties

A model has been used in Tendring District where a Trust is created, and houses are gifted to it. These houses are then rented to local people at a discounted rent. The advantage of these over conventional affordable housing is that it allows the Trust to set the rents lower and prioritise local people.

Bungalows/ Retirement Apartments

There is potential to provide bungalows/ apartments within the development that are designed for this use.



What Happens Next?

The purpose of this session is to provide local residents with an opportunity to understand the proposals and provide their feedback. An outline application will be submitted to Colchester Borough Council in due course.

Timeline



Stakeholder and community feedback collated and reviewed following this consultation event

Application submitted to Colchester Borough Council end of 2018/early 2019

Members of the public and statutory consultees will be able to comment on the application via the Council's website

A decision is expected to be made on the application by Spring/Summer 2019

Assuming the decision is positive, we will begin the process of pulling together a reserved matters application to identify the details of the proposals. As part of this we will re-engage with the public and will look to hold another public consultation event prior to submission.