



**GL Hearn**

Part of Capita plc

# Consultation Report

## **Defence Infrastructure Organisation**

Middlewick Ranges  
Colchester  
CO2 8QH

December 2020

## **Prepared by**

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**Public**

## Contents

Section	Page
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 SUMMER 2019 CONSULTATION	5
3 AUTUMN / WINTER 2020 ENGAGEMENT	15
4 APPENDICES	17

## List of Tables

TABLE 1: ABOUT YOU	6
TABLE 2: Q2: WHAT TYPE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE INCLUDED IN THE PLANS?	7
TABLE 3: Q3: PLEASE LET US KNOW ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THE PROPOSALS	8

## Appendices

APPENDIX A: 2020 NEWSLETTER	17
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## Quality Standards Control

The signatories below verify that this document has been prepared in accordance with our quality control requirements. These procedures do not affect the content and views expressed by the originator.

This document must only be treated as a draft unless it has been signed by the originators and approved by a Business or Associate Director.

DATE	ORIGINATORS	APPROVED
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### Limitations

This document has been prepared for the stated objective and should not be used for any other purpose without the prior written authority of GL Hearn; we accept no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than for which it was commissioned.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has identified Middlewick Ranges ('the site') for disposal, when work at Fingringhoe Ranges has been completed and is operational to ensure continuing military capability. This presents an opportunity for the site to contribute towards Colchester's housing needs and the site has been identified in the emerging Colchester Local Plan as being suitable for the development of up to 1,000 new homes.
- 1.2 The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), part of the MOD, is overseeing the promotion of the site for inclusion in the emerging Local Plan and has instructed a technical consultant team to help develop an evidence base to support an allocation.
- 1.3 The DIO has undertaken public consultation on the proposal to redevelop the site for new housing and initial concept plans and held meetings with key stakeholders at Colchester Borough Council. This report sets out the consultation undertaken in the summer of 2019 and the feedback received, as well as an overview of the further technical work that has been undertaken to support the allocation taking account of concerns that have been raised. It also provides an update on further activity being undertaken in the autumn and winter of 2020.
- 1.4 The site is being promoted for an allocation as a development site within the emerging Colchester Local Plan and no planning application has yet been prepared. Although consultation is not necessarily required to support a Local Plan allocation, DIO has sought to provide local residents and groups with the opportunity to provide feedback on the redevelopment of the site to inform the technical work and evidence base being prepared.
- 1.5 If an allocation is secured it is likely that the owner of the site (either the MOD or a developer who has acquired the site) will then bring forward a planning application. At this point, further public consultation will be required and additional technical work needed to support the proposals which would be submitted to Colchester Borough Council.
- 1.6 As a planning application is not yet being prepared, it is not possible to provide definitive responses to all the areas of feedback set out in this report as the details of any future scheme are not finalised. This document does however set out a record of the feedback received on the project to date and establishes the topics of particular importance to local residents and the wider community.

## 2 SUMMER 2019 CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The project team undertook a round of public consultation in the summer of 2019. The activity described in this chapter was led by Camargue, who were appointed by the DIO at that time as communication consultants.

### Pre-consultation publicity

- 2.2 The consultation and associated public engagement events were widely publicised to the local community from late June 2019:

- Invitation flyers were sent to over 5,300 neighbouring homes and businesses, elected representatives, local amenity providers and interested parties
- Additional invitation letters were sent to 340 homes directly neighbouring the site to ensure they knew of the consultation
- Adverts were published in the Colchester Gazette on 26 June and 3 July 2019
- A press release was issued to the local media and published by Colchester Gazette

### Public Consultation events

- 2.3 Two consultation events were held by the DIO as part of an inclusive programme of engagement to inform, explain and involve stakeholders and members of the community including local residents and businesses:

- Wednesday 10 July 2019 (2pm to 8pm), RCCG Stillwater Centre, Grange Way
- Saturday 13 July 2019 (10am to 3pm), Orchard Baptist Church, 23 Blackheath

- 2.4 These venues were chosen due to their accessibility and because they were known by the local community, providing straightforward access to members of the public.

- 2.5 The opening hours covered weekend and evening times to increase the opportunities for people to attend and provide the largest potential audience of people living and working nearby.

- 2.6 Representatives from the DIO and its project team including specialist consultants staffed the exhibition at all times to answer queries and explain the proposals to the public. The initial concept plan was on display at the events together with supporting information on key topics including transport and ecology.

- 2.7 For those unable to attend the exhibition, a copy of materials available at the event and an online feedback form could be downloaded from the project website: <https://middlewickconsultation.co.uk/>.

### Event attendance

- 2.8 Both events were well-attended, demonstrating a strong level of engagement from the local community and the efficacy of the DIO's consultation publicity.
- Approximately 250 visitors attended the event on Wednesday 10 July 2019
  - Approximately 290 visitors attended the event on Saturday 13 July 2019
- 2.9 As well as local residents, a number of local business, community groups, key stakeholders and elected representatives attended the events to find out more about the proposals.

### Consultation feedback analysis

- 2.10 A total of 231 written statements of feedback were received during the consultation window, which ran from 10 July to 5 August 2019.
- 2.11 This included a combination of paper feedback forms submitted at the events, afterwards by post, online and 'unstructured' feedback by email:
- 175 paper feedback forms
  - 37 online feedback forms
  - 19 emails containing statements of feedback
- 2.12 Respondents were asked to provide their name and contact details, including identifying themselves as either a resident, local business, local group or elected representative (GDPR protection applied). The clear majority of respondents identified themselves as local residents.

**Table 1: About you**

Resident	Local group	Local business	Elected representative	No response
158	2	3	2	37

- 2.13 Respondents were asked to check a box if they would like to be kept updated on the proposals for Middlewick Ranges. 184 indicated that they would like to receive future updates, confirming the strong

levels of interest in the developing plans. Contact details for those indicating they would like to be kept updated will be held in accordance with relevant data protection and privacy laws.

- 2.14 The DIO will be able to use this register of information to ensure interested parties are kept informed on the emerging proposals and future public consultation.

### ***Community facilities***

- 2.15 Respondents had an opportunity to indicate what community facilities they would like to see included within the plans. Many respondents also used this space to provide general comments, which have been included in the analysis of question three below.
- 2.16 A significant number (73) of the feedback forms directly referenced a desire to see the site turned into a 'country park' with no further development.
- 2.17 An overview of the general types of amenity requested is provided and then broken down into further detail below:

**Table 2: Q2: What type of community facilities would you like to see included in the plans?**

Type of community facility	Number of times referenced	Themes of feedback
Green space and parkland	121	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>73 referenced a country park (with limited or no development)</li> <li>31 referenced green space and parkland (accompanying development)</li> <li>7 referenced spaces to walk dogs</li> <li>7 referenced the preservation or provision of trees</li> <li>1 referenced specific wildflower areas</li> <li>1 referenced allotments for the community</li> <li>1 referenced a duck pond</li> </ul>
Healthcare	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>33 referenced a doctors surgery / GP</li> <li>8 referenced a hospital</li> <li>7 referenced a dentist</li> <li>2 referenced a care home</li> </ul>
Education	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18 referenced a school (non-specific)</li> <li>10 referenced a nursery</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 referenced a secondary school</li> <li>• 8 referenced a primary school</li> <li>• 1 referenced a special needs school</li> </ul>
Retail and leisure	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 referenced an outdoor play area</li> <li>• 9 referenced shops</li> <li>• 9 referenced a community centre</li> <li>• 7 referenced a sports / swimming centre</li> <li>• 2 referenced a library</li> <li>• 2 referenced a pub / restaurant</li> <li>• 2 referenced a skate park</li> <li>• 1 referenced a military museum</li> <li>• 1 referenced a water park</li> </ul>
Transport and access	41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 referenced improvements to local roads</li> <li>• 10 referenced footpaths and cycleways</li> <li>• 10 referenced new bus links for the development</li> <li>• 6 referenced adequate parking provision for new houses</li> <li>• 3 referenced wide streets between the new housing</li> </ul>

### ***Other issues***

- 2.18 Respondents were invited to share their views on the proposals, to draw out the issues which respondents viewed as the most important in relation to the potential development.
- 2.19 The following key themes emerged which are analysed and evidenced in greater detail below.

**Table 3: Q3: Please let us know any other comments you may have about the proposals**

Theme of feedback	Number of times referenced
Transport and access	141
Ecology and environment	109
Loss of local amenity and social impact	83
Ability of local social infrastructure to cope (e.g. schools, GP surgeries)	71



Colchester's housing need	52
Climate change and pollution	50
Site suitability (e.g. flooding, sewerage, archaeology, contamination)	37
Consultation method	30
Density and style of development	27
Site ownership	26

#### *Transport and access*

- 2.20 Transport and access issues were the most frequently raised theme, appearing in 141 written feedback forms. Most of these expressed the opinion that the local road network would not be able to cope with an influx of new people and vehicles.
- 2.21 The key areas principally mentioned were the roads directly surrounding the site, namely Mersea Road, Abbot's Road and Berechurch Hall Road, particularly at key commuting and school run times. The Lidl on Abbot's Road was repeatedly cited as a special area of concern for congestion.
- 2.22 Several feedback forms suggested that any new development would have to have multiple access roads.
- 2.23 Several comments expressed the difficulty of mitigating the development's impact on local traffic flow due to the surrounding roads being naturally bordered by the river and by the town's Roman walls.
- 2.24 In relation to local transport services, a significant number of respondents commented that the existing bus services would not be able to service demand. Their limited operation, going into Colchester town centre rather than the surrounding area, was also raised as a drawback for potential commuters looking for employment in the local area.

### *Ecology and environment*

- 2.25 After transport and access concerns, the most frequently cited issue was ecological and environmental concerns due to the potential new development impacting wildlife habitats.
- 2.26 In many cases respondents listed the species they had personally observed on the Middlewick Ranges, particularly where they believed these to be protected.
- 2.27 The Essex Wildlife Trust also responded formally to the consultation with its intention to object to the proposals due to their potential to create a significant reduction in biodiversity for the Local Wildlife Site. Its objection also referenced Colchester Borough Council's commitment to delivering an overall net gain to biodiversity in the implementation of its new Local Plan, stating that the Middlewick Ranges Local Wildlife Site would play a key part in this:

*"It is our contention that the loss of a large part of Middlewick Ranges local wildlife site to development will result in a significant reduction in biodiversity and therefore cannot be considered sustainable. The ecological value of Middlewick Ranges must be recognised and protected if Colchester Borough Council's new local plan is to deliver an overall biodiversity net gain."* [Essex Wildlife Trust]

- 2.28 Some feedback also contained doubts about the proposal's efforts to mitigate its impact on local wildlife. Of particular concern for some was the loss of connectivity for wildlife across the site, while others were happy with the retention of specific spaces for habitats.

### *Loss of local amenity and social impact*

- 2.29 83 responses mentioned how the proposed development would impact on the existing community's use of the Middlewick Ranges site. Activities such as dog walking and nature-spotting were most frequently cited, with a significant proportion of respondents talking about the site's contribution to the community's mental and physical wellbeing.
- 2.30 This was regularly linked to children needing natural outdoor play spaces instead of being 'stuck indoors' with phones and computers. In this context, some respondents noted how the community has used Middlewick Ranges for generations and their hope that future generations could continue to have access to the site.
- 2.31 Comments on the loss of amenity were regularly framed in the context of a perceived lack of green spaces elsewhere in south Colchester. The Middlewick Ranges site is perceived by some as

possessing a community facility value equivalent to the Highwoods Country Park for this part of the borough.

- 2.32 Some respondents felt that the creation of a new community was at the expense of the amenity and quality of life of existing residents. This included seven feedback forms implying that the new development would also increase crime rates and antisocial behaviour in the local area.

#### *Social infrastructure*

- 2.33 71 respondents talked about the local social infrastructure and its perceived inability to cope with any significant new development. As demonstrated by Question 2, healthcare and educational facilities were most frequently referenced issues, followed by perceived pressure on local policing.
- 2.34 Many respondents stated that local schools (both primary and secondary) and GP surgeries were already unable to cope without additional residents.
- 2.35 Similarly to Question 2, several respondents were sceptical about references to supporting infrastructure provision to accompany the development. This was raised in the context of previous developments that brought a perceived lack of benefits and new amenities.

#### *Colchester's Housing Need*

- 2.36 52 respondents questioned the need for the development, with many disputing the independently assessed housing need (920 homes per year) in Colchester's Draft Local Plan. The view that Colchester is already overdeveloped and overpopulated were frequently cited as objections to the proposals going ahead.
- 2.37 This included reference to specific new developments including The Hythe, Tollgate, Severills Hospital, Lexden Hospital and the proposed West Tey garden community.
- 2.38 Three feedback forms acknowledged the need for more housing, but also questioned whether 1,000 was the right number for this site.
- 2.39 There was also a general level of concern that the properties would not help the people and community of Colchester but instead be bought by commuters or outsiders. 14 specifically referenced new residents from London buying any houses, which was portrayed as negatively impacting the town's current community.

- 2.40 Some respondents therefore stated that the proposals should include guaranteed provision for local people, including homeless individuals.

*Climate change and pollution*

- 2.41 Climate change, greenhouse gas emissions and carbon were referenced in 14 responses, while a further 36 respondents concentrated specifically on potential air pollution, largely as a result of increased traffic movements due to the new development.
- 2.42 Some respondents stated that it would be difficult to encourage sustainable modes of transport due to the lack of bus services and the site's perceived isolation from nearby train services. In particular, Wivenhoe Station's location over the river was repeatedly characterised as difficult to access.
- 2.43 A perceived increase in air pollution due to traffic and the partial loss of Middlewick acting as a 'green lung' was frequently commented on. Again, this was perceived to be a pre-existing issue for the town which any new development would make worse.

*Site suitability*

- 2.44 37 respondents named specific issues that they believed made the site unsuitable for any future development, namely perceived contamination from foot and mouth livestock carcasses (11), munitions (4), sewerage issues (10), flooding (8) and existing archaeology (4).

*Consultation*

- 2.45 30 respondents took the opportunity to comment on the Defence Infrastructure Organisation's consultation within their written feedback. Several were sceptical about the process and their ability to affect any change by leaving feedback, expressing a belief that the development going ahead was a foregone conclusion.
- 2.46 In 12 feedback forms, the respondents expressed frustration about the lack of information available at the consultation events. The lack of consultants based locally was mentioned, leading some to believe that a lack of local input would adversely affect the quality of the development.
- 2.47 Six responses specifically criticised Colchester Borough Council for a lack of involvement in the consultation process or attendance at the consultation events, as well as for standing to profit from the development at the perceived expense of local people's quality of life.

- 2.48 While a narrative of the local community against outsiders proposing development was frequently apparent, there was also a frustration that objections might be perceived or written off as 'NIMBYism'.

*Density*

- 2.49 27 responses made specific comments about the density and design of any new development. Nine of these stated that if building does go ahead, then it should be in reduced numbers rather than the 'up to 1,000 homes' referenced in the consultation. Housing numbers between 200 and 500 were suggested, but none higher.
- 2.50 Nine respondents stated they wanted to see social housing and council homes as some or all of the development.
- 2.51 Regarding the design of the houses, there was a clear preference for individuality rather than 'cookie cutter' homes. Some respondents also expressed a preference for sustainable building choices.
- 2.52 However, six feedback forms questioned whether the current proposals would act as a floodgate for further development on the Middlewick Ranges and in south Colchester. This was referenced in relation to the land to the south of the proposed development and whether this could be developed in the future.

*Site ownership*

- 2.53 26 responses specifically questioned the ownership of the site, referring to a locally held belief that the land has been gifted to the Ministry of Defence by the people of Colchester. Many such responses referred to the site as 'public land' or 'our Wick'.
- 2.54 Several respondents wanted to see the land 'returned' to the community to be used as a Country Park. Some suggested that the public would be able to raise funds or volunteer their time to facilitate this.
- 2.55 Some feedback also suggested that the development proposals had the potential to damage the positive relationship between the Ministry of Defence and the people of Colchester.

## **Conclusion**

- 2.56 Consultation on the initial concept plans for Middlewick Ranges was well participated, with approximately 540 visitors at the public exhibitions and 231 pieces of written feedback. The majority of respondents expressed objection or opposition towards development at the site, largely citing the loss of ecology and leisure space and concern for the ability of transport and social infrastructure to cope with increased homes as primary issues for concern.

### 3 AUTUMN / WINTER 2020 ENGAGEMENT

3.1 Since undertaking the consultation set out in Chapter 2, the project team has been working on further studies, surveys and assessment work in order to further develop the supporting evidence base for the Local Plan allocation. This has taken into consideration the comments and feedback received during 2019 consultation, including topics such as ecology and transportation.

3.2 It had originally been the plan that a further round of public exhibitions would have taken place during 2020 to provide an update to residents and other stakeholders on the work undertaken by the team. However the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have meant this has not proven to be feasible and as such the team has had to combine a newsletter mailing with virtual meetings. This chapter sets out the engagement that has taken place from September to December 2020.

#### ***Community newsletter***

3.3 An update community newsletter is being prepared and will be distributed to approximately 6,000 local properties around the site, following the submission of the technical evidence base to Colchester Borough Council. This will update people on the progress of the project and advise them how their feedback has been considered and applied in the further development of the illustrative masterplan for the site.

3.4 A copy of this newsletter can be found at **Appendix A** of this document. The distribution area is consistent with the area that was used for invitations to the 2019 consultation.

3.5 The newsletter provided an update on:

- the work that had been undertaken by the team;
- an overview of the previous consultation and discussion of the most common themes of feedback;
- a revised illustrative masterplan for the site showing how it could be redeveloped;
- timescales and next steps for the Local Plan process and when the site may come forward for development; and
- contact details for the project team and a link to the existing .gov consultation website, which has been updated with the technical documents submitted to Colchester Borough Council

3.6 A copy of the newsletter will also be made available on the existing consultation website, which is available to view at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/middlewick-ranges-supporting-sustainable-growth-for-colchester>

### ***Updates for Colchester councillors***

- 3.7 The project team has met and provided briefings to members of Colchester Borough Council, including:
- Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council;
  - Ward councillors for Old Heath and the Hythe; and
  - Ward councillors for Berechurch
- 3.8 These briefings included an update on the work that the team has undertaken since the 2019 consultation (when meetings had previously been arranged with the majority of these same councillors), with a particular focus on known topics of interest (including ecology, open space and transport) and an overview of next steps and timescales.

### ***Updates for local Members of Parliament***

- 3.9 The team has also provided briefings to Member of Parliament for Colchester (Will Quince MP) and for Harwich and North Essex (Sir Bernard Jenkin MP).

Again, these briefings included an update on the work that the team has undertaken since the 2019 consultation and a particular focus on known topics of interest (including ecology, open space and transport) and an overview of next steps and timescales.

### ***Further engagement***

- 3.10 It is envisaged that there will continue to be local interest in the proposed redevelopment of the site as the Local Plan process moves forward. The project team will continue to engage with stakeholders on technical matters associated with the evidence base for the site allocation as part of the Examination in Public process. It is committed to working positively and proactively with Colchester Borough Council and others to bring forward this site.
- 3.11 Further engagement activities may be organised in the future, potentially once COVID-19 social distancing restrictions are lessened allowing public events to be held again. The team may also provide further briefings to local councillors, MPs as requested.



## **4 APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A: 2020 newsletter**

# Middlewick Ranges

## Introduction

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is investing in new military firing range capabilities for Colchester Garrison which will release Middlewick Ranges for disposal.

This presents an opportunity for the site to contribute towards Colchester's need for new housing, and the land has been identified in the draft Colchester Local Plan as being suitable for up to 1,000 new homes and supporting local infrastructure.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), on behalf of the MOD, undertook public consultation in the summer of 2019 on some initial ideas

on how 1,000 homes could be sensitively and suitably brought forward. Due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated social distancing restrictions, we are unable to hold further public events this year as we had previously planned.

We have designed this newsletter to provide local residents and groups with an update on the work we have been undertaking since last summer.

## About the site

Middlewick Ranges is an operational firing range located on the southern edge of Colchester. The site will be surplus to requirements once upgrade works have been completed at nearby Fingringhoe Ranges.

This map shows the area in **red** which is to be released by the MOD and which has been allocated by Colchester Borough Council for new housing in the draft Local Plan.

The area outlined in **blue** to the south of Birch Brook will remain within the ownership of the MOD and continue to be used actively by the military for training exercises. It will however also be used for some ecological mitigation work linked to the redevelopment of the ranges (*more information on this over the page*).



# Public consultation

The DIO undertook a public consultation exercise in July and August 2019. More than 500 people took part by attending one of the two consultation events and providing feedback on our initial concept plans.

There were some clear themes of feedback received at these events. We have set out some of the most common themes of feedback and questions we received, as well as responses from the project team.

## Green space and parkland

- Will people still be able to walk across the site?
- Will the existing public rights of way be kept?

### Our Response:

- Our illustrative masterplan shows that **over 63%** of the allocation site would remain as green space open to the public, including children's play spaces, sports pitches and allotments.
- Large, accessible and usable green spaces are shown within our masterplan, opening up areas of the site to the public which are currently restricted.
- Existing rights of way will be retained, with the potential for additional connections to the surrounding residential area.

## Traffic and transport

- Will local roads be able to cope with the additional traffic?
- Will there be support for local public transport?



Illustrative view of the development

### Our response:

- Our transport modelling has shown that with appropriate mitigation, the potential impact of the development on local roads can be positively managed. The design of the scheme will encourage low reliance on the car but with support for hybrid and electric vehicles
- The link road through the site, between Mersea Road and Abbots Road, would provide an alternative route through the area and lessen traffic pressures along Abbots Road
- Bus and cycle links will also be provided through the site, with bus stops within the site itself. The Colchester Orbital route and other pedestrian routes will be integrated across the site.

## Ecology and environment

- How will the acid grassland on site be considered?
- What work have you done to understand the ecology of the site?
- How will you be protecting the biodiversity of the site?

### Our Response:

- Our approach has sought to minimise impacts on ecology and biodiversity.
- Extensive assessment and surveys have been undertaken to help us understand where these sensitive areas are and the species which they are likely to support, which has informed the emerging design
- The redevelopment of the site will deliver a net gain in biodiversity, through mitigation and enhancement measures implemented across the site and on land to the south of it (the area outlined in blue on the illustrative masterplan)

**A Consultation Report has been prepared setting out the feedback received during these events in more detail. This can be found on the project consultation website (see back page).**



## Work undertaken since Summer 2019

We have been busy behind the scenes since our consultation events in Summer 2019. We have:

- Continued to meet with planning and technical officers at Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council;
- Provided briefings to local councillors and MPs;
- Updated our transport modelling and strategy;
- Completed soil sampling;
- Prepared draft evidence base and impact mitigation strategies;
- Agreed methodology for biodiversity assessments;
- Sought specialist opinion on acid grassland preservation strategy; and
- Further developed and refined the overall masterplan based on consultation feedback.

This illustrative masterplan shows one way in which the site could be redeveloped with new homes, to help inform the emerging Local Plan.



- Up to 1,000 new homes in a mix of sizes and styles
- A new local centre with primary school and community facilities within walking distance of all homes
- Pedestrian and cycle connections complemented by green corridors and links
- Existing hedgerows protected and included within the green corridors
- Retention of an area of acid grassland
- Heritage features protected and incorporated into the development

Our work supports the allocation of the site within the emerging Local Plan as a suitable location for new homes. This will be considered further by the Inspector at the Local Plan Examination.

We can only show an illustrative level of masterplanning here. We are working with Colchester Borough Council to help inform the Local Plan Examination and make sure there are clear policies set out within the Local Plan to guide the future redevelopment of the site.

As well as delivering much-needed new homes for Colchester, the redevelopment of the site will see money reinvested into the defence estate supporting our armed forces.

### KEY

- |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <span style="color: red;">—</span> Site boundary   | Proposed sports pitches                | Primary road   | Enhanced hedgerows and tree lines                                       |
| <span style="color: blue;">—</span> Ecological mitigation land within MOD land ownership | Proposed focal spaces                  | Vehicular site access  | Key grassland habitat   |
| Residential  | Allotments                             | <span style="color: blue;">- - -</span> Indicative orbital route         | Heritage asset and setting to be sensitively incorporated               |
| Education  | Existing hedgerows, trees and woodland | <span style="color: orange;">- - -</span> Public Right of Way (footpath) | <span style="color: pink;">- - -</span> Public Right of Way (bridleway) |
| Local centre   | Proposed green corridors               | Potential for green community uses                                       | Village green   |

## Next steps

We currently expect the Local Plan to be considered by an independent government planning inspector as part of the Examination in Public (EiP) in early 2021. We had previously thought this would have taken place during 2020 but it has been delayed due to the need for Modifications to the Section 1 part of the Local Plan to be considered.

If the EiP concludes in 2021 and the Local Plan is found to be 'sound' it could be adopted by the end of the year. The Middlewick Ranges site would then be formally allocated for a new housing development.

If the land is allocated for residential development it will be brought forward only once the works at Fingringhoe Ranges are completed. The owner of the site at that point (either the MOD or a developer which has acquired the site) would then bring forward a planning application. We think this could take place during 2022, although that is only indicative at this point.

This developer would need to undertake their own public consultation and people will have further opportunities to provide feedback on the draft proposals.

**Although the site has been identified for future disposal, at present it remains a heavily used military training site. When accessing the Ranges we ask that the public respects the dangers associated with military training to keep both themselves, and our military, safe.**

### Winter 2020 (now)

Submission of evidence to Local Plan inspector

### Winter 2021

Anticipated adoption of new Local Plan

### 2022

Likely work on planning application for site by future developer

### 2023 onwards

Expected phased redevelopment of site

### By 2033

Anticipated completion of site redevelopment

## Contact us

If you have any questions about this newsletter or the project generally, you can contact us via [DIO-DEOPublicConsultation@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DIO-DEOPublicConsultation@mod.gov.uk)

You can also visit the project consultation website <https://MiddlewickConsultation.co.uk> on which you can find:

- a copy of the materials shown during the 2019 consultation;
- a summary report from that consultation; and
- the Vision Document and associated technical studies due to be submitted to the planning inspector as part of the Local Plan review.



Illustrative view of the development from Abbot's Road