



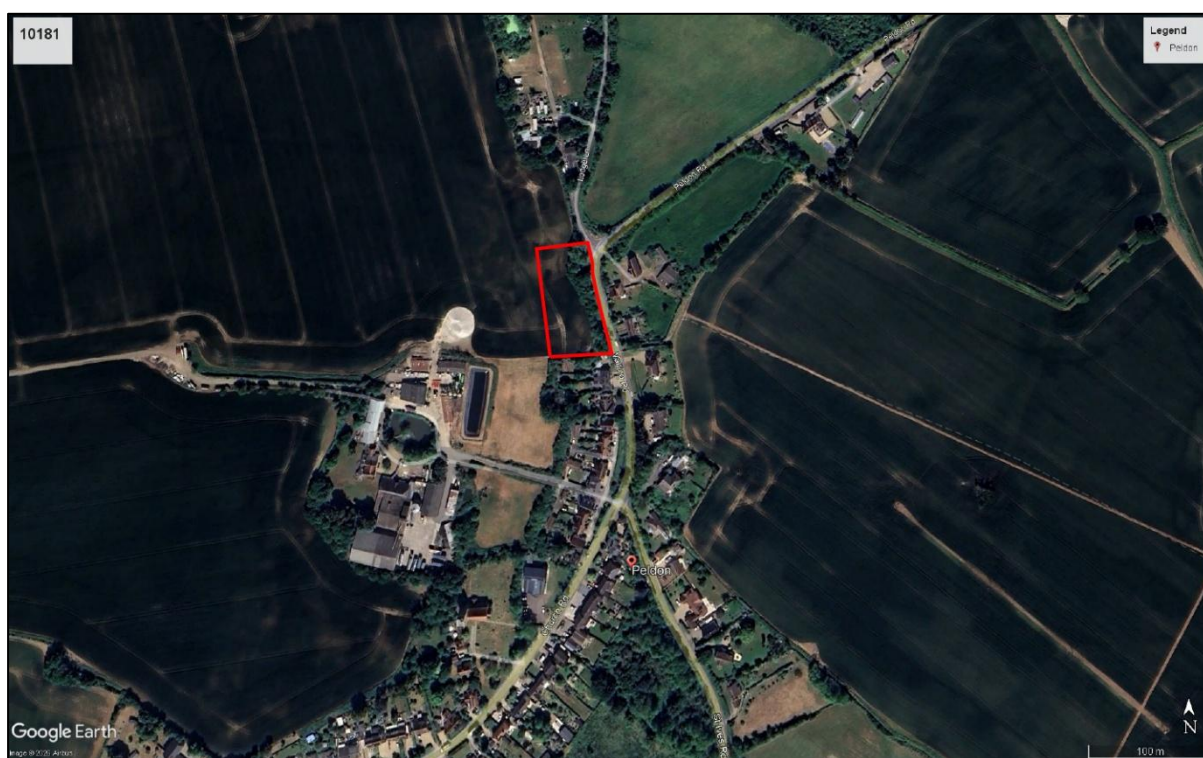
STANFORDS

ESTABLISHED 1879

Land west of Malting Road, Peldon

Regulation 18 Representation on behalf of Mr T Sawdon

Call for Sites Reference: 10181



Revision	Purpose	Originated	Date
A	Draft Representation	MRD	09.01.25
Job number: MRD/50961-003		 STANFORDS ESTABLISHED 1879	

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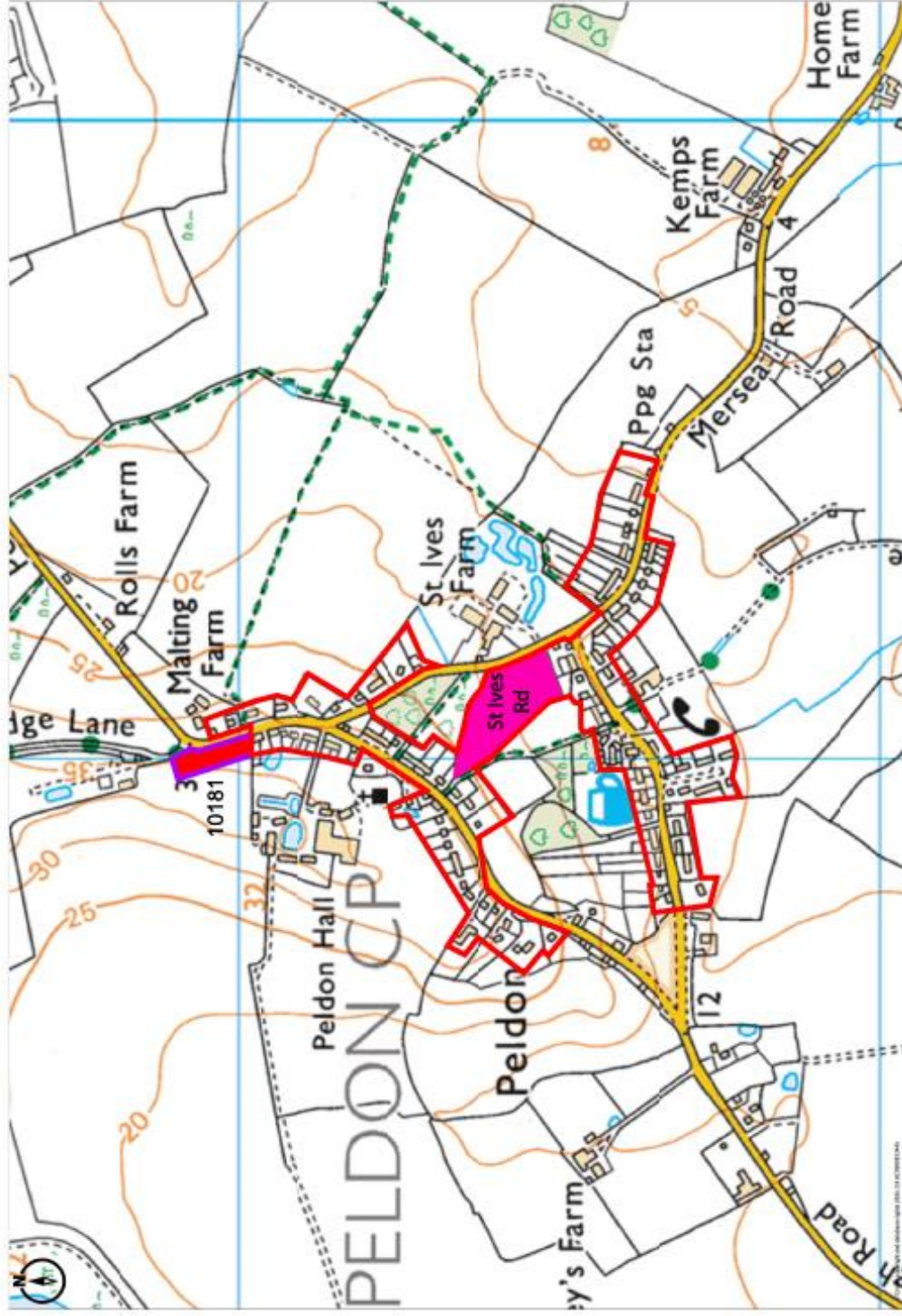
1.0 Summary and Purpose of Representation

1.1 This representation is submitted on behalf of the landowner for a site presented in the Call for Sites exercise in December 2023 allocated the reference 10181. Moving forward to Regulation 18 stage, this site was considered passed to Stage 2 but discounted on the basis that it is 'likely to harm biodiversity as site access is likely to require impact to a Priority habitat woodland strip along Malting Road.' This representation aims to provide an overarching detailed assessment of Site 10181 to support the Council's decision making toward Regulation 19 stage.

1.2 The purpose of this representation is to:

- Confirm the landowner's position as able to provide a deliverable site in the short-term to support the sustainable development of Peldon;
- Demonstrate how Site 10181 aligns with the draft Plan's objectives including high-quality design, extensions to existing settlements, protection from coalescence, BNG and active and sustainable travel;
- Compare and contrast Site 10181 versus the draft allocation Policy PP49 as the only planned growth of the settlement; and
- Recommend the strategic policies aims and objectives are appropriately reflected in the adopted settlement boundaries given the clear shift in approach to settlements over the next Plan period.

1.3 It is requested that with the evidence and assessment discussed within this representation that the Council considers Site 10181 as a natural extension to the settlement of Peldon and includes the site within the settlement boundary as relative growth for the settlement. This representation seeks to ensure that the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan provides a clear, proportionate and deliverable policy framework which is centred around the character and appearance of each individual settlement and what they can provide to secure the sustainable development outcomes the Council is seeking.

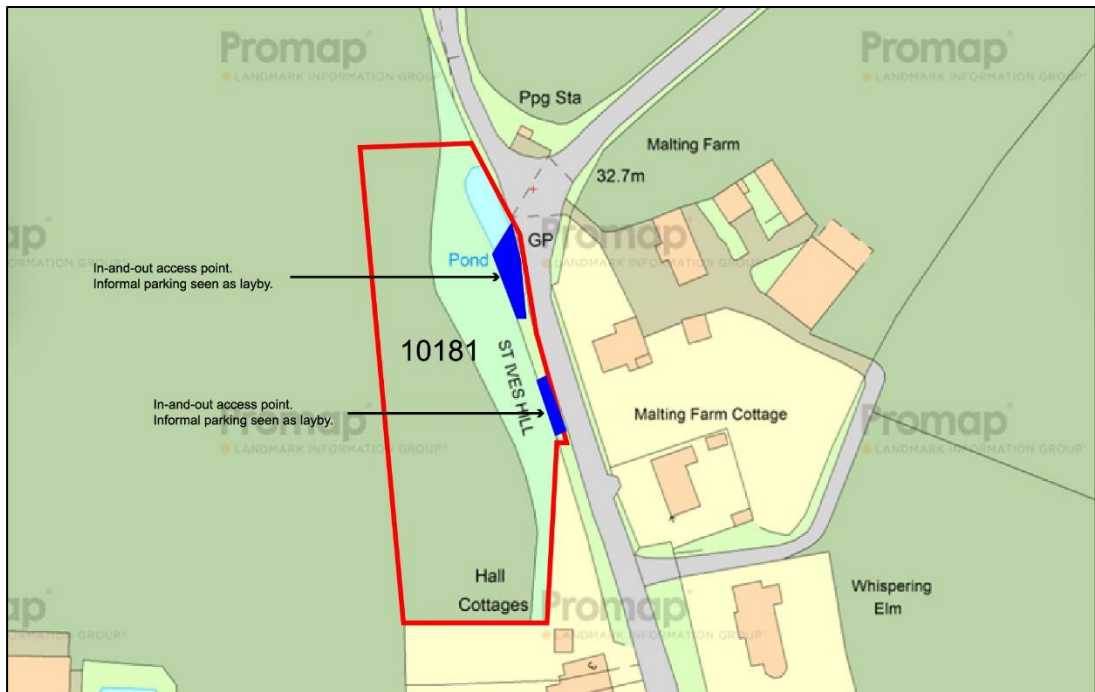


2.0 The Site

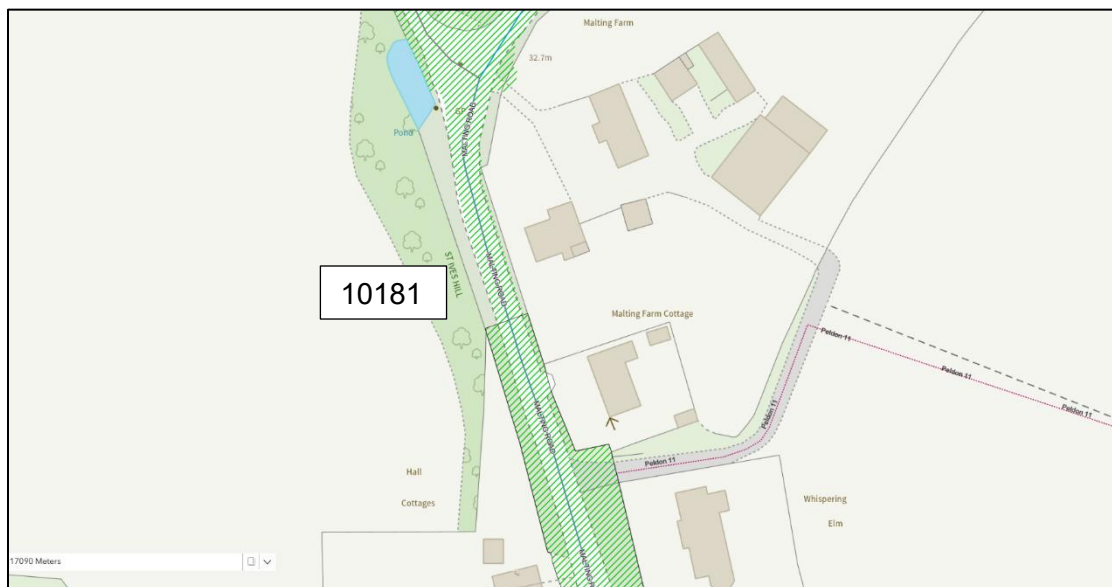
- 2.1 Site 10181 is located on the western side of Malting Road at the northern point of the settlement of Peldon. Covering an area of 0.45ha with the benefit of the eastern boundary comprising entirely road frontage, the site forms part of a wider agricultural holding which is an established arable business in southern Colchester.
- 2.2 The site lies north of, and adjoining to, the linear housing fronting Malting Road. When approaching Peldon from the north along Peldon Road, Site 10181 is, in part, the first visual marker of the village.

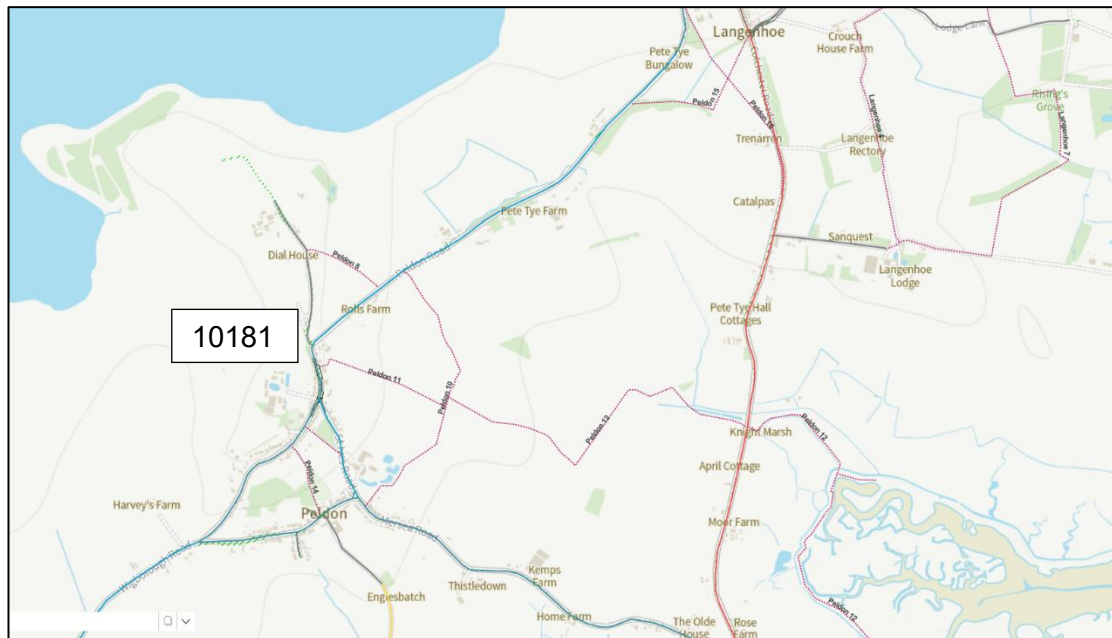


- 2.3 The western part of the site is the corner of an arable field with the eastern part planted with a mix of trees and hardstanding area used informally as parking by visitors. The landowner's father previously obtained planning permission c.1980s for an in-and-out driveway at this site; the two access points were implemented. The informal parking areas which appears as laybys are these access points. The northern point is just beyond the national speed limit zone, whereas all road frontage south of this access point is within the 30mph speed limit.



- 2.4 The topography of the land falls away from west to east, so Site 10181 is at a lower elevation in the landscape; there are no long distance views to the site from surrounding public vantage points. Opposite the site is a connection to the Public Right of Way Peldon 11. This PROW connects the site to a wider series of comprehensive footpaths to surrounding villages of Abberton and Langenhoe and to Mersea Island.





- 2.5 Peldon provides a good level of village facilities including two public houses (750m and 2.2km away from Site 10181), a café (300m), a children's nursery (1km), commercial premises (500m) and a community hall (220m) holding a wide range of services. In recent years, Kemp's Farm (1.3km) to the south of the village, in addition to the agricultural use which still operates, barns no longer fit for purpose have been replaced with a building constructed to facilitate four commercial units and an indoor cricket training facility comprising two lanes. The commercial units have a zero-vacancy rate and a waiting list with the cricket facility benefitting from daily bookings since its opening. The diversification of the site has assisted the business in supporting the rural economy whilst bringing new facilities to the residents of Peldon and surrounding settlements south of the city centre.
- 2.6 There are two bus stops located 120m south of Site 10181 on Malting Road which are served by five bus routes; No. 50b, 63, 67, 68 and 68A. These services connect the site to Colchester city centre and railway station, West Mersea, Tesco Highwoods, Abberton, Great Wigborough, Layer-de-la-Haye and Colchester General Hospital daily between 6:33am and 11.45pm. It can therefore only be considered that Site 10181 is a highly sustainable location when assessing the settlement's growing facilities and public transport links reinforced by the frequency and range of bus services operating daily, connecting residents to Colchester city centre, railway station, and key destinations such as hospitals and retail hubs. This accessibility ensures a genuinely sustainable location for growth.

3.0 The Council's Vision, Approach and Draft Policies

- 3.1 When analysing the spatial strategy for the emerging Plan up to 2041, there is a clear shift in the Council's approach to planned growth which is a key material consideration in this instance. Policies ST3 and ST4 aim to supersede Policy SP3 (Spatial Strategy for North Essex 2017-2033). Please find these draft policies appended as Appendix MRD1 and MRD2 respectively. Policy ST3 discusses the need for growth in sustainable and accessible locations where there tends to be a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services and travel choices for future communities. The Justification and Alternatives section of the Draft Local Plan for Policy ST3 states that the alternatives included 1) continuing the existing spatial strategy 2) new Garden Communities and 3) new Garden Suburbs. However, paragraph 3.29 makes clear that:

3.29 The preferred spatial strategy draws together the positives from as many of the spatial options as possible, while ensuring the growth needs of Colchester are met. These include:

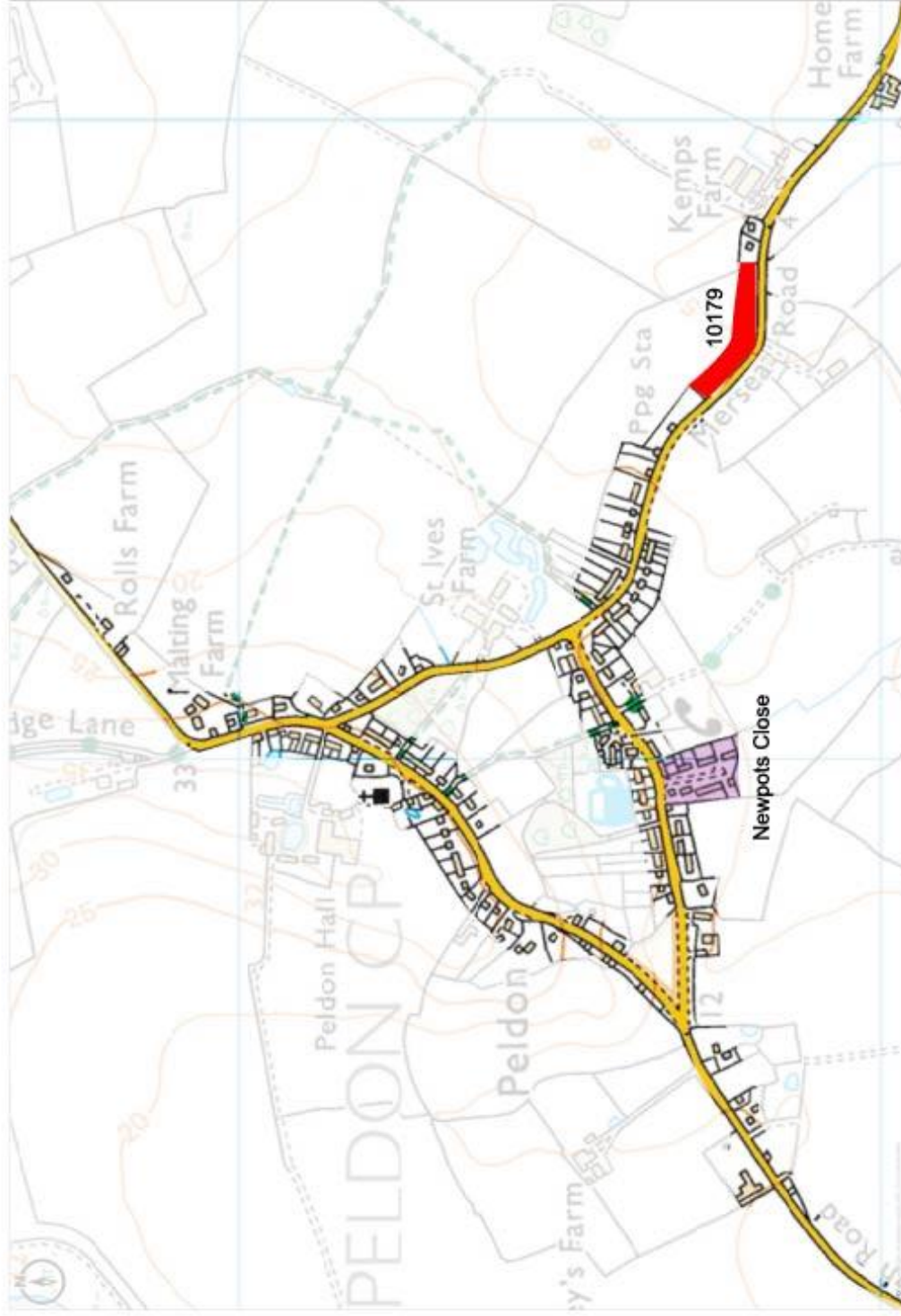
- Focus on the existing urban area and intensify where appropriate;*
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors;*
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure; and*
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments.*

- 3.2 Other clear changes are to the understanding of the spatial hierarchy which has been reconfigured making it clearer and more detailed, moving away from ambiguous 'other village' and 'sustainable settlement' titles to 'large', 'medium' and 'small' settlements, beneath the Urban Area and Growth and Opportunity Areas listed at the apex of the hierarchy.
- 3.3 Turning to Policy ST4, this aims to create an independent framework for the Council's decision making toward development in the countryside which wasn't previously as

overt. The policy states that the spatial strategy will inform the growth in the countryside balanced against any adverse impacts. The policy text then states that:

Where residential proposals are located outside defined settlement boundaries, there should be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the defined settlement in the first instance. Residential proposals in the countryside should 1) conserve and enhance the character, quality and tranquillity of the landscape, and 2) it must be proved that they will protect and reinforce the rural character of the areas where a development is proposed (emphasis added).

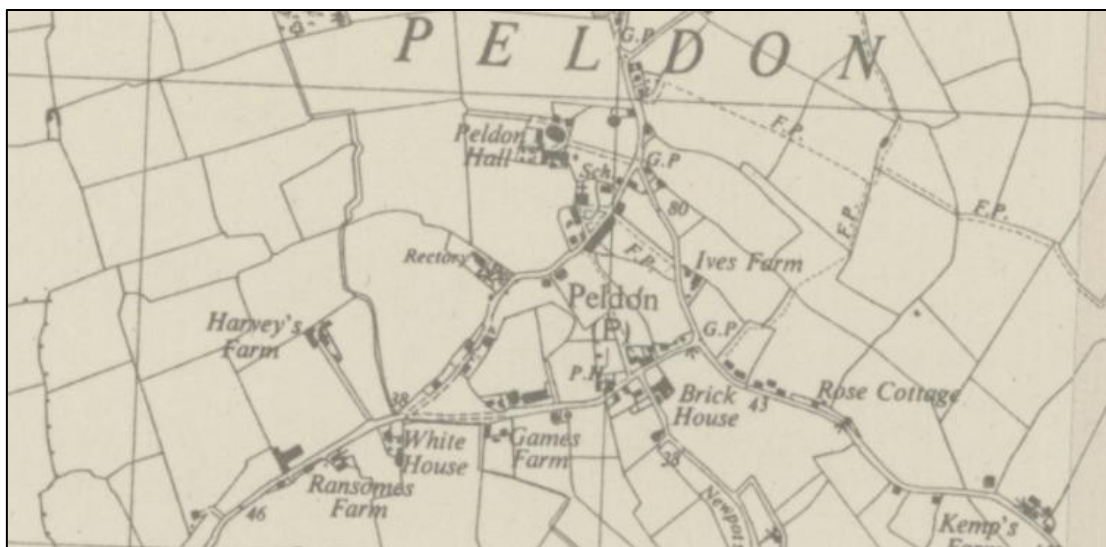
- 3.4 The final element to highlight in the proposed spatial strategy are key transport corridors across Colchester which have been identified for their function and connectivity and potential to support growth most notably for the 'large' settlements.
- 3.5 Peldon has been subject to Stages 1 and 2 of the Settlement Evidence Review. Stage 1 acknowledges the settlement shape and pattern as 'two roughly equivalent areas of housing on either side of two of the three roads' forming Peldon in a triangular formation. The report further states that the community hall 'hosts a wide range of activities throughout the week... since 1833'. The sustainable travel section acknowledges the regular bus services. However, the 'high level constraint' identified is that growth opportunities are limited if they are to prevent further ribbon development away from existing village services and facilities, where character is more rural/or is open countryside. To challenge this statement, it is clear that the core character of Peldon is road frontage residential development along the three main road links, with the only example straying from this being the cul-de-sac at Newpots Close to the south of the village. There are no other residential examples of development in this settlement other than along the road frontage.
- 3.6 Respecting historic settlement patterns is not only a matter of heritage but a key principle in landscape character assessments and draft Policy ST4, which requires development to reinforce rural character. Road frontage development is consistent with the Essex Design Guide, ensuring that growth integrates seamlessly with the existing village form while maintaining rural identity.



3.7 This 'high level constraint' contradicts draft Policy ST4's objective for the physical and functional connections of sites to settlements as the first test. Further ribbon development in this instance would not be 'away from existing village services and facilities' given its proximity to the bus stops 120m south, The Glasshouse Café 300m east and the community hall 220m south, with most remaining offerings in Peldon within another kilometre. Turning to the Colchester Landscape Character Assessment (November 2024) prepared by LUC, the landscape strategy for Peldon makes clear that 'development should be sensitively integrated into the landscape using appropriate boundary treatments and to maintain the historic settlement pattern. Visually intrusive and incongruous development should be avoided, particularly on more visually open higher ground to the north [Abberton and Langenhoe]' (p.361). An assessment of the historic Ordnance Survey maps shows that the built form of Peldon has always been road frontage ribbon development and that is therefore unequivocally the historic landscape character.



OS Six Inch 1888-1915



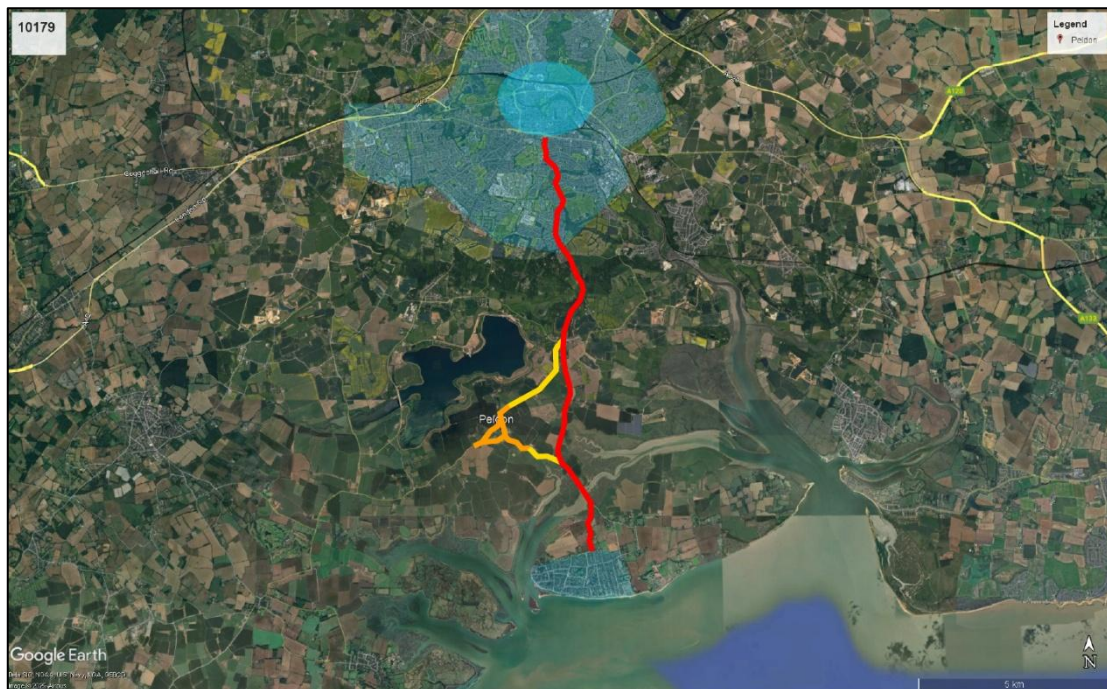
OS 1:25,000 1945-1965



OS 1:10,000 1949-1974

- 3.8 In terms of the settlement hierarchy, Peldon is currently categorised in the adopted Local Plan as an 'Other Village' and the proposed Local Plan has labelled Peldon as a 'Small Settlement'. This shift recognises the role that the smaller settlements have to play in the wider aims of the City's ambitions for development up to 2041 rather than their exclusion from development opportunities. A key characteristic that separates Peldon from the other smaller settlements is its juxtaposition to West Mersea which is categorised as a 'Large Settlement'. This means that West Mersea can provide a full range of services and facilities to its residents and accommodate a higher level of growth. The key characteristic is the B1025 key transport corridor connecting Mersea Island with the city centre, although oddly the Council has not identified this as a key transport corridor in its 'Key Diagram' under draft Policy ST3 (Appendix MRD1). It is undeniable that the B1025 is the main artery to the south of the city, with Peldon's road

network connected at two points; one to the north at Abberton and the other before The Strood to Mersea Island. This creates a direct link to the city centre services just 5 miles north and West Mersea 3 miles south which is a significant material consideration in this instance for the growth of Peldon. It must therefore be considered that there is existing infrastructure in the south of Colchester to support development even if that is not as significant as the A12 and A120 to the north. Residents of rural settlements are instrumental to the success of the rural economy, agriculture, sports, leisure and tourism and its growth should reflect the growing desire to live rurally.



- 3.9 The assessment of the draft policies in this section provides a clear image of the aim of the Council to extend existing settlements rather than provide large garden communities to reach a five-year housing land supply over the Plan period. The evidence also supports the settlement pattern of Peldon to be that of road frontage development historically and thus its extension would naturally include other road frontage sites already read as part of the settlement albeit historically omitted from the defined settlement boundary. Section 4 discusses the planned growth identified over the Plan period for Peldon with an assessment of Policy PP49.

4.0 Planned Growth for Peldon

4.1 The Colchester Local Housing Needs Assessment (September 2024) confirms that using the Standard Methodology for calculating housing need, there is a need for 1,300 new homes per year across the City. This equates to 20,800 new homes over the Plan period to 2041. For Peldon, the Council determined that a growth of up to 25 new dwellings would be appropriate at a site known as 'Land at St Ives Road'. This site is the only proposed extension to the settlement boundary of Peldon.

4.2 In the Summary of Sites Evidence (October 2025) this preferred options site was proposed as a mixed use residential and commercial allocation. It was deemed that the inclusion of this site would 'represent a logical extension to the village and lead to improved connections throughout the village, when compared against the alternatives' (p. 184). The below table summarises the Council's identified strengths and weaknesses of the site:

Strengths	Weaknesses
No contribution to coalescence;	Access constraints but not significant enough to affect the deliverability;
No neighbouring use issues;	Loss of greenfield land;
No known utility issues;	Loss of 3b classified agricultural land;
Site is not located in AONB, SSSI, SAC, SPA, RAMSAR or Ancient Woodlands;	Site is located within a Local Wildlife Site (LoWS), LNR or Coastal Protection belt;
Opportunities to enhance or create green infrastructure;	There is possibility of site contamination, but it can be remediated without affecting development viability;
No potential harm to archaeological or heritage assets;	Development will impact established grassland and likely native hedgerow with trees; and
Development would not result in the loss of public open space, public right of way or a bridleway;	The Biodiversity Protection & BNG Study concluded that development would result in the loss of an established grassland and would likely require some priority habitat hedgerow for access, leading to harm to biodiversity.
Site is wholly located in Flood Zone 1;	
Site is not located within a Critical Drainage Area;	
Site is vacant;	

The site does not rely on another piece of land; and	
Site is not within a Minerals Safeguarding Area or Waste Consultation Area.	

4.3 Site 10179 was ranked by the Council in the Summary of Sites Evidence similarly, with the differences being:

- The site is not located within a Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) or Coastal Protection Belt;
- The assumption that there are no opportunities to enhance or create green infrastructure;
- Potential harm to archaeological or heritage assets;
- Moderate harm to woodland; and
- Likely to harm biodiversity as site access is likely to require impact to Priority habitat woodland strip along Malting Road.

4.4 The site at St Ives Road does not contribute to coalescence as it would comprise significantly of backland development behind the dwellings along Church Road and Lower Road. It would also introduce new housing on a side of St Ives Road where there is currently no built form; the only section of road in the settlement without existing established development. It can only therefore be considered that this allocation opposes the historic pattern of the settlement from road frontage ribbon development when compared with Site 10181 before the Council in this representation. Whilst settlement extensions through increasing settlement boundaries are seen as encouraging coalescence, it must be seen in its context and when the Plan is read as a whole. Peldon is over 1.5 miles from its nearest settlement of Great Wigborough and given the 'Small Settlement' category of each place, it is unlikely that this part of the city is at any risk of coalescence.

4.5 The perceived harm to archaeological or heritage assets has not been detailed but one can assume that this references the local historic buildings which are listed, one of which is the Grade 1 listed Church of St Mary the Virgin. Please find the below excerpt from Historic England's map search, each blue point representing a designated heritage asset. The point in a blue circle marks the Church of St Mary.

respect of the heritage asset would call for a sensitive design scheme which respects the historic pattern of development. These criteria are secured under draft policies PC5, PC6 and EN6. It is the landowner's aim to ensure a sensitive scheme which respects the rural vernacular as a lifelong resident of Peldon and generations of their family before them; this will therefore create a high-quality design environment.

- 4.7 The reason to discount Site 10181 was the likely harm to biodiversity as the site access could require the loss of a deemed Priority habitat: a woodland strip along Malting Road. Please find enclosed as Appendix MRD4 an Ecological Walkover Technical Note prepared by Crossland Ecology. This states that there is no Priority Habitat at Site 10181 and the closest area of Priority Habitat is a deciduous woodland 180m south of the site; adjacent to the St Ives Road preferred allocation. The existing planting at Site 10181 has been categorised as Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland and all trees were classed as young to semi-mature in age. The report continues that the ground flora is species-poor and dominated by ivy. The young age and partially open canopy alongside the evidence showing it is a secondary woodland are sufficient for the ecologists to assess that this woodland element of the site as a Habitat of Principal Importance (HoPI).
- 4.8 There is a small pond at the south of the site which has a below average suitability for Great Crested Newts habitat. During the walkover, no species of high conservation importance were noted, and no exceptional assemblages of key biotic groups were deemed to be present. Additionally, the pond appeared to have poor water quality due, likely due to its location adjacent to farmland and along a roadside. As such, the pond is not deemed to be of high ecological quality or a pond that is important due to its age, rarity or landscape context. Therefore, it is assessed that there is a reasonably low likelihood that the pond can support any notable or protected species and is a HoPI.
- 4.9 The report concludes that although the woodland on-Site does meet certain criteria across both definitions of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, the poor species-composition and young age indicate that the Site is not a HoPI. Additionally, due to the woodland having only developed in recent years, there is a reasonably low likelihood that an established NVC ground flora community is present. The woodland on-Site correlates most with UKHabs definition of 'Other broadleaved woodland' and is

therefore, not considered to be a Priority Habitat woodland. The pond present within the southern end of the woodland is of poor quality and assessed to be of 'Below Average' suitability for GCN. It is, therefore, determined that there is a reasonably low likelihood of this pond supporting notable or protected species and therefore meeting the definition of a HoPI.

- 4.10 The ecological findings highlight that there would be little impact for the removal of part of the existing planting at the site in terms of biodiversity. There also proves an opportunity to enhance green infrastructure by incorporating the pond into a development proposal increasing its benefit to local wildlife which it is not currently serving a function of. The improvement will produce a Biodiversity Net Gain and allow for an appropriate native landscaping scheme to support the biodiversity. This site has the benefit of unrestricted boundary to the east with opportunities to introduce further on-site Biodiversity Net Gain enhancements.
- 4.11 Policy PP49 states that vehicle access should be gained from the connection with St Ives Road to its eastern boundary (Appendix MRD3). Notwithstanding the mature planting loss to create a new access and facilitate its visibility splays, it would be in close proximity to the triangular junction with Lower Road where there are two bus stops and the sole vehicle entrance to St Ives Farm Buildings which are home to at least four commercial businesses. 25 dwellings could accommodate 50 parking spaces and with an average of 4 vehicle movements a day per household, 100 daily movements would intensify the use of this section of St Ives Road when considering the potential conflict with a regular public transport service and the business park opposite the site. Site 10181 could accommodate either 1) individual accesses to each dwelling maintaining the existing design cues in Peldon or 2) an in-and-out shared driveway arrangement as a nod to the original form of the site. This section of Malting Road is on the inside of the bend and visibility in each direction is clear. There are not conflicting uses in the immediate vicinity which would compromise this arrangement.
- 4.12 Finally, it is pertinent to spotlight that no allocations were afforded to Peldon for the currently adopted Local Plan over the period 2017 to 2033 nor any non-commercial allocations in the Local Development Framework Site Allocations back in October 2010 for Peldon. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that there is overdue relative growth

for the settlement with its advances in services. However, a key consideration for Peldon should be the diversification of development opportunities. If the preferred options site cannot come forward, the settlement boundary restrictions do not support alternative development.

5.0 Site 10181: Draft Policy Compliance

5.1 The below table provides summary of the criteria contained within relevant spatial policies ST3 and ST4 and how Site 10179 is compliant. This framework aims to assist the Council in its consideration moving forward to Regulation 19 to adopt areas read as part of the settlement of Peldon as part of its formal settlement boundary:

Policy	Criteria	Compliance
ST3	Significant scale of growth along transport corridors identified for their function and connectivity and potential to support growth;	B1025 (Mersea Road) is the key transport corridor for the southern half of the city and has two direct access points to Peldon.
	Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure;	Site 10181 directly benefiting from short distance to community facilities, employment generating sites, hospitality and sports and recreation.
	Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments;	Utilisation of the site's existing blue and green infrastructure enhance its advantage for Biodiversity Net Gain.
	Avoid harmful coalescence; and	Nearest settlement is over 1.5 miles away; no risk of coalescence.
	Relative growth to the scale of the settlement.	Minor development opportunity for a 'Small Settlement'.
ST4	Where residential proposals are located outside defined settlement boundaries, there should be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the defined settlement in the first instance.	The physical relationship of the site to the settlement is direct: road frontage adjoining existing housing. The functional connection is its distance to the two bus

		stops and the village centre 120-220m south of the site.
	Conserve and enhance the character, quality and tranquillity of the landscape; and	Respecting the historic pattern of development and landscape character by avoiding incongruous built form or uses which may be at odds with its surroundings.
	It must be proved that they will protect and reinforce the rural character of the areas where a development is proposed.	Opportunity for detached cottage-style dwellings which are landscape led and driven by the Essex Design Guide.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This representation demonstrates that Site 10181 offers a sustainable, deliverable, and policy-compliant opportunity for modest growth in Peldon. The site aligns with the emerging spatial strategy under draft Policies ST3 and ST4, supporting development in accessible locations while respecting rural character and historic settlement patterns. Unlike the preferred allocation at St Ives Road, Site 10181 provides a logical extension to the village through road frontage development, maintaining the established form and avoiding coalescence.
- 6.2 Evidence confirms that biodiversity concerns previously cited are overstated; ecological assessments show no Priority Habitat woodland and identify opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain through sensitive design and landscaping. The site benefits from strong physical and functional connections to village services and public transport, reinforcing its sustainability credentials. Furthermore, its proximity to the B1025 transport corridor and West Mersea strengthens its strategic role in supporting rural communities and the wider economy.
- 6.3 Given the overdue growth for Peldon and the Council's shift toward proportionate settlement extensions, Site 10181 should be reconsidered for inclusion within the settlement boundary at Regulation 19 stage. This approach ensures a balanced, deliverable framework that meets housing needs while safeguarding landscape character and enhancing local infrastructure.



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APPENDIX MRD1

The Spatial Strategy

- 3.17 The spatial strategy sets out the place-based approach for how growth will be guided across Colchester to 2041. This provides the framework for how the housing and employment needs will be met through allocations in the Local Plan, taking into account the unique characteristics of areas across the City.
- 3.18 The settlement hierarchy forms part of the spatial strategy. Growth will be allocated in accordance with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy. This recognises the relationship between the Urban Area of Colchester, growth and opportunity areas within and outside of the urban area (Marks Tey and TCBGC) and the larger settlements of, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe. This also recognises the role that other settlements play in creating diverse places across Colchester, as well as the importance of the countryside that should be protected
- 3.19 In the first instance, development is directed to the City centre and the urban area of Colchester. This will enable greater use of brownfield sites to be realised and developments of a higher density. This approach is reflected in the NPPF.
- 3.20 The next tier in the settlement hierarchy is growth and opportunity areas. A number of sites are allocated for residential, employment / mixed use development within the urban area of the City. The Hythe which has seen significant changes over the years, notably through recently approved and built student accommodation is identified as an opportunity area where there are opportunities here for wider regeneration. This area is an established regeneration area that seeks to deliver sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods, identifying the River Colne as a feature and respecting the historic character of the area. Magdalen Street where regeneration could help deliver a new and improved gateway to the City Centre is also identified as an opportunity. There are a number of older commercial buildings suitable for reuse and or redevelopment to enhance this area. This tier in the hierarchy also includes the University of Essex, Knowledge Gateway and north Colchester.
- 3.21 Marks Tey is also identified in this tier as a growth area, recognising its potential opportunities for strategic scale growth and potential for improvements to infrastructure and placemaking. Its strategic location along with the benefits the train station brings, support the potential for expansion. However, there is also recognition that infrastructure improvements will be required in order to support development at the scale promoted. Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is established and defined in a separate Development Planning Document. It continues to form an integral part of how this area of North Essex will develop up to 2041 and beyond. In recognition of the contribution it will make to towards the supply in this plan period for Colchester it is defined as a growth area in the hierarchy.
- 3.22 Key transport corridors across Colchester have also been identified for their function and connectivity and potential to support growth. The role of larger settlements outside of the urban area is also recognised. These larger settlements have the most facilities, services and opportunities. These settlements also have some of the largest populations of Colchester. As such, it is proposed to group, Tiptree, Wivenhoe and West Mersea as the next tier within the hierarchy as large

settlements. Growth in these settlements not only reflects their size but also considers the opportunities and constraints that apply to each location.

- 3.23 Creating a distinction between the large, medium and small settlements enables small scale development, which has been identified as a desire in some of the small settlements through engagement undertaken as part of the Issues and Options. The settlement hierarchy identifies medium and small settlements where growth is allocated appropriate to the size of the settlement and its constraints. Growth is not directed to all of the smaller settlements as appropriate land for growth was not identified for every small settlement.
- 3.24 The spatial strategy also reflects sustainable development principles underpinned by the NPPF which seeks to ensure all development meets the three dimensions of sustainable development; social, economic and environmental sustainability. All development will need to be in accordance with the spatial strategy and should meet the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- 3.25 The key diagram illustrates the spatial strategy for this Plan.

Policy ST3: Spatial Strategy

The Plan makes provision for growth and supporting infrastructure across the Colchester area to 2041. A sufficient number of homes have been provided in the plan to meet the overall housing requirement to 2041 as set out in Policy ST5.

Growth is directed across Colchester starting with the most sustainable and accessible locations in the urban area or close to, transport corridors and existing centres, where there tends to be a range of employment opportunities, facilities, services and travel choices for future communities.

Additionally, an appropriate level of growth is allocated within the large, medium and some small settlements, based on the opportunities and constraints of each settlement and informed by the wider evidence base. This can help support the long-term viability of services and facilities, which may otherwise be lost.

The growth needs of Colchester are balanced against the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and heritage. The highest areas of sensitivity are receiving the lowest levels of growth in this Local Plan. This approach also ensures that existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and role by avoiding harmful coalescence between them and through conserving their setting. New development will be required to respect the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserve or enhance the historic environment and biodiversity to safeguard the character of the City.

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) and other large-scale developments will deliver substantial growth, enabling significant community benefits to be realised. Opportunities for growth along key transport corridors, particularly with access to the rail network are favoured subject to sufficient capacity on the network and/or appropriate mitigation to support any enhancement required.

The re-use of previously developed land and developments of higher densities (particularly in the Urban Area of Colchester) will be supported where this enables a more efficient use of land. Opportunity areas are therefore identified at the Hythe and Magdalen Street.

The primary focus for growth is made through the allocations identified in this Local Plan, together with the existing commitments and TCBGC as set out in Policy ST5. Allocations are made in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out below. The settlement hierarchy groups areas across Colchester based on their sustainability merits, size, function, opportunities and the services provided in each locality.

Settlement Hierarchy

Colchester Urban Area including City Centre
Growth and Opportunity Areas Hythe Opportunity Areas Magdalen Street Opportunity Area Marks Tey Growth Area Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Growth Area
Large Settlements Tiptree West Mersea Wivenhoe
Medium Settlements Abberton and Langenhoe Boxted Chappel and Wakes Colne Copford Dedham and Dedham Heath Eight Ash Green Fordham Great Horkesley Great Tey Langham Layer de la Haye Rowhedge West Bergholt
Small Settlements Aldham Birch and Layer Breton Copford Green Easthorpe East Mersea Fingringhoe Great Wigborough Little Horkesley Messing Mount Bures Peldon Salcott Wormingford
Countryside

KEY DIAGRAM



Justification

Purpose of the policy

- 3.26 The NPPF requires Strategic Policies in Local Plans to set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places. Strategic Policies are required to provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward to address needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption for sustainable development. The Strategy must provide for social and economic needs, sufficient strategic and local infrastructure, whilst balancing the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, and address climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
- 3.27 The Spatial Strategy sets out the approach for how Colchester will develop to 2041. This informs where sites will be allocated for housing and economic growth, and where areas will be safeguarded and protected in this Preferred Options Local Plan.

Alternative

- 3.28 The alternative spatial options considered were:

- Continuing existing Spatial Strategy
- New Garden Community
- Garden Suburbs
- Intensification in the City Centre
- Transport Corridors
- Hubs and Spokes
- Environment Led

- 3.29 The preferred spatial strategy draws together the positives from as many of the spatial options as possible, while ensuring the growth needs of Colchester are met. These include:

- Focus on the existing urban area and intensification where appropriate largely within growth and opportunity areas;
- Significant scale of growth along transport corridors;
- Growth in the other settlements, including some of Colchester's smaller villages, to support communities and provide opportunities to sustain and enhance facilities and infrastructure;
- Ensure protection and enhancement of the most sensitive environments



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APPENDIX MRD2

Policy ST4: Development in the Countryside

The Council will consider the requirement for new development within the countryside to meet identified development needs in accordance with Colchester's spatial strategy while supporting the vitality of rural communities. This will be balanced against ensuring development does not have an adverse impact on the different roles and relationships between settlements and their separate identities, valued landscapes, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and visual amenity.

The intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised and assessed, and development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Proposals must consider the role the landscape plays as an open buffer between settlements or areas of a settlement, and the resulting sense of separation and distinctive identity.

Within valued landscapes, development will only be permitted where it would not impact adversely and would protect and enhance the factors that contribute to valued landscapes.

Proposals for sustainable rural businesses will be supported if they are of an appropriate scale, meet a local employment need, minimise negative environmental impacts, and harmonise with the local character and surrounding countryside where they are being proposed.

Where residential proposals are located outside defined settlement boundaries, there should be consideration of the physical and functional connection to the defined settlement in the first instance. Residential proposals in the countryside should conserve and enhance the character, quality and tranquillity of the landscape, and it must be proven that they will protect and reinforce the rural character of the areas where a development is proposed. Proposals will need to demonstrate that the scheme respects the character and appearance of landscapes and the built environment and preserves or enhances the historic environment and biodiversity. Opportunities to maximise access to sustainable modes of travel for future residents must be demonstrated.

Justification

Purpose of the policy

- 3.30 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Settlement boundaries are an essential tool for the management of development and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by preventing the encroachment of development into the countryside, protecting rural character. The spatial strategy (Policy ST3) directs development to the most sustainable locations across Colchester.

- 3.31 Areas outside of settlement boundaries are defined as 'Countryside'. Within the countryside, there are a number of very small villages and hamlets and isolated clusters of dwellings which lack any community facilities or access to services or public transport and rely on nearby larger settlements to meet their daily needs. It is essential that development is restricted in the countryside to protect landscape, character, quality and tranquillity.
- 3.32 Development within the countryside will accordingly be limited to activities that either require a rural location or help sustain a rural community and local economy and which help protect the rural character of the areas where a development is being delivered.
- 3.33 The NPPF includes examples of exceptions whereby proposals for isolated dwellings in the countryside may be acceptable. The Council's interpretation of 'isolated' are sites that are physically isolated relative to existing settlements, and sites that are functionally isolated relative to services and facilities.

Alternative

- 3.34 The alternative is to rely on national policy and guidance or the spatial strategy and housing allocations policies.



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APPENDIX MRD3

Peldon

12.46 Housing in Peldon is laid out in a triangular pattern around three roads. The settlement boundary in Peldon currently comprises two roughly equivalent areas of housing on either side of two of the three roads. The triangular residential area is surrounded by arable farms. The village lies within the Coastal Protection Belt.

Policy PP49: Land at St Ives Road, Peldon

In addition to the infrastructure and mitigation requirements identified in Policy ST 7 and subject to compliance with all other relevant policies, development will be supported on land within the area identified on the policies map which provides:

- a) Approximately 25 new dwellings of a mix and type of housing to meet evidenced needs and be compatible with surrounding development;
- b) Safe and suitable site access to required highway design standards. The point of vehicular access is to off St Ives Road to be agreed with the Highway Authority and it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway capacity and safety;
- c) Provide a safe pedestrian access to ensure connectivity within and throughout the site to existing footways and any public rights of way. Ensure provision of green infrastructure connections and recreational access to the countryside, also securing active travel links and connections to the settlement;
- d) 'Enhanced Open Space' as shown on the Policies Map substantively in excess of 10% of the allocation area must be provided as open space. This should include a minimum of 0.6ha of open space within the site;
- e) Mature trees and hedgerows within the site should be retained;
- f) Screening comprising locally appropriate hedgerows and/or woodland will be required along the site boundaries to ensure that development is sensitively integrated into the landscape to reflect and reinforce rural character;
- g) Respect the setting of and conserve the local distinctiveness of the Church of St Mary (Grade I Listed Building) at Peldon which forms a prominent landmark, visible from much of the surrounding landscape due to its location on a localised knoll;
- h) Development must conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their settings). Designated heritage assets close to the allocated site includes one Grade I, one Grade II* and fifteen Grade II Listed Buildings as informed by the stage 1 HIA;
- i) Applicants must demonstrate they have confirmed with Anglian Water Services that treatment capacity at the Water Recycling Centre is available to serve the development at the point of anticipated connection and where appropriate agree to phasing triggers to support development;

- j) Demonstrate adequate capacity for managing wastewater including proposed phasing requirements or alternative solutions to the satisfaction of the Council and Anglian Water;
- k) A range of measures in addition to prioritising SuDs (Policy EN8) and water efficiency measures to reduce the risk on impact on the WRC capacity as a result of planned growth including:
 - i) Removal of unrequired network flows;
 - ii) Targeted education to include new residents of the development;
 - iii) Reduction in the demand for potable water.



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APPENDIX MRD4

Title	Ecology Walkover Technical Note
Date	08/01/2025
Revision	A
Client	Stanfords
Site	Peldon Hall Farm, Maltings Road
Author	Maddy Carter

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** Crossland Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Stanfords to undertake an ecological walkover survey of land at Peldon Hall Farm, Maltings Road (the 'Site'). The Site is located at central Grid Reference TL 99022 17038 and the Site boundary is shown in Figure 1.
- 1.2** The purpose of this Ecology Walkover Technical Note is to provide an appraisal of the habitats and ecological features present, and to review if these habitats constitute priority woodland status, as per Colchester Borough Council's previous analysis of the Site (Evidence Summary by Settlement).
- 1.3** The Site was visited on 08/12/2025 by Crossland Ecology Ltd with all accessible areas of the Site walked over.

2.0 Methodology

- 2.1** The Site walkover comprised a UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Survey. UKHab survey methods are set out in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual - Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd. 2023). UKHab is a comprehensive habitat classification system designed for the UK and is intended for ecologists to identify and map habitats to provide outputs that are suitable for ecological impact assessment. Habitat mapping was undertaken using the standard classification to indicate habitat types, and the readily identifiable higher plant species identified and recorded.
- 2.2** An online search was undertaken utilising Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online spatial data resource

(<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) on 17.12.25 for Habitats of Principal Importance (HoPI) listed under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (also referred to as Priority Habitats), and ancient woodland listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI).

- 2.3** Both the UKHab and the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat Descriptions produced by Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) have been considered when assessing the woodland habitat type present on-Site.

3.0 Constraints

- 3.1** All the species that occur in a habitat would not necessarily be detectable during survey work carried out at any given time of the year, since different species are apparent at different seasons. The assessment of the Site was undertaken in December 2025, which is considered outside the optimal plant growing season. However, the final conclusions have taken account of the timing of the survey, the results of the desk study and a review of historical aerial imagery and street view. As such, no constraints to the assessment are considered significant.

4.0 Ecological Appraisal

- 4.1** The Site is situated upon slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base rich loamy (Landis.org) and clayey soils atop clay, silt and sand (geologyviewer.bgs).
- 4.2** A search of Defra's MAGIC database returned no records of HoPIs within the Site. The closest area of Priority Habitat deciduous woodland is located 180 m south of the Site. This pocket of woodland, along with all others in a 2 km radius, are separated from the Site by residential properties and a network of roads.
- 4.3** The Site comprises largely of the woodland which has a small pond present to the southern end. To the west of the woodland is an arable field. A UKHab map of the Site is provided within Figure 2.
- 4.4** The woodland canopy is partially open and dominated by young to semi-mature trees. The species composition is dominated by English oak *Quercus robur* with occasional ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, and rare (in frequency) pine *Pinus sp.*, crab apple *Malus sylvestris*, silver birch *Betula pendula* and elm *Ulmus sp.*. The shrub layer includes frequent holly *Ilex aquifolium* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg.*, with occasional hawthorn and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*. The ground flora is limited in extent, being dominated by leaf litter and ivy *Hedera helix*, with occasional herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum*, cleavers *Galium aparine* and

common nettle *Urtica dioica*, and rare stinking iris *Iris foetidissima* also recorded.

- 4.5** All trees, with the exception of a single mature oak, were young to semi-mature in age which coincided with the information gathered in the desk study. No evidence of coppicing was noted.

5.0 Assessment

Woodland

- 5.1** UKHab defines the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland HoPI to include woodland growing on the full range of soil conditions. They occur largely within enclosed landscapes at relatively low altitudes. Woodlands within this habitat type should have a great variety in species composition within the canopy layer and the ground flora.
- 5.2** The UK BAP description categorises Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland to fall into National Vegetation Classification (NVC) categories W8, W10 or W16. Due to the location, species composition, soils and geology of the Site, the woodland on-Site is closest to W8a-d or W10c.
- 5.3** W8 occurs on sedimentary rocks with fairly impermeable clay soil. Ash, field maple *Acer campestre* and hazel *Corylus avellan* are the main diagnostic features but are sometimes relegated to a minor role due to the local abundance of other species. Sub-communities A-D of W8 list oak as the most common species. The understorey in these woodlands often includes hazel and lime *Tilia sp.*, or hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*. On base-rich soils, beech *Fagus sylvatica* and yew *Taxus baccata* are also common. Shrub species include hawthorn, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and privet *Ligustrum vulgare*. Ground flora includes mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, nightshade *Solanum nigrum*, wood avens *Geum urbanum*, cuckoo-pint *Arum maculatum* and violet *Viola riviniana/reichenbachiana*. Rough meadow grass *Poa trivialis*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, bugle *Ajuga reptans*, primrose *Primula vulgaris*, bluebell and dog rose *Rosa canina* are associated with base-rich soils. Sub-community W8d is usually indicative of secondary woodland with a simple canopy and dense understorey atop a species-poor ground flora dominated by ivy. W8d has a simple structure, with a dense canopy and shrub layer of ash or oak over hawthorn, hazel and/or field maple. The ground flora is species-poor and dominated by ivy.
- 5.4** W10 is found on base-poor brown earths mainly in the lowlands of southern Britain. Oak is the most common tree, and silver birch is abundant, and ash is rare but can be frequent. Other species that may occur at low levels

include holly, beech, wild cherry *Prunus avium*, wild service *Sorbus torminalis* and crab apple. Hazel is the most abundant shrub, often with hawthorn. Ground flora indicators include dog's mercury, bluebell and wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, however, bramble, eagle fern *Pteridium aquilinum* and common honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* are the most common species. Sub-community W10c is most distinguishable by the carpet of ivy that is present. Bramble and honeysuckle are abundant in this sub-community.

- 5.5** A review of historical street view (Google Maps) found that in April 2010 the Site comprised an area of scrub bound by a hedgerow bordering Malting Road, as shown in Figure 3. Since this date, it appears the Site has lacked management which has allowed it to reach its current condition as woodland.
- 5.6** The species composition and general structure does adhere to aspects of W8d and W10c, however, the young age and partially open canopy alongside the evidence showing it is a secondary woodland (historical streetview imagery) are sufficient to assess that this woodland does not classify as a HoPI.

Pond

- 5.7** A small pond, measuring approximately 66.8 m², is present in the southern end of the woodland. It is well shaded by the surrounding woodland and had no identifiable aquatic vegetation present.
- 5.8** A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) was completed to determine if the pond is suitable for Great Crested Newts (GCN) and provided a score of 'Below Average' (Table 1).

Table 1: HSI scores for the on-Site pond.

HSI Criteria	Pond Scores	HSI Values
Location	Zone A	1
Pond Area	66.8m ²	0.1
Pond Drying	Rarely Dries	1
Water Quality	Poor	0.33
Shade	96 – 100%	0.2
Waterfowl	Absent	1
Fish	Absent	1
Pond Count	7	0.85
Terrestrial Habitat	Moderate	0.67
Macrophytes	26-30%	0.6
Score	Below Average	0.5436

- 5.9** In order to be classified as a HoPI, a pond must meet one or more of the five criteria stated within UKHabs under secondary code 40 – Ponds (Priority Habitat). During the walkover, no species of high conservation importance were noted, and no exceptional assemblages of key biotic groups were

deemed to be present. Additionally, the pond appeared to have poor water quality due, likely due to its location adjacent to farmland and along a roadside. As such, the pond is not deemed to be of high ecological quality or a pond that is important due to its age, rarity or landscape context. Therefore, it is assessed that there is a reasonably low likelihood that the pond can support any notable or protected species and is a HoPI.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1** Although the woodland on-Site does meet certain criteria across both definitions of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, the poor species-composition and young age indicate that the Site is not a HoPI. Additionally, due to the woodland having only developed in recent years, there is a reasonably low likelihood that an established NVC ground flora community is present.
- 6.2** The woodland on-Site correlates most with UKHabs definition of 'Other broadleaved woodland' and is therefore, not considered to be a Priority Habitat woodland.
- 6.3** The pond present within the southern end of the woodland is of poor quality and assessed to be of 'Below Average' suitability for GCN. It is, therefore, determined that there is a reasonably low likelihood of this pond supporting notable or protected species and therefore meeting the definition of a HoPI.

7.0 References

Evidence of Summary by Settlement PDF.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) (2004) National Vegetation Classification: Field guide to woodland. Available at:

<https://data.jncc.gov.uk/data/673dc337-e58f-4f6b-ac7b-717001983c2e/JNCC-NVC-FieldGuideWoodland-2004.pdf>

UK BAP (2008) UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions.

Available at: <https://jncc.defra.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap-priority-habitats/>

UKHab Ltd. (2023) UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0. Available at:

<https://www.ukhab.org>

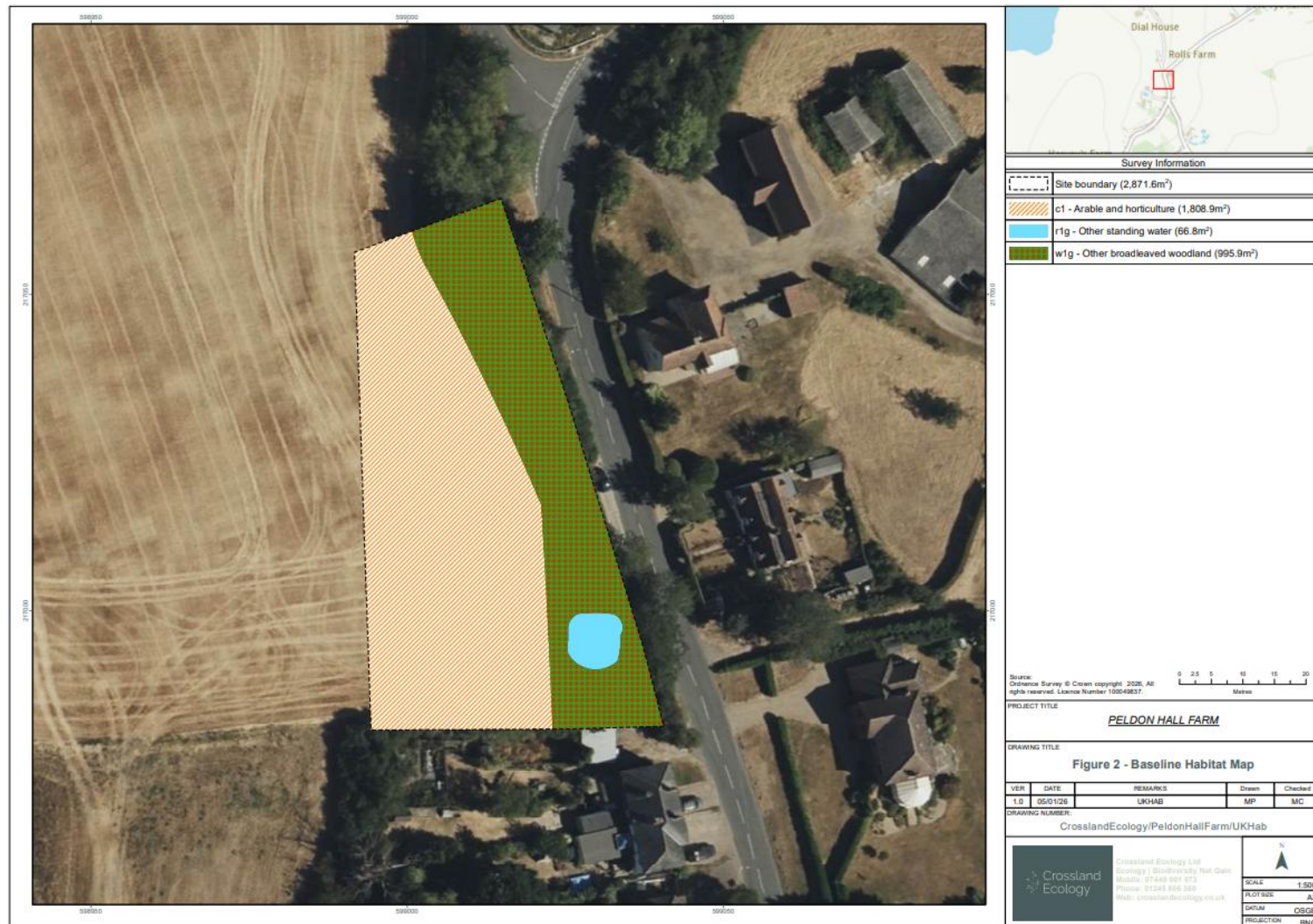
Figure 1: Site Location



Crossland Ecology Ltd. Office 5945, 321 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex, RM6 6AX

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Figure 2: UKHab map of the Site



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Figure 3: Historical Streetview Imagery of the Site

Reproduced from Google Maps Streetview



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Figures 4-8: Photos of the Site





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