# AGENDA ITEM 3 – APPENDIX 1

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Fiona Marshall

31 May 2019

Dear Councillor

**PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE – 6 JUNE 2019**

Further to the published agenda, the following enclosed document should be considered alongside Agenda Item 3 – Minutes of the last meeting:.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting – Appendix 1** (Pages 3 - 140)

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

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APPENDIX 1

LUC

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# A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Maldon District

**Final Version**
**March 2019**

**Project Title**: A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Maldon District

**Client**: Maldon District Council

| Version | Date | Version Details | Prepared by | Checked by | Approved by |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 26/07/2018 | Draft for comment | Katie Norris<br>Katie Stenson<br>Natalie Collins | Katie Norris | Peter Lawrence |
| 2 | 03/09/2018 | Final version for Consultation | Katie Norris<br>Katie Stenson | Katie Norris | Peter Lawrence |
| 3 | 19/03/2019 | Final Report for publication | Katie Norris<br>Katie Stenson<br>Melissa Kurihara | Katie Norris | Sarah Young |

All images are the author's own unless otherwise stated.

Last saved: 19/03/2019 17:43

**APPENDIX 1**

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# A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Maldon District

Report for Consultation
Prepared by LUC
March 2019

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# 1 Introduction

**Maldon District Council commissioned LUC to develop a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)[1] to promote a long-term Vision, Opportunities Map and Action Plan for the sustainable development and management of green infrastructure across the District.**

The need for a GI Strategy was initially identified in the February 2017 Local Development Scheme. This GI Strategy SPD (referred to as the 'GI Strategy') follows the Maldon District Green Infrastructure Study that was published in 2011 which informed the emerging future growth and infrastructure requirements in the District.

The planning context against which the 2011 study was prepared has now changed, most notably at a national level with the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 and its replacement in 2018 which incurred minor revisions during 2019, and the approved new Local Development Plan at the local level. In addition, the time elapsed since the previous study means that there may be changes to the existing green infrastructure assets in the District and new opportunities for expansion and enhancement of the green infrastructure network.

**The structure of this GI Strategy is as follows:**

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** - this chapter introduces green infrastructure, sets out the aims of the GI Strategy, outlines the planning policy context and provides the Maldon context.
- **Chapter 2: Key Green Infrastructure Themes** – using eight green infrastructure themes this chapter presents the green infrastructure baseline and feedback from the stakeholder consultation.
- **Chapter 3: Action Plan** – this chapter identifies the green infrastructure projects that have been informed by the desk based study and stakeholder consultation. The second section of this chapter sets out the green infrastructure policy principles.

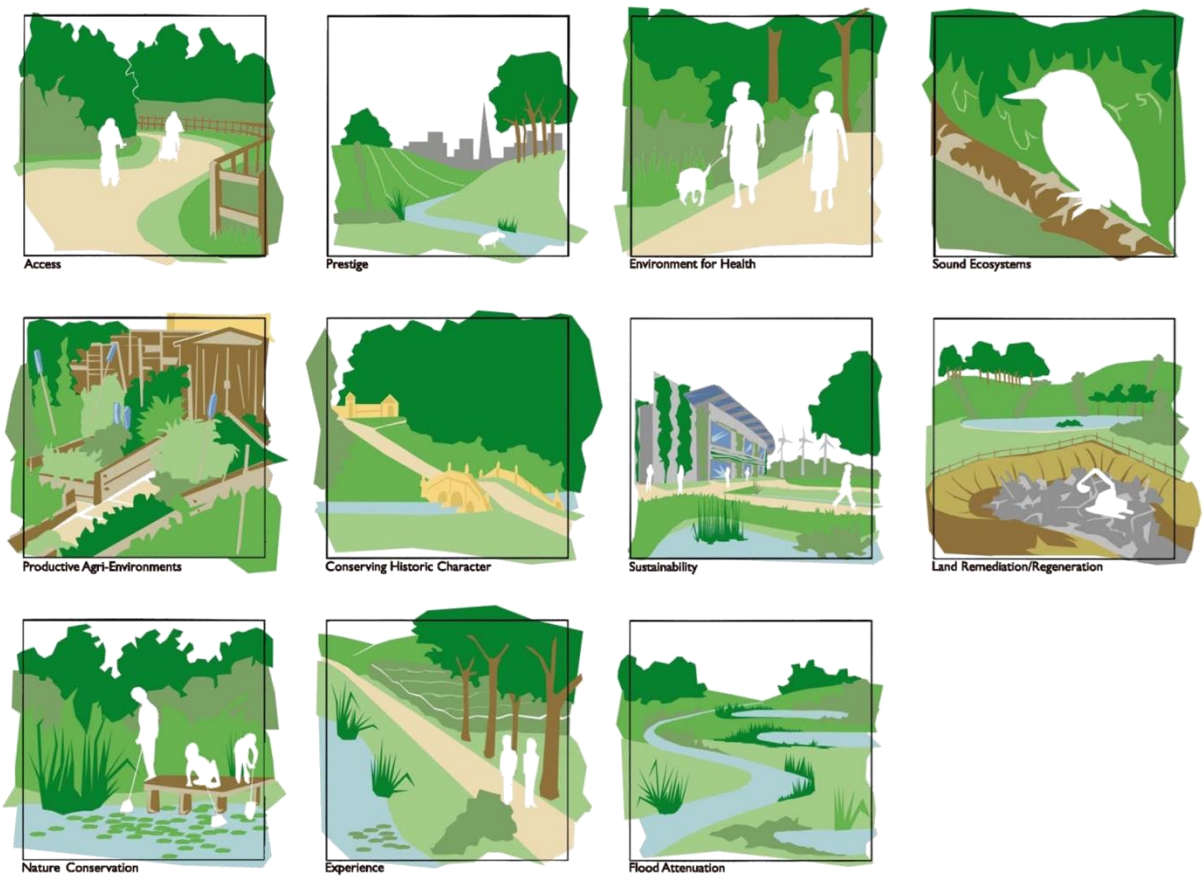
[1] Supplementary planning documents (SPD) are non-statutory documents that can form part of the Local Development Plan. They provide more detailed advice and guidance on policies in local plans and are a material consideration when planning applications are being assessed.

## What is Green Infrastructure?

1.1 National Planning Practice Guidance[2] defines green infrastructure as:

> ***"A network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.***
>
> *Green infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. As a network it includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, but also street trees, allotments and private gardens. It can also include streams, canals and other water bodies and features such as green roofs and walls."*

1.2 Green infrastructure delivers multifunctional benefits to local communities (as shown below), for example enhancing physical and mental wellbeing through access to greenspace; supporting biodiversity and local landscape character; and delivering climate change adaptation and mitigation, such as reducing urban temperatures and reducing flood risk. The benefits of green infrastructure can be felt at a local, regional and national scale.




[2] DCLG 2016 Planning Practice Guidance for the Natural Environment – Green Infrastructure. Available at: http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/green-infrastructure/

1.3 As well as offering environmental benefits, green infrastructure affords economic benefits through:

- reducing healthcare costs by improving physical and mental wellbeing;
- increasing the attractiveness of a local area;
- supporting the tourism sector by providing visitor attractions; and
- supporting agriculture and food production.

## Aim of the GI Strategy

1.4 The aim of the Maldon GI Strategy is to assess the existing evidence base and identify opportunities to conserve, enhance and promote the Maldon's green infrastructure network by developing a vision, opportunities map and action plan to guide future investment in green infrastructure.

1.5 Maldon District is set to deliver high levels of development in the coming years, when compared to recent times. It is important that new and existing communities have access to high quality greenspace and the landscapes and wildlife which are such a valued feature of the District. The Local Development Plan 2014-2029, which was approved in July 2017, sets out that a minimum of 4,650 homes are to be delivered mainly through sustainable extensions to Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch in the form of Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations during the plan period.

### The purpose of this GI Strategy is to:

- **Promote a long-term Vision** for the sustainable development and management of green infrastructure across the District.
- **Provide an opportunities map** that demonstrates how distinct elements of the green infrastructure network work together at a District level (and beyond, as appropriate).
- **Create a set of principles and policies** to underpin the creation and enhancement of the green infrastructure network.
- **Identify and prioritise key projects**, and identify potential partners and funding streams for their delivery.
- **Provide an Action Plan** for the delivery of key projects and interventions.

1.6 To help deliver these purposes, eight green infrastructure themes (shown below) have been identified. These were initially selected through listing and grouping the multifunctional benefits provided by green infrastructure in Maldon District, followed by verification in consultation with Maldon District Council and at stakeholder consultation events.

1.7 These eight themes in turn provide a structure for:

- evaluating the outputs of a desk based study and feedback from key stakeholders and Council Members; and
- guiding the evaluation and analysis of the green infrastructure baseline in the District.

## National, Regional and Local Policy

1.8 This section outlines the key national, regional and local policies that have influenced the approach to this study.

### National Planning Policy Framework

1.9 Published in 2018, with minor amendments made in 2019, the revised NPPF[3] guides on the plan making process and decisions on development proposals that are decided by local planning authorities, and is expected to:

- improve housing delivery;
- strengthen the plan-led system by focusing on strategic policies; and
- encourage viability assessments at the plan-making stage.

1.10 The revised NPPF outlines the relevance of green infrastructure to the development of a Local Plan:

- Paragraph 20 highlights that 'Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for…conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure'.
- Paragraph 91 requires that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places; referencing safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities and high quality public space as a means to achieving this.
- Paragraph 150 states that 'New development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change…including through the planning of green infrastructure'.
- Paragraph 171 states that 'Plans should…take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure'.
- Paragraph 181 links the requirement for the identification of green infrastructure provision and enhancement at the plan making stage to the improvement of air quality or mitigation of impacts relating to this issue.

1.11 The NPPF provides a mechanism by which local authorities can protect some open spaces under a 'Local Green Space' designation (paras.99 and 100), and provides high-level criteria for such a designation.

### Green Infrastructure in Planning Practice Guidance

1.12 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) encourages a strategic approach to incorporating green infrastructure into local plans and implementing planning decisions through an evidence based approach. It emphasises the importance of green infrastructure to the delivery of high quality sustainable development, alongside other forms of infrastructure such as transport, energy, waste and water. Green infrastructure provides multiple benefits, notably ecosystem services, at a range of scales, derived from natural systems and processes.

1.13 The PPG states that local authorities are required to provide suitable mitigation for potential impacts on international nature conservation sites and recommends the provision of open space to deliver a range of benefits and mitigation measures either directly or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

1.14 The PPG also requires the sustainable management of green infrastructure, which should be identified at the earliest stage, alongside the determination of sources of funding for its on-going management. This study considers the potential for S106/ CIL to deliver green infrastructure.

### Green Infrastructure in Local Policy

*Local Development Plan 2014-2029*

1.15 The Maldon Local Development Plan[4] was approved in July 2017 and sets out the overarching vision of the District between 2014 and 2029. It identifies the long-term requirements for growth and its distribution, and includes strategic policies and large mixed-use land allocations in Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch.

[3] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework

[4] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon District Local Development Plan. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9311/approved_local_development_plan_21_july_2017

1.16 The Local Development Plan sets out a spatial vision and 14 objectives to deliver the vision, including *'…enabling the provision of facilities and services, including … green infrastructure'.* The key policies relevant for this GI Strategy are:

- **Policy N1: Green Infrastructure Network** seeks to secure the protection, creation and enhancement of green infrastructure, and support for development proposals that contribute to and strengthen the green infrastructure networks' connectivity.
- **Policy N2: Natural Environment, Geodiversity and Biodiversity** seeks to protect and enhance internationally, nationally and locally designated sites and to deliver net biodiversity and geodiversity gain in new development.
- **Policy N3: Open Space, Sport and Leisure** aims to protect PRoW, spaces and facilities contributing towards the integrity of the green infrastructure network, from loss or damage from development. Developments are required to contribute towards improving the provision, quality and accessibility of open spaces, sports, community and leisure facilities.
- **Policy S1: Sustainable Development** sets out 14 overarching principles covering environmental, social and economic objectives which development proposals will be considered against during the planning application process. Green infrastructure is specifically identified in the ninth objective which covers the natural environment, and is also relevant to many of the other 13 objectives including the local economy, climate change, flood risk, sustainable modes of transport, sustainable communities and the historic environment.
- **Policy S2: Strategic Growth** allocates land for at least 4,650 new homes that need to be delivered within the District between 2014 and 2029. To ensure the most accessible and sustainable locations are selected, this policy allocates sites on the urban fringes of the main settlements in the District. The site allocations are set out in **Table 1.1** below:

**Table 1.1: The strategic sites identified in Policy S2 of the Local Development Plan**

| Site allocation | | Approximate number of dwellings to be delivered |
|---|---|---|
| **South Maldon Garden Suburb** | S2(a) South of Limebrook Way | 1,000 |
| | S2(b) Wycke Hill (North) | 320 |
| | S2(c)Wycke Hill (South) | 102 |
| | **Site allocation total** | **1,428** |
| **North Heybridge Garden Suburb** | S2(d)North of Heybridge | 1,138 |
| | S2(e) Land to the North of Holloway Road | 100 |
| | S2(f) West of Broad Street Green Road | 145 |
| | **Site allocation total** | **1,383** |
| **Maldon and Heybridge Strategic Allocations** | S2(g) Park Drive | 131 |
| | S2(h) Heybridge Swifts | 101 |
| | **Site allocation total** | **232** |
| **Burnham-on-Crouch Strategic Allocations** | S2(i) West of Burnham-on-Crouch | 180 |
| | S2(j) North of Burnham-on-Crouch (West) | 180 |
| | S2(k) North of Burnham-on-Crouch (East) | 90 |
| | **Site allocation total** | **450** |

### Landscape and green infrastructure approach

1.17 The proposed green infrastructure provision for the garden suburbs are as follows:

- **The South Maldon Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework SPD** assigns 40% of the allocation as strategic green infrastructure, as shown on Figure 4.3 of the South Maldon Garden Suburb SPD. The document also sets out a number of green infrastructure principles and include:
  - preserving and enhancing existing natural features such as trees, hedgerows ponds and ditches; and,
  - creating green links that will promote sustainable ways of traveling such as walking and cycling.
- **The endorsed North Heybridge Garden Suburb Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework**[5] states that green infrastructure will play a significant role in determining the character of this allocation. As well as retaining and protecting Heybridge Woods, there will substantial planting and habitat creation in areas which are currently low in ecological value.

1.18 The concept of green infrastructure is embedded throughout the Local Development Plan policies including in the strategic site allocations (Policy S4 Maldon and Heybridge Growth, Policy S6 Burnham-on-Crouch Strategic Growth), Policy S7 Prosperous Rural Communities, and Policy S8 Settlement Boundaries and the Countryside. It is also a key component of Policy D1 Design Quality and Built Environment, Policy D2 Climate Change and Environmental Impact, Policy D5 Flood Risk and Coastal Management, E5 Tourism, Policy N1 Green Infrastructure Network, Policy N2 Natural Environment and Biodiversity and Policy N3 Open Space, Sport and Leisure.

*Site preparation for the construction phase of the Burnham-on-Crouch North (West) Strategic Allocation (January 2018)*

1.19 As well as identifying sites for the development, the Local Development Plan also provides policies that helps ensure that new development conserves and enhances the rural character of Maldon District and its natural assets.

[5] Maldon District Council (2014) North Heybridge Garden Suburb Consultation Draft Strategic Masterplan Framework. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/supporting_documents/4%20Other/DOC122.pdf

*Supplementary Planning Documents*

1.20 To support the approved Local Development Plan, a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other guidance have been prepared:

- **The South Maldon and North Heybridge Garden Suburbs** allocate 2,600 dwellings and 4.5 hectares of employment space and each have a **Strategic Masterplan Framework (SMF)**. These SMFs set out the vision and objectives of each site as well as detailed masterplan and development principles. Green infrastructure is an essential component within these documents. The South Maldon Garden Suburb SMF (adopted as a SPD in March 2018) states that 40% of the allocation is proposed as strategic green infrastructure[6] whilst the North Heybridge Garden Suburb SMF explains that the consideration of the comprehensive green infrastructure network 'has been central to the evolution of the SMF'[7].
- **The Maldon District Design Guide**[8] SPD was adopted in December 2017 and supplements the Local Development Plan policies to ensure that high quality design is delivered in the District by providing a design led approach to all development. The Guide has supporting technical documents that expand on landscape and green infrastructure requirements and specifies that green infrastructure should be considered at the concept plan stage of development and that the network is important for people, wildlife, landscape and climate change.
- **The Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan**[9] was adopted as a SPD in November 2017 and it identifies the opportunities for the delivery of key projects outlined in Policy S5 of the Local Development Plan. It seeks to promote investments within the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area to ensure it continues to be a key hub for local and sub-regional retail, employment and visitor economies. In green infrastructure terms, the masterplan focuses on connection opportunities, including linking the two sections of the England Coast Path. It also seeks to establish a continuous riverside route, provide enhancements to The Causeway Corridor, regeneration of Promenade Park, enhanced access to the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and managing flood risk as the masterplan area is located within flood zone 3.
- The draft **Essex Coast Recreation Disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)** shows that Maldon District falls entirely within the overall zone of influence for the Essex Coast RAMS. The draft document identifies the measures required to mitigate the recreational impact generated by planned housing growth on birds, wildlife and their habitats in the Natura 2000 sites that cover the majority of the Essex Coast. This emerging SPD sets out how developer contributions will be used to fund the mitigation and the level of any contributions sought from new dwellings in the study area. In the context of the recreational disturbance pressures currently being faced by the Essex Coast designated sites, the existing green infrastructure network and new provision will be of growing importance. In terms of green infrastructure, the mitigation is expected to be varied and could include habitat creation and enhancement, improved management of recreation activities along the coast and additional rangers to communicate the benefits of using the coast in a positive way. The Essex Coast RAMS provides an opportunity for on-site green infrastructure provisions to be incorporated into large scale developments. The RAMS is a joint project between 11 local authorities (Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Maldon, Rochford, Southend, Tendring and Thurrock). The Essex Coast RAMS document will be available for public consultation in the late summer of 2019.

[6] Maldon District Council (no date) South Maldon Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/supporting_documents/4%20Other/DOC121.pdf

[7] Maldon District Council (2014) North Heybridge Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/supporting_documents/4%20Other/DOC122.pdf

[8] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon District Design Guide. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9226/urban_design/2

[9] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9226/urban_design/4

*Maldon District Green Infrastructure Study Report (2011)*

1.21 A Green Infrastructure Study was published in September 2011, to inform the emerging future growth and infrastructure requirements in the District. The study identified the components that make up the green infrastructure network, including parks, amenity space, sports provision, natural and semi-natural green spaces and allotments. This study found that overall provision of green infrastructure in the District was good, although this is not consistent throughout the District. The study concluded that given the projected growth in population, new facilities would be required to maintain the current level of provision. Recommendations included creation of a new District Park, additional sports provision, improving connectivity between and protection of natural and semi-natural greenspaces and improving provision of and access to allotments.

*Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)*

1.22 The Local Development Plan HRA[10] concluded that there are no significant adverse effects on the integrity of the three international sites (Dengie Special Protection Area (SPA); Blackwater Estuary SPA; and the Crouch and Roach SPA) either alone or in-combination as a result of the approved Maldon District Local Development Plan. It is important that this GI Strategy does not inadvertently result in potential impacts on these international sites, but it rather presents an opportunity to reduce impacts, such as recreational pressure, on these sites. A number of the projects within this GI Strategy are within close proximity to the coastal European sites, and as such require due consideration under the Habitats Regulations assessment process.

*Essex Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2020*

1.23 The aims of this document are similar to those of this GI Strategy; to prevent biodiversity loss, protect the existing healthy ecosystems and also create well-functioning ecological networks.

1.24 The Action Plan is divided into five habitat groups (lowland farming, lakes and ponds, rivers, wetlands and coastal) and each is further subdivided into priority habitats[11]. Each priority habitat document outlines the national and Essex context as well as identifying targets at national, regional and county level. This provides a useful guide for when considering biodiversity delivery in planning proposals and may usefully inform this GI Strategy.

[10] Royal HaskoningDHV (2013) Maldon District Council LDP SA and HRA

[11] These are defined as a variety of semi-natural habitat types that were recognised as being the most threatened and therefore required conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (based on the JNCC definition).

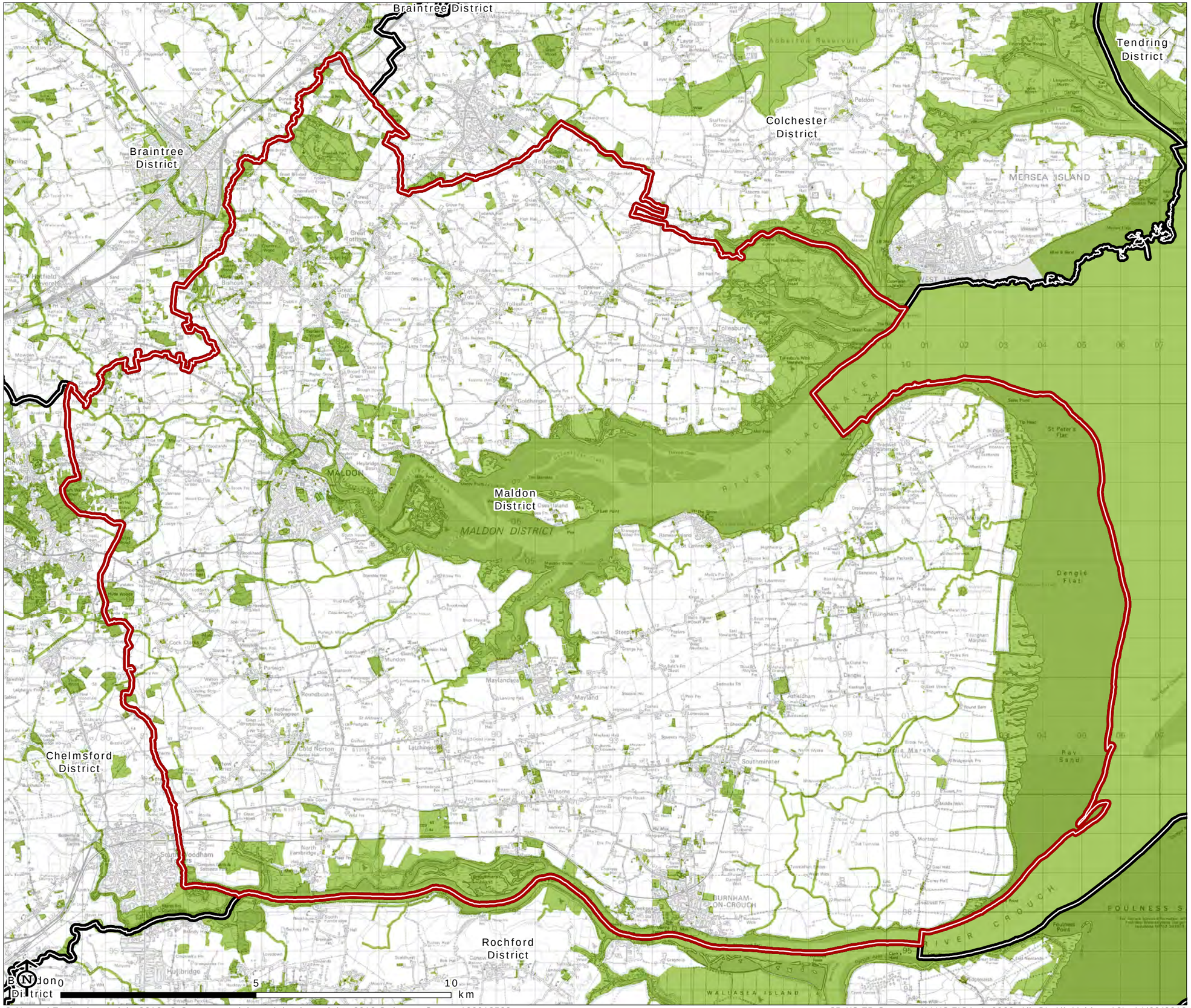
# 2 Key Green Infrastructure Themes

This chapter details Maldon District's current green infrastructure (as identified through Steps 1 and 2 of the methodology, detailed in **Appendix 1**). This is shown in **Figure 2.0**. This includes the following for each of the eight green infrastructure themes:

- **A map** showing the District's existing green infrastructure baseline including a 10km buffer;
- **A commentary** on the maps;
- **The findings** of the desk based study;
- **Opportunities and threats,** which includes feedback from stakeholder engagement; and,
- An analysis of the findings for each green infrastructure theme

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure **2.0**: Green Infrastructure Baseline: All Green Infrastructure




Maldon District Council
Neighbouring local authorities
All green infrastructure*

* Data includes:
Local Wildlife Sites
Local Nature Reserves
Sites of Special Scientific Interest
National Nature Reserves
Special Conservation Areas
Special Areas of Conservation
Ramsars
Ancient woodland
Registered common land
Open access land
RSPB reserves
Traditional orchards
Open space
Country parks
National forest inventory
National Trust open and limited access land
Rivers and canals
Lakes including fishing lakes

Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

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MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG1_1_9999_All_GI_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: BrDC, FC, MDC, NE, NT, OS, RSPB, TDC

## Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife

**The Maldon District supports a wealth of biodiversity assets, including a large number of locally, nationally and internationally designated sites, as well as extensive areas of open countryside which supports a range of habitats (many lying within farmed landscapes). For these reasons, the District supports a diverse range of wildlife, including notable and protected species.**

### Map Observations

The key biodiversity assets within the District are shown in **Figure 2.1**.

The entirety of the District's coastline is **internationally and nationally designated** and the international designations go beyond the District's boundary into adjoining Districts, the river estuaries and the North Sea.

Further inland, there are a number of **local nature designations**, particularly towards the western boundary of the District where there are several linear sites following old railway routes and existing canals. **Ancient woodland** also features within many of the local nature designation sites.

Eleven **priority habitats** exist within the District, the majority of which are associated with riverine and water environments.

Two **RSPB reserves**, Old Hall Marshes and Wallasea Island, bound the District to the north and south respectively. Eight **Essex Wildlife Trust Reserves** can also be found in the District, with two further reserves beyond the District's boundary in South Woodham Ferrers (Chelmsford City Council) and to the south of Tiptree (Colchester Borough Council).

Ttwo **turtle dove friendly zones** cover large areas of rural land within Maldon District. The northern zone encompasses sections of the River Blackwater, while the River Chelmer lies within the southern zone.

The Local Development Plan **site allocations** in Maldon and Heybridge either include a locally designated wildlife site, or lie directly adjacent to one of these designated sites. For example, the North Heybridge Garden Suburb includes Heybridge Woods a designated Local Wildlife Site, which includes ancient woodland and the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area allocation shares boundaries with the three Essex Estuaries international designations (SAC, SPA and Ramsar). To the south of the District, the Burnham-on-Crouch site allocations lie fully within the turtle dove friendly zone and the Burnham Riverside Park, a Local Wildlife Site, is located directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the employment allocations.

## Desk Based Study Findings

*Maldon's National Character Areas*

2.1 National Character Areas (NCAs) are broad divisions of landscape, and form the basic units of cohesive countryside character[12]. Although primarily a description of landscape, they also very usefully help to characterise ecological character, and inform both ecological and landscape strategies.

2.2 Maldon District falls into two separate NCAs:

- The Greater Thames Estuary; and,
- The North Thames Basin.

2.3 The **Greater Thames Estuary NCA** is predominantly a landscape of shallow creeks, drowned estuaries, lowlying islands, mudflats and broad tracts of tidal salt marsh and reclaimed grazing marsh that lies between the North Sea and the rising ground inland. It forms the eastern edge of the London Basin and encompasses the coastlines of South Essex and North Kent, along with a narrow strip of land following the path of the Thames into East London. Despite its close proximity to London, the NCA contains some of the least settled areas of the English coast.

2.4 The coastal habitats of the NCA are internationally important for their biodiversity interest and support large numbers of overwintering and breeding wetland birds, rare plant and invertebrate species, and diverse marine wildlife (see below). Hundreds of thousands of wintering waterfowl including grey plover, dunlin and black-tailed godwit add movement and variety to the open landscape. The estuary also provides some of the best breeding sites for rare wetland birds in southern England, including avocets and marsh harriers. The estuary is also notable for its overwintering population of dark-bellied Brent geese, which rely on the surrounding arable farmland as a food source.

2.5 The **North Thames Basin NCA** is dominated by agricultural habitats interspersed with woodland, and is dissected by a number of rivers. It falls naturally into several distinct areas, shaped by their geology, topography and land use, of which the London Clay lowlands (which runs from the outer east London suburbs at Grays and Thurrock, extending east to the Dengie Peninsula) is of relevance to Maldon.

2.6 The London Clay Lowlands is drained by numerous rivers such as the Roach, Crouch and Blackwater, which merge to create the flat marshes to the east. The diverse range of semi-natural habitats present in this area include ancient woodland and floodplain grazing marsh which provide important habitats for a wide range of species including great crested newt, water vole, dormouse and otter. The area is also important for wetland birds.

"Black tailed godwit" By "Nick Goodrum" Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0) https://www.flickr.com/photos/nrgoodrum/43359011465

"Marsh harrier" By "Nick Goodrum" Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0) https://www.flickr.com/photos/nrgoodrum/40386806971

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"Dormouse - Muscardinus avellanarius" By "Ettore Balocchi" Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0) https://www.flickr.com/photos/29882791@N02/8300290208

[12] As defined by Natural England.

*Designated Nature Conservation Sites*

2.7 International designated sites within Maldon include the following Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar Sites:

- The Dengie SPA and Ramsar Site.
- The Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar Site.
- The Crouch and Roach SPA and Ramsar Site.

2.8 These are designated on the basis of the coastal and estuarine habitats and species assemblages they support, and in particular populations of wintering (Hen Harrier, Dark-bellied Brent Goose, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Grey Plover) and breeding birds (Pochard, Ringed Plover and Little Tern). Over wintering species, particularly Black-tailed Godwits, may be present in internationally important numbers from August through to April. This prolonged period of up to nine months has to be a significant consideration when assessing impacts of any projects. Typically, birds that are present in the spring will have spent the winter months further south in western Europe. When they arrive in spring, they are less habituated to the regular human activities that long-staying over-wintering birds have acclimatised too. It follows that birds present for a shorter period of time may show a disturbance effect at a greater distance than over-wintering birds.

2.9 In addition, the above designations are encompassed within the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC), again in recognition of the international importance of the area for coastal and estuarine habitats (including estuaries, mudflats and sandflats, *Salicornia* saltmarsh, *Spartina* beds and Atlantic salt meadows).

2.10 The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) manage a number of reserves in the District. Sites include Blue House Farm Nature Reserve (EWT), Bradwell Shell Bank Nature Reserve (EWT)[13], Tollesbury Wick (EWT) and Old Hall Marshes (RSPB).

2.11 Although beyond the District's boundary, in neighbouring Rochford District, the RSPB's Wallasea Island is open to the public and can be accessed by boat from Burnham-on-Crouch. The island is currently undergoing transformation, the largest conservation and engineering project of its kind in Europe, to create an intertidal area of saltmarsh and mudflats using three million tonnes of soil from the Crossrail scheme in London[14]. The construction work has been completed and the site is naturally re-seeding/ colonising.

2.12 Woodham Walter Common SSSI is the largest inland SSSI in the District, and extends into the neighbouring local authority and the parishes of Little Baddow and Danbury. The SSSI is an extensive area (almost 80ha) of ancient woodland and woodland that has developed on former heathland.

*Local Strategies*

2.13 A Turtle Dove Friendly Zone was created in Maldon District in 2017 to help species numbers increase. Farming intensification and use of herbicides has led to a decrease in seedlings from fumitory and knotgrass, which are key components of the turtle dove diet. Within the conservation zone, farmers, businesses and conservation organisations will work together to create enhanced breeding and foraging habitat for this species. This will also benefit a range of other farmland/ lowland priority species.

*Ancient Woodland*

2.14 Ancient woodlands are irreplaceable. They have great value because they have a long history of woodland cover, with many features remaining undisturbed. This applies both to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

[13] Essex Wildlife Trust (2014) Find a Nature Reserve. Available at: https://www.essexwt.org.uk/wildlife/reserves

[14] RSPB (no date) Wallasea Island Wild Coast project. Available at: https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/wallasea-island-wild-coast-project/

2.15 In comparison to other districts in East Anglia, Maldon District has a high density of ancient woodlands. There are 12 ancient woodlands in the Danbury/ Baddow area, 11 in the Wickham Bishops/ Great Baddow area and 12 between Danbury and Cold Norton[15]. These woodlands are important landscape features, have significant levels of biodiversity and are therefore a great natural asset locally and at a regional level.

### Strengths and Opportunities

*Desk based study findings*

- The District supports abundant semi-natural greenspace, including internationally designated sites as well as large expanses of open agricultural landscapes of value for a wide range of wildlife.
- Initiatives such as Biodiversity Net Gain[16] and Building with Nature[17] have established a benchmark and standards for the design and maintenance of green infrastructure in development. For example, the wildlife theme standards within the 'Building with Nature' initiative considers how nature has been delivered within a development's boundary and at a landscape scale. This initiative also covers habitat connectivity, sustaining and restoring wider ecological networks and targeting the conservation of key species.
- Essex County Council Minerals Site Restoration for Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance document[18] aims to guide green infrastructure delivery within quarry restoration, which can make considerable contributions to conserving scarce wildlife habitats.
- Emerging strategies to address the protection and mitigation for protected species, particularly great crested newt with Natural England's emerging approach to District Licencing, may provide for strategic/ landscape scale nature conservation for such species.
- The Government's recently published 25 Year Environment Plan[19] sets out actions for the government to realise the vision of a healthier environment which will create opportunities for wildlife. Elements of this document should be reflected when considering current and future developments in Maldon District.
- The Essex Little Tern Group (ELTG) is a group of public, private and non-governmental organisations who are working to restore little tern populations around the District. Old Hall Marshes and Tollesbury Wick are key sites. Through a combination of vegetation management, deployment of little tern decoys and the use of oyster-shells (provided by local oystermen) to raise the beach-crest (which provides safer nesting habitat), the number of successfully breeding birds is increasing.
- RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust, Maldon District Council, Natural England, Environment Agency, The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), local water companies and landowners are currently establishing a Blackwater Conservation Strategy. Its focus is on protecting and enhancing key species and habitats by working more closely together to share ideas, management methods, experiences and knowledge.

[15] Source: Forestry Commission response to the GI Strategy consultation.

[16] The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management define biodiversity net gain as "development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before".

[17] Building with Nature is an initiative developed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, in partnership with the University of the West of England to support the creation of high quality green infrastructure throughout the planning and development process. More information can be found at: https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/

[18] Essex County Council (2016) Minerals Site Restoration for Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available at: https://www.essex.gov.uk/Environment%20Planning/Minerals-Waste-Planning-Team/Planning-Policy/minerals-development-document/Documents/Mineral%20Site%20Restoration%20for%20Biodiversity%20SPG.pdf

[19] HM Government (2018) The 25 Year Environment Plan. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

***Stakeholder comments***

- The Greater Thames Seal Working Group seeks to understand and manage the interactions between the seal populations and human activities in the Greater Thames Estuary.
- The Turtle Dove Zone has opened up dialogue between farmers and wildlife officers, aiming to increase the number of turtle doves in the District.
- There is potential for Maldon District Council to further facilitate the partnership between Essex Wildlife Trust, the RSPB and landowners. The Living Landscapes initiative is an excellent example of such partnerships.
- There are opportunities for new and enhanced natural and semi-natural greenspace to be provided within developments and around existing sites, with Stow Maries World War One Aerodrome (which already has a conservation plan) and churchyards providing a good example.
- There is potential for the Bradwell 2 development to fund biodiversity enhancements including a visitor centre.
- There is potential for the restoration of native oyster beds, comprising designated features (along with the Intertidal mixed sediments) for the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone.
- Opportunities are available for developments to accommodate wildlife, for example through the incorporation of wildlife friendly planting and connectivity for hedgehogs.
- There are opportunities to join woodland/pasture around Great Totham/Wickham Bishops and the woodland north of Maldon.
- The water vole population is increasing in Essex due to successful conservation projects. Tthere is a water vole presence within Maldon includeing a colony at Heybridge Gravel Pits.

### Weaknesses and Threats

*Desk based study findings*

- Recreational pressure can have adverse impacts on nature conservation sites.
- This includes the risk associated with water-based recreation, such as boat wakes leading to river bank erosion and the displacement of habitats.
- Maldon District has a long coastline but there is no District-wide or strategic coastal species work. Without this co-ordinated approach, the coastline's biodiversity is at threat of becoming fragmented.
- There is uncertainty whether schemes such as Countryside Stewardship[20] will continue following the UKs departure from the EU.
- There is a lack of strategic wildlife visitor centres in the District and joined up promotion of wildlife.
- The long term management of semi-natural green infrastructure in strategic development sites remains uncertain.
- The value of non-designated semi-natural sites are not always recognised.
- The proposed volume of residential development within the District poses a potential threat to local wildlife populations.
- The District's Local Wildlife Sites have not been reviewed for a number of years, with potential for such sites to have become degraded or enhanced, or other sites having developed which would warrant designation.

***Stakeholder comments***

- Currently there is the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan at county level; however there is no District Level Biodiversity Action Plan meaning there is no strategic overview of habitats and species within Maldon District.
- New developments are being delivered on a site by site basis, and could threaten biodiversity connectivity, particularly given the absence of a District Level BAP (as above).
- Conflict as a result of the attractiveness of designated biodiversity sites to visitors and recreational pressure can lead to adverse effects on habitats and species.
- Agricultural intensification can have adverse effects on wildlife and biodiversity.
- Woodland is often isolated and not connected to other woodlands and habitats, preventing the movement of species.

[20] Countryside Stewardship provides financial incentives for farmers and land managers to care for and enhance their environment which can include conserving and restoring wildlife habitats; woodland creation and management and reducing widespread water pollution from agriculture.

### Analysis

2.16 There are international nature designations along Maldon District's coastline and estuaries, with a number of local nature designations inland as well as along the coast. Both the desk based study and stakeholder findings identified existing initiatives, such as the Essex Coast RAMS, that aim to protect and enhance these designations, as well as species, but there is scope for partnerships to be strengthened. In contrast, there is increasing recreational pressures on habitats, whilst the intensification of agricultural practices has historically affected biodiversity in Maldon District.

2.17 From a strategic perspective, the ecological network appears to be disconnected. Aside from a few linear routes designated as Local Wildlife Sites (for example the Blackwater Rail Trail, The Wick and the River Chelmer), many of the inland designations are isolated by agricultural land and/ or development, as evident on **Figure 2.1**. There is potential for this GI Strategy to enhance connectivity between these designations, and through the wider countryside, thereby strengthening the ecological network.

2.18 As the allocations in the Local Development Plan are delivered, it is important that the designated sites which lie within and directly adjacent to are protected from the construction phase of the development, as well as additional recreational pressure exerted by new residents.

2.19 The key priorities for Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife in Maldon are:

- Protecting international, national and local wildlife designations, ensuring that their integrity is maintained and enhanced, whilst also helping identify and protect non-designated natural greenspace. A suggested framework to help achieve the latter is presented in **Appendix 2**.
- Managing the recreational pressure exerted on international, national and local wildlife sites, providing places for Maldon District's residents and visitors to enjoy the District's natural environment and experience the benefits provided by access to nature, whilst managing potential impacts through mitigation projects and partnerships.
- Better understanding the ecological resource within the District, whilst informing and engaging with the public and landowners about the importance of the biodiversity assets in Maldon District, and building strong and effective partnerships.

APPENDIX 1

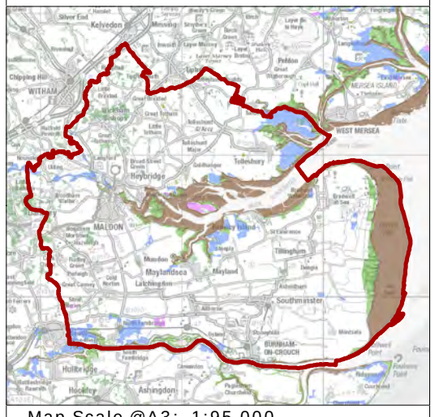
# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

## Figure 2.1: Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife

- Maldon District Council
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Site allocations (housing)
- Site allocations (employment)
- Essex Wildlife Trust Reserves
- International nature designation (SPA, SAC, Ramsar)
- National nature designation (SSSI, NNR)
- Local nature designation (LWS, LNR)
- Ancient woodland
- Traditional orchards
- RSPB reserves
- Turtle dove friendly zone
- Country park

Priority habitat (inset)

- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- Coastal saltmarsh
- Coastal vegetated shingle
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi-improved grassland
- Lowland dry acid grassland
- Lowland fens
- Lowland heathland
- Maritime cliff and slope
- Mudflats
- Reedbeds
- Traditional orchard



Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_1_9999_Wildlife_All_Maldon_A3L 04/03/2019 Source: EWT, NE, MBC, RSPB

## Creating Resilient Water Environments

**With 70 miles of coastline, the River Crouch bordering the south and the River Blackwater cutting through the centre, water is a prominent feature in the District. The marine and riverine environments bring advantages to the District in their natural beauty, supporting internationally designated wildlife sites and providing opportunities for water sports and recreation.**

### Map Observations

**Figure 2.2** shows the importance of the marine and riverine environments within the District. Much of the 70 miles of coastline falls within **flood zones 2 and 3** which are intersected by **strategic flood defences** as well as tidal and inland rivers. Flood zones 2 and 3 associated with the Crouch and Blackwater Rivers continue inland and beyond the District's boundary.

The majority of the area covered by the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan lies within these flood zones as does a portion of the south east boundary of the South Maldon Garden Suburb. Both northern boundaries of the east and west parcels of the North of Burnham-on-Crouch site allocations are situated within a 1% annual chance of **surface water flooding**.

### Desk Based Study Findings

*Flooding*

2.20 In addition to the benefits outlined above, the heavy influence of the water environment means the District is at risk of flooding from a variety of sources. The potential impact of climate change on the water environment means that the risk of flooding within the District is likely to increase over the next 100 years.

2.21 Tidal creeks and marshland, including the Bradwell Marshes, Dengie Marshes and Ramsey Marshes characterise the coastal areas which lie along the Blackwater and Crouch estuaries. These coastal areas, which also contain a number of settlements including Maldon Town, Burnham-on-Crouch and Heybridge, are influenced by tidal fluctuations which also present a risk of tidal flooding. According to Maldon's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment[21], the North Sea is the source of tidal flooding in the District. Storm surges, high spring tides or both events combined would result in tidal inundation along the Blackwater and Crouch Estuaries, although the coast line is heavily defended by sea walls. Tidal flooding occurs downstream of Beeleigh Falls, which is the tidal limit of the Blackwater and Chelmer Rivers.

2.22 With records of flood events dating back to 1099, the most significant in recent times was in 1953 which caused widespread devastation across Eastern England. Even though Maldon District was not the worst affected area, lives were lost and there was damage to infrastructure and buildings.

[21] Scott Wilson (2008) Maldon District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Appendix D Maldon Supplementary Report. Available at: https://data.gov.uk/dataset/76828b72-3c9c-4700-83c7-d7c36047d322/flood-map-for-planning-rivers-and-sea-spatial-flood-defences-without-standardised-attributes

2.24 Today, there are defences along these watercourses that prevent the water following natural flow pathways and drainage channels, however when factoring in the effects of climate change, these defences are at risk of overtopping in the future. The Environment Agency's Spatial Flood Defences map[22] shows where there is a standard of protection equal to or better than 1 in 100 (1%) for rivers and 1 in 200 (0.5%) from the sea.

Looking east from Bradwell Waterside

2.25 There are significant benefits in leaving green corridors around watercourses and setting these within public open space, or as part of a green link route, as there is less risk of householder modification of these features. If these areas remain as public open space, the risk to habitat through culverting or increased local flood risk etc. can be reduced.

2.26 Fluvial flooding is also prevalent in the District, with the main sources being the Rivers Blackwater and Chelmer. This is usually caused by heavy storms or long periods of rainfall that lead to the rivers exceeding their capacity, as was the case in Maldon in 2000 and 2001. River channel blockages and snow melt can also contribute to fluvial flood events.

2.27 Upstream of Beeleigh Falls, the Rivers Blackwater and Chelmer flow through predominantly rural areas in the District and therefore there is limited risk of structural damage to property. Beyond the District's boundary fluvial flood risk is present in the towns of Kelvedon and Coggleshall in Braintree District from the River Blackwater and in Chelmsford from the River Chelmer.

2.28 Smaller watercourses, such as Spickett's Brook, Holloway Road ditch and Heybridge Hall ditch, present localised flood risk that can cause damage to property and infrastructure[23].

*Catchment Management*

2.29 In terms of water management, Maldon District falls within the Anglian River Basin. In 2015, the Blackwater catchment had not reached 'good' ecological status owing to a number of sector activities: agricultural and rural land management, local and central government[24] and the water industry[25].

Northey Island from Heybridge Basin" By "Sludge G" Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0) https://www.flickr.com/photos/sludgeulper/4003332174

[22] Environment Agency (2016) Flood Map for planning (Rivers and Sea) - Spatial Flood Defenses (without standardised attributes).

[23] The Environment Agency's interactive flood risk map is available at: https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map?easting=587569.15&northing=203622.58&address=100091258901&map=SurfaceWater

[24] Central government own a number of flood protection structures which are impassable for fish and this means that a 'good ecological status cannot be met and is unlikely to be met by 2021. In addition, there are a number of water abstractions which also act as a barrier to reaching 'good' ecological status.

[25] Environment Agency (no date) Blackwater – Summary. Available at: http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/OperationalCatchment/3034/Summary

2.30 As part of a contribution to improve environmental outcomes by 2021, a major Catchment Restoration Fund (CRF) project co-ordinated by the Essex Wildlife Trust, titled 'Essex Healthy Headwaters River Restoration Project', aimed to improve habitats at seven sites on the Chelmer and Blackwater rivers[26]. This funding from the Environment Agency has ceased, but its success is still being built upon. For example, the Essex Wildlife Trust's River Warden's Network has around 170 volunteers that monitor 16 rivers, covering over a fifth of the county's total length of rivers[27].

2.31 The Essex Rivers Hub is a partnership initiative headed by Essex Wildlife Trust, Essex Biodiversity Project and the Environment Agency and aims to consolidate and share information about the rivers in Essex in order to achieve good ecological status in the county[28].

*Natural Flood Management*

2.32 The NPPF encourages the use of natural flood management techniques to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding. Natural flood management is when natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. Examples include: restoring bends in rivers, changing the way land is managed so soil can absorb more water and creating saltmarshes on the coast to absorb wave energy. There are potential benefits in encouraging the implementation of natural flood management techniques on and around small watercourses in catchment headwaters. At a development site level, small scale natural flood management measures can be incorporated within the site boundary and there is some potential to overlap these with SuDs measures, resulting in benefits in flood risk management for the individual site. However, greater gains from natural flood management could be achieved when applied over a wider catchment scale.

*SuDs in Public Open Space (POS)*

2.33 All development must contribute towards improving the provision, quality and/ or accessibility of local and strategic open space, sports, community and leisure facilities, biodiversity and habitat. Direct provision of POS should form part of a green infrastructure network. POS should be accessible, functional and practical for all users. POS is diverse in its use, to have an informal 'kick about' or for other ball games' to have a picnic or to ride a cycle. POS must not be dominated by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) features whether wet or dry and should not encumber use of the POS for informal recreation and play or impact upon direct routes to facilities and services for pedestrians, cyclists, motor scooters, wheelchairs and those with pushchairs and buggies. SuDs features should be incorporated into existing site features including watercourses and ditches. Where SuDs features overly dominate the POS provision, alternatives or complementary SuDs should be considered including 'Rain Gardens,' tree planting, or an underground drainage network[29].

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[26] DEFRA and the Environment Agency (2015) Water for Life and Livelihoods: Part 1: Anglian river basin district River basin management plan. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/500463/Anglian_RBD_Part_1_river_basin_management_plan.pdf

[27] Essex Wildlife Trust (2016) River Restoration Projects. Available at: https://www.essexwt.org.uk/blog/conservation-successes/2016/05/24/river-restoration-projects

[28] Essex Rivers Hub (no date), About Us. Available at: http://www.essexrivershub.org.uk/index.php/about-us

[29] Maldon District Design Guide SPD and supporting Landscape and GI Technical Document. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9226/urban_design/2 Designing Rain Gardens: A Practical Guide, Urban Design London is available at: https://www.urbandesignlondon.com/resources/designing-rain-gardens-practical-guide/

### Strengths and Opportunities

*Desk based study findings*

- The Environment Agency flood defences have been implemented along much of the District's coastline.
- There is an opportunity to adopt and promote the Building with Nature initiative, which includes a set of standards that seek commitments from developments to '*improve water quality, on site and in the wider area; reduce the risk of flooding; and manage water naturally for maximum benefit.*'
- There are good fish and aquatic invertebrate populations within the River Blackwater and there are also low levels of ammonia and high levels of dissolved oxygen within this waterbody[30].
- The Crouch catchment has good water flows and good morphology (the channel has natural features and good in channel habitats). Downstream of Wickford, dissolved oxygen levels are high and ammonia levels are low in the River Crouch[31].
- The Essex Rivers Hub aims to collate information within catchments and share this information so good ecological status can be obtained.

***Stakeholder comments***

- There are attractive Marinas along the District's coastline which promote access to the rivers and sea.
- There are opportunities for new developments to incorporate flood alleviation schemes, including woodland creation, which could help reduce flood risk downstream.
- Access along the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and towpath allow the public to engage with one of the District's most prominent heritage assets.
- There is potential for catchment-wide land management projects to deliver multi-functional benefits.
- There are potential opportunities for the managed realignment of rivers/the coastline, providing for flood alleviation and wildlife habitats.

[30] Essex Rivers Hub (no date) River Blackwater Catchment Overview. Available at: http://essexrivershub.org.uk/index.php/catchment-overview/167-catchment-overviews/749-river-blackwater-summary

[31] Essex Rivers Hub (no date) River Crouch Catchment Overview. Available at: http://essexrivershub.org.uk/index.php/catchment-overview/167-catchment-overviews/759-crouch-summary

### Weaknesses and Threats

*Desk based study findings*

- There are extensive areas of coastline in Maldon District, but currently no District-wide initiatives to survey or manage these areas.
- Dredging in tidal waters and the Navigation would enhance access to these waterbodies, but the process of dredging has the potential to conflict with wildlife.
- The River Blackwater has an overall Water Framework Directive classification of 'poor', failing for certain attributes, including the presence of phosphates (linked to point sources such as sewage treatment works and discharges from private residences and businesses), and ecological attributes.[32].
- Downstream from Wickford, the River Crouch fails for aquatic invertebrates and phosphates. The sources for high levels of phosphate are unknown[33].
- The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is the strategic document for managing the coastline (and is linked into planning and development). Funding for delivering the preferred policies in the SMP are not guaranteed and maintaining the standards of tidal flood protection may be challenging. It will require a partnership approach with developers, with the potential to seek contributions towards maintaining or improving the levels of protection from flooding.

***Stakeholder comments***

- There are changes in water depths which can be attributed to silting, presenting physical restrictions and limitations to the use of the River Blackwater.
- There is a lack of distinction between SuDs and accessible green infrastructure in development proposals and as such, there is a potential conflict between the provision of SuDs and open/recreation space.
- The coastline is not fully accessible to the public.
- A number of communities and employment sites are situated within areas that are at risk from flooding.
- The Environment Agency is concerned with the presence of pesticides and herbicides within the Blackwater and Crouch catchment areas.

[32] Essex Rivers Hub (no date) River Blackwater Catchment Overview. Available at: http://essexrivershub.org.uk/index.php/catchment-overview/167-catchment-overviews/749-river-blackwater-summary

[33] Essex Rivers Hub (no date) River Crouch Catchment Overview. Available at: http://essexrivershub.org.uk/index.php/catchment-overview/167-catchment-overviews/759-crouch-summary

### Analysis

2.34 The water environment plays a prevalent role in Maldon District. The various waterbodies host numerous recreational opportunities whilst supporting diverse and valuable habitats for wildlife, but these uses can often result in conflict.

2.35 In addition, large areas of the District lie within flood zones (approximately 30% of the land area in the District is within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as shown in **Figure 2.2**) and are subject to flooding events, whilst the water quality is poor in some of the District catchment areas.

2.36 There are partnerships established to address catchment scale management of rivers, yet the coastline is relatively neglected in terms of strategic management. Providing a more strategic approach to the management of the District's coastline as a resource should aim to ensure the public can fully benefit from the resource whilst the associated wildlife, heritage and landscape qualities are protected and enhanced.

2.37 The key priorities for Creating a Resilient Water Environment are:

- Taking a co-ordinated approach to identifying and implementing water management initiatives in the District.
- Improving water quality throughout catchment management.
- Increasing access to the coastline, rivers and canals, whilst managing associated impacts.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

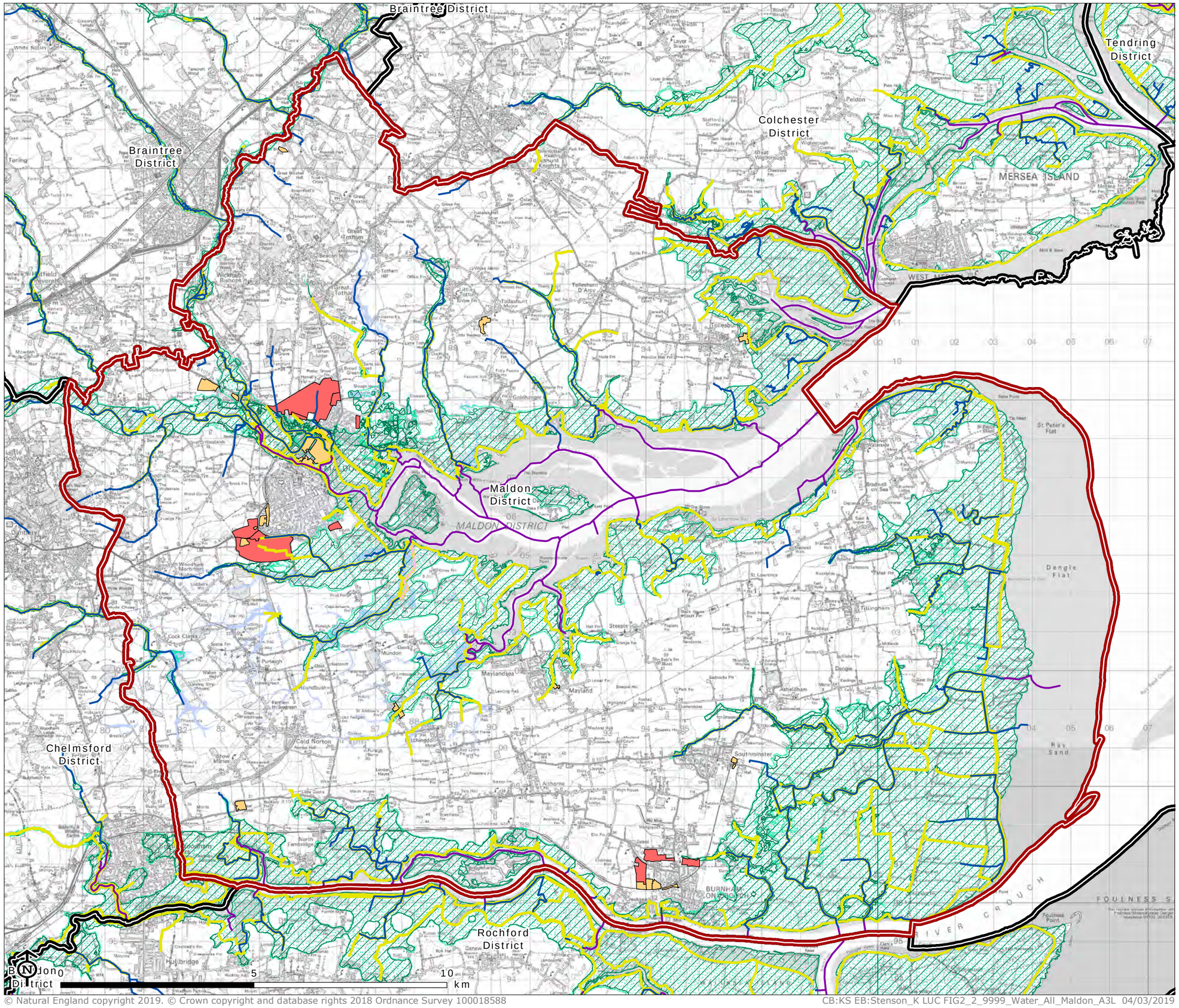


Figure 2.2: Green Infrastructure Baseline for Creating Resilient Water Environments

- Maldon District Council
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Site allocations (housing)
- Site allocations (employment)
- Flood zone 3*
- Flood zone 2*
- Risk of flooding from surface water: 1% annual chance
- Lakes
- Canal
- Inland river
- Tidal river
- Spatial flood defence**

**Flood zones are areas identified by the Environment Agency and refer to the probability of river and sea flooding, ignoring the presence of defences or climate change (please note for planning purposes, flood zone 3 is divided into flood zone 3a and 3b, however the Environment Agency do not distinguish the zone and as such their maps only identify a general flood zone 3). Flood zones 2 and 3 are shown on this map:
-Flood zone 2: These areas are shown to have between 0.1% – 1% chance of flooding from rivers in any year (between 1:1000 and 1:100 chance) or between 0.1% – 0.5% chance of flooding from the sea in any year (between 1:1000 and 1:200 chance).
-Flood zone 3: These areas are shown to be at a 1% or greater probability of flooding from rivers or 0.5% or greater probability of flooding from the sea.

*This shows flood defences protecting against river floods with a 1 per cent (1 in 100) chance of happening each year, or sea floods with a 0.5 per cent (1 in 200) chance of happening each year, together with some, but not all, defences which protect against smaller floods.
(https://data.gov.uk/dataset/6884fcc7-4204-4028-b2fb-5059ea159f1c/spatial-flood-defences-including-standardised-attributes)

Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_2_9999_Water_All_Maldon_A3L 04/03/2019 Source: EA, MDC, OS

## Supporting Local Landscape Character

**The primary use of the District's landscape is agriculture, which has been influential on the landscape character since Neolithic times. The rural landscape in particular has experienced significant landscape changes over the past fifty years due to crop intensification, loss of field boundaries, introduction of a larger-scale field pattern, drainage of marshes/ wetlands, and the introduction of new farm buildings. It is unclear what effects of the Common Agricultural Policy, agri-environmental schemes such as Environmental Stewardship and increased global market competition will have on the landscape.**

### Map Observations

**Figure 2.3** shows that the Northern Thames Basin and the Greater Thames Estuary are the two main **National Character Areas (NCA)** within Maldon District. Small areas of the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA can be found along the District's north west boundary which it shares with Braintree District.

The Greater Thames Estuary NCA is confined to the District's Coastline, the Dengie and inland to Tolleshunt D'Arcy. Within this classification the **Maldon District's Landscape Character Areas and Types** (see **Figure 2.4*)** of Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats Landscapes (Type C) and Drained Estuarine Marsh Landscapes (Type D) can be found.

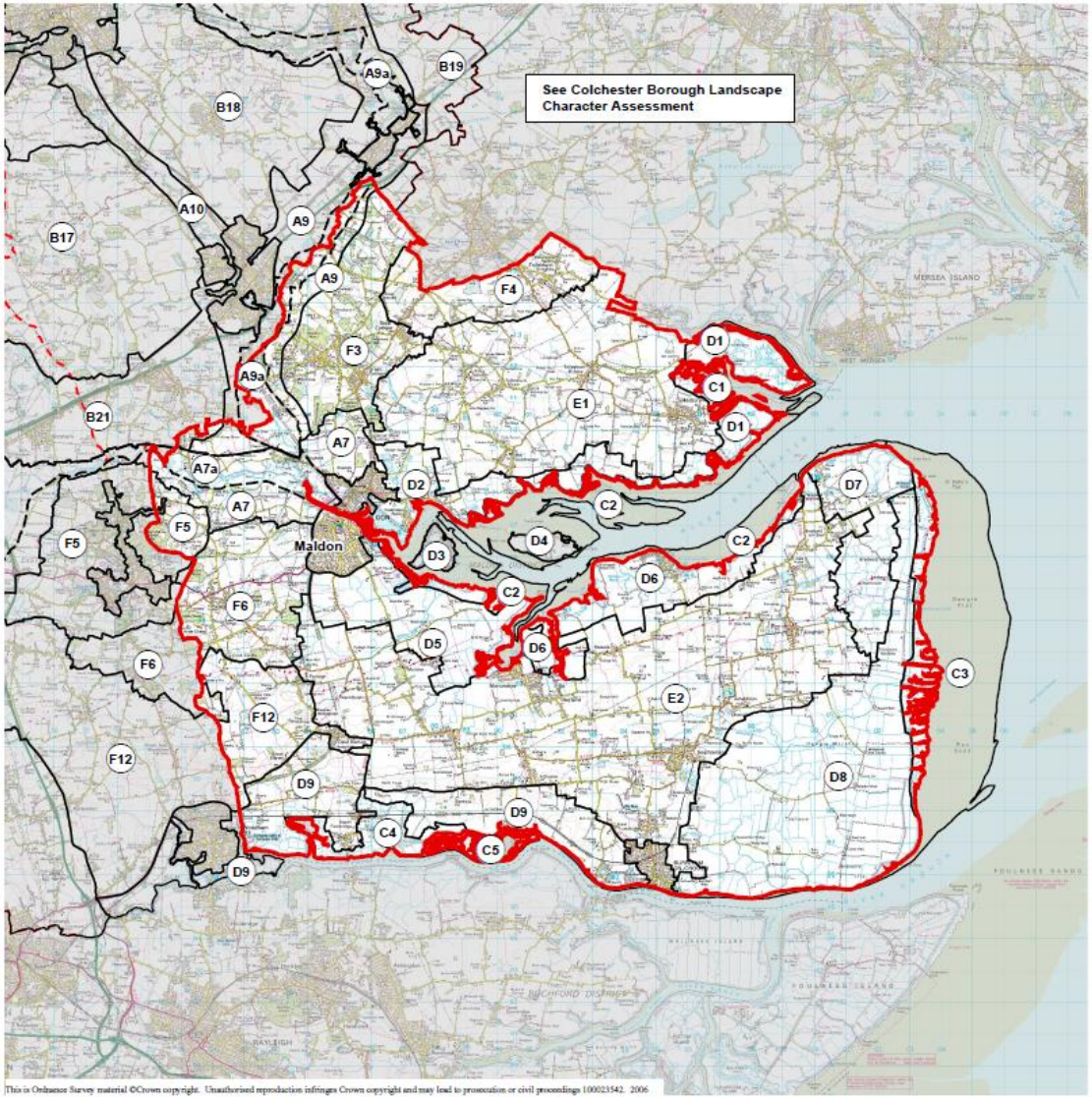
The Wooded Farmland Landscapes identified by Maldon District's Landscape Character Areas and Types (Type F) can be found to the west of the District interspersed with River Valley Landscapes (Type A) to the north west. Both these District level local character areas and types fall within the Northern Thames Basin NCA. An exception to this is the Blackwater River Valley Floor (Type A9a), a landscape character area sub-unit of the Blackwater River Valley which is found within the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA.

The Coastal Farmland Landscapes (Type E) spans both the Greater Thames Estuary and Northern Thames Basin NCAs.

**The digital layers for this map are unavailable and therefore cannot be incorporated to the main figure.*

## Figure 2.4: Maldon District Landscape Character Types and Areas

EB009b




Landscape is a continuum and character does not in general change abruptly on the ground. The boundaries between Landscape Character Types and Areas should be considered to reflect zones of transition in many cases. The assessment was undertaken at a scale of 1:25000, and should only be used on its own to inform decision making at this scale.

**Key**

- Maldon District Boundary
- Landscape Character Areas (e.g. A7)
- Landscape Character Area Sub-Unit (e.g. A7a)

**A - River Valley Landscapes**

A7 - Lower Chelmer River Valley

A7a - Lower Chelmer River Valley Floor

A9 - Blackwater River Valley

A9a - Blackwater River Valley Floor

**C - Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats Landscapes**

C1 - Tollesbury Fleet Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats

C2 - Blackwater Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats

C3 - Dengie Flats Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats

C4 - Fleet Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats

C5 - Bridgemarsh Island Estuarine Marsh/Mudflats

**D - Drained Estuarine Marsh Landscapes**

D1 - Old Hall Marshes and Tollesbury Wick Drained Estuarine Marsh

D2 - Maldon Drained Estuarine Marsh

D3 - Northey Island Drained Estuarine Marsh

D4 - Osea Island Drained Estuarine Marsh

D5 - Mundon Drained Estuarine Marsh

D6 - Ramsey Drained Estuarine Marsh

D7 - Bradwell Drained Estuarine Marsh

D8 - Dengie Drained Estuarine Marsh

D9 - Fambridge Drained Estuarine Marsh

**E - Coastal Farmland Landscapes**

E1 - Tolleshunt Coastal Farmland

E2 - Tillingham and Latchingdon Coastal Farmland

**F - Wooded Farmland Landscapes**

F3 - Totham Wooded Farmland

F4 - Tolleshunt Knights Wooded Farmland

F5 - Little Baddow and Danbury Wooded Farmland

F6 - Woodham Wooded Farmland

F12 - East Hanningfield Wooded Farmland

0 2 4 km

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Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES www.cba.uk.net

August 2006

**Figure 6.1**
Maldon District Landscape Character Types and Areas

## Desk Based Study Findings

*Character Areas*

2.38 The key variations of the District's landscape are reflected in the classification and description of geographically unique Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), which are identified in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments report[34]. It highlights the variability of landscape within Maldon District by identifying six landscape character types:

- **Coastal Farmland Landscapes** occupy the largest areas that are located in the centre of the northern and southern parts of the District. The Dengie-form, a unique and ancient coaxial hedgerow pattern, is a key feature within this landscape. There are semi regular patterns of tall hedgerows and copses with gently undulating arable farmland lying adjacent to the coastal marshland. There is a strong sense of historic character which should be reflected if new development is permitted in this LCA.
- **River Valley Landscapes** are present along the river corridors in the northwest of the District. These areas are characterised by a flat or gently undulating valley floor and intimate or wooded features. Arable farmland dominates the lower valley slopes and there is a wide flat valley floor at the confluence of the Chelmer and Blackwater rivers. There are extensive linear poplar and willow plantations adjacent to the river, however these are sensitive to changes in land management. The tranquillity of this character area is threatened by new developments; however other landscape characteristics can be conserved by ensuring that new built development reflects features in this character area.

- **Estuarine Marsh/ Mudflats Landscapes** line the coast and estuaries. There is limited public access. This LCA is characterised by its tranquillity, and sense of openness. This mostly undeveloped area also contains several international and national wildlife sites, for these reasons development is discouraged here.
- **Farmland Plateau Landscapes** are present in a small area on the western fringe of the District. Irregular field patterns with scattered settlements, hamlets and intertwining narrow winding roads ware bounded by small woods and copses are all key features within this LCA. Small scale development that reflects the historic settlement pattern is recommended in this LCA.
- **Drained Estuarine Marsh Landscapes** are present along the coast and estuary, often fronted by Estuarine Marsh/ Mudflats Landscapes character type. There is a distinct lack of woodland here, as the low-lying alluvial fields criss-crossed with drainage ditches and dykes and rough pasture dominate this tranquil landscape. All these features are sensitive to land use change and new development. It is advised that views are conserved here and that impacts of development in adjacent character areas are considered from this LCA.

[34] Chris Blandford Associates for Braintree District Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Maldon District Council and Uttlesford District Council (2006) Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/2%20Design%20and%20Climate%20Change/EB009a%20Landscape%20Character%20Assessment.pdf

- **Wooded Farmland Landscapes** are confined to the north and southwest of the District and are characterised by small rounded hills, open landscape with arable farmland surrounded by woodland and hedgerows. On wooded ridges there are small irregular fields and pasture. New development should reflect the historic features of this LCA and be well integrated into the landscape.

2.39 The above landscape character types mainly fall within two National Character Areas (NCAs) that have been identified within the District:

- **Northern Thames Basin (NCA 111)[35]**: The majority of the District lies within this NCA and this diverse area in Maldon is described as *"rich in geodiversity, archaeology and history and diverse landscapes."* The character of Maldon remains tranquil with a *"dispersed settlement pattern broken up by arable land and semi-natural habitats."*
- **Greater Thames Estuary (NCA 81)[36]**: The coastal fringe of the District is within this NCA and is described as "predominantly a remote and tranquil landscape of shallow creeks, drowned estuaries, lowlying islands, mudflats and broad tracts of tidal salt marsh and reclaimed grazing marsh." It highlights that "rising sea levels due to climate change present a major threat to coastal areas."

*Historic Landscapes*

2.40 The Essex Historic Landscape Characterisation indicates that the majority of Maldon District is characterised as either 20th century agriculture or pre-18th century enclosure. There are notable areas of landscape, particularly along the estuary and eastern coast of the District, characterised as coastal drained enclosure. In addition, there are a variety of other historic landscapes also classified across the District[37]. The 2008 Maldon District Historic Environment Characterisation Project, separates the District into 14 historic environment character areas, comprised of multiple historic environment characterisation zones[38]. These characterisations highlight the unique and varied historic character of the District.

2.41 The characteristics of these landscape character areas should inform the design and management of green infrastructure, which can help maintain local identities within, and surrounding new site allocations and garden suburbs that are to deliver the majority of the District's housing between 2014 and 2029.

**Strengths and Opportunities**

*Desk based study findings*

- The District-wide LCA primarily identifies key ecological features, visual character, planning and land management issues, landscape strategy objectives, landscape and land management guidelines. These should inform planning decisions and guide how green infrastructure can be implemented in a given area.
- The Maldon District Design Guide[39] provides detailed design advice taking account of the special characteristics of the District including the settlements.
- The Local Development Plan Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations present opportunities to incorporate a strong landscaped character with well managed open space, tree-lined streets, structural landscaping, SuDs and other natural areas into new developments.

[35] Natural England (2013) NCA Profile: NCA Profile:111 Northern Thames Basin (NE466). Available at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4721112340496384?category=587130.
[36] Natural England (2013) NCA Profile: 81 Greater Thames Estuary (NE473). Available at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4531632073605120?category=587130.
[37] Archaeology Data Service (2013) Essex Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (HLC). Available at: http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/essex_hlc_2013.
[38] Essex County Council (2008) Maldon District Historic Environment Characterisation Project. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base.
[39] QuBE Planning Ltd for Maldon District Council (2006) Maldon District Characterisation Assessment: Maldon District Design Guide. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base.

***Stakeholder comments***

- The estuaries provide beautiful seascapes, big skies and bird-life, as well as the skyline of Maldon, and woody hilltops e.g. Purleigh.
- The Dengie is host to long tranquil views and the unique Dengie hedgerow pattern.
- The landscape is freely accessible to all members of the community.
- Landscape enhancement areas should be encouraged based on landscape character.
- There are opportunities for wayfinding and including landscape interpretation boards.
- Enhancing the visual quality of landscape can be achieved by restoring green infrastructure features.
- The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan creates potential funding opportunities in future.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund still provides opportunities for landscape, biodiversity and heritage enhancements.

**Weaknesses and Threats**

*Desk based study findings*

- There are a number of new developments located on the fringes of settlements that do not respect the local character or views.
- Access to the coast can be difficult.
- There is a lack of information on local landscape, which is also not fully promoted.
- There have been a number of developments on greenfield land leading to adverse impacts on the wider countryside.

***Stakeholder comments***

- The local landscape character assessment has not been digitised and is over a decade out of date.
- The ancient field pattern in the Dengie is not well recognised.
- Historic field patterns in the Dengie are not celebrated; mapping these features would help promote them.

### Analysis

2.42 Maldon District's landscape is heavily influenced by the water environment: the coastline and rivers and the interaction between the two. The rural, agricultural landscape remains dominant in the District. These two landscape types should, where possible, be protected and enhanced, being much valued by residents and visitors.

2.43 Some developments in the District have compromised landscape character, and future development continues to pose a threat which needs to be managed.

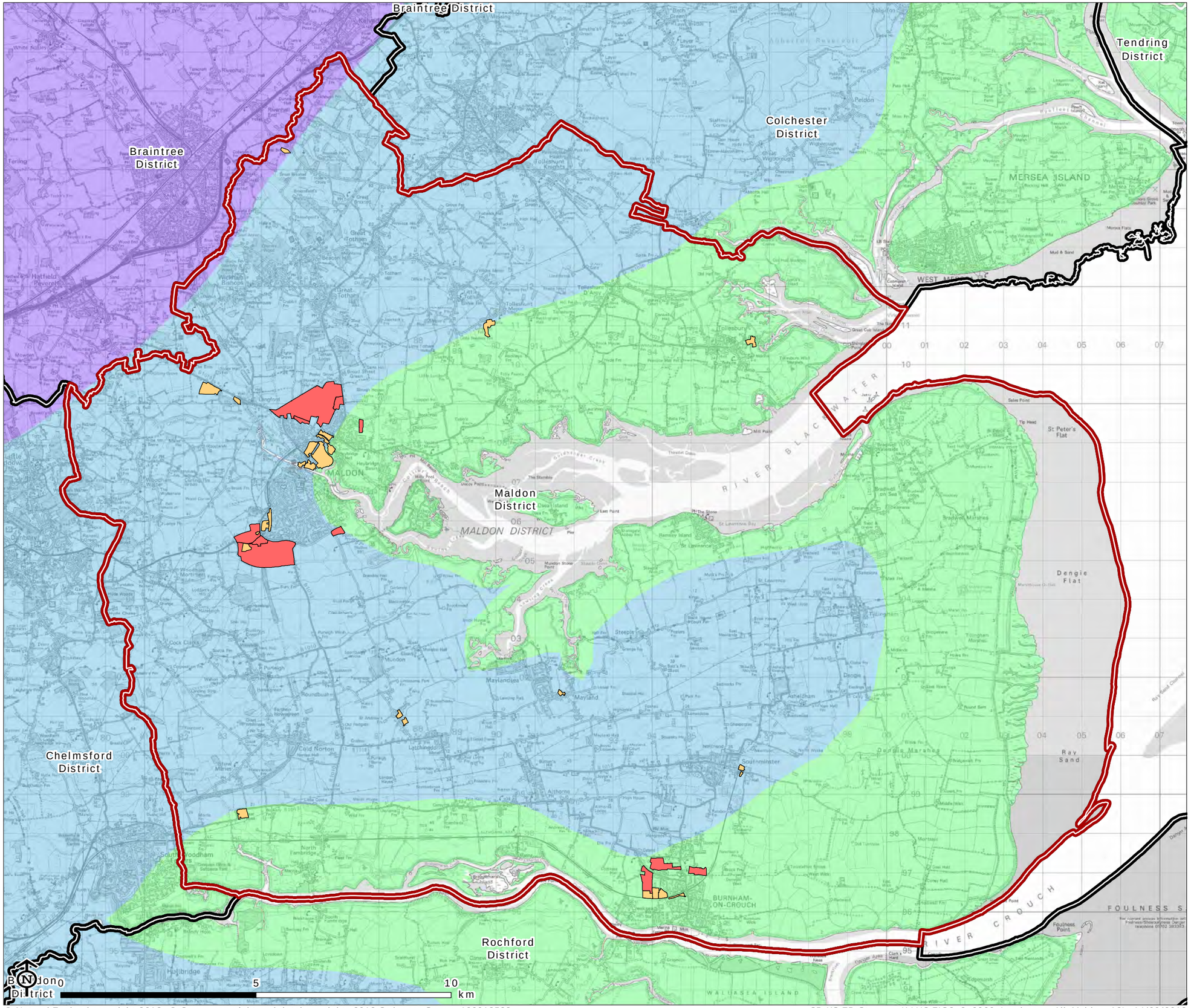
2.44 To help protect and enhance landscape character, it would be beneficial for an up to date local landscape character assessment to be undertaken. In the meantime, the projects identified in this GI Strategy should reflect and celebrate local landscape areas and their diversity.

2.45 The key priorities for Supporting Local Landscape Character are:

- Updating the landscape character assessment and digitise the existing baseline to enhance local understanding and inform planning decision making.
- Protecting, enhancing and celebrating the local landscape character for residents and visitors.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure 2.3: Green Infrastructure Baseline for Supporting Local Landscape Character




Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

LUC

MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_3_9999_Landscape_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: MDC, NE

## Celebrating Cultural Heritage

**Maldon District has a strong cultural heritage, which is reflected in the number and range of designated features within the landscape.**

### Map Observations

**Figure 2.5** shows the **designated heritage assets** within the District (excluding Listed Buildings).

The Battle of Maldon site, the only **Registered Battlefield** in the District, is linked to Northey Island by a causeway which is only accessible at low tide.

Of the 14 **Conservation Areas**, 12 are located within or in close proximity to settlements; only the Stow Maries World War One Aerodrome and the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation are located in rural areas (although the latter passes through Maldon and Heybridge).

Braxted Park, a Grade II **Registered Park and Garden** located in the north west of the District is the only designation of its type in Maldon District.

There are 14 **Historic Parks and Gardens** within Maldon District and these are registered as having significant designed landscapes reflecting the style of the time rather than for their botanical features.

The 22 **Scheduled Monuments** show that the District has a number of nationally important archaeological sites both above and below the ground.

### Designated assets

2.46 There are 1,032 Listed Buildings, 22 Scheduled Monuments, one Registered Park, and many 'undesignated heritage assets' within the District.

2.47 Conservation Areas are designated by Local Authorities for their special architectural or historic interest[40]. There are 14 Conservation Areas in the District, predominantly incorporating the historic cores of towns and villages. These include the centre of the town of Maldon, including part of Promenade Park which is the key public park in Maldon; and the 24 buildings and setting of the Stow Maries World War One Aerodrome in the southwest of the District[41]. The Aerodrome is of national historical significance in demonstrating the way that Royal Flying Corps aerodromes functioned, for its association with the Gotha bomber raids in 1917, and for its role in Home Defence. It is of international significance, as probably the most complete surviving example of a First World War aerodrome in Western Europe[42].

[40] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework: 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment - Paragraphs 186. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf

[41] Maldon District Council (2018) Conservation areas in the Maldon District. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20049/heritage_and_conservation/9165/conservation/2

[42] Maldon District Council (2014) Conservation Statement for Stow Maries First World War Aerodrome. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20049/heritage_and_conservation/9165/conservation/2

2.48 The eight mile corridor of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation running to the east and west of Maldon/ Heybridge is an important Conservation Area. The Navigation opened in 1797, in response to the large volume of building materials needed to support Chelmsford's rapid growth, as transporting goods by land was slow and inefficient[43]. During its peak year in 1842, 60,000 tons of goods were transported along the canal. However from 1846 the tonnage of goods decreased due to the introduction of the Eastern Counties Railway and the Maldon—Witham— Braintree Railway. Trade ceased along the canal in 1942 and in 1945 the canal was opened to the public for recreational use. Today, the Inland Waterways Association maintains the canal route and aims to maximise public use and safeguard it for future generations[44].

2.49 One of the key designated sites in the District is the Chapel of St Peter-on-the-Wall which is one of the most easterly buildings situated on the District's coastline. Founded by St Cedd in 654 AD and consecrated in the same year, this is the earliest chapel in the country and weekly services are still held here. The Chapel is a key green infrastructure asset as it is set in a remote landscape which is visible from the surrounding flatland and can only be accessed by the Public Rights of Way network[45].

### Historic Designed Landscapes

2.50 The Historic Designed Landscapes of Essex Handbook[46] outlines 12 historic landscapes identified as being of local importance in Maldon District. Of these 12 historic landscapes, Braxted Park is the only Registered Park and Garden and incorporates a principle building, gardens and pleasure grounds, the park and a kitchen garden[47]. Promenade Park is the most important historic designed landscape locally in Maldon District and forms one of the key destinations on the existing green infrastructure network. There is one Registered Battlefield within the District, located to the east of Maldon, where the Battle of Maldon took place in 991 CE[48].

The Clock Tower at Burnham-on-Crouch

2.51 Green infrastructure can contribute to enhancing the setting of cultural heritage assets, such as through new planting in keeping with local landscape character, or management of existing landscape features, and can provide interpretation of assets, for example through information boards and wayfinding or providing non-vehicular access.

[43] Inland Waterways Association (2013) Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation History. Available at: https://www.waterways.org.uk/essex_waterways/history/History_of_the_navigation
[44] Inland Waterways Association (2013) The Future. Available at: https://www.waterways.org.uk/essex_waterways/history/future
[45] Chris Blandford Associates for Braintree District Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Chelmsford City Council, Maldon District Council and Uttlesford District Council (2006) Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/2%20Design%20and%20Climate%20Change/EB009a%20Landscape%20Character%20Assessment.pdf
[46] Essex Gardens Trust (2010) Historic Designed Landscapes of Essex Handbook Part 4 - The District of Maldon. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base
[47] Essex Gardens Trust (2010) Historic Designed Landscapes of Essex Handbook Part 4 - The District of Maldon. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base
[48] Maldon District Council (2018) Heritage and conservation. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20049/heritage_and_conservation

*Non-Designated Heritage Assets*

2.52 The District contains over a thousand listed buildings, which are protected by law. There are many historic buildings which, although they may not meet the criteria for national listing, possess local value because of their architectural and historic interest. The District Council is developing Lists of Local Heritage Assets to identify and celebrate these locally important buildings in each parish. Inclusion on a Local List does not of itself bring any additional consent requirements over and above the existing requirement for planning permission. However, it does mean that a building's heritage significance will be a material consideration in the planning process.

2.53 Within the wider landscape, there are other non-designated heritage assets of historical and archaeological interest, such as the remnants of the late Iron Age and Roman salt-making industry (Red Hills), and the historic coastal grazing marshes that are of significance to the cultural heritage of the District[49].

**Strengths and Opportunities**

*Desk based study findings*

- Maldon District has numerous historic assets.
- The District is home to the oldest recorded Battlefield site in England, the site of the Battle of Maldon which took place in 991 CE.
- There are many churches and churchyards through the District.
- The District has a rich maritime heritage which is well celebrated through the District.
- Although under private ownership, Beeleigh Abbey can be seen from a public right of way and the building is currently being restored.
- The Chelmer Canal Trust is a charity that actively preserves the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and its conservation area, and organises activities for people to enjoy this waterway.

[49] The Historic Environment Characterisation Project (2008) provides an overview of the district and the Historic Environment Record. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/2%20Design%20and%20Climate%20Change/EB018%20Maldon%20District%20Historic%20Environment%20Characterisation%20Project.pdf

***Stakeholder comments***

- A circular walk linking St Peter on the Wall with Bradwell Waterside and Bradwell-on-Sea would be a valuable asset.
- Circular walks linking Creeksea Place, North Fambridge and Burnham including access would be beneficial, with opportunities to make these walks circular by including the railway route.
- Heritage Lottery Fund provides opportunities for projects that enhance heritage assets and/or their setting.
- Heritage trails could be delivered around the District, combined with walking or cycling routes.
- Museum of Power, the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation, Beeleigh Abbey, Military Museum and other locations provide potential destination hubs

**Weaknesses and Threats**

*Desk based study findings*

- Access to heritage assets via public transport/ sustainable transport (walking or cycling for example) is limited.
- There are a number of neglected listed buildings in the District. These could have the potential to be commercially viable as visitor attractions/ facilities.
- There is pressure on Promenade Park to generate income via new facilities and activities that conflict with its function as greenspace for quiet recreation and play.
- Declining resources to maintain assets in public ownership.

***Stakeholder comments***

- The heritage evidence base for the District needs updating, including for example, mapping the historic hedgerows on the Dengie.

### Analysis

2.54 There are many designated and non-designated heritage assets dating from prehistory through to modern times within the District. These all contribute to the District's identity and sense of place, whilst benefitting residents and visitors.

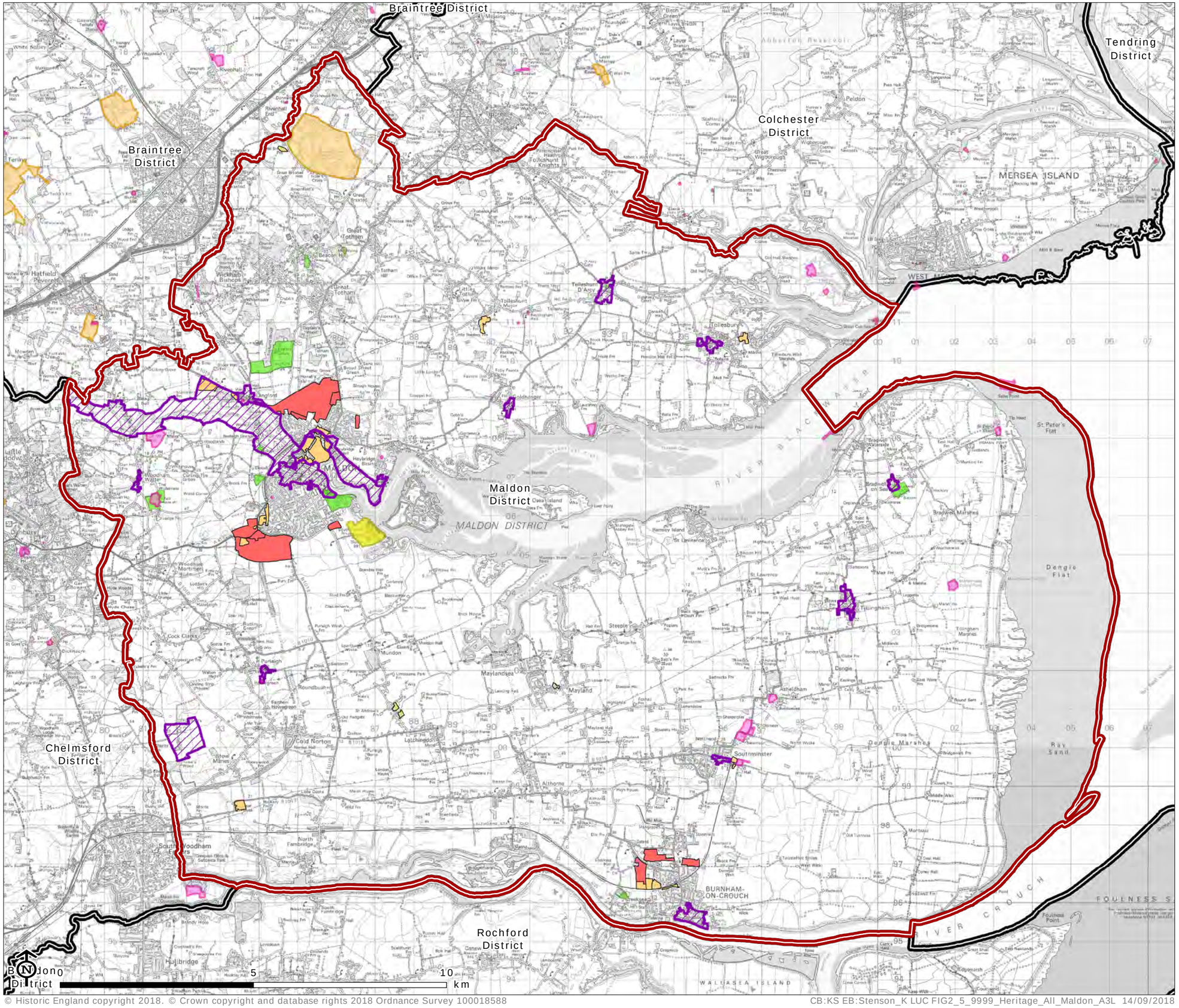
2.55 The provision of green infrastructure can help enhance the setting and improve access to such assets.

2.56 The key priorities for Celebrating Cultural Heritage are:

- Increasing access to cultural heritage assets for both residents and visitors to the District.
- Providing information about cultural heritage assets so they can be understood and valued by the public.
- Contributing to the protection and enhancement of heritage assets.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure 2.5: Green Infrastructure Baseline for Celebrating Cultural Heritage




Maldon District Council
Neighbouring local authorities
Site allocations (housing)
Site allocations (employment)
Registered battlefield
Scheduled monument
Conservation areas
Registered Park and Garden*
Historic Park and Garden

*No Registered Parks and Gardens in Maldon are open to the public

Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_5_9999_Heritage_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: HE, MDC

## Promoting Healthy Living

**Green infrastructure has the potential to make a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of local communities. It can provide recreation destinations and influence how people travel between their homes and places of work and leisure. Good connections between these places can promote active travel.**

### Map Observations

**Figure 2.6** shows that the District is well served by footpaths, however there is a lack of other **public rights of way**, such as bridleways. All of the Local Plan **site allocations** are located along footpaths, and these will be important for promoting healthy living, but opportunities exist for the promotion of other means of sustainable transport.

There is a **national cycle network** provision to the north west of the District that passes through Maldon and Heybridge connecting these towns to Witham (Braintree District Council) and Danbury (Chelmsford City Council). However there are no other designated cycling routes that link Maldon and Heybridge to the coastline to any other settlement in the District.

Two of the seven **protected lanes** link to the national cycle network, whereas the remaining five protected lanes link to footpaths.

The provision of **open/green spaces, outdoor sports facilities and playing fields** are mostly confined to settlements.

### Desk Based Study Findings

*Walking and Cycling Routes*

2.57 Although there are no National Trails currently present within Maldon, there are numerous Public Rights of Way (PRoW) present across the District, offering walking opportunities for residents and visitors. The England Coast Path is a National Trail in development (promoted by Natural England) that will follow the coastline of England. There are three sections of the England Coast Path in the District: the section from Maldon town to Salcott-cum-Valley has been approved, the section from Maldon Town to Burnham-on-Crouch is proposed, and the section from Burnham-on-Crouch to South Woodham Ferrers is in development[50].

2.58 Cycle routes are also present within Maldon town, providing active transport opportunities, and National Cycle Network routes (Route 1, and regional routes 16 and 50) connect the town to the neighbouring local authorities to the north and west. In Maldon Town, 7% of internal journeys to work are made by bike, which represents 209 cyclists per day, putting it in the top 10 urban areas for cycling in Essex[51]. The District would benefit from additional cycle paths and PRoW, particularly linking transport hubs, schools, town centres and points of interest such as heritage destinations.

[50] Natural England (2018) England Coast Path in Essex. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-coast-path-in-essex

[51] Essex Highways (2018) Maldon District Cycling Action Plan, Highways Transport Planning. Available at: https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/Getting%20Around/Cycling/Maldon-District-Cycling-Action-Plan.pdf

2.59 The Essex Cycling Strategy sets out the key elements of a long term plan that will lead to a significant and sustained increase in cycling in Essex. Two key commitments of the Essex Cycling Strategy are to:

- Establish a coherent, comprehensive and advantageous cycle network in every major urban area, utilising a combination of on-carriageway and off-carriageway cycle facilities; and
- Ensure each District has an up to date Cycling Action Plan (renewed every 5 years). As part of the Essex Cycle Strategy, Essex Highways published the Maldon District Cycling Action Plan in 2018[52]. This includes potential cycleway projects that would support the GI projects in this Strategy. It is recognised that effective partnership working will be key to delivering both the GI projects and the Cycle Action Plan projects.

2.60 Long distance paths are also present within the District, offering recreational walking opportunities to the District's population. These include the following[53]:

- **Our Lady of Ulting Pilgrimage Walk**, which encircles Little Baddow and extends into the west of Maldon District at Ulting where it ends.
- **Byrhtnoth's Last Essex Visit**, which follows the Cam valley from Great Chesterford, enters the west of Maldon District at Ulting and follows the River Chelmer to reach the head of the Blackwater estuary at Maldon, at the site of the Battle of Maldon.
- **Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation**, which extends north from All Saints Church in Maldon, encircles Heybridge Creek, and follows the River Chelmer west, leaving Maldon District at Ulting and ending in Chelmsford.
- **St Peter's Way**, which extends from Chipping Ongar eastwards, enters Maldon District in the west at Cock Clarks and extends easts to reach Sales Point.
- **St Cedd's Pilgrimage**, which extends from Southminster to Tillingham to Sales Point and encircles back thorough Bradwell-on-Sea in a figure of eight.

*Formal Recreation Space*

2.61 Currently there are numerous open spaces present across Maldon District, including common land, open access land, allotments, amenity green spaces, parks, sports and playing fields, as well as the beach/ foreshore areas. These are largely associated with settlements, as would be expected. The Green Infrastructure Study (2011) found that public parks and amenity spaces represent 145 hectares within the District, comprising of three district parks, 35 local parks and 72 neighbourhood amenity spaces. The majority of the District has sufficient provision of public parks and amenity space, however some parishes are deficient in these assets[54].

2.62 The key public parks in Maldon District are Promenade Park, Elm Farm Park and Burnham Riverside Park:

- Located to the east of Maldon with views over the River Blackwater, **Promenade Park** is the most popular park in District (attracting over 300,000 visitors a year) and includes an ornamental lake with fountains, dedicated picnic areas, a splash park water play facility, a riverside walk, a play galleon and fort, aerial runway, a model boating and crabbing lake, three large sand pits, sports pitches and a toilet block with disabled facilities[55].

[52] Maldon District Cycling Action Plan (2018) is available at: https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/Getting%20Around/Cycling/Maldon-District-Cycling-Action-Plan.pdf
[53] The Long Distance Walkers Association (2018) Long Distance Paths. Available at: https://www.ldwa.org.uk/ldp/public/ldp_public_home.php.
[54] Maldon District Council (2011) Maldon District Green Infrastructure Study. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base.
[55] Visit Maldon District (no date) Promenade Park. Available at: https://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=0241208&itemtype=48%2c124&groupid=2&catid=13&feature=1

- **Burnham Riverside Park** has been awarded a Green Flag and overlooks the River Crouch and Wallsea Island and includes a wildflower meadow and play areas[56].
- **Elms Farm Park** lies to the west of Heybridge. It has a variety of habitats including meadow, rank vegetation, scrub trees, wet ditches, open water and a man-made lake with an island[57].

2.63 Part of Marsh Farm Country Park is located on the southwest edge of the District and comprises of over 300 acres of grazing marsh, ten miles of footpath and as it is a SSSI designation, there are opportunities for watching wildlife.

2.64 The Maldon District Children's Play Strategy identified that within Burnham, North and West Maldon, Tollesbury, Wickham Bishops, Mayland, North Fambridge and Tolleshunt Knights there are limited opportunity for children to play on green open space. Additionally, the strategy identified that there are limited opportunities for children to experience play in all villages except for Maldon, Heybridge, Burnham and Southminster, where there is a multitude of play services operating[58].

2.65 The Green Infrastructure Study (2011) identifies that there is a good distribution of grass pitches across the District meeting the needs of recreational football, cricket and rugby. However, the quality of these pitches and their ancillary facilities are below average.

*Informal Recreation Space*

2.66 Informal parks in towns and villages, are distributed throughout the District. The Green Infrastructure Study (2011) identifies small amenity spaces as being important informal play spaces for younger children as they are often located within or in close proximity to residential areas and are therefore accessible to large numbers of members of the public.

2.67 Maldon District offers a variety of destinations for informal recreation, including Stow Maries World War One Aerodrome in the southwest of the District[59], Promenade Park to the east of Maldon town[60], Northey Island (restricted access)[61] and Osea Island (private)[62] within the estuary, and nature reserves across the District including Shut Heath Wood, Oxley Meadow, Maldon Wick, Tollesbury Wick and Chigborough Lakes[63].

2.68 Semi natural and natural greenspace contribute to wildlife conservation and biodiversity but they are often used by the general public for the enjoyment of nature. However, many of these areas are either inaccessible or only partially accessible to the public. A set of robust criteria for appraising natural and semi-Natural greenspace sites should inform future policy, and these have been prepared as part of this GI Strategy (see **Appendix 2**).

Borrow dyke at sundown, Tollesbury Wick Marshes
cc-by-sa/2.0 - © Roger Jones - geograph.org.uk/p/3818874

2.69 Burnham-on-Crouch has a strong association with yachting and sailing, with a number of clubs offering recreational opportunities. These include the Crouch Yacht Club, the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club and the Royal Burnham Yacht Club[64].

[56] Visit Maldon District (no date) Burnham Riverside Park. Available at: https://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=0243970
[57] Visit Maldon District (no date) Elms Farm Park. Available at: https://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&venue=0164030
[58] Maldon District Council (2007) Maldon District Children's Play Strategy 2007-2012. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base
[59] Stow Maries (2018)Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome. Available at: http://www.stowmaries.org.uk
[60] Visit Maldon (2018) Promenade Park. Available at: http://www.visitmaldon.co.uk/promenade-park
[61] National Trust (2018) Northey Island. Available at: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/northey-island
[62] Osea Island (2018) Osea Island. Available at: http://www.oseaisland.co.uk/
[63] Essex Wildlife Trust (2018) Visitor Centre and Nature Reserves. Available at: http://www.essexwt.org.uk/visitor-centres-nature-reserves
[64] Maldon District Council (2017) Local Development Plan 2014-2019. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/ldp

2.70 The Maldon Landscape and Green Infrastructure Technical Document to Maldon District Design Guide outlines the standards for open space, sports pitches, allotments and play areas developed through the Maldon Green Infrastructure Study (2011) and are shown **Table 2.1** below.

**Table 2.1: Greenspace Standards set out in the Maldon Landscape and Green Infrastructure Technical Document to Maldon District Design Guide[65] and current delivery as set out in the 2011 Green Infrastructure Study[66]**

| Typology | Standards to be maintained | | Current Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| District Park | 1 ha per 1000 population<br>The whole population within 10 minutes' walk/ 1km distance | | 1 ha per 1000 population<br>Meeting standard |
| Local Park | 1.14 ha per 1000 population<br>The whole population within 10 minutes' walk/ 1km distance | | 1.14 ha per 1000 population<br>Meeting standard |
| Neighbourhood amenity space | 0.14 ha per 1000 population<br>The whole population within 5 minutes' walk/ 1km distance | | 0.14 ha per 1000 population<br>Meeting standard |
| Total parks and amenity space | 2.28ha per 1000 population | | 2.28ha per 1000 population<br>Meeting standard |
| Natural and semi-natural greenspace | To investigate the potential to create new accessible greenspaces in or around Latchingdon and Tillingham.<br>To improve connectivity between semi natural greenspaces.<br>To apply a higher level of policy protection to Local Wildlife Sites.** | | 11517.94 ha<br>Unknown if meeting standard |
| 11-a-side football pitches | One pitch per 1,475 in Burnham, Heybridge, Maldon, Southminster. One pitch per 1,650 people in rural areas. | Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all pitches and ancillary facilities are rated as 'average' or better at all sites. | 1 per 1,650 but an overall shortage in the more urban areas<br>Below standard |
| Mini-soccer football pitches | One mini-soccer pitch per 6,280 people. | The whole population within 15 minutes' drive or walk of the nearest pitch | 1 per 6,280 people<br>Meeting standard |
| Allotments | 0.2ha per 1000 population.<br>The majority of the District is deficient in allotments. Priority for creating new allotments should be in parishes with larger populations where there are identified deficiencies.<br>The whole population should be within 2km of the nearest site. | | 0.17ha per 1000 population<br>Below standard |
| Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) | • Located within a walking time of five minutes from home<br>• 5 play types, including safer surface<br>• Fencing complete with two pedestrian gates<br>• Minimum activity zone of 400sqm<br>• Seating, litter bins and a notice should be provided | | Below standard |
| Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP) | • Located within a walking time of 15 minutes from home<br>• Eight play types, including safer surface<br>• Provision of a Multi-Use Games Area/ Skate Park<br>• Fencing complete with two pedestrian gates<br>• Minimum activity zone of 1,000sqm<br>• Seating, litter bins and a notice should be provided | | Below standard |

* includes SSSIs, Ramsar sites, SACs, NNRs, Fishing Lakes, Common Land, Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland and Green Corridors.
** This relates to policy NE2 MDLDP.

[65] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon Landscape and Green Infrastructure Technical Document to Maldon District Design Guide. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9226/urban_design/2
[66] Maldon District Council (2011) Maldon District Green Infrastructure Study. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base

*New development and Recreational spaces*

2.71 In addition, the Approved Local Development Plan aims through Policy S3: Place Shaping - Objective 8 requires development proposals for the Garden Suburbs and Strategic Allocations to provide a network of safe and usable paths and streets for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and vehicles. This network should prioritise accessibility to open spaces, education and health facilities[67]. Furthermore, the Sport England Active Design Guide defines principles for active design, including through creating walkable communities, connecting destinations through walking and cycling routes, creating a network of multifunctional open spaces and providing infrastructure to enable sport and physical activity[68]. Additional guidance on incorporating active design and recreational opportunities into new developments is available in the Maldon District Design Guide[69]and the Essex Design Guide[70]. The Fields in Trust guidance for outdoor sport and play is a useful tool for designing outdoor recreational space[71].

2.72 The importance of healthy living is reflected in the Approved Local Development Plan which requires through Policy N3: Open Space, Sport and Leisure that all development must contribute towards improving the provision, quality and/ or accessibility of local and strategic open space, sports, community and leisure facilities. As a minimum, developments are required not to increase existing deficiencies of open space, sports and leisure facilities in the locality, including District parks, local parks, children's play areas, sports grounds, sports facilities, cycleways, footpaths and allotments[72].

*Healthy Living and Nature*

2.73 Maldon District Council will be producing, in conjunction with ten other Essex councils, the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) to address the potential effects from new residential development upon coastal European sites[73]. The RAMS aims to avoid impacts in combination with other plans and projects whilst encouraging visitors to behave appropriately to protect sensitive coastal areas and its internationally important wildlife. Ensuring that sufficient recreational space (for example, Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) within new development is provided for new residents is a consideration for the District Council when determining planning applications, in order to avoid impacts from each development alone and meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

2.74 The 'Building with Nature' User Guide, developed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, outlines standards for planning and development to deliver high quality green infrastructure, and could form a model for the District. Key standards include those for wellbeing, including ensuring green infrastructure is accessible for all and situated close to where people live, ensuring developments encourage all people to use and enjoy green infrastructure, ensuring schemes support local priorities for addressing health inequalities, and ensuring that schemes demonstrate innovative solutions to overcoming social and cultural barriers to the use and enjoyment of green infrastructure, promoting socially sustainable communities and community cohesion[74,75]. Recreational access to the countryside is important and the lack of safe off-road routes can be a barrier to this. Wherever possible, new or upgraded routes should be accessible by all user groups, including walkers, cyclists, riders and people with disabilities.

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[67] Maldon District Council (2017) Local Development Plan 2014-2019. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/ldp

[68] Sport England (2015) Active Design. Available at: https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/active-design

[69] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon District Design Guide. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9226/urban_design/2

[70] Essex County Council (2019) The Essex Design Guide. Available at: https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/overarching-themes/active-design-principles/

[71] Fields in Trust Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play, Available at: http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance

[72] Maldon District Council (2017) Local Development Plan 2014-2019. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/ldp

[73] Place Services and Essex County Council (2017) The Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. Available at: https://democracy.maldon.gov.uk/documents/s9068/9%20Essex%20Coastal%20RAMS%20Update%20-%20Appendix%203.pdf

[74] Building With Nature (2017) User Guide. Available at: https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk

[75] Further information on improving access to green space for all social groups, to reduce social equality, is available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/357411/Review8_Green_spaces_health_inequalities.pdf

2.75 The Approved Local Development Plan identifies that Protected Lanes have both considerable ecological value as habitats for plants and animals, serving as corridors for movement and dispersal for some species and acting as vital connections between other habitats, whilst allowing people to access historic landmarks and landscapes, and encouraging recreation within the countryside[76].

### Strengths and Opportunities

*Desk based study findings*

- The Active Design Guide[77] by Sport England aims to promote active communities underpinned by ten principles, including connecting communities to schools, workplaces and shops with walking and cycling routes.
- The Maldon District Design Guide[78] notes that play should not be confined just to playgrounds, but in a range of areas including pocket parks and areas such as town squares in the public realm.
- Essex Highways have produced a draft Cycling Action Plan (2018) for the District and has identified seven priority areas where the cycle network should be developed.
- The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan creates potential funding opportunities for access and enhancement of routes in future.
- Promenade Park forms a destination for recreation in the District and region.

***Stakeholder comments***

- Protected and Quiet Lanes are underutilised and could be incorporated into the cycle network.
- There is potential to reinstate parts of the old railway lines as multi access routes.
- Rochford District Council is currently implementing a cycle route along the footpath that follows the southern banks of the River Crouch and there is an opportunity to create a circular route via ferry links.
- The designation of the English Coast Path will promote increased access to the District's coastline and there is potential for circular walks to be created inland linking to communities.
- There is an opportunity to provide a Country Park at Beeleigh Falls working in partnership with Essex Waterways.

[76] Maldon District Council (2017) Local Development Plan 2014-2019. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/ldp

[77] Sport England (2015) Active Design: Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity. Available at: https://www.sportengland.org/media/3964/spe003-active-design-published-october-2015-high-quality-for-web-2.pdf

[78] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon District Design Guide: Landscape and Green Infrastructure (including Open Space, Sport and Play Facilities, Biodiversity and Trees). Available at: http://www.maldon.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/13656/landscape_and_green_infrastructure_technical_document_-_final.pdf

### Weaknesses and Threats

*Desk based study findings*

- Much of the District's PRoW network are footpaths, and therefore do not allow for cycling or horse-riding.
- Settlements and communities located in the Dengie and north of the River Blackwater are isolated.
- Many of the District's roads, particularly in rural areas are dangerous for cyclists and there have been 58 personal injury collisions involving cyclists between August 2012 and July 2017.
- Climate change could impact sea wall access.
- Promenade Park is under threat from a lack of master planning/ overarching strategy, over-use in summer and economic pressures.
- Smaller open spaces, including amenity greenspace, often consist primarily of mown grass which can be monotonous for both people and wildlife.

***Stakeholder comments***

- There is no cycling or walking provision between Southminster and Burnham-on-Crouch, including limited opportunity for pupils living in Southminster to travel to school using active modes of transport as the road (B1021) is considered to be dangerous.
- The surfacing of the NCN 1 cycle route between Maldon and Danbury needs improving as it is unusable after periods of rain.
- There are a number of informal spaces available for public use; that need enhancement and signage to encourage use.
- Appropriate promotion of further active water sports e.g. paddle-boarding is needed.
- The towpath surface along the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation requires upgrading so that it can be used as a year round pedestrian and cycle route to Chelmsford.

### Analysis

2.76 The existing green infrastructure network provides a range of spaces (formal and informal), places and routes for Maldon District's residents and visitors to engage in an active lifestyle.

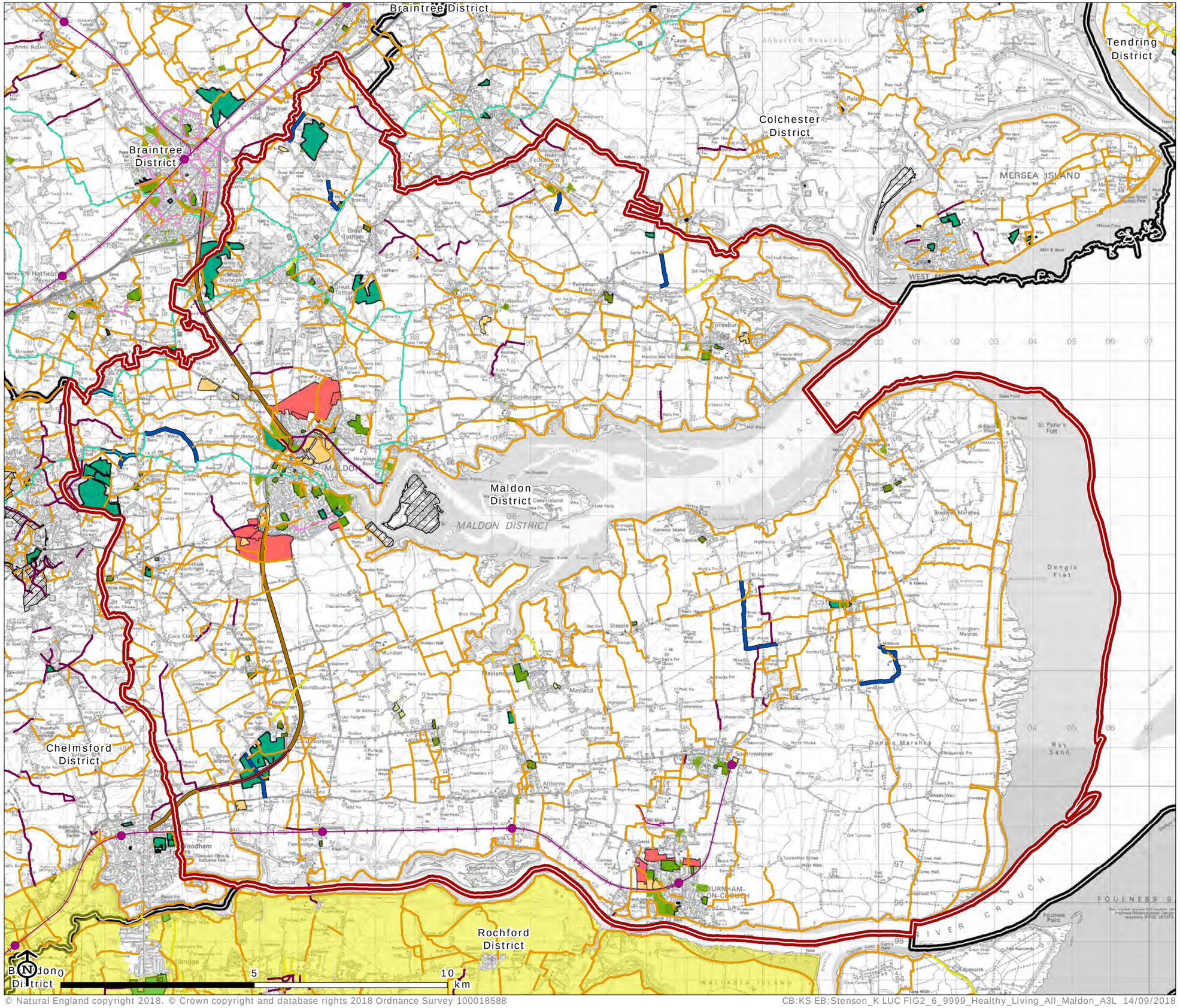
2.77 However there appears to be a lack of safe routes for cycling and horse riding, with the majority of the Public Rights of Way comprising footpaths. There should be a focus on connecting schools, places of work and recreational areas to settlements (being mindful of impacts on designated coastal habitats). This provision would encourage the use of active transport for commuting and sustainable modes of travel to places of recreation such as parks and sports facilities.

2.78 The key priorities for Promoting Healthy Living are:

- Enhancing connectivity through the District through increased provision of, or the enhancement of, the public footpath network, including increased provision of other modes of sustainable transport such as cycling and horse riding.
- Ensuring new developments promote active lifestyles by providing interactive spaces for children and adults on or near residential sites and connecting the sites to walking and cycling routes.
- Ensuring potential conflicts, such as increased access and recreation activities occurring within close proximity to wildlife sites, are acknowledged and addressed.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure 2.6: Green Infrastructure Baseline for Promoting Healthy Living




Maldon District Council
Neighbouring local authorities
Site allocations (housing)
Site allocations (employment)
Open space
Outdoor sports facility or playing field
Green belt
National Trust land
Railway station
Railway
Local cycle route
National cyle route
Old rail route
Protected lanes

Public rights of way
Footpath
Bridleway
Byway/ Restricted Byway

Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

LUC
MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_6_9999_Healthy_Living_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: BaBC, BrBC, MDC, NE, NT, OS, Sustrans

## Nurturing Communities

**The population of Maldon District is 63,400[79] and the District has a low overall population density. The settlements of Maldon and Heybridge account for over a third of the population of the District. Burnham-on-Crouch is the second largest town in the District after Maldon, accounting for over an eighth of the population of the District (13% in 2011).**

**There are a few deprived areas where the residents experience higher than average levels of poor health, unemployment and child poverty. Crime rates in the District are low and residents feel safe. In terms of ethnicity, Maldon has a high white[80] population (95.8%) which is greater than the Essex County and national figures of 90.8% and 79.8% respectively[81].**

### Map Observations

The **English Indices of Deprivation 2015*** show there are 40 Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Maldon District (there are 32,844 LSOAs nationally).

For Local Authority areas, Maldon District is ranked 216th for the multiple deprivation score (rank of average score) out of the 326 local authority areas in England (where 1 is most deprived and 326 is least deprived). **Figure 2.7** shows there is evidence of disparity between the different parts of Maldon District at LSOA level. One LSOA (Maldon West) is ranked as one of the top 10% of the most affluent in the country and although there are no LSOAs in Maldon that are in the top 10% least deprived, three LSOAs are ranked within 30-40% of the most deprived areas within the country.

Primary schools are generally distributed evenly throughout the District, yet there are only two **secondary schools** in the District; one located in Maldon and the other in Burnham-on-Crouch, meaning that secondary school aged children living outside of these towns may need to travel long distances to access a school.

*The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 is a measure of multiple deprivations in small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOA), in England. Seven domains of deprivation are measured: Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment Deprivation. Each domain contains a number of indicators. The seven domains are combined to give a multiple deprivation score.

[79] ONS (2017) Nomis Labour Market Profile – Maldon. Available at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157218/report.aspx.
[80] English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
[81] Maldon District Council (2017) Maldon District Council: Equality and Diversity Update.

*Population*

2.79 In 2016, the population of Maldon District was approximately 63,400 and was almost evenly split between females (50.8%) and males (49.2%)[82]. The District's population is expected to increase to 70,700 by 2039[83]. In 2011, Maldon had a population density of 1.7 persons per hectare, which is significantly lower than the Essex figure of 4.0 persons per hectare and the England and Wales average of 3.7 persons per hectare[84]. Based on an evaluation of housing types recorded in the 2011 census, it is estimated that approximately 86.6% of households within Maldon are likely to have access to a garden[85].

2.80 In 2011, the mean age of the Maldon population was 43.0 years, which is a slightly older average population than the Essex average of 40.9 years and England and Wales as a whole, where the average is 39.4 years. The census data also shows that 20.1% of the resident population in Maldon was of retirement age (65 and over) compared with 18.3% in Essex and 16.4% in England and Wales[86]. The District is experiencing an increasing demand on services owing to the ageing population[87] and this demand is set to intensify as between 2008 and 2033, the population aged between 65 and 84 years is expected to increase by approximately 77%, whilst those aged over 85 years is expected to more than double in number[88].

*Health and Wellbeing*

2.81 Generally, the health of residents in Maldon District is better than the English average. There are however certain elements of health which are concerning for the District. Adult obesity rates in the District are high with almost six in ten being overweight or obese[92]. There are various factors which influence obesity and lack of interaction with the environment or green spaces can fuel obesity; just below half of all Maldon District residents walk at least five times per week[93], similarly only 15% of residents use walking as a method of transport at least three times a week - which is significantly lower than the rest of the County[94]. The issue of obesity is reflected in both Reception and Year 6 children, who are on average more overweight than the rest of the County[95].

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[82] ONS (2017) Nomis Labour Market Profile – Maldon. Available at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157218/report.aspx

[83] ONS (2016) Subnational Population Projections with Components of Change (Births, Deaths and Migrations) for Regions and Local Authorities in England: Table 5 (2014 based). Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections

[84] ONS (2011) Table KS101UK Usual Resident Population, local authorities in the United Kingdom. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsandquickstatisticsforlocalauthoritiesintheunitedkingdompart1

[85] It has been assumed that terraced, detached and semi-detached houses are likely to have access to gardens, whilst flats, apartments and maisonettes are unlikely to have access to a garden.

[86] ONS (2011) Table KS102UK Age Structure, local authorities in the United Kingdom. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsandquickstatisticsforlocalauthoritiesintheunitedkingdompart1

[87] Essex County Council (2016) A profile of people living in Maldon. Available at: https://www.essexinsight.org.uk/get/ShowResourceFile.aspx?ResourceID=385

[88] Maldon District Council (2017) Local Development Plan 2014-2019. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/ldp

[92] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese (2016/17). Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

[93] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Percentage of adults who do any walking at least five times per week (2014/15). Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

[94] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Percentage of adults walking for travel at least three times per week (2016/17). Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

[95] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Reception: Prevalence of overweight (including obese)(2016/17); Year 6: Prevalence of overweight (including obese) (2016/17). Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

2.83 When considering physical activity and green space, a study which examined obesity levels in European countries found that people with access to large amounts of green space are three times more likely to be physically active than people living in areas where there is little green space[96]. Residents in the District who have more access to green space will therefore be more likely to be physically active and reap the benefits of doing so, for example, exercise and physical activity can reduce the likelihood of coronary heart disease[97].

2.84 Mental health is another health priority of the Council. The proportion of estimated mental health disorders in young people (5-16) is better than the county average[98], however, the overall suicide rate for both males and females is marginally worse than the County average[99]. Access to green space has an important role to play with mental health. It has been shown that people living in a green urban area will exhibit significantly lower levels of mental distress and higher levels of wellbeing. Linking physical activity, mental health and green spaces together, evidence has found that people who engage with physical activity in a natural environment experience additional benefits to mental wellbeing than experienced with similar levels of indoor physical activity[100].

2.85 The District has an ageing population[101], which will mean that there will be increased demand on health, social care services and support needed in the District. Issues surrounding an ageing population may also be amplified in the future with adults who are becoming more overweight. Older adults in the future may be more susceptible to developing more rapid and life changing illnesses and issues due to excess weight. Therefore, having the opportunity to be physically active and explore the green spaces that the District has to offer could significantly benefit the health and wellbeing of residents.

*Education*

2.86 There are two secondary schools within the District: Plume School in Maldon and Ormiston Rivers Academy in Burnham-on-Crouch[102]. In 2017, 33% of GCSE pupils at Plume School and 34% at Ormiston Rivers Academy achieved a pass grade in English and maths. This is lower than the Essex average (42.8%) and the national average (39.36%)[103].

2.87 In 2016, 40.6% of residents within the District were qualified to level NVQ4 (HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent) and above. This is above both the regional average (34.9%) and the national average (38.2%)[104].

*Community Involvement*

2.88 Maldon and District Community Voluntary Service is an independent registered charity that supports charities, community groups and volunteers in Maldon District. Their websites provides links to Connect Well, which provides non-medical support for social, emotional or practical issues such as debt, managing a health condition or finding general peer support. The District Community Voluntary Service also provides links to Essex Connects, a searchable directory to help residents contact local charities, voluntary groups, and community sector services within Essex.

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[96] White MP, Alcock I, Wheeler BW, Depledge MH. (2013) Would you be happier living in a greener urban area? A fixed-effects analysis of panel data. Psychological science. 24(6):920-8.

[97] Heran BS, CHen JMH, Ebrahim S, Moxham T, Oldridge N, Rees K, et al. (2011) Exercise-based cardiac rehabilitation for coronary heart disease (Review). The Cochrane Collaboration. (7):1-97.

[98] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Estimated prevalence of mental health disorders in children and young people: % population aged 5-16 (2015). Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

[99] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Suicide rate (Male)(2015-17); Suicide rate (Female) (2015-17). Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

[100] Coon JT, Boddy K, Stein K, Whear R, Barton J, Depledge MH. (2011) Does Participating in Physical Activity in Outdoor Natural Environments Have a Greater Effect on Physical and Mental Wellbeing than Physical Activity Indoors? A Systematic Review. Environmental Science & Technology. 45(5):1761-72

[101] Public Health England (2018) Local Authority Health Profile 2018: Maldon District. Age Profile: ONS Mid-year population estimates. Available at: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/area-search-results/E12000006?search_type=list-child-areas&place_name=East

[102] Maldon District Council (2017) Local Development Plan 2014-2019. Available at: www.maldon.gov.uk/ldp

[103] Gov.uk (2018) Compare School Performance. Available at: https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk

[104] Nomis (2016) Labour Market Profile – Maldon. Available at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157218/report.aspx?town=maldon#tabquals

2.89 These services are important as they support good mental and physical wellbeing through linking residents to a range of groups that use the District's green infrastructure offering opportunities for residents to participate in activities such as conservation, gardening, walking or cycling.

2.90 Essex Outdoors, Bradwell, is a coastal outdoor education centre run by Essex County Council on the south of the Blackwater Estuary and offers sailing courses and other outdoor activities[105].

2.91 Maldon District offers outdoor opportunities, such as at the Parkrun in Burnham-on-Crouch[106]. Essex Wildlife Trust offers volunteering opportunities[107] and there are several Essex Wildlife Trust nature reserves across the District, including Shut Heath Wood, Oxley Meadow, Bradwell Shell Bank, Maldon Wick, Tollesbury Wick and Chigborough Lakes[108]. The National Trust also offer volunteering opportunities[109] and have a National Trust site at Northey Island[110].

2.92 The 2011 Maldon Green Infrastructure Study provides various recommendations for green infrastructure provision within the District. This includes improving accessibility to Green Infrastructure for rural communities, as green infrastructure provision is concentrated within more densely populated settlements and it is likely that, due to resourcing, new green infrastructure provision will continue to be focussed in and around larger settlements[111].

*Public Transport*

2.93 Public Transport is not a component of green infrastructure, but the provision of public transport is important when considering how local communities, particularly those residents who do not have access to a private vehicle, travel to reach destinations such as parks, open spaces and the coastline. Public transport is also relevant as Maldon District has an ageing population and this will therefore increase demand on services and so green infrastructure provision in the District should reflect this trend by ensuring that publicly accessible locations are welcoming to the frail or elderly.

2.94 There are four train stations within the District that connect to the neighbouring authorities to the west and to London, which may help to discourage private car usage for those along the route and encourage active travel to stations. However, these train stations are all confined to the south of the District, located at North Fambridge, Althorne, Burnham-on-Crouch and Southminster. The route is known as the Crouch Valley Line and offers an attractive alternative to the car for those living along its line. Therefore, the populations in the centre and north of the District may be more likely to use private cars. Part of the old railways lines from Maldon to Witham, and Maldon to South Woodham Ferrers still exist in the landscape although some of this has been lost under the plough or to development. The passenger service was withdrawn in 1964 with a residual goods service continuing until 1966 when the line was completely closed.

Within Maldon District, 42% of residents are satisfied with their local bus service (the second lowest in the county) and 34% are satisfied with their local transport information (also the second lowest in the county). Both are well below the county averages of 51% and 39% respectively[112]. Compared to other authorities within Essex, residents living in Maldon District experience the longest travel time by public transport, or walking to reach key services as it takes on average 17 minutes[113].

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[105] Visit Maldon District (2018) Essex Outdoors – Bradwell. Available at: https://www.visitmaldonDistrict.co.uk/thedms.aspx?dms=3&feature=3&venue=0146531

[106] Maldon District Council (2017) Volunteer with Burnham parkrun. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/news/article/6172/volunteer_with_burnham_parkrun

[107] Essex Wildlife Trust (2018) Volunteer with Essex Wildlife Trust. Available at: https://www.essexwt.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer

[108] Essex Wildlife Trust (2018) Visitor Centre and Nature Reserves. Available at: http://www.essexwt.org.uk/visitor-centres-nature-reserves

[109] The National Trust (2018) Volunteer. Available at: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteer

[110] National Trust (2018) Northey Island. Available at: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/northey-island

[111] Maldon District Council (2011) Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/9164/pre-submission_local_development_plan_evidence_base

[112] Essex County Council (2016) Essex Local Authority Portraits - A product of the Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA): A profile of people living in Maldon. Available at: http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/GroupQuery.aspx

[113] Essex County Council (2016) A profile of people living in Maldon. Available at: https://www.essexinsight.org.uk/get/ShowResourceFile.aspx?ResourceID=385

### Strengths and Opportunities

*Desk based study findings*

- Maldon is an attractive and safe District to live in and visit.
- The approved Local Development Plan policies, promotion of the Green Infrastructure standards in the Green Infrastructure Study (2011), the adopted Maldon District Design Guide, and the Masterplan Frameworks, have influenced a good provision of greenspace in new developments in the District. This provision can promote healthy lifestyles within new communities.
- There is a low percentage of the population with mental health problems.
- The Maldon and District Community Voluntary Service is a platform that assists residents to connect with charities, groups and activities that promote healthy lifestyles.

***Stakeholder comments***

- There is a large population of elderly people with specific needs for access to green infrastructure, and who can greatly benefit from access to green spaces.
- The provision of community gardens in new developments promotes community cohesion, physical activity and food growing.

### Weaknesses and Threats

*Desk based study findings*

- There are many isolated communities with limited access to public transport.
- Market Hill is subject to high levels of air pollution and is currently proposed as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Planting schemes along these roads could help improve air quality and reduce associated adverse health impacts.
- Community greenspaces are often poorly designed and inaccessible.
- The ageing population is currently putting pressure on services, and this pressure is set to increase.

***Stakeholder comments***

- The District is popular with cyclists and there are a number of local cycling clubs, however key links of the cycle network are missing, and many of the connections that need to be made on road are too dangerous, for example Fambridge Road.
- The provision of gardens in new developments are generally meeting the smallest size set by standards.
- New developments need to be designed for all user groups.
- Old and new communities need to be better connected and integrated.
- There is a lack of adult play provision such as Green Gyms within the District.
- More places for intergenerational interaction need to be provided.

### Analysis

2.95 In terms of health and deprivation, Maldon District's population performs better than the national average. To ensure that this is maintained, particularly for health and wellbeing, green infrastructure provision should aim to promote active lifestyles and ensure spaces are accessible for all members of the population by sustainable modes of transport.

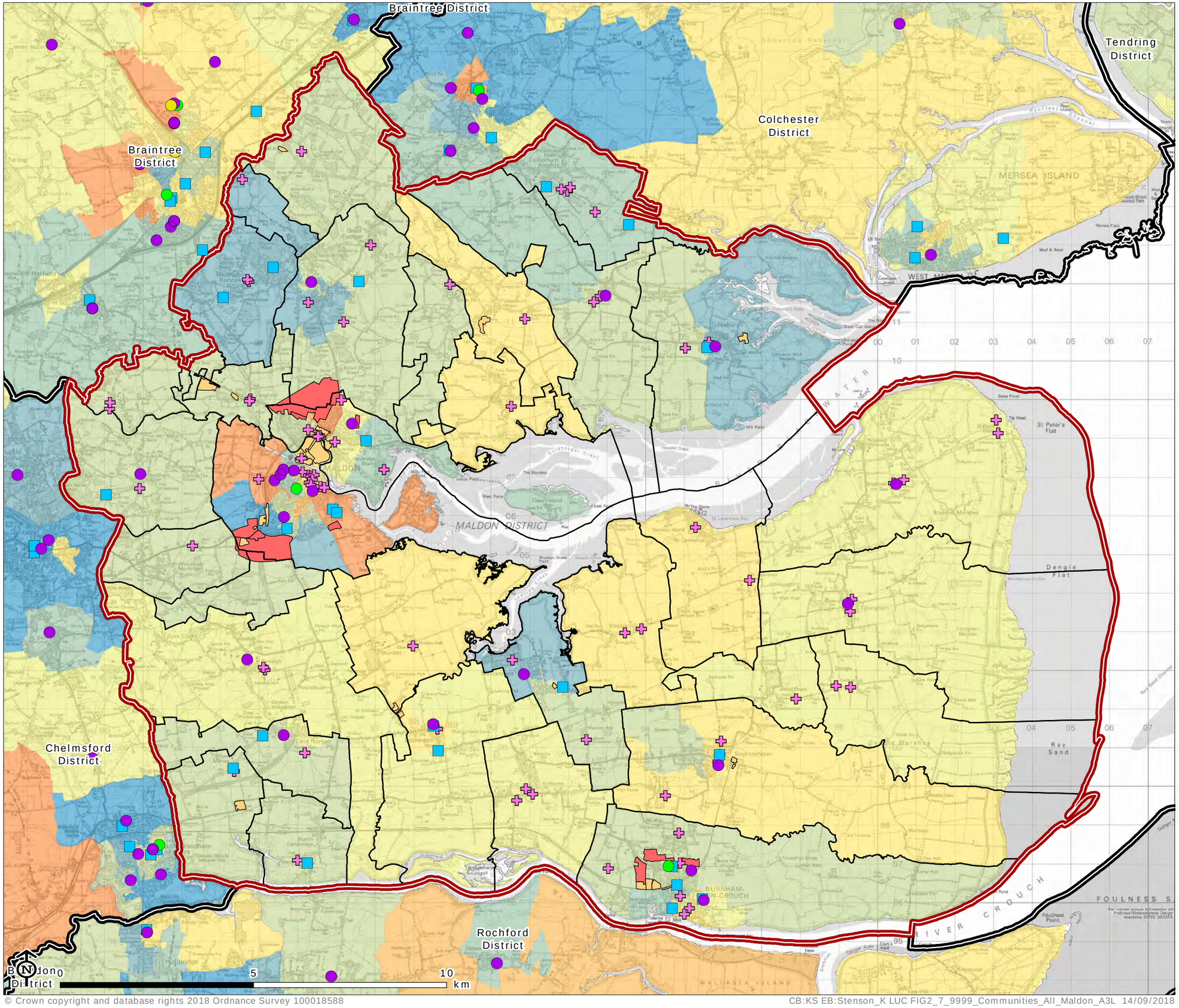
2.96 The key priorities for Nurturing Communities are:

- Ensuring settlements and places for recreational are accessible to all.
- Identifying and facilitating opportunities for people to come together and for communities to develop.

APPENDIX 1

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure 2.7: Green infrastructure Baseline for Nurturing Communities




Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

- Maldon District Council
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Parish boundary
- Site allocations (housing)
- Site allocations (employment)
- Indoor sports facility
- Church or cemetery
- Primary education
- Further/secondary education
- Special Needs Education

Index of Multiple Deprivation

- 0 - 10% (most deprived)
- 10 - 20%
- 20 - 30%
- 30 - 40%
- 40 - 50%
- 50 - 60%
- 60 - 70%
- 70 - 80%
- 80 - 90%
- 90 - 100% (least deprived)

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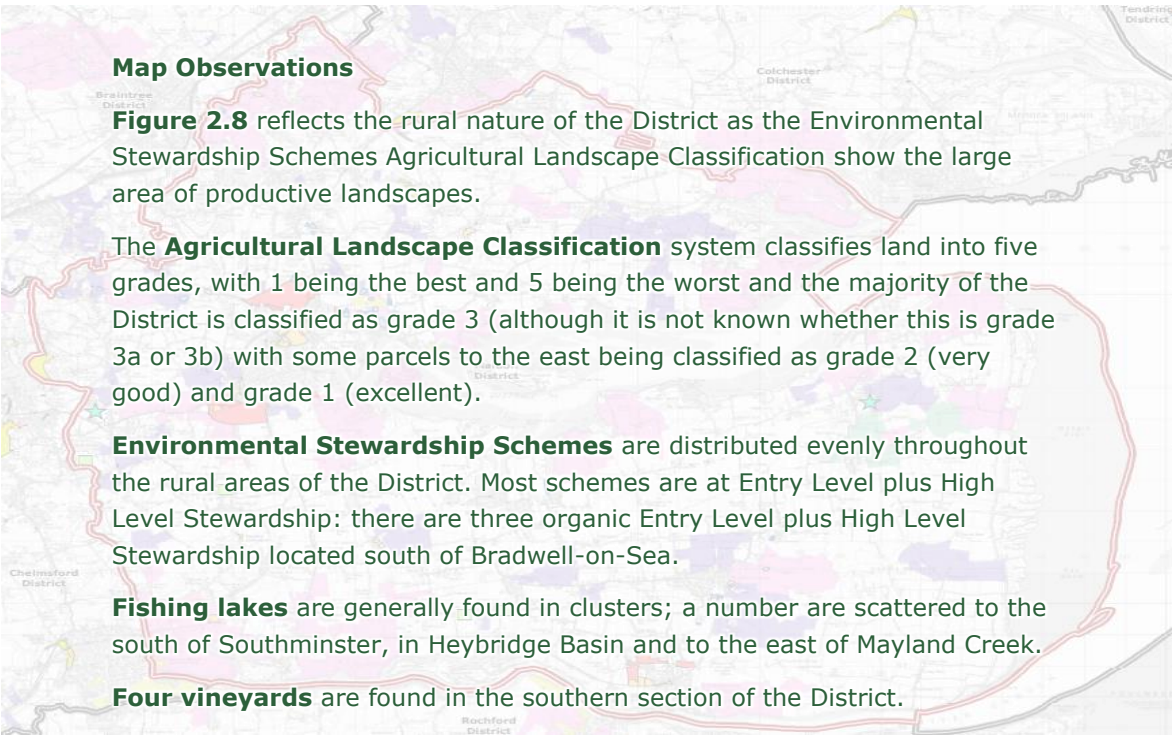
CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_7_9999_Communities_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: DCLG, MDC, OS VML, SE

## Sustaining Productive Landscapes

**In the south of the UK, arable farming is the common farming practice, with over half of farm holdings growing cereal. The main crops grown in the District are wheat, oilseed rape, barley, peas, beans and potatoes.**

**Many of the farms in Maldon District have diversified either through agricultural diversification (e.g. producing and selling dairy products or speciality flowers) or non-agricultural diversification (e.g. opening farm shops, offering accommodation for visitors and organising farm visits). This diversification is necessary so the District's farming sector can react to market changes, respond to competition, and remain viable and competitive[114].**




2.97 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) for the Eastern region shows that the soil in the vicinity of the urban areas of Maldon District is classified as grade 3, although these maps do not distinguish between grade 3a (good) and 3b (moderate). Three small pockets of the top soil classification, grade 1 (excellent), can be found in south Maldon: one east of Burnham-on-Crouch, the second to the east of Bradwell-on-Sea and the third is situated to the east of Bradwell Waterside. Grade 2 (very good) soil is located along much of the Dengie's east coastline, to the north of Southminster and Burnham-on-Crouch, between Maldon Town and Danbury, and to the north of Heybridge. In addition, large areas of the District are farmed under the Countryside Stewardship or Environmental Stewardship Schemes. The main priority for these schemes is to protect and enhance the natural environment, the diversity of wildlife (biodiversity) and water quality. As a result, these areas contribute significantly to the Green Infrastructure of the District.

[114] Writtle College (2010) Maldon District Rural Gap Analysis Report (EB039). Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/

2.99 Agriculture was one of the largest employment sectors in the District in the 19th and 20th Centuries[115]. In 2010, Maldon has a high proportion of agricultural jobs, 2.5 times higher than the sector share nationally[116]. Today, agriculture, forestry and fishing sector represent 7% of the businesses in Maldon District and contributes to 3.5% of total employment[117]. The following examples of businesses give a flavour of the productive landscape in the District.

2.100 Dengie Crops Ltd is the UK's leading grower and producer of Alfalfa, which is used in the production of high quality animal feeds. They also operate a farmers' co-operative which can provide a full service to farmers, from crop drying through to grain marketing, and a buying group through which considerable savings can be made on the purchase of a long list of products and services. Run as an extension of members' farm offices, its Agricultural Division works exclusively on each individual member's behalf.

2.101 North Maldon Growers Ltd, wholesale producers of UK grown handpicked fresh vegetables since 1964, is a co-operative farming business of four local Essex families. They have been producing field fresh vegetables for over 50 years in mid Essex on the Blackwater estuary. Reclaimed fertile soil and maritime climate combined with vast expertise and experience in this area has provided a successful formula for them to produce sweetcorn, squashes, pumpkins, courgettes, and purple sprouting broccoli and kale.

2.102 Part of the Wilkin and Sons (Tiptree jams) 'Tiptree' farm estate is in the District, with farms near Goldhanger and Tollesbury. Much of the fruit used in the preserve-making business is grown on the 'Tiptree' farms, with the company aiming to be self-sufficient in the fruits that will grow well in the area. Today, the farm grows fruit not only for the preserve-making business but also has a blossoming trade in fresh and frozen fruit for shops. The farm estate is managed sustainably, to LEAF (Linking the Environment and Farming) standards and is one of the LEAF Demonstration Farms. The LEAF Marque is a leading global environmental assurance system recognising sustainably farmed products.

2.103 Ernest Doe is a long established family firm, whose headquarters are based in the Maldon District, and have a network of branches in the South and East of England. The current Managing Director Colin Doe is the fourth generation of the family to have taken the helm during the company's 100+ years of trading. They are the UK's largest agricultural, construction and ground care machinery dealership, a major agricultural equipment supplier in East Anglia, and represent some of the best known and well respected names in the industry, supplying every type of agricultural equipment from cultivation machinery, spreaders, balers, tractors, through to combine harvesters.

2.104 Carr's Flour Mill is an important production company within the District which has been in operation since 1896. Today the mill produces 150 tonnes of flour a day and although some of the wheat comes from abroad, much of it is sourced within 30 miles of the Maldon Mill.

2.105 With tides washing over flat marshland and combined low rainfall, this coastal location has provided excellent environmental conditions for the renowned Maldon Sea Salt production. Sea salt production began in Essex at least 2,000 years ago and the Doomsday Book (1086) records that 45 pans were in operation in the Maldon region. In the 19th century the industry started to decline in Essex, owing to the introduction of a heavy taxation. The Maldon Sea Salt Company is now the only surviving sea salt manufacturer in the county, operating 19 pans.

2.106 Turning inland, the District's mild winters and hot dry summers have allowed the region to produce wine for over 800 years[118]. Although not as steeped in history, Maldon District is also home to a number of breweries in the area[119], with many providing micro-pubs and tap rooms.

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[115] Tym and Parteners and Fenn Wright (2009) Maldon District Employment and Land Review (EB035a). Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/

[116] Essex County and Partners (2010) Essex Local Economic Assessment. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/3%20Economic%20Prosperity/EB011%20Essex%20Local%20Economic%20Assessment.pdf

[117] Maldon District Council (2012) Economic Prosperity Strategy 2013-2029 (EB068b). Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/

[118] Visit Maldon District (no date) Grape and Grain Trail. Available at: https://www.visitmaldonDistrict.co.uk/eat-and-drink/grape-and-grain-trail.aspx

[119] The hops and malt are often imported.

2.107 Maldon District's vineyards and breweries have been enjoying national and regional success. To harness their success and growing reputation, Maldon District Council have partnered with neighbouring Braintree District Council and have instigated the 'Grape and Grain Trail'. This trail experience includes visits to vineyards, breweries and distilleries, with demonstrations of how the drinks are made.

### Strengths and Opportunities

*Desk based study findings*

- Both the terrestrial and marine environments are productive and are delivering local produce.
- Wine and beer production is steadily growing in popularity and partnerships are being established between the private and public sectors.
- Food and produce that is steeped in history is still being produced and sold today, providing a vital role in the celebrating the District's heritage and identity.
- New opportunities for farming may arise once the UK has left the European Union.

***Stakeholder comments***

- The agricultural sector is diversifying, and therefore becoming more resilient to market changes.
- The UKs position outside of the EU is an opportunity to harness products produced in the UK which could continue and perhaps even increase productivity in Maldon.
- LEADER funding is available until 2020 for farmers, foresters, rural businesses and rural communities to increase farming productivity and farm diversification.

### Weaknesses and Threats

*Desk based study findings*

- Intensified agricultural activity can lead to a decrease in biodiversity.
- Rural businesses are at risk from weather conditions and disease outbreaks.
- Uncertainty on public subsidy for agriculture beyond 2020 and once the UK has left the European Union.

***Stakeholder comments***

- Brexit is adding to the uncertainty surrounding agricultural subsidies and fisheries policy.
- Climate change could impact the productivity within the District.

### Analysis

2.108 The rural land in Maldon District has been productive for thousands of years. The influence of national and international economy and policy has shaped the agricultural sector in the District, which has responded successfully to change by diversifying or by increasing efficiency through economies of scale. As Brexit approaches, there is more uncertainty about the environmental stewardship schemes and other European funded projects, although some opportunities may arise. Landowners and farmers in Maldon will need to continue to react to these changes and challenges to ensure that they are resilient and Maldon's landscape continues to be productive.

2.109 The key priorities for sustaining productive landscapes are:

- Ensuring that the rural economy is supported in reacting to national and global changes including climate change.
- Enabling the District's landscape and heritage to benefit from producing.
- To continue marketing and promoting Maldon's local produce as this benefits the District's economy and also contributes to the rural landscape.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

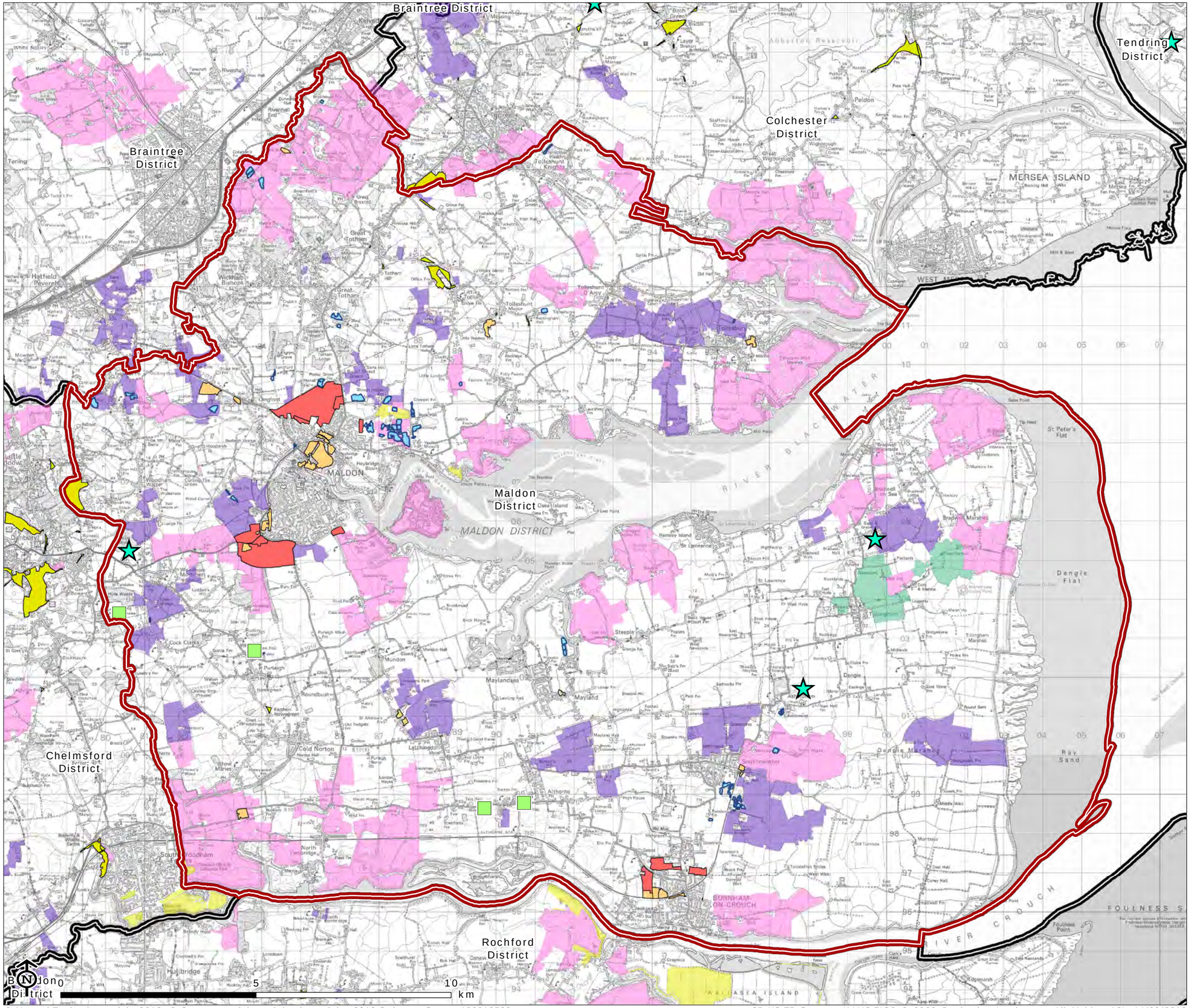



Figure 2.8: Green Infrastructure Baseline for Sustaining Productive Landscapes

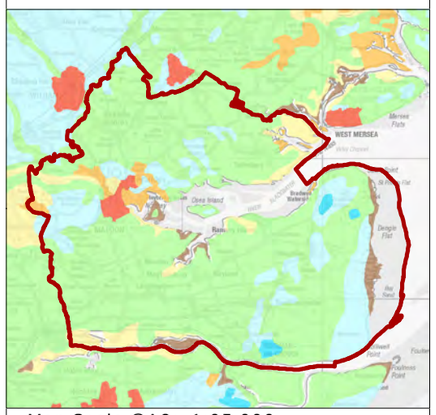
- Maldon District Council
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Site allocations (housing)
- Site allocations (employment)
- Existing mineral site (extraction
- Vineyards
- Fishing lakes
- Registered common land

Environmental Stewardship Scheme

- Entry Level Stewardship
- Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
- Higher Level Stewardship
- Organic Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship

Agricultural Landscape Classification (inset)

- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Grade 5
- Non Agricultural
- Urban



Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

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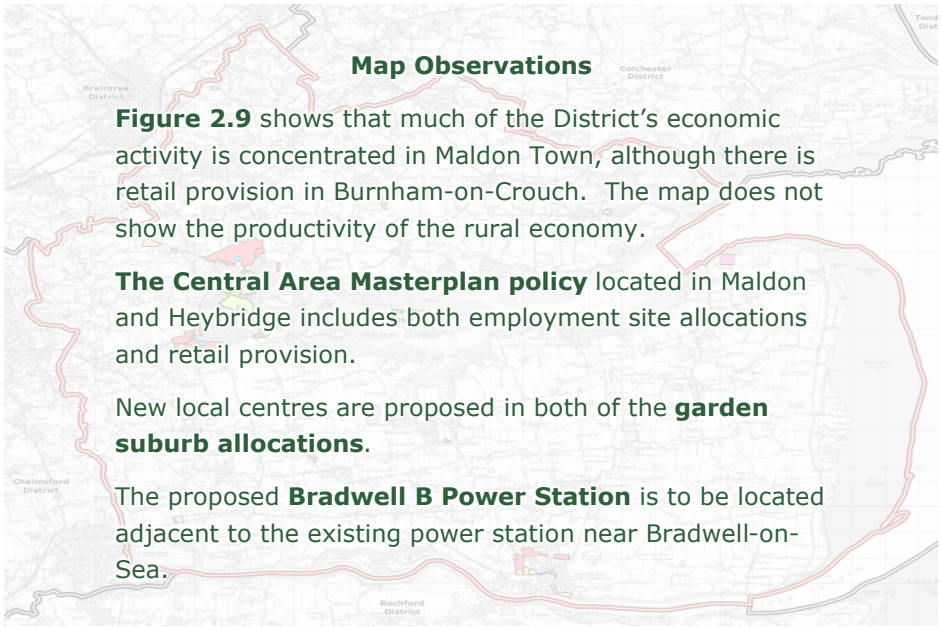
CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_8_9999_Productive_Landscapes_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: FC, MDC, NE

## Supporting Economic Progress and Tourism

**Much of the District's current economic profile reflects its rich maritime past, wealth of environmental assets and productive landscape. The District has a diverse economic base and key local economic sectors include innovation, creativity, design, agriculture and manufacturing.**

**Maldon District is within one hour's train journey to London, however there are poor road connections to the A12, A127 and M25 road networks and this constraint is a limiting factor for the District's economic growth.**

**There is access to ports at Harwich, Felixstowe, Tilbury and the London Gateway port in Thurrock, but improved access to the A12 is needed. London Stanstead and Southend airports are close by.**




2.110 The Maldon Economic Prosperity Strategy[120]classifies the District into three:

- The towns of Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch are classified as '**the core**' since they are the centres of industry, service sector businesses, transport links and local amenities. These settlements are also identified in the Local Development Plan as centres for new employment growth, which will complement the LDP housing allocations.
- Located primarily in the areas south east of Maldon and north and east of Burnham-on-Crouch, '**the rural hinterland**' comprises mostly of small businesses that service a local market and a few larger employers, such as Dengie Crops Ltd and Desch Plantpak Ltd.
- Given the good transport links in some areas of Maldon to London and other Essex authorities, over 8,000 of Maldon's residents commute out of the District on a daily basis; and this forms '**the commuter economy**'. The gross weekly pay of Maldon District residents with full-time jobs outside the District is some 30% higher than that of residents who work in the District.

2.111 This is in addition to its longstanding tradition of producing, recruiting and nurturing highly entrepreneurial individuals, with many of the District's residents starting their own businesses – a trend that is higher than the Essex and UK average.

[120] Maldon District Council (2013) Economic Prosperity Strategy, 2013-2029. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/publications/LDP/pre-submission/3%20Economic%20Prosperity/EB068a%20Maldon%20District%20Economic%20Prosperity%20Strategy.pdf

2.112 Tourism is a key economic component within Maldon District. In 2016, the industry represented 15.2% of the entire District's employment, with 2,771 jobs directly related and 719 indirectly related to tourism[121]. In the same year, the total visitor spending in the District was £156 million, which delivered a total value of £195 million to the local economy (up by 4% from 2015)[122]. Although the summer months are most popular among tourists, the visitor numbers remain significant throughout the rest of the year.

2.113 The District supports, and has done so historically, a strong maritime economy of marinas, ports, docks and boatyards. The Hythe Quay, the old port of Maldon, is well known for its modern day production of Thames Sailing Barges. Burnham-on-Crouch and Tollesbury are highly regarded for their expertise in marine engineering. To the south of the District, the 15-mile coastline between Burnham-on-Crouch and the North Sea, known as 'Cowes-of-the-East-Coast', is renowned for its sailing activities, including the world famous 'Burnham Week' annual regatta. As well as contributing to Maldon District's economy, these activities promote access and use of the District's green infrastructure resource for both residents and tourists.

2.114 The Economic Prosperity Strategy states that '*the Maldon District brand must continue to take advantage of the high quality of life by celebrating the District's history, coastline, maritime culture … and the 'Old English' character of its towns and villages*' and thereby recognises the importance of the District's green infrastructure and its current and future contribution to the economy. The Green Infrastructure Strategy can help achieve this ambition, through guiding green infrastructure projects that will enhance key employment areas, creating new areas for new and existing businesses to thrive, and sustaining the tourism industry.

2.115 While being the principle employment area in Maldon District, the Causeway has suffered from poor road network connectivity, relatively low quality building stock, fragmented ownership, high risk of flooding and restricted supply of good quality employment space. Most of these issues are beyond the scope of green infrastructure. However, the Plan identified a programme of five proposed improvements, of which two – Environmental Improvements and Flooding Risk Review – are linked to the conserving and enhancing of the green infrastructure. They include initiatives such as:

- **Creating and improving cycle and pedestrian routes** – improving access for pedestrians and cyclists, including the creation of attractive cycle lands and pavements along the Causeway and linking them to the river Chelmer and the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.
- **Enhancing key gateway points** – creating a sense of arrival through landscaping, tree planting and public realm improvements.
- **A strategic approach to flood risk** – the Causeway Regeneration Area is located entirely within flood zone 3 with some sections benefiting from existing flood defences. The Plan advises that, rather than taking a site by site or building by building approach to reducing flood risk, the Causeway area is addressed as one.

[121] Maldon District Council (2017) The Maldon District attracts an additional 128,000 day visitors in 2016. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/news/article/6225/the_maldon_district_attracts_an_additional_128000_day_visitors_in_2016

[122] Maldon District Council (2017) The Maldon District attracts an additional 128,000 day visitors in 2016. Available at: https://www.maldon.gov.uk/news/article/6225/the_maldon_district_attracts_an_additional_128000_day_visitors_in_2016

### Strengths and Opportunities

*Desk based study findings*

- Some areas of the Maldon District have good connections to London and the national road network, international ports and airports.
- The District is an attractive place to visit and therefore tourism is a key economic sector.
- The River Crouch Coastal Communities Team, a partnership between Rochford District Council and Maldon District Council, has produced an action plan, which seeks to support economic prosperity and that would interpret local environment as well as its energy generating role.
- LEADER funding is available which aims to create jobs and develop businesses in rural communities.
- The agricultural sector is able to respond to changes in global markets and demands.
- Local produce contributes the District's economy.

***Stakeholder comments***

- The tourism market could be diversified to attract 'adrenaline' activities, golf courses, water sports and promoting filming locations.
- There are opportunities for ferries to operate between Burnham-on-Crouch and Wallasea Island, and Bradwell-on-Sea and Tollesbury.
- Marinas have the potential to contribute to the transport infrastructure.
- Potential to include a visitor centre at the proposed Bradwell B Power Station.

### Weaknesses and Threats

*Desk based study findings*

- Large areas of the District are poorly connected to the transport network.
- There is a restricted supply of employment space.
- Potential impact on green infrastructure assets of proposed economic development.

***Stakeholder comments***

- There is limited attractiveness in the District for big employers.
- There is a lack of infrastructure for non-road traffic.

### Analysis

2.116 Connections to the capital are important economically for the District as the transport of goods and people can be undertaken efficiently. The diverse economy has been based on the productivity of the natural environment, and this continues today, alongside an increase in more contemporary economic sectors such as design and innovation.

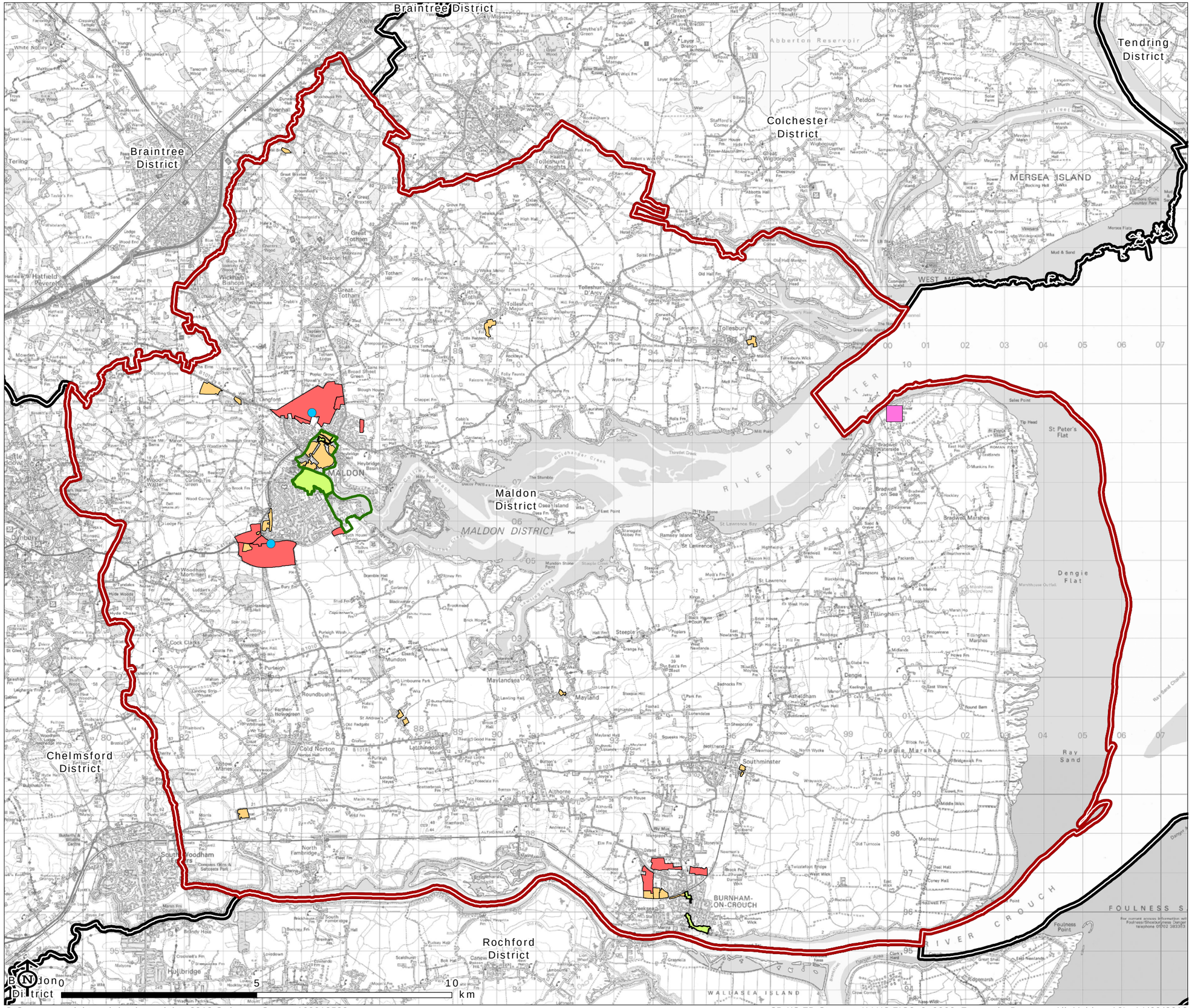
2.117 On first appearance, much of the economic activity is based in Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch. However, the rural economy needs to be taken into consideration (see the Sustaining Productive Landscapes theme above).

2.118 The key priorities for Economic Progress are:

- Ensuring that centres of economic activity are accessible for commuters, residents and visitors by sustainable modes of transport.
- Ensuring the public realm surrounding employment sites is well designed and attractive, helping attract investment.
- Enabling green infrastructure enhancements to increase the visibility, attractiveness and accessibility of the District for visitors and tourists, capitalising on its connectivity to London for example.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

Figure 2.9: Green Infrastructure Baseline for Supporting Economic Progress and Tourism




Maldon District Council
Neighbouring local authorities
Central Area Masterplan policy
Site allocations (housing)
Site allocations (employment)
Retail provision
Proposed Bradwell B Power Station
Proposed local centre

Map Scale @A3: 1:95,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG2_9_9999_Economic_Progress_All_Maldon_A3L 14/09/2018 Source: BrDC, MDC

"Tollesbury" By "fourthandfifteen" Attribution 2.0 Generic (CC BY 2.0) https://www.flickr.com/photos/chelmsfordblue/3608627066

# 3 Action Plan

This section of the report sets out the Action Plan for delivering the GI Strategy. This includes the Vision that the GI Strategy seeks to deliver, as well as the policy principles and recommended policy framework for incorporation within future planning policy, which will aim to facilitate delivery of the Vision.

The study has also identified a number of opportunities to enhance Maldon District's green infrastructure network. Nineteen green infrastructure projects have been identified, contributing towards each of the eight green infrastructure themes. These green infrastructure projects, are either location-specific and are shown on **Figure 3.1**, or are District-wide, or strategic, green infrastructure projects.

Further detail regarding these projects, including a description, map, associated challenges and risks, suggested delivery partners and an indicative cost category are presented in a series of project proformas. For ease of reference, these are provided in the separate document 'A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Maldon District: Projects'.

# Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy

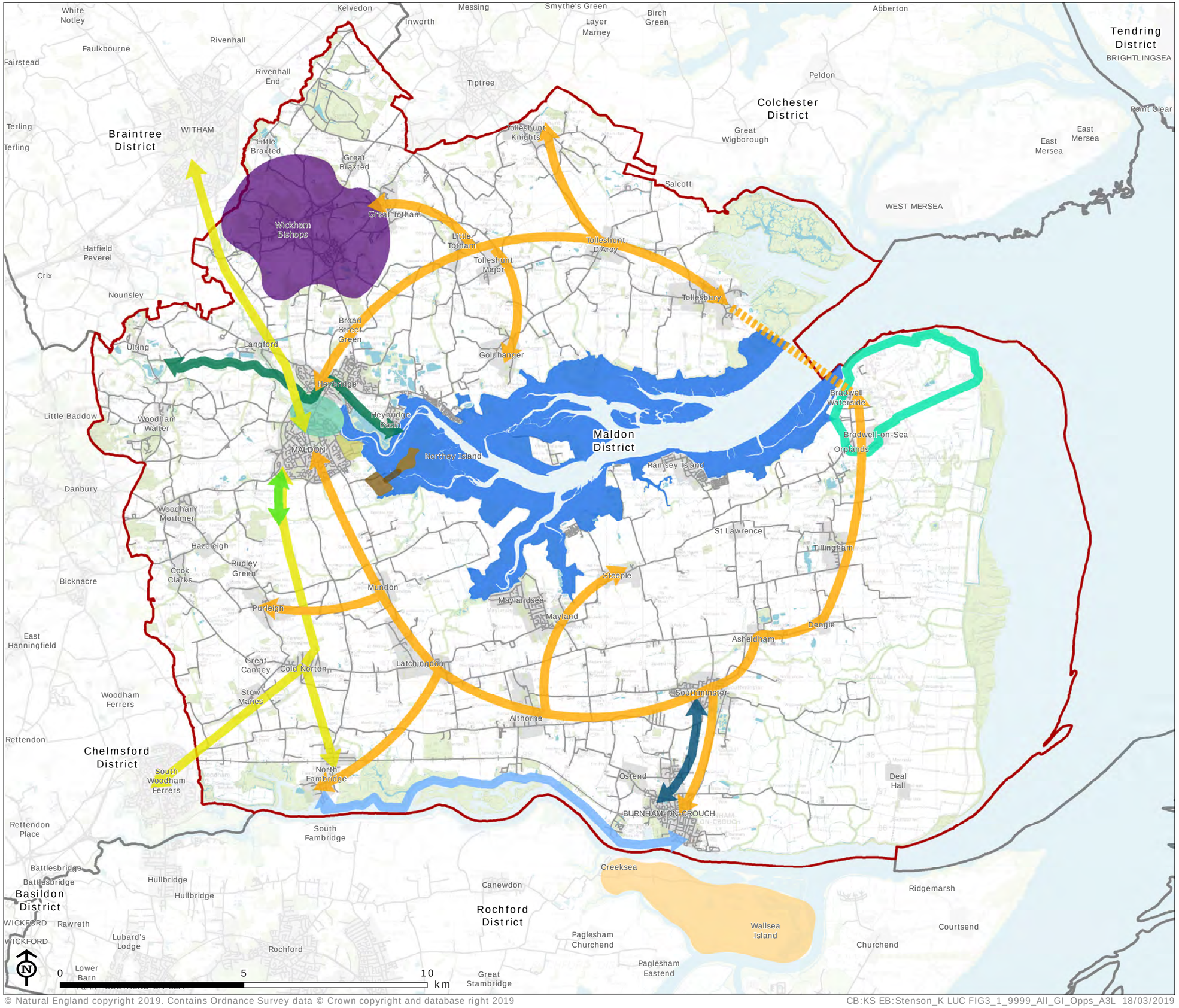


Figure 3.1: All Green Infrastructure Opportunities

- Neighbouring local authorities
- Maldon District Council
- Chelmer and Blackwater Access Project
- Blackwater Greenway
- River Crouch Greenway
- Railway Multi-Access Trial
- Southminster to Burnham-on-Crouch Greenway
- St Peters and Bradwell Circular Walk
- The Wick
- Connections to Wallasea Island
- Town Centre Greening
- Water Sports Awareness Programme
- Connecting Woodlands
- Northey Island/Battle of Maldon
- Promenade Park

Map Scale @A3: 1:100,000

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CB:KS EB:Stenson_K LUC FIG3_1_9999_All_GI_Opps_A3L 18/03/2019

Source: BC, BDC, FC, MDC, NE, NT, OS, RSPB, TDC

## Vision

3.1 The vision for this GI Strategy has been informed by stakeholders, as outlined in the methodology in **Appendix 1**.

3.2 The Maldon GI Strategy Vision is set out below. The Vision reflects stakeholder aspirations, as well as the desk based review findings outlined in **Chapter 2** of this GI Strategy. The Vision encompasses the already well-functioning green infrastructure network, and its importance in defining the District's character, but also identifies that the GI network needs to be promoted and enhanced to maximise the delivery of benefits for local communities.

**Vision**

**"The Maldon GI Strategy will deliver a connected multi-functional landscape for communities and wildlife, which celebrates and promotes the District's distinctive landscape character, heritage, biodiversity, coast and watercourses. Opportunities to enhance the green infrastructure network will deliver a range of benefits for local communities and promote healthy living, whilst providing mitigation for development and population growth."**

## Policy Principles

3.3 The policy principles set out below encourage the protection, enhancement and creation of green infrastructure and will be used to deliver the Vision. These may be used to inform future Local Development Plan policies, to inform decision making and ensure that green infrastructure is adequately considered in the design of developments.

### Principle 1: Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity

3.4 The principle of protecting and enhancing biodiversity is enshrined in international and national legislation, national planning policy and guidance, and local policy. However, declines in wildlife continue and there is a growing emphasis on landscape level measures to create 'big, better and more joined up' ecological networks[123], whilst also delivering Biodiversity Net Gain through development as supported in the revised NPPF (2019). Green infrastructure strategies provide opportunities to deliver against these areas.

*Development of a Coherent Ecological Network*

3.5 The GI Strategy and projects identified provide the means to develop a coherent ecological network across the District and to neighbouring areas, facilitating the delivery of nature conservation benefits including in the face of a changing climate. The development of green infrastructure projects will seek to deliver a more robust ecological network wherever possible. This may be facilitated by the identification of non-designated natural greenspace alongside designated sites, with a suggested framework for the identification of such sites presented in **Appendix 2**.

*Partnership working*

3.6 Maldon District Council will work with other bodies including Natural England, the Environment Agency, Essex County Council, neighbouring local authorities, landowners, developers and other biodiversity organisations to achieve this aim. Importantly, this will seek a greater level of

[123] Lawton, J.H., et al (2010) *Making Space for Nature: a review of England's wildlife sites and ecological network. Report to Defra*.

communication and coordination with landowners and particularly farmers to deliver ecological and other environmental benefits in the wider countryside.

*Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity in New Developments*

3.7 New developments will be designed to mitigate adverse impacts on biodiversity whilst providing demonstrable/ measurable net gain for biodiversity where possible. In the context of the recreational disturbance pressures currently being faced by the Essex Coast designated sites, and the requirement for net gain for biodiversity, the green infrastructure network and new provision will be of growing importance. In terms of green infrastructure, new provision could range from on-site green infrastructure, habitat creation and enhancement, through to improved management of recreation activities along the coast.

### Principle 2: Improving Water Quality and Flood Risk Management

3.8 Poor water quality adversely affects wildlife, human health and the enjoyment of the blue infrastructure environment including both rivers and the coast. The major watercourses in the District suffer from relatively poor water quality. In addition, the water environment in and around the District can cause threats, specifically from increased flood risk. It is anticipated that as a result of climate change, more frequent storm events are likely in the UK in the future. It is important that resilience to flood related events is improved through the provision of flood defences that are multifunctional, offering benefits for biodiversity, and improving access and contact with nature. Multifunctional flood defence can benefit the local economy, by reducing risk to people and property.

*Improving Water Quality*

3.9 Maldon District Council will work with key bodies including the Environment Agency, water companies, Essex County Council, neighbouring local authorities, landowners and developers to help improve water quality within the District and the surrounding area[124].

*Sustainable Drainage Systems*

3.10 Maldon District Council will ensure that new developments will incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) (where necessary), in accordance with the policies of the Local Development Plan.

*Multi-functional Flood Defence*

3.11 Proposals for new flood defence works will be supported where they consider all opportunities to provide multi-functional benefits to the community. The partners are developing an Action Plan for the investment in flood mitigation and management measures across the District. Planning applications for flood defences must be supported by evidence setting out how the scheme:

- safeguards and enhances biodiversity;
- provides for public access;
- conserves and enhances understanding of cultural heritage;
- safeguards or improves the character and quality of the landscape.

3.12 Unless robust evidence is provided to demonstrate that the above benefits cannot be delivered as part of a flood defence scheme, proposals will be refused.

### Principle 3: Conserving and Strengthening Links with our Landscape

3.13 The landscape of Maldon District features a range of different characteristics, including rolling agricultural land, river corridors, wide estuaries and an expansive coastline. The land form has significantly influenced the development of Maldon District in the past and will continue to do so in future. The natural landscape within and surrounding the District attracts people to live, work and visit the area. It is important to recognise this landscape quality and preserve it, and to

[124] In April 2018 'Farming Rules for Water' were introduced to help farmers and landowners reduce the risk of pollution to protect water quality. Further information is available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rules-for-farmers-and-land-managers-to-prevent-water-pollution

strengthen the links between development and landscape characteristics, to enable an appreciation of this natural resource of Maldon.

*Assessing and Safeguarding Landscape Character and Quality*

3.14 Maldon District's landscape character is important to the District's identity, yet applications for planning permission and other land-use related projects have the potential to affect landscape character and quality. Green infrastructure can help mitigate adverse landscape impacts and its design and integration into a development should be guided by the local landscape assessment to ensure that the proposed developments reflect and enhance the local character of the site and setting.

**Principle 4: Conserving and Connecting to our Cultural Heritage**

3.15 Significant cultural heritage exists within Maldon. These have helped to shape towns, villages and other settlements, and characterise the landscapes of the District. They also allow interpretation of the past activities that occurred in the District.

*Conserving and Enhancing Cultural Heritage*

3.16 Applications for planning permission and other land-use related projects which have the potential to affect cultural heritage within the District will be designed to mitigate adverse impacts and provide enhancements wherever possible, in accordance with the requirements of international legislation, UK policy and planning guidance and the requirements of the Local Development Plan.

*Enhancing Interpretation and Understanding of Cultural Heritage Assets*

3.17 Important cultural heritage sites within the District will be safeguarded and enhanced through joint working with Historic England, Essex County Council, neighbouring local authorities, landowners, developers and other cultural organisations.

*Increasing Access to Cultural Heritage Assets*

3.18 Where cultural heritage assets cannot currently be accessed, opportunities to increase public access to and provide opportunities for education and interpretation will be reviewed and undertaken.

**Principle 5: Improving Access, Fitness and Contact with Nature**

3.19 The natural environment and man-made green spaces in Maldon District offer significant opportunities for leisure, recreation and fitness. Improving access to the natural environment and these man-made areas can help to improve physical and mental health, as well as increase enjoyment of the natural environment. New development, where ever possible, should be designed to promote physical activity, following the guidance in the Maldon District Design Guide. Deficiencies have been identified within the District which should be addressed. Where new off-road routes are proposed or PRoW are upgraded, the resulting scheme should be, wherever possible, multi-user by default and suitable for a range of user groups. The District benefits from excellent natural assets, including access to the water environment, and this resource is enjoyed by many residents and visitors already. It would be appropriate to build upon the existing benefits, and provide new resources where deficiencies have been identified. However, this must address the potential for conflict posed by access to sensitive coastal habitats and impacts on internationally designated wildlife sites. The Playing Pitch Strategy is expected to be reviewed (target date 2021) ahead of the Local Development Plan review. The outcomes of this will inform the LDP review.

*Increasing Play Provision*

3.20 As set out in Table 2.1 of the Promoting Healthy Living theme in this GI Strategy, there is a deficiency in areas for play in some parts of the District. A review of NEAPs and LEAPs for all parishes in the District will be carried out as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy review (target date 2021).

3.21 New developments shall assess the local provision of NEAPs and LEAPs and will be required to provide these within their development unless it can be demonstrated that this is not appropriate due to the scale or design of the development, or likely impacts in relation to biodiversity, cultural heritage, landscape or flood risk.[125]

3.22 Where these play areas cannot be provided on site, financial contributions will be expected.

*Enhancing Cycle Infrastructure*

3.23 New developments adjacent to existing cycle routes will be expected to provide attractive connections into these and provide high quality cycle routes within them. New developments which are not adjacent to cycle routes are still expected to include direct and attractive cycle routes within them, to facilitate expansion of the cycle network in future.

3.24 The existing cycle network shall be assessed and where deficiencies are identified, developer contributions and other funding sources will be utilised to address these.

3.25 Key assets such as National and Regional Cycle Routes, Protected Lanes, The Blackwater Rail Trail, Promenade Park and Riverside Park, will be connected and enhanced to meet the needs of residents and visitors for the long term.

*Increasing Water Based Activity Levels*

3.26 Opportunities to facilitate enjoyment of the water environment within and surrounding the District will be identified. This could include taking steps to improve water quality and improving health and safety at access points. However, particularly in coastal locations, such measures will fully consider ecological sensitivities, with a partnership approach taken to ensure impacts are avoided or mitigated in accordance with Recreational Disturbance and Avoidance Measures (RAMS).

3.27 New developments with the potential to enhance access to the water environment will be required to do so unless it can be demonstrated that this is not appropriate due to the scale or design of the development, or likely impacts in relation to biodiversity, cultural heritage, landscape or flood risk.

### Principle 6: Increasing Local Food Supply

3.28 Food security is becoming an issue of increasing concern across the country. Between 2007-2013 food prices rose by 12.6% above inflation in the UK. A supply of fresh locally produced food is central to the aims of sustainable development and has a host of economic, social and environmental benefits.

3.29 Studies have shown the strong physical and mental benefits of working outside, particularly on allotments or small holdings. Growing food locally can also help to develop a sense of community.

3.30 A deficiency of allotments has been identified within the District, which should be addressed.

*Allotment Provision*

3.31 New developments will be required to include allotments within their sites in accordance with the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners standards which recommends 20 standard (300 sq. yard) plots per 1,000 households, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not appropriate due to the scale or design of the development, or likely impacts in relation to biodiversity, cultural heritage, landscape or flood risk.

3.32 New and improved allotments are being created in the South Maldon and North Heybridge Garden Suburbs and in Burnham on Crouch.

[125] Any developer contributions will need to meet the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (or any successor regulations).

### Principle 7: Enhancing the Green Economy

3.33 The natural environment can provide significant benefits to the local economy, for example by attracting visitors to the District, and by increasing people's enjoyment of their local area. The natural environment of Maldon should be enhanced in order to help promote the economy of the District. It has also been shown that properties near green spaces attract higher values compared to those further away.

*Promoting Maldon's High Quality Natural Environment*

3.34 Maldon offers a stunning natural environment which attracts people to live, work and visit the District. Opportunities to promote the District as an area of natural beauty and interest should be made the most of.

*Opportunities for Urban Greening*

3.35 Opportunities for 'urban greening' of the towns in the District will be considered. New public realm schemes will include elements of new planting to improve the appearance of the public realm whilst providing potential enhancements for biodiversity, appreciation of cultural heritage, sustainable drainage and greater resilience to flood risk.

## Green Infrastructure Policies

3.36 **Appendix 4** provides an analysis of national and local policies in relation to green infrastructure. The production of this GI Strategy demonstrates that the District adheres to national policy and guidance, whilst reflecting established policies.

3.37 On a local level, the approved Maldon Local Development Plan contains a number of polices that refer to green infrastructure. The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure section of the Plan seeks to protect and enhance the quality of the District's biodiversity, landscape, coastline and estuaries.

### Green Infrastructure Strategies in neighbouring authorities

3.38 Colchester Borough, Braintree District, Chelmsford City Council and Rochford District are the four neighbouring authorities of Maldon District. Of these four authorities, only Chelmsford City Council has recently published a Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan (2018).

*Colchester Borough*

3.39 Colchester Borough published a Green Infrastructure Strategy in 2011 which covers the period until 2025. However, as this was written before the publication of the NPPF (2012), and the green infrastructure approached has since changed, it will not be reviewed here. Essex County Council is in the initial stages of producing an Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

*Chelmsford City*

3.40 The Chelmsford GI Strategic Plan 2018-2036[126] has taken a similar approach to this GI Strategy in using the multifunctional benefits of green infrastructure to identify the District's baseline. Twelve 'key messages' were identified that outline the importance of and opportunities for green infrastructure in the City. These key messages have informed six aspirations for the planning and management of green infrastructure in Chelmsford. Both the key messages and aspirations have informed three objectives for each green infrastructure function used in the baseline analysis.

3.41 Five Areas of intervention have been identified, with a spatial map presenting where these aspirations and objectives can be delivered. Further explanation is given as to where the opportunities and enhancements to the green infrastructure network should be delivered within each of the five areas of intervention.

[126] Amec Foster Wheeler (2018) Chelmsford GI Strategic Plan 2018-2036.

3.43 In relation to policy context, the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan outlines that the document should be integrated into development management policy and forward policies. It also highlights the strong relationship between the strategic and site specific policies to the role of Green Infrastructure in delivering sustainable growth across Chelmsford. Although the document recognises planning policy and delivery principles in relation to green infrastructure, it does not provide any policies within the Strategic Plan. Instead it provides the mechanisms that are needed for the delivery of the Strategic Plan, highlighting the importance of partnership working, designing green infrastructure, outlining green infrastructure related expectations of the delivery of development and monitoring its delivery.

3.44 In terms of the delivery of green infrastructure for each theme, the document sets out what is already being undertaken, what initiatives need to be delivered and what aspirational projects could occur. Funding sources are also identified.

3.45 This approach has been applied to Chelmsford City as the city clearly has defined areas that have similar deficiencies and opportunities for green infrastructure. However for Maldon, the baseline and stakeholder engagement revealed that 'gaps' in the network do not conform to specific areas within a settlement, parish, river corridors or landscape character areas within the District. As a result, nineteen green infrastructure projects have been identified.

### Recommended Policy Framework

3.46 As set out in the introduction to **Chapter 3**, the GI Strategy sets out the Vision that the GI Strategy seeks to deliver, as well as policy principles and a recommended policy framework for incorporation within future planning policy which will aim to facilitate delivery of the Vision.

3.47 Although this SPD cannot introduce Policy which is not in the parent LDP, the suggested policy set out below has been informed by the desk based study, stakeholder engagement and policy analysis in **Appendix 4**.

3.48 When the LDP is reviewed, depending on the scale and focus of the review, it is recommended that this suggested policy wording is considered for inclusion:

"*Development proposals should seek to protect and enhance the existing green infrastructure network as identified in the most recent Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy.*

*All developments will where necessary:*

- *Protect and enhance designated sites (international, national, regional and local) and Wildlife Corridors and Ecological Networks.*
- *Reflect the character of the landscape as identified in the District Council's Landscape Character Assessments.*
- *Contribute to the Green Infrastructure Projects identified in the most recent Maldon District Green Infrastructure Strategy.*
- *Provide key linkages such as walking routes, cycling routes and bridleways, which will be well designed and constructed to allow year round safe usage by all, linking new developments to local services, schools, transport hubs, settlements and the coastline.*

*The use of land and buildings as new allotments, orchards, community gardens and for local food growing spaces and production will be supported, including the temporary use of vacant or derelict land or buildings and the use of informal open space, where this does not conflict with other policy objectives.*"

## Green Infrastructure Projects

3.49 The desk based analysis combined with stakeholder consultation discussed in **Chapter 2** of this GI Strategy has identified nineteen specific opportunities, in the form of GI projects, to enhance and connect Maldon District's green infrastructure network. Delivery of GI projects will ensure that improvements are made against all of the eight green infrastructure themes:

3.50 The 19 identified GI projects are set out in **Table 3.1** below, with full details provided in the separate report 'A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Maldon District: Projects'. The highlighted icons provide an overview of the potential contribution of each opportunity to the green infrastructure themes as identified in **Chapter 2**. Each GI project has been prioritised as either high, medium or low priority (the ordering of the GI projects within these categorises does not imply relative importance or significance of a project).

3.51 For ease of reference, detailed information regarding each project is provided in the separate document **A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Maldon District: Projects**. Within this GI Projects document, the indicative GI project costs have been identified and are bracketed as Low (less than £10,000); Medium (£10,000 – £50,000); and High (more than £50,000). At this stage, and until the GI projects are developed further, it is not possible to provide realistic estimates of the costs of the larger projects. It is recognised that some GI projects are likely to cost considerably in excess of £50,000 due to their scale. All GI projects will need to be subject to a full business case which will include a full cost estimate.

*Delivery and Monitoring*

3.52 All the projects will need to be progressed in partnership with other organisations and landowners. Delivery will also require funding. In the most cases, funding has not been identified. The Green Infrastructure Strategy, however, equips the Council and its key partners with an agenda for change which is ready to form the basis of future funding bids and applications.

3.53 As individual projects are further developed, there will be opportunities for stakeholder input and, where appropriate, further opportunities for public engagement.

3.54 A regime of monitoring and review should be established to ensure the action plan is kept up to date.

3.55 Progress on GI Projects should be reported regularly and corrective actions taken where necessary. Progress reports should be made publicly available so that stakeholders, local residents, businesses and the wider public have the opportunity to engage with and shape the different projects as they progress.

3.56 As each project is further developed, each will have a monitoring framework to ensure that each meets its intended outcomes.

3.57 The GI Strategy, as an SPD will be monitored through the authority monitoring report.

**Table 3.1: Green Infrastructure Opportunities in Maldon District**

| GI Theme / Project | Protecting and enhancing wildlife | Creating resilient water environments | Supporting local landscape character | Celebrating cultural heritage | Promoting healthy living | Nurturing communities | Sustaining productive landscapes | Supporting economic progress and tourism |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **High priority projects** | | | | | | | | |
| Community Greenspcaes | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Promenade Park | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Town Centre Greening | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Maldon's Hidden Landscapes | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | |
| Chelmer and Blackwater Access Project | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Railway Multi-Access Trail | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |

| GI Theme / Project | Protecting and enhancing wildlife | Creating resilient water environments | Supporting local landscape character | Celebrating cultural heritage | Promoting healthy living | Nurturing communities | Sustaining productive landscapes | Supporting economic progress and tourism |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Blackwater Greenway** | ● | ○ | ○ | ○ | ● | ● | ○ | ● |
| **Wildlife Friendly Farming** | ● | ● | ● | ○ | ○ | ○ | ● | ○ |
| **Medium priority projects** | | | | | | | | |
| **Connecting Woodlands** | ● | ● | ● | ○ | ● | ● | ○ | ○ |
| **The Wick** | ● | ○ | ○ | ○ | ● | ● | ○ | ○ |
| **Water Sports Awareness Programme** | ● | ● | ○ | ○ | ● | ○ | ○ | ● |
| **Southminster to Burnham-on-Crouch Greenway** | ● | ○ | ● | ● | ● | ● | ○ | ○ |
| **River Crouch Greenway** | ● | ○ | ○ | ○ | ● | ● | ○ | ● |

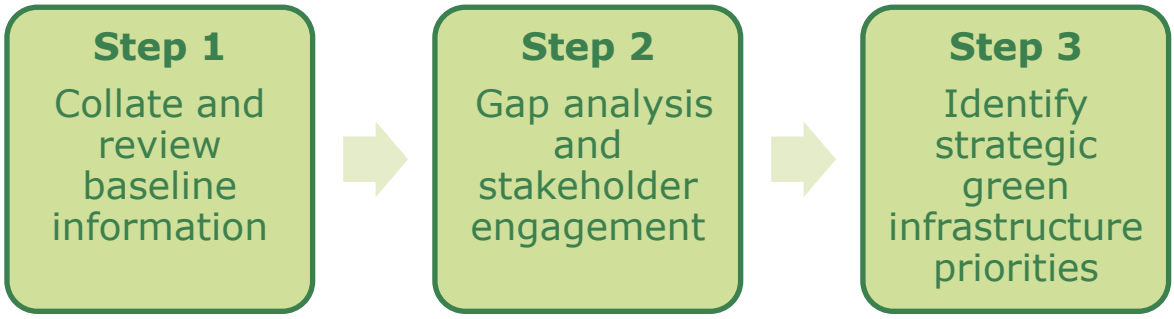
| GI Theme / Project | Protecting and enhancing wildlife | Creating resilient water environments | Supporting local landscape character | Celebrating cultural heritage | Promoting healthy living | Nurturing communities | Sustaining productive landscapes | Supporting economic progress and tourism |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Northey Island/ Battle of Maldon** | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| **Medium priority projects** | | | | | | | | |
| **'Get Active Maldon' – an interactive online map/ app** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| **Low priority projects** | | | | | | | | |
| **Country Park** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| **Quiet Lanes** | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| **Connections to Wallasea Island** | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| **St Peters and Bradwell Circular Walk** | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |

# Appendix 1
# Methodology

## Approach to the Strategy

A1.1 The overall aim of this Strategy is to develop a vision, opportunities map and action plan to guide future investment in Maldon's green infrastructure. In order to achieve this, **Chapter 2** summarises the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with the current green infrastructure network, and the functions it provides to the residents of Maldon and neighbouring local authorities. This in turn helps to prioritise opportunities for investment in, and enhancement of, green infrastructure alongside planned growth.

A1.2 The approach involved three broad steps, which are described briefly below.




### Step 1: Research baseline information

A1.3 This step involved the review of relevant policy and the collation of relevant datasets. The policy review included national policy, in addition to a range of relevant evidence base and guidance documents.

A1.4 Relevant datasets, in particular those mapped in GIS, were collated for the District itself, and where available, for neighbouring authorities and other authorities up to 10km from the District boundary. This provided the wider context and helped identify linkages and synergies.

A1.5 This mapped information was reviewed and, following initial consultation with Maldon District Council officers was grouped in to 'green infrastructure themes' which seemed to most accurately represent the key types of green infrastructure and opportunities within the District. This then shaped the subsequent description and analysis of green infrastructure (see below).

A1.6 The findings of this contextual research are presented in **Chapter 2** of this report.

### Step 2: Gap analysis and stakeholder engagement

A1.7 The second step of the study involved the review of relevant mapped information to reveal the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) associated with the green infrastructure network in Maldon District. This was initially a desk-based study, utilising the extensive mapped information and relevant studies available.

A1.8 Once the initial SWOT analysis was complete, a stakeholder workshop was held on 5th April 2018. The purpose of the workshop was to agree the key issues and opportunities in the District, and to gather stakeholder perspectives on:

- To 'ground truth' the baseline information, including the appropriateness of the green infrastructure themes.
- Identify challenges and threats to the green infrastructure in Maldon District, as well as opportunities and existing/ potential projects.
- To identify opportunities and priorities for funding/ investment in the District's green infrastructure.
- To provide input into the Vision for green infrastructure in Maldon District.

A1.9 Telephone conversations were held with stakeholders who were unable to attend the workshop.

### Step 3: Identify strategic green infrastructure priorities

A1.10 The findings from steps 1 and 2 informed the identification of strategic green infrastructure priorities. This step brought together the evidence base and consultation feedback, and focused in on the key green infrastructure priorities for the District. Green infrastructure priorities identified fit into two categories: either location-specific or District-wide. For each priority project, a short proforma was prepared, outlining the purpose, benefits, potential partners, approximate cost category and likely timescale of the project or initiative.

# Appendix 2
# Appraising Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace Sites: Guidance Note

## Background

A2.1 LUC were appointed by Maldon District Council (MDC) to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the District in 2018. Part of the scope of this study included that:

> *"Development of a set of robust criteria for appraising Natural and Semi-Natural greenspace sites should be undertaken to inform future policy, and the existing database of natural and semi-natural greenspace sites appraised against these criteria."*

A2.2 This is required to enable the Council to identify and appraise the value of areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace which fall outside of nature conservation designations (at the international, national and local level) so that any such sites can be identified as part of the local Green Infrastructure (GI) network in future reviews of the GI Strategy or the Local Development Plan (LDP) with a view to ensuring their conservation and possible enhancement. This would be in recognition of the value which such sites can deliver, providing habitat for wildlife in the wider countryside, contributing to people's enjoyment of the countryside (through their scenic value or accessibility), and providing ecological connectivity between designated sites.

A2.3 This paper therefore presents a proposed approach to the appraisal of such sites, informed by relevant guidance, suggesting certain criteria which may be used Maldon District Council.

## Approach

A2.4 In developing criteria and a process for the appraisal of natural and semi-natural greenspace, reference has been made to the following documents/ guidance:

- Maldon District Green Infrastructure Study September 2011, which identified natural and semi-natural greenspace sites initially
- 'Nature Nearby' Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance (Natural England 2010), and in particular Annex 2: A proxy measure when mapping naturalness[127]
- Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria (Essex Local Wildlife Sites Partnership, 2016[128])
- Local Sites: Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management (DEFRA, 2006)
- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (DCLG, 2002)

A2.5 Although PPG17 is no longer active, it includes a useful definition of natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces as an Open Space typology, with no further definitions since published, as follows:

> *'… woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits)'.*

[127] Natural England (2014) Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt). Available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605111422/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/east_of_england/ourwork/gi/accessiblenaturalgreenspacestandardangst.aspx

[128] Essex Local Wildlife Sites Partnership (2010) Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria. Available at: https://www.essex.gov.uk/Environment%20Planning/Environment/local-environment/Wildlife-and-Biodiversity/Documents/Essex_LoWS_Criteria_Jan_2010.pdf

A2.7 The availability of baseline data in a (Geographical Information Systems) GIS format has also been considered. For the purposes of this study, only publically accessible habitat data, comprising that provided by Natural England[129], has been made use of. The Essex Wildlife Trust Biological Records Centre does not appear hold any specific habitat data, other than designated sites, which would usefully inform this study[130].

A2.8 In light of the above, it is considered that the key attributes appropriate to consider when identifying natural and semi-natural greenspace sites initially would be as follows:

1. Located outside of existing nature conservation designations
2. Naturalness
3. Accessibility
4. Connectivity
5. Potential

A2.9 Additional attributes which may be considered, such as quality, condition, rarity etc., could be used to inform the 'Ground Truthing' process (see below) and may be useful for the future identification of locally designated wildlife sites (as outlined in the Essex Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria). Detailed site surveys require significant resources for the robust and meaningful assessment against criteria so is not recommended for this purpose. It is considered that such resources would be better placed reviewing existing or assessing potential additional Local Wildlife Sites.

A2.10 Below is a suggested process for the identification and appraisal of such sites, following the following key tasks:

Task 1: Identification of all potential natural and semi-natural greenspace.

Task 2: Appraise value.

Task 3: Ground trothing.

## Process for Appraising Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Sites

| Task | Criteria | Rationale | Datasets required |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Task 1: Identification of all potential natural and semi-natural greenspace** | | | |
| 1. Identify 'naturalness' | Sites identified as supporting the following habitat types:<br>Woodland<br>Grasslands (semi-natural/ meadow)<br>Coastal habitats<br>Heathlands, fens etc.<br>Traditional orchards<br>This excludes those sites primarily comprising highly 'managed' habitats, such as formal parks, agricultural land etc. | Although formal parks, agricultural land etc. can provide valuable areas of habitat (for example, hedgerow network), and can provide access to nature, the presence of such habitats often lie within a relatively small portion of wider managed land uses.<br>The sites identified as supporting these habitat types could be verified through consultation, to identify any areas not identified in the GIS data. Any such potential additional sites could then be visited confirm | Natural England ancient woodland inventory<br>Forestry Commission national forest inventory, the following categories:<br>• Assumed woodland<br>• Broadleaved<br>• Conifer<br>• Coppice<br>• Grassland<br>• Mixed mainly broadleaved<br>• Mixed mainly conifer<br>• Shrub<br>Natural England priority |

[129] Natural England (no date) Interactive Mapping at your fingertips. Available at: https://magic.defra.gov.uk/
[130] Essex Wildlife Trust Biological Records Centre (no date) Data Requests. Available at: http://www.essexwtrecords.org.uk/

| Task | Criteria | Rationale | Datasets required |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | suitability for inclusion. | habitats*<br>Woodland Grant schemes |
| 2. Exclude habitats within nature conservation designations | Located outside of existing nature conservation designations | Nature conservation designations are subject to specific protection through legislation and/ or planning policy, and provide a higher 'tier' of value above natural and semi-natural greenspace | Areas within the following to be excluded from the dataset:<br>Statutory nature conservation designations (SPA's, SAC's, Ramsar sites, SSSIs, NNR's, LNR's)<br>Local Wildlife Sites |
| * Natural England priority habitats comprise (publically available data set): | | Priority habitat<br>Main_Habit<br>Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh<br>Coastal saltmarsh<br>Coastal vegetated shingle<br>Deciduous woodland<br>Good quality semi-improved grassland<br>Lowland dry acid grassland<br>Lowland fens<br>Lowland heathland<br>Lowland meadows<br>Maritime cliff and slope<br>Mudflats<br>Purple moor grass and rush pastures<br>Reedbeds<br>Saline lagoons<br>Traditional orchard | |
| **Task 2: Appraise value** | | | |
| 3. Accessibility | Presence alongside a public footpath/ bridleway<br>Identified as Open Space, Common Land or other publically accessible land | Provides for access to nature, increasing its value in terms of provision of multi-functional space | MDC Open Space<br>Footpath/ bridleway/ Byway/ Restricted Byway<br>Natural England registered common land<br>National Trust open/ limited access land<br>Open Access Land (CROW) |
| 4. Ecological Connectivity | Adjacent to designated nature conservation sites<br>Located along a linear habitat network such as watercourse, railway line etc. | Natural and semi-natural greenspace which contributes towards ecological connectivity provides greater value for wildlife by supporting the movement of wildlife through the countryside | Statutory nature conservation designations (SPA's, SAC's, Ramsar sites, SSSIs, NNR's, LNR's)<br>Local Wildlife Sites |

| Task | Criteria | Rationale | Datasets required |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | and between higher value nature conservation sites. This is of particular importance given the impact of climate change.<br><br>If adjacent to designated sites, this can also contribute to a larger area of land being available for wildlife whilst providing a buffer from other land uses.<br><br>These principles are supported in the 'Making Space for Nature Report', which supports the creation of '*bigger, better and more joined up*' ecological networks[131]. | Rivers and canals<br><br>Railway lines<br><br>Rail trails |
| 5. Potential | Presence within or adjacent to likely areas of opportunity or change:<br><br>Within or adjacent to existing settlements or other infrastructure<br><br>Within or adjacent to potential development sites<br><br>Within areas of existing nature conservation strategies, existing or proposed green infrastructure network and projects<br><br>Within existing environmental stewardship programmes | Potential change or opportunity, such as new development, can present threats to such sites as well as opportunities in terms of funding and delivery mechanisms for the enhancement of such sites for wildlife and people. | LDP Site allocations<br><br>GI Projects Plan<br><br>Other existing strategies/ projects e.g. Turtle Dove Friendly Zone<br><br>Environmental Stewardship |
| **Task 3: Ground Truthing** | | | |
| 6. Site Visits | To confirm whether conditions identified using GIS data sets are present on the ground. | This may comprise verification of a random sample (for example 10%) to check accuracy of the GIS datasets and site identification/ appraisal; as well as site visits to any such sites queried through consultation. | Random sample<br><br>Consultation |

[131] Lawton, J.H., et al (2010) Making Space for Nature: a review of England's wildlife sites and ecological network. Report to Defra.

A2.11 Size is not recommended as one of the criteria for the selection of sites in its own right. Although larger areas of habitat are known to provide greater benefits for wildlife, it is considered that this is more appropriate for use at the site designation level, whilst small parcels of lower quality natural and semi-natural greenspace can provide valuable stepping stones for wildlife to move through the landscape (see above criteria). However, purely from a practical stand point an initial review of habitat parcels above 0.01ha (datasets as above) identified over 12,000 parcels of land. Therefore a threshold of 0.1ha is suggested for use.

A2.12 It is not considered that a formal scoring approach is appropriate but that this provides a tool for decision making in terms of potential to protect or enhance these sites given the value they provide for wildlife and people.

# Appendix 3
# Stakeholder Input

## Context

A3.1 On 5th April 2018; two workshops were held; the first morning workshop was attended by technical stakeholders and the second was an evening workshops attended by Maldon District Council's Members. The organisations who attended the stakeholder workshop are listed below (those that were unable to make the meeting were contacted via phone):

- Active Essex (phone conversation)
- Environment Agency
- Essex County Council
- Essex Gardens Trust
- Essex Highways
- Essex Waterways Limited
- Maldon District Council
- Natural England
- PLACE Services
- RSPB (attended meeting and follow up phone conversation)
- Sport England (phone conversation)
- The British Horse Society

A3.2 The wards that were represented by Members at the evening workshop are:

- Althorne
- Maldon West
- Mayland
- Tollesbury
- Tolleshunt D'Arcy
- Wickham Bishops and Woodham

## Vision

A3.3 To inform the Vision each attendee was asked to write three bullet points on what the green infrastructure in Maldon District means to them now or in the future.

### Vision feedback from the Maldon District Council Members' workshop

- Retaining the benefits of the District. Quiet roads, cycling routes, footpath, bridle/ horse trails; linking all areas of the District to protect wildlife and distinctive character of Maldon District
- Recognising the importance of water as recreational venue
- An integrated mosaic (greatest green infrastructure by area are Entry Level Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship schemes)
- Open spaces with more conservation opportunities
- Connectivity of Public rights of Way/ cycle trails
- Encourage private input to landscape
- People and places and species working together, respecting the value of the urban environment
- Increase chances for wildlife within and around a new housing development
- Promote heritage areas
- Promote/ enhance various walks (e.g. Burnham to Woodham)
- Accessible but with interpretation (Why am I here? What can I see and do? What will I tell my friends?)
- Coastline; Salt Marsh; Big Sky
- Like it as it is new hospital

- Connecting assets
- Protecting the obvious (coast, saltmarsh, wildlife and green space)
- Don't let private ownership stop cooperation
- Multi-functional; connected; respects character
- Comprehensive, joined-up trails and 'places' so all day(s) experiences can be had
- Greater protection and security for green places so they remain and are enhanced for our generation and the future ones
- Social inclusion and benefits (health and benefits of green spaces) for all through having accessibility
- Attract tourism; promote economic development; encourage conservation

### Vision feedback from the Technical stakeholders workshop

- Accessible, high-quality, sustainable
- Space for leisure; natural landscapes; providing for future generations – longevity
- Multifunctional networks; connectivity; ecosystem services
- Space to be outside (recreation); sustainable drainage; retain cultural heritage
- Joined up with other Districts/ Boroughs across Essex; joined up habitats for wildlife; natural greenspace garden suburb.
- High-quality open green spaces for people; safe havens for wildlife; a sense of community
- Greening the water
- Connectivity/ accessibility; make better use of the coast; promote attractions
- Active spaces; community space; interaction (internal and external)
- Accessibility for all users – pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians; improve connectivity of green infrastructure in the District
- Connectivity; diversity; legacy
- Inclusive; accessible across life-course; health promoting
- Nature; wellbeing; clean air
- Sustainable economic development; rural diversification; tourism diversification
- Recreation; connectivity; wildlife
- Market – Maldon District!
- Brand it! It's ours!
- Realise its potential!
- Give it a future!

## Workshop Break Out Group feedback

### Maldon District Council Members' workshop

**Promoting Healthy Living** and **Nurturing Communities**

- Transport links – localised (parts of the District) good links but many areas have deficient transport connections.
- The largest population of people are elderly and therefore the District is attractive to older people
- There is a need to promote areas into themes (e.g. cultural) and break down into smaller areas
- The Essex Cycling Action Plan includes a proposed flagship route in Maldon District.
- There are a number of issues when considering cycling off road:
    - The Rail trails are not marked on maps and they are not consistent
    - There needs to be circular routes (integrate parts of England Coast Path?)
    - Currently they are not suitable for families
- PRoW linkages and connectivity (including habitat promotion) and this will promote walking.
- There is 75 miles of coastal walk
- Parish councils can help deliver projects
- Mundon Parish Council has public access
- Householders claim that the old rail line is disconnected as landowners have purchased land along the linear route
- There is a need to connect Maldon with Danbury, particularly as the National Cycle Route is bizarre
- Due to the historic road patterns that are in use today, there is a conflict of interest between cycling and roads
- There are many footpaths in the Districts and there are isssues of promoting bridleways from footpaths (e.g. Southminster to Bradwell-on-Sea secondary road)
- There needs to be a permissive right to cycle on all the sea walls
- The old railway line needs to be used
- Platform at Langford (Friends of Flitway; Rail Trail)
- Maldon Town needs to be connected to the Dengie
- There are cycling clubs who meet on Sunday mornings in Dengie
- Cycling is dangerous on the roads, but there are not many 'safe' cycling roads off road
- Well used footpaths in villages need to be integrated into whole of District
- Tollesbury is cut off (Heritage Trail Café contains maps) and more walking and cycling connections are needed to connect this area
- Footpaths are an important connection between villages
- Quiet lane designations (i.e. roads used by few cars/ tractors) should be utilised for cycling routes
- The old A130 road (particularly ½ route upper Brettington) is a good example of cycle routes being integrated into the road network.

| **Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife** and **Creating Resilient Water Environments** |
|---|
| • Semi-natural and Natural Greenspace are important, not just Local Wildlife Sites<br>• Include Entry Level Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship layer onto wildlife mapping<br>• Farmer/Landowner engagement activity is required as:<br>  ○ These relationships need developing.<br>  ○ The District has little involvement outside of planning, landowners go to Wildlife Trust etc. for help and advice<br>• Living Landscapes mapping has a wildlife bias as it excludes areas that may have non-wildlife value<br>• Technical documents and design guides for developments need to include planting/ species preferred lists.<br>• Technical documents and design guides for developments need to include bird 'bricks', bat roof tiles, hedgehog doors in fence gravel boards.<br>• A District Level Biodiversity Action Plan is required<br>• Green infrastructure is not just about human beings!<br>• Identify species translocation sites/ opportunities<br>• Inclusion of Common Land on mapping<br>• Churchyards (closed), burial grounds, cemeteries are also forms of green infrastructure<br>• Green open spaces used for sport/ recreation, but these areas should include set aside areas on margins to be kept for wildlife<br>• Water:<br>  ○ Dredging in tidal waters<br>  ○ Marina creation/ enlargement to increase (sewage) capacity<br>  ○ Surface water management plan<br>  ○ Managed Retreats to be mapped<br>• Stow Maries Aerodrome – important wildlife side alongside heritage and tourism<br>• There are already a number of area/ Regional Species projects already in place:<br>  ○ Greater Thames Seal working group<br>  ○ Little Terns<br>  ○ Turtle Doves<br>• The District has a huge coastal area, but there are no District based marine species, so proactivity is required in the form of surveys<br>• Ferry links between Mersea Island and Bradwell-on-Sea; Burnham–on-Crouch and Wallasea Island would be beneficial<br>• If there is such a high coverage of Living Landscapes, there needs to be better relationships (and support) with Essex Wildlife Trust<br>• Is Brexit a threat or opportunity?<br>• Parish boundary badges |

| **Supporting Local Landscape Character** and **Celebrating Cultural Heritage** | |
|---|---|
| Opportunities | • Creeksea Place circular walk<br>• Fambridge walks (Crouch coastal communities)<br>• Bradwell/ St Peter's walks<br>• Heritage centre at St Lawrence<br>• Churches (Dengie Gateway rollout)<br>• Parish boundaries/ hedgerows<br>• Museum of Power, canal, Beeleigh Abbey for interpretation hubs<br>• Military Museum – ditto<br>• Landscape enhancement areas (*see mapping*)<br>• Talk to parishes about the local maps of walking routes (MDC promote on website?) and through strategy |
| Threats | • Access to heritage, i.e. public transport |

| **Workshop map annotations** | |
|---|---|
| Maps with no annotations:<br>• Landscape Character Areas (Maldon District's Landscape Character Area Assessment)<br>• Maldon Existing Cycle Infrastructure<br>• Potential Flagship Routes for Maldon District<br>• Key Cycling Desire Lines in Burnham on Crouch<br>• Key Cycling Desire Lines in Maldon<br>• Celebrating Cultural Heritage Nurturing Communities | |
| • Essex Living Landscapes | • Perhaps District only mapping of Living Landscapes |
| • Celebrating Cultural Heritage | • Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation is a hub<br>• Bradwell/ St Peters circular walk<br>• Fossil hunting<br>• Fambridge walks<br>• Circular walk potential (between Fambridge and Burnham-on-Crouch)<br>• Crouch Coastal Community Team – production of walks<br>• Creeksea Place – tourism hub |
| • Supporting Local Landscape Character | • Arcadian Wood<br>• Open farmland<br>• Undulating farmland<br>• Hedge rows<br>• Wide open marsh<br>• Steeply sloping with south views |
| • Sustaining Productive Landscapes | • Vineyards – lots missing |
| • Creating Resilient Water Environments | • (+) Surface water flooding<br>• (+) Managed retreat projects |
| • Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife | • Woodland |
| • Promoting Healthy Living | • Dodgy areas to walk (salt marsh) – *near Mersea Island*<br>• Old A130 – permissive rights for cycling |
| • Supporting Economic Progress and Tourism | *There are numerous places marked on this map, with the following legend:*<br>**T** Tourism (sites missing)<br>**ECP** Coastal Path<br>**I** Employment land<br>▬ Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation<br>**VY** Vineyards<br>**CP** Caravan Park |

## Technical stakeholders workshop

| **Supporting Local Landscape Character** and **Celebrating Cultural Heritage** |
|---|
| **STRENGTHS**<br>• Churches and churchyards could be used for Open Farm Sunday (leaf certification scheme)<br>• Promenade Park is strongly associated with Maldon town (links social and cultural) and it is freely accessed<br>• Battlefield is the oldest registered battlefield.<br>• Seascapes of estuaries<br>• Seasonality, skies, birds, skyline of Maldon, Purleigh Hilltop location<br>• Tranquil long isolated/ views/ Dengie field pattern |
| **WEAKNESSES**<br>• Access to coast; public transport legibility [suggested interpretation: the public transport network can be difficult to navigate in terms of accessing timetables and linking routes throughout the District]<br>• Little guidance or information about the landscape or cultural heritage vale in the District.<br>• Assets are not used to their full potential<br>• There needs to be recognition of ancient field networks on Dengie and Lowland Estuary landscape |

## **Supporting Local Landscape Character** and **Celebrating Cultural Heritage**

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- Improved wayfinding
- Legible routes with timings stated on signage
- Enhancing green infrastructure can contribute to better visual quality
- Veteran trees need to be mapped at a District scale
- Map historic hedgerows in Dengie
- Enhance key landscape character at a District wide scale and this could be undertaken using post-Brexit grants with landowners to deliver.
- Partners
  - Local groups, e.g. Wildlife Trust
  - Landowners
  - RSPB
  - Writtle (?)
  - Parish Councils
  - Amenity societies.
  - Ramblers
  - Essex County Council/ EWT (old railway trail)
  - Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation Trust
  - Essex County Council/ Sustrans cycle ways
- Boatyards; marina/maritime heritage should be recognised
- Beeleigh Abbey and Falls as a key asset within the District
- Use of canal for boat rides/ ticket trips which could be delivered by the Canal Trust
- LEADER funding should be used to encourage rural areas to diversify and for employment/ tourist related Rural Development Programme for England projects
- Crouch Coastal Communities Team/ North Fambridge
- There is a proposed cycle link along estuary on Rochford side and the same is required in Maldon. Once implemented, both these routes could be linked by a ferry crossing North Fambridge to Rochford
- Commercial opportunities to re-use neglected listed buildings
- Entry Level Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship for natural heritage/ landscape
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership is a possible source for cultural funding
- Bradwell B as visitor destination, linked to enhancements as part of development (Twin with Norwegian town which could act as a partner in relation to the Battle of Maldon)
- Heritage trails should be encouraged
- Communities could make use of historic churches by using these spaces as community shops/ post offices
- Link new cycle links to heritage destinations
- Limited public transport in the District, but there are opportunities to visit destinations outside District from Burnham-on-Crouch by train
- Link Burnham- on-Crouch and Southminster by off-road links
- Update evidence base for landscape and heritage
- Explore 'percent for art' programme or artist-led projects
- Landscape – scale enlargement programmes
- The District should celebrate artistic and literary connections such as Dickens and HG Wells
- St Peter's Way – promote further
- Operation Turtle Dove has these opportunities:
  - Landscape scale project (scrub, water, ponds etc.)
  - Cultivated areas with Arabic plants under stewardship (possibly post-Brexit)
  - Maldon good for Turtle Doves

## **Sustaining Productive Landscapes** and **Supporting Economic progress and tourism**

- Connectivity and access to the Coastline
    - Footpath only (even England Coast Path)
    - PRoW and linkages
- Public Transport links
- Lack of infrastructure for road traffic (limited parking, overuse, Road System)
- Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation
- Reuse of railway lines
- Marinas and coastal access
- Small industrial sites (those mapped are all Local Development Plan, do not show diversification)
- Bradwell B impacts
- There is a need to package the attractiveness of District for bigger employers
- Maps need to include:
    - Tourism attractions and neighbours
    - Touring and static caravan sites
    - Hotels
- Ferry links (Burnham-on-Crouch and Wallasea; Tollesbury and Bradwell)
- Need to make more of the Quality of our Coast and its use/ potential as a transport network or marine industry development.
- Develop different tourism market development examples include filming; adrenaline activities, golf courses and water sports.
- There is a physical restriction/ limitation of the River Blackwater for users and visitors due to silts and water depth. This has resulted in a change in use from historical port activities coupled with the increasing size of vessels.
- How will road network cope post-current Local Plan?
- The landscape map needs to include the District wide landscape character assessment.
- The Causeway development is attractive to businesses
- If [we] want to attract bigger employers, [we] need to emphasise the interplay of attractiveness of the District
- Tie in to country level/ neighbouring District strategies
    - Essex County Council GI development
    - Rights of Way Improvement Plan review
    - County cycle strategy (Rochford plans?)

## **Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife** and **Creating Resilient Water Environments**

**MAPS** ** = Priorities identified for this GI theme

- Stewardship schemes need to be added to the wildlife map
- Turtle Dove priority zones need to be added to the north and south of the District
- Land ownership needs to be added
- Surface water flood risk zones need to be included
- Catchment management projects need to be shown
- Protected/ notable species need to be mapped
- RSPB future scopes need to be mapped
- Plant life needs to be mapped.
- Beelines (Burnham-on-Crouch; shrill carder bee – bug life)

**Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife** and **Creating Resilient Water Environments**

**ISSUES and OPPORTUNITES**

- Definition of green infrastructure needs to be included so developers can't wriggle out
- Stakeholders (→ District management; → engagement, e.g. farmers)
- Embedding GI in new developments needs to work in parallel with design guide ** (focuses on build)
- There is an overlap with SuDs and Green infrastructure which presents conflict between public open space and SuDs
- Upstream/ water alteration/ flood alleviation from development
- Connecting woodlands – link with three planting and upstream flood alleviation **
- Access to coastal reserves/ wildlife (e.g. Northey Island hides) **
    - Manage conflict
    - Maximise coastal frontage
- Quarry restoration as outlined in the Essex County Council minerals SPD **
- Issue: long-term management/ maintenance (Garden Suburbs – in trust)
- Providing green infrastructure at settlement edges.
- Biodiversity Net Gain is an opportunity that should be considered by all developments.
- Some Essex Wildlife Trust reserves are without visitor centres, e.g. North Fambridge under potential ferry crossing with South Fambridge **
    - Also tie in with Rochford cycleway
    - Site near power station
- Beeleigh Falls could be a location for an Essex Waterways visitor centre, this could also be a heritage attraction **
- Heybridge Lakes are private, but there is owner ambition for fishing/ bird site
- Wallasea Island – potential ferry link from Burnham/ day trip potential, however viability could be an issue **
- Maldon-Chelmsford canal link which could enhance heritage links.
- Dog walking is an issue
- Stow Maries World War One Aerodrome is abundant with wildlife and there is an Essex Wildlife Trust site nearby
- Essex Wildlife Trust as key potential partner
- Canal-grown willows could be uses as a crop to encourage cricket bats
- Tollesbury – currently no visitor centre but access restrictions
- Natural and semi natural greenspace needs to be reinvestigated as there are constraints with landowners
- Potential in terms of agro-environmental funding (for access, but potential wildlife benefits)
- Broadening access to other user groups, e.g. cyclists, horse riders
- Dredging canals will improve access

**Promoting healthy living and nurturing communities** *(2 flip chart pages)*

**CURRENT BASELINE**

- Visitor enhancement at Beeleigh Falls would also offer links with the Blackwater Rail Trail and Elms Farm Park. It could also offer boat trips to the marina as a desitnation

- Access for all user groups in new development and links should be made to existing routes
- Old and new communities integration and connectivity
- Two community centres should be linked by paths, no steps
- Infrastructure 1st policy
  - I.e. Before other development is built – therefore people have positive behaviour
  - Issue with funding
  - Developer needs to understand
  - Deliverability - green infrastructure is an afterthought as there is a focus on granting planning permission
- no connected cycle route
- community transport scheme struggles – 'dead mileage' needs to break even
- In rural areas there is limited access to these settlements resulting in isolation, there is a need for integration and to identify the push and pull factors for residents in small communities
- Using natural assets for health and wellbeing
- Conflicts over provision and perceived conflicts (e.g. perception of horse rides)
- Sailing clubs
- Poor access to coast – one-way walks
- PRoW – mostly footpaths and illegal to cycle/ ride
- Physical exercise and obesity levels – flip around, e.g. ½ are inactive, but ½ are active
- Elderly people mixing with families and younger generations need to be promoted
- Need to add slipways to map to show where people access the blue infrastructure
- Car parks need to be added to map

**OPPORTUNITES**

- PRoW surfaces need to be upgraded so that they can be used all year round
- Outdoor green gyms – adult play spaces as well as children's
- Pay farmers for access around headlands - Brexit/ the future of farming consultation
- Right of Way Improvement Plan – circular walks/ running routes around each community
- Re-purposing of old railway links, but issues inlcude:
  - Landowner issue
  - Severance of Blackwater
- Upgrade surface of towpath from Heybridge Basin to Chelmsford, there are opportunities for joint partnership with Chelmsford and Basin Trail
- Make use of existing informal spaces – good signage – you can play here!
- Way-finding and distances (e.g. N Fambridge to Burnham – walk one way and then train back; there are a number of train station near sea wall). Sign posts need metal feet to prevent rotting
- Facilities attraction (toilets) – if any, e.g. None between Burnham-on-Crouch and Bradwell
- Schemes (e.g. planting) for poor air quality areas
- Safe off road routes for riding, cycling, walking and families
- Water sports including canoeing; kayaking; paddle boating could benefit from circular routes along the canal and rivers
- RAMS – developer contributions could fund green infrastructure projects
- Community gardens – grow veg – community involvement
- Nature parks – multifunctional: birds, SuDs, community, garden, community farm
- Daily recreational needs
- Wallasea Island (RSPB) → Cross Rail project – enough visitor numbers for provision of visitor

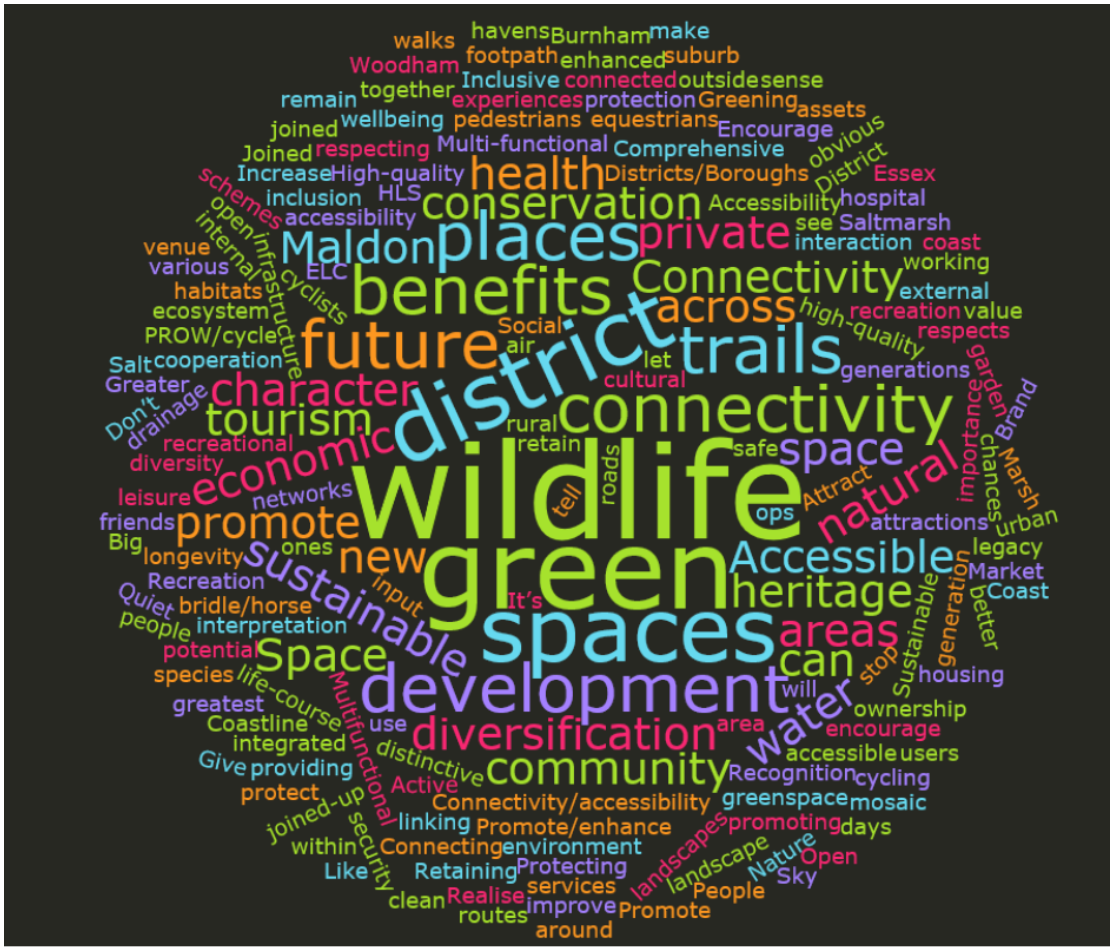
| **Promoting healthy living and nurturing communities** *(2 flip chart pages)* |
|---|
| infrastructure<br>- Ferry link from Burnham-on-Crouch, here there is guarantee of enough visitors; difficult to determine; help viability<br>• Country Park – take people away from sensitive sites |
| **THREATS**<br>• RAMS – may force people away from current sites; viability/ funding issues + ownership<br>• Small country lanes – soft verges out of urban area<br>• Country Park – already a number of these in Essex; would encourage traffic to Maldon<br>• Air Quality Management Areas is to be declared on Market Hill<br>• Smaller gardens and communal areas<br>• Poor locations of communal space<br>• Minimal space given for outside space<br>• No garden sheds<br>• Affordable housing – has poor outdoor provision and often located near a road<br>• No cycle provision<br>• Water sports – adverse inputs on habitats (e.g. jet ski) |

| **Workshop map annotations** | |
|---|---|
| Maps with no annotations:<br>• Sustaining Productive Landscapes | |
| Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife | • (Site allocations) → Housing and employment: different colours<br>• Add veteran trees and hedgerows<br>• (Traditional orchards) → fill in the colour coding rectangle<br>• (Local nature designation) → ~~LNR~~ |
| Creating Resilient Water Environments | • Surface Water Flood Zones (MDC have in GIS) |
| Supporting Economic Progress and Tourism | • Points to Map Legend:<br>- Camping and caravans<br>- Marinas and shipways<br>- Car parks<br>• Adventure fuelled activities<br>• Improve off road routes to encourage cycling commuting<br>• Ferry? (in three places)<br>• River Services?<br>• Pedestrian/ cycle routes; guided bus ways<br>• Link to North Fambridge Station in Maldon District |
| Promoting Healthy Living | *Blue pen notes:*<br>• CB Navigation → 14 miles to Chelmsford City<br>• CB Navigation → 3 miles to Braintree District (Witham) – guided bus way and cycle way?<br>• Could reinstate connection to North Fambridge Station partnership with Network Rail<br>*Red pen notes:*<br>• Ferry link<br>• Potential new cycle route Rochford District (development) |

| Workshop map annotations | |
|---|---|
| | • Ferry – commercial operator (no owner)<br>• Visitor centre (pontoon – MDC; pontoon – RSPB)<br><br>*Black pen notes:*<br><br>• Blackwater Rail Trail<br>• 14 miles from Heybridge to Chelmsford Basin (needs upgrading surface)<br>• Non-designated area with landowner issues<br>• Existing bridleway<br>• Potential Air Quality Improvement/ GI?<br>• Cycling – National Road Race inhibited by blocked road access (private farm road)<br>• Road access blocked (access to Seawall) |
| Celebrating Cultural Heritage | • (Site allocations) → Differentiate employment and housing<br>• (Conservation areas) → Add them all!<br>• (Historic Park and Garden) → Add local designation<br>• Add redundant railways and canal (non-desiganted) |
| Celebrating Cultural Heritage | • Are there areas of archaeological interest?<br>• (Site allocations) → Housing and employment split<br>• (Conservation areas) → Are there sub-areas?<br>• (Listed buildings) → Do we know which ones are open?<br>• (Grade I) → Name churches with associated open space<br>• Add names of key sites/ features<br>• Add canal<br>• Add both redundant rail lines<br>• Different background map<br>• Boatyards/ Hythe Quay/ Fullbridge etc./ Heybridge Basin/ Burnham marina → maybe show on tourism/economic development map |
| Supporting Local Landscape Character | • (Site allocations) → Housing and employment in different colour<br>• Need to have local character boundaries<br>• Add landscape features/ viewpoints? – or new map?<br>• Identify historic character areas |

**Figure 3.1: Words Stakeholders provided when asked to what green infrastructure means to them now or in the future.**

A3.4 Each stakeholder who attended the green infrastructure workshopswas asked to list three words or very brief phrases which summed up what green infrastructure means to them or what they would like Maldon District's green infrastructure to look like in the future. The word cloud in illustrates their views.



# Appendix 4
## Policy Review

A4.1 To inform the suggested policy that is to be recommended as part of this GI Strategy, national and local policies that refer to green infrastructure have been reviewed. This appendix is structured as follows:

- **Table A4.1** below sets out the national policy and guidance and analyses them in terms of the findings found in **Chapter 2** (desk based research and stakeholder consultation).
- Analysis on Essex County Council's emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- The main green infrastructure policy in Maldon's Local Development Plan (Policy N1: Green Infrastructure Network).
- **Table A4.2** analyses how green infrastructure is addressed in the local plans of neighbouring authorities.

A4.2 A summary of these findings are found in **Chapter 3** of the GI Strategy.

**Table A4.1: Analysis of national policy and guidance**

| Policy document | Page/ policy reference | Content relevant to the GI Strategy | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| National Planning Policy Framework | February 2019<br><br>Paragraphs 20, 91, 92, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 171 and 181<br><br>Duty to cooperate: Paragraphs 24, 25, 26 and 27 | Paragraph 20 of the NPPF highlights that '*Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for…conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure.'*<br><br>Paragraph 91 highlights that '*Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which … enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure.'*<br><br>Paragraph 92 states that '*To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should … plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.'*<br><br>Paragraph 96 essentially provides the rationale for the strategy, what the strategy should comprise of and how it feeds into the strategic allocations of new green infrastructure as well as managing existing green infrastructure. It states that:<br><br>*'Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.'*<br><br>Paragraph 97 sets out the only circumstances in which an open space, sports and recreational building and land (including playing fields) can be developed for different uses. It clarifies that existing open space should not be built on unless:<br><br>*an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*<br><br>*the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*<br><br>*the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.*<br><br>Paragraphs 99, 100 and 101 describes the Local Green Space designation requirements and what level of protection should be afforded to this type of designation. This could inform the audit and perhaps be used to help designate new Local Green Spaces.<br><br>Paragraph 171 explains how Green Infrastructure should be addressed in Local | The revised and updated NPPF requires green infrastructure to be considered strategically in local plans as its multifunctional benefits can enhance the social, environmental and economic sectors of local communities.<br><br>In order to effectively inform planning decisions, the strategic provision of green infrastructure is to be based on recent assessments.<br><br>The Maldon Local Development Plan does contain a number of policies that refer to green infrastructure and in particular Policy N1: Green Infrastructure Network completes to this national guidance as criterion 3 requires all development to "*Seek to meet local standards and address any deficiencies as identified in the Maldon District*".<br><br>Given that it is a national and therefore high level document, it does not emphasise the importance of green infrastructure in contributing to and enhancing the local qualities of a District or local area. Furthermore it fails to identify the significant importance of connectivity in relation to GI; which was a key deficiency in the network particularly in relation to biodiversity and promoting |

| Policy document | Page/ policy reference | Content relevant to the GI Strategy | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Plans through a strategic approach and this in turn could inform this strategy in terms of how it can best provide evidence for the Local Plan.<br><br>Paragraph 181 states that opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts relating to air quality should be identified within plans, such as through '*green infrastructure provision and enhancement'*.<br><br>The 'duty to cooperate' is a legal requirement of the plan preparation process and is set out in Section 110 of the Localism Act. It is also outlined in the NPPF. Paragraph 20 sets out the strategic issues where co-operation might be appropriate. This includes conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment inclusive of green infrastructure. Paragraphs 24-27 provides further guidance on '*effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities*'. The duty to cooperate recognises linkages between neighbouring authorities and that development requirements and infrastructure provision cannot always be wholly met by one single authority. | healthy living. |
| Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space<br><br>Planning Practice Guidance | Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space | The guidance of the PPG highlights that open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space. It outlines that open space includes formal sports pitches, open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks and they offer benefits to landscape, townscape, healthy living and biodiversity. It is also stated that authorities and developers may refer to Sport England's guidance on how to assess the need for sports and recreation facilities when considering the assessment of such need. Local planning authorities are required to consult Sport England in certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields.<br><br>The PPG also highlights in importance of the Public Right of Way network, particularly in relation to promoting active modes of transport and they should therefore be protected and enhanced. | Although this GI Strategy is not an open space audit, elements of the green infrastructure network includes open space.<br><br>Sport England were stakeholders in this GI Strategy and approved a number of projects relating to enhancing open spaces and encouraging local communities to lead active lifestyles. For these aspirations to be achieved the policy needs to ensure that open spaces and public rights of way are connected so people can access them by sustainable modes of transport. This will need to be carefully considered as the majority of the pubic rights of Way network in the District is footpaths and therefore cycling is not permitted. The policy needs to take into account the some of the strategic allocations include an existing footpath within the |

| Policy document | Page/ policy reference | Content relevant to the GI Strategy | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | site boundary. |
| Natural Environment<br><br>Planning Practice Guidance | Green Infrastructure | The green infrastructure PPG calls for green infrastructure to be a key consideration in Local Plans and in relevant planning decisions. From a strategic perspective, Local Authorities are encouraged to plan positively for green infrastructure by preparing an authority wide (including crossing administrative borders) green infrastructure framework or strategy comprising of an audit of current green infrastructure that also identifies gaps and areas of where green infrastructure can be improved. This will in turn contribute to neighbourhood plans, infrastructure delivery plans and CIL schedules. Whereas Local Plans are to locate existing and proposed green infrastructure networks, SPDs can define the planning, design and management components of the GI Strategy.<br><br>The PPG supports the strategic planning and provision of green infrastructure and details how it supports the delivery of other planning policies:<br>• Building a strong, competitive economy;<br>• Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes;<br>• Requiring good design;<br>• Promoting healthy communities;<br>• Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; and,<br>• Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.<br><br>The green infrastructure PPG also promotes green infrastructure being well designed considered early on the development phase which includes considering its maintenance over a long term period. | Planning positively and with a long term vision for green infrastructure should be included in the policy that is to be delivered as part of this GI Strategy as well as considering the green infrastructure network beyond the Maldon District Boundary.<br><br>As well as the strategic approach to delivering a green infrastructure network, the policy takes into account the importance of green infrastructure in contributing to enhancing local qualities. This is particularly key to Maldon District as the local landscape character assessment is out dated and the design of some new developments have not reflected the landscape and setting of a local area thereby adversely affecting its character. |

### Green Essex Strategy

A4.3 The Vision of the emerging Green Essex Strategy is:

*'We will protect and grow a high quality connected Green Infrastructure network which extends from our City and town centres to the countryside and coast which is designed for people and wildlife whilst being self-sustaining.'*

A4.4 The emerging objectives are:

- Place: Protect existing green infrastructure, especially the most valuable.
- Place: Improve existing green infrastructure so it is better functioning.
- Place: Create more high-quality green infrastructure, especially in areas of deficiency.
- Place: Connectivity improvements connecting green infrastructure, people and wildlife.
- People: Increase use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all social groups and abilities.
- People: Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing.
- Economy: Secure funding for new and existing green infrastructure to ensure their sustainability.

A4.5 Overall the vision and objectives of the emerging Essex Strategy aligns with that of the Maldon GI Strategy. The emerging GES takes into consideration priorities coming out of the 25 Year Environment Plan, and other local and national policies and Green Infrastructure Strategies. The GES is planned to be published for consultation in Spring 2019.

#### *Essex Design Guide*

A4.6 The Essex Design Guide[132] is the UK's first interactive web-based design tool, embedding these ten active design principles and has been produced collaboratively with the Essex Planning Officers' Association. Within its 'Landscape and Greenspaces' section, the guide specifically refers to green infrastructure stating that it should be used to offset the built environment as well as 'shape and structure developments, while good landscape design should provide wayfinding cues and sensory stimulation – features which can provide valuable reassurance to older people and those with dementia'. The section concludes with a series of targeted questions of how a future development provides or enhances green infrastructure to meet the physical and mental health needs of future residents of all ages and abilities and does it contribute to a multifunctional biodiversity network.

A4.7 The revised Essex Design Guide (2018), has been widened in scope to cover topics including Highways Technical Manual; Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); Garden Communities; Local Authority Profiles; and new themes regarding ageing populations, digital and smart technology, active design and health and wellbeing. The revised Essex Design Guide (2018) is not endorsed by MDC. However, reference should be made to the EDG where Essex County Council is the lead authority including Flood Risk, SuDs and Highways. Reference should be made to the EDG Home Page 'Essex Local Authorities' that lists all relevant policy documents and sets out key policy requirement for each Local Authority Area. The EDG should be referenced in relation to locally adopted design guidance, key policy and supporting documents.

### Analysing Maldon Local Development Plan Policy N1: Green Infrastructure Network

A4.8 This SPD will not introduce a new policy, however it will inform the review of the LDP. If the review of the LDP considers it appropriate to include an additional green infrastructure policy, this policy will need to complement Policy N1 in the LDP. For this to take place, a review of Policy N1 has been undertaken.

A4.9 The opening paragraph of the policy sets out the aims of Policy N1 and states that areas of significant biodiversity will be protected. The second paragraph complements this by stating there will be a presumption against any development which may lead to the loss, degradation, fragmentation and/ or isolation of existing or proposed green infrastructure. This paragraph also promotes the enhancement and interconnection of the green infrastructure network. Although none

[132] Essex County Council (2019) The Essex Design Guide. Available at: https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/overarching-themes/active-design-principles/

of the eight GI themes within **Chapter 2** of this GI strategy are specifically stated here, they are all components of green infrastructure.

A4.10 Policy N1: Green Infrastructure Network provides four criteria of what green infrastructure developments should include. The policy focuses on delivering green infrastructure and ensuring its maintenance is viable and covered for the lifetime of new developments. The policy also promotes the integration of new green infrastructure with existing provision which is important when considering the network as a whole.

A4.11 This is key in relation to the findings of the GI Strategy, as many of the findings for each of the eight green infrastructure themes found there was a lack of a strategic and District wide approach to green infrastructure. For example, woodlands were identified as 'islands' and it was also reported that there was an absence of a coastline management plan. Also from a health and wellbeing perspective there is a lack of connectivity in the green infrastructure network resulting in private vehicles being used by a large proportion of commuters and for the school run.

A4.12 However, when applying the policy, decision makers need to carefully consider the implications of making more places with biodiversity assets accessible as there is great risk of recreational pressure that can damage these assets.

A4.13 Similarly, application of the proposed policy needs to consider the local impact of a development on the natural environment and how green infrastructure can mitigate any adverse impacts. For example when considering planning applications, the local landscape assessment should be referred to and SuDs should be considered as a function within green infrastructure rather than as a separate entity.

### Green Infrastructure in Neighbouring Authorities Local Plans

A4.14 The analysis of how green infrastructure is addressed in Maldon's four neighbouring authorities are shown in **Table A4.2** below:

**Table A4.2: Green infrastructure in the Local Plans of Maldon District's neighbouring authorities**

| **Chelmsford City** | **Rochford District** | **North Essex Authorities**[134] | **Braintree District** (a North Essex Authority) | **Colchester Borough** (a North Essex Authority) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pre-Submission Local Plan (June 2018)**<br><br>Green infrastructure features within the specific growth site allocation policies in two of the Strategic Priorities (Strategic Priority 7 – Protecting and enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment, the Green Belt and valued landscapes and Strategic Priority 8 – Creating Well Designed and Attractive Places, and Promoting Healthy Communities), and five strategic policies[135], in addition to the Natural Environment policies:<br><br>• **Strategic Policy S1 – Spatial Principles** Protects and enhances the character of valued landscapes, heritage and biodiversity.<br><br>• **Strategic Policy S13 – The Role of The Countryside** recognises the role the countryside plays as part of the green infrastructure network, and providing connectivity | Rochford District Council is at the initial stage of producing their local plan; the Preferred Options Document public consultation document is expected in the late autumn of 2018.<br><br>The adopted Core Strategy (2011) only mentions green infrastructure once in relation to using landscaping to help mitigate increasing access in the Upper Roach Valley.<br><br>Similarly, the Council's adopted Development Management Plan (2014) only refers to green infrastructure once in **Policy DM25 – Trees and Woodlands** where it is promoted in projects that create new woodland. | **Publication Draft Local Plan Section 1 (June 2017).**<br><br>For these North Essex authorities, their Local Plan is set out over two separate documents: Section one is focused at strategic regional level (North Essex) and each authority is producing their own Section 2. Both documents together are considered to be the Local Plan for each of the North Essex Authorities.<br><br>Green infrastructure is referred to in five policies of **Section one** of the Local Plan:<br><br>• **Policy SP6 - Place Shaping Principles** promotes good design and calls for an integrated network of green and blue infrastructure that includes accessible public open space that connects with the existing green infrastructure network.<br><br>• **Policy SP7 -** | **Section two** of Braintree District's Local Plan (June 2017) refers to green infrastructure in three policies:<br><br>• The final paragraph in **Policy LPP44 Sustainable Transport** requires new developments to provide improved walking, cycling or horse riding routes which improve connectivity within the proposed site, between settlements and to the countryside. This encompasses the social benefits that green infrastructure can provide.<br><br>• **Policy LPP67 - Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure** expects new developments to contribute to address deficiencies and enhance the green infrastructure network which are to be proportionate to the scale of the development. This policy addresses the environmental benefits of | The Publication Draft stage of the Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017 – 2033 **Section two** (June 2017) refers to green infrastructure in three policies:<br><br>• **Policy ENV3 - Green Infrastructure** sets out the strategic role of green infrastructure through its importance of linking the settlements, river corridors, rural hinterland and open spaces with the Borough. It also notes the importance of radial green infrastructure connections and how they link future developments with the existing network. The policy will not permit development that has adverse effects of the existing green infrastructure network, unless suitable mitigation is provided. The policy makes reference to creating new 'paths' where gaps have been identifies, although it is unclear as to whether this |

[134] Braintree District Council, Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council

[135] Strategic Policy S3 – Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk; Strategic Policy S6 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment; and, Strategic Policy S11 – Infrastructure Requirements

| Chelmsford City | Rochford District | North Essex Authorities[134] | Braintree District (a North Essex Authority) | Colchester Borough (a North Essex Authority) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| between the countryside and the urban area<br>• **Strategic Policy S3 – Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk** supports Chelmsford to mitigate and adapt to climate change, although the reference to green infrastructure is in the context of city greening and habitat creation with no explanation of how this relates to climate change or flooding.<br>• **Strategic Policy S6 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment** sets out the role green infrastructure provides in the physical environment and promotes the enhancement of biodiversity, amenity and water quality arising from new developments.<br>• **Strategic Policy S11 – Infrastructure Requirements** supports the multifunctional benefits of in terms of recreational, ecological and amenity.<br>The Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan places emphasis on the Local Plan. Green Infrastructure features throughout the Local Plan. For example, Green Wedges and Green Corridors have a prominent position in | | **Development and Delivery of New Garden Communities in North Essex** requires green infrastructure to be included in the cross boundary garden communities. Green infrastructure provision is to include a new country parks, connectivity to existing corridors and networks and enhance biodiversity.<br>• **Policies SP8 - Tendring/ Colchester Borders Garden Community; SP9 - Colchester/ Braintree Boarders Garden Community and SP10 - West of Braintree Garden Community** all contain the paragraph "*A network of multi-functional green infrastructure will be provided within the garden community. It will include community parks, allotments, the provision of sports areas with associated facilities and play facilities*".<br>There is no specific policy for green infrastructure green infrastructure policy and there is no mention of landscape character, however policy SP6 for example sets this requirement through enhancing the public realm. | green infrastructure, which aligns with 'natural environment' element of the policy.<br>• **Policy LPP71 - Landscape Character and Features** sets out the role of green infrastructure link urban areas to the countryside, and creating and enhancing the biodiversity value of wildlife corridors. This policy also refers to the District's Landscape Character Assessments, which the policy for this GI policy should also refer to.<br>Although Section 2 of Braintree's Local Plan contains a policy that is aimed at protecting and enhancing green infrastructure, this policy does not cover the social or economic elements green infrastructure. However, other policies that refer to green infrastructure do pick up a number of other elements such as landscape and active transport, but there is no mention of cultural heritage assets, or the water environment in the context of green infrastructure. | is referring to footpaths. The promotion of the innovative use of land and derelict buildings in providing new allotments, orchards, community gardens and for local food growing space is also supported in this policy. In addition, this policy refers to a number of documents that contribute to the delivery of green infrastructure, including the projects identified in the Colchester GI Strategy (2011).<br>• **Policy CC1 - Climate Change** notes the importance of green infrastructure in relation to providing shade, flood mitigation, habitat creation and species migration. The policy also states the importance of green infrastructure and productive landscapes.<br>• **Policies NC1 - North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area; EC1 - Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area; EC2 - East Colchester/ Hythe Special Policy Area; and WC2 – Stanway** are polices within the in the 'Place Policies' section and set out broad green infrastructure |

| Chelmsford City | Rochford District | North Essex Authorities[134] | Braintree District (a North Essex Authority) | Colchester Borough (a North Essex Authority) |
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| the Local Plan, and Green Infrastructure is a key element within the strategic growth areas. | | | | requirements that are tailored to each of these allocations.<br>• **Policy DM4 - Sports Provision** states that development on existing or proposed sports ground or playing field will not be supported if it results in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green infrastructure network.<br>• **Policy DM17 - Retention of Open Space and Recreation Facilities** states that any areas of open space that add amenity value to existing residential neighbourhoods or green infrastructure elements such as registered common or heathland cannot be lost to new development. Similarly to DM4, policy DM17 states that development on existing or proposed public or private open space, including allotments will not be supported if it results in the loss of an area important for its amenity or contribution to the green infrastructure network. |

| Chelmsford City | Rochford District | North Essex Authorities[134] | Braintree District (a North Essex Authority) | Colchester Borough (a North Essex Authority) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | • **Policy DM20 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Changing Travel Behaviour** states that new developments will need to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of green infrastructure in the context of walking and cycling routes.<br><br>The green infrastructure policy should reflect elements of Policy ENV3, as it refers to green infrastructure projects in the related GI Strategy. The policy also promotes the use of derelict land in delivering green infrastructure. This should be included in the policy for this GI strategy as there are a number of derelict buildings in Maldon District. |