

**DRAFT**  
For consultation  
8<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> October

**WEST BERGHOLT** - Neighbourhood Plan

May 2017 - 2032



Our children's future



# Foreword

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## West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan

### Foreword to Consultation Draft

In July 2005 a group of people from West Bergholt got together in the John Lampon Hall to discuss what was important to our village and wider parish area. The result of their discussions and subsequent labours was the first forward plan for West Bergholt, “a Parish Plan – Moving Forward Together” produced in 2008. More followed through a Village Design Statement and many other initiatives such as the Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) and the community broadband project to name but a small selection of community based ventures.

In 2011 the government realised that there was no way that locality-based planning could be ignored and the Localism Act was passed empowering communities to get organised and produce wide ranging planning documents, aimed at not only taking control of their environments, but also harnessing and unleashing the power of local knowledge and collaborative ventures. The “Big Society” may have become a political cliché, but it has its roots in common sense: why would anyone imagine that central or local government could actually plan on a parish or village scale, and actually deliver or claim to deliver what was needed locally with any sense of true democracy or awareness of local needs. As George Ewart Evans said nearly a century ago why not “ask the fellows who cut the hay”!!

So “top down” has our society become that we sometimes underestimate the value of “bottom-up” community-based work. In 2013 work began of producing West Bergholt’s first Neighbourhood Plan. A steering group has been formed of people from the Parish Council plus other representatives of organisations in our village and wider parish area.

To date we have assembled a holistic Neighbourhood Plan consisting not only of true “planning” matters such as housing and employment, but also matter well outside this brief such as traffic and transport, environmental quality, sports and recreation and communications strategy. Along the way we have (possibly all too frequently!) canvassed for local input through many surveys and questionnaires, but the reason we have done this is to make sure we check at every point that we have captured what is the essence of what the community values and wants to see happen.

And so to today – with the publishing of the consultation draft of the Neighbourhood Plan – we ask again “is this what we need for the future wellbeing of our parish?”. Take time to read the document, the various consultation documents such as the summaries, exhibition material and participate in the accompanying survey. This is the last of the informal consultations which will take place. After this our plan has to take its chances in the rarefied atmosphere of statutory planning examinations, including a referendum in due course, before it can be declared a “statutory” plan.









As Chairman of the Steering Group it has been my pleasure to lead a group of extremely motivated people, whose concerted effort has been to bring us to this point in the process. Make their day and mine by helping us over line – by all means challenge us and argue with our findings but do so from the point of making the plan even better than it is.

Above all please participate.

Chris Stevenson

On behalf of the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

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# Executive Summary

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## Why prepare a neighbourhood plan?

In December 2011 the Localism Act was passed by parliament and came into operation. The act is complex and much has been written about its intent. What is clear is that communities (with the relevant credentials), will be given more of a say in how they can shape their future develop. This means the future development of West Bergholt is in our hands more than third parties such as Developers, Colchester Borough or Essex County Council and in some respects Central Government.

The village has a [Parish Plan](#) and [Village Design Statement](#). These were put in place following a detailed and lengthy work programme completed by village volunteers. Both were adopted by Colchester Borough Council as supplementary planning guidance documents, and they provide an aspirational plan for the future of our village reflecting the findings from community wide consultation programmes. Individually however they do not provide a holistic strategic plan for the village.

Communities with a Neighbourhood Plan have the means to define the “what, where and timeframe” of change for the area defined by the Neighbourhood Plan. There must however be a clear understanding that a “No Change” option is not permissible in Neighbourhood Plan development terms.

The future development of our community and the facilities will provide sustainability for generations to come. It will be determined by a correctly compiled and approved Neighbourhood Plan.

## What is the neighbourhood plan and why bother?

Although many residents do not involve themselves with local decision making this does not indicate a lack of interest in community well being.

However indifference to decision-making must not be confused with lack of interest in community wellbeing; most residents really care about the community and want it to be the place of choice for our children and perhaps their children’s children. The Localism Act recognises this situation and where there is a desire for people to have a say then residents are given more control over local decision that directly affect the community where they live.

The theme of local decisions made by local people is so entrenched in the Act that for the first time a referendum must be part of the village Neighbourhood Plan approval process to demonstrate community support for the plan. A majority vote at the referendum is the first major hurdle of the Neighbourhood Plan approval process, signifying acceptance of some key points including;

- Acceptance that future development change will occur, however any change will be greatly enhanced by the approved Neighbourhood Plan.
- A focus on what is wanted by the community over time thereby influencing village sustainability.
- A demonstration that its plans for the future are not only acceptable to the majority of residents but also that the plan complies with legal statute.
- An acceptance that the Neighbourhood Plan means change will occur which in turn are linked to benefits that accrue for the community as a whole.

## Executive Summary

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### What if we do not have a Neighbourhood Plan?

Initially nothing will alter for a while providing we do not become the target for developers. For communities without a Neighbourhood Plan there is already a presumption in favour of the developer to build where they can show a need and or a reason to develop.

Without a Neighbourhood Plan the community will continue to be reliant upon non community bodies to determine the scope and location of development within our village.

Colchester Borough Council has an approved Local Development Framework that specifies planning growth needs within the borough. The process of updating the existing Local Development Plan has begun and will take the form of a Local Plan. This will be an unknown factor and when adopted this may or may not include wide-scale development in villages.

Without a Neighbourhood Plan we will have little to help us control our future building strategy. In the past West Bergholt has been blessed by wealthy benefactors with vision to see what was needed to promote health and well-being. These same benefactors provided money to execute their vision and just consider where our village would be without the Orpen Hall, the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field or Poors Land. We are rapidly reaching overuse of these important and well used facilities. As an example, it would be prudent to plan now for adequate recreational facilities to meet the future needs of our village.

### This draft Plan

Our draft plan provides a framework within which we can plan holistically. In it you will find:

1. A profile of our community in a variety of guises such that we can judge the community health of our current circumstances
2. Our vision and aspirations for the lives of future generations
3. Ways in which we can influence change in a positive manner and to the benefits of the wider community
4. Proposals which cover the future land use for housing, recreation and community buildings and facilities
5. Ideas for projects or activities which the community has suggested as priorities
6. Policies for ensuring that the Plan has a statutory controlling influence over change whoever is the instigator

An important concept in our Neighbourhood Plan is that of family groupings. We recognise that we are planning for a wide variety of ages, family sizes and family circumstances. The groupings we have chosen are:

- *Younger Families - Early years play, pre and primary schooling*
- *Developing Families – Families with children in teenage years*
- *Mature Families – All adult households*
- *Single / couple adult living*
- *Senior years (largely retired residents)*

Through our plan you will find there are many examples of how the Neighbourhood Plan can be shaped to provide benefits to the community. We want residents to influence how benefits will be achieved and this will be achieved by the results obtained through the planned consultation processes. It must be worth our time to get the plan right and to shape our village future. In conclusion, can we really afford not to have a Neighbourhood Plan?

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 The Purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan has a number of functions. In a strict planning sense it relates to the use and development of land, and in this sense its primary purpose is to help in deciding future land allocations for a variety of uses, notably but not exclusively, housing and subsequently planning applications in the Plan Area. However it is also an opportunity to cover in a holistic sense a great deal more. Communities have manifold needs and a Neighbourhood Plan allows these needs to be set out in a way that the community can plan for priorities it feels need addressing, everything in fact from sport to transport!

Localism provides the opportunity for local decisions to be made by local people. As long as it can be demonstrated that the Neighbourhood Plan is inclusive and deals with potential and planned growth, then there is no reason why it would not be agreeable to the community when submitted for referendum or by CBC which must approve the plan.



*The purpose of this document is therefore to:*

- Set out a framework to guide residents, local authorities and developers on how the community wishes to manage and control future development in the Plan Area over the next 15 years, along with its facilities, services and environment. This document is therefore intended to be updated from time to time, as well as formally every five years.
- Record the historical and existing status and nature of the community and its environment.
- Establish an Action Plan that provides the community with a prioritised plan to improve its facilities, services and environment on a voluntary and assisted basis.

*The Neighbourhood Plan therefore:*

- Identifies the main community issues and objectives for West Bergholt as a whole.
- Makes proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes
- Sets out the community's policies for the management of development
- Provides an Action Plan that schedules a series of desired projects arising from the residents' vision for sustainable growth in their Neighbourhood Area.
- Documents the mechanisms for monitoring and the timescales for delivering the Plan and its proposals



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.2 Local Planning Context

West Bergholt sits within a number of other plan and service areas including:

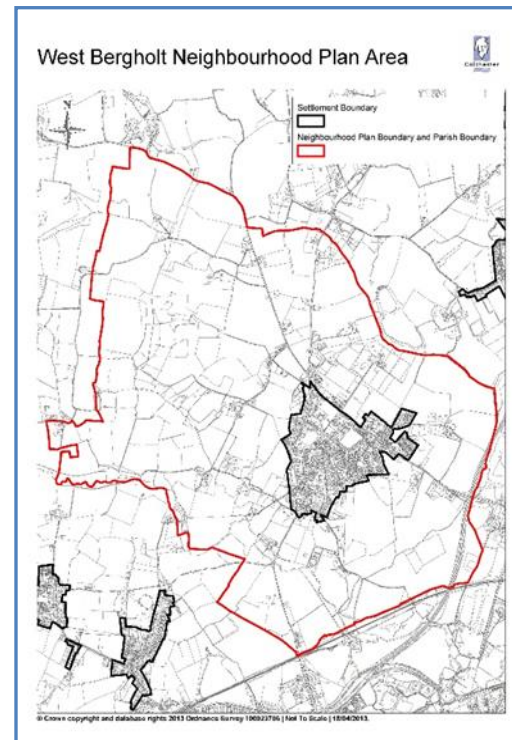
- **National Government** which sets out Planning Policies & Frameworks and other matters including strategic infrastructure
- **Essex County Council** which produces plans for a number of functions including: minerals and waste; education; social services; highways and libraries
- **Colchester** which produces the Local Plan for the Borough area
- **Its own Parish Council** which has at its heart the representation of its community to other bodies, as well as specific localised functions covering open space, parish facilities such as community buildings and other facilities such as play and recreational activities
- **Service Specific Plans** such as those set out by the Police and Fire Services and the National & Mental Health Services
- **Deregulated private bodies** such as transport and utility bodies which provide us with power, water and public transport services
- **Voluntary sector** which comes in a variety of guises to fill gaps in the public and private sector.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out to ascertain which areas would benefit from intervention and to sound its community out on areas where they think planning could be carried out at a local level.

The biggest impact on local land use planning matters is Colchester’s Local Plan which currently spans 15 years from 2009 to 2023. A new Local plan is in the process of being formulated to cover the period up to 2032. Our Neighbourhood Plan must be in conformity with this Plan by law although the relationships with other service and planning bodies is in fact equally if not more important.

## 1.3 How the Plan was produced

The plan was a community-led affair, but affiliated to the Parish Council who acted as its sponsor. The Neighbourhood Plan was informed by village workshops, community surveys and other parish meetings. The process was overseen by a Steering Group made up of both residents and business owners within West Bergholt who valued the opportunity to have a say in the future shape and development of their village.



## 1.4 The Plan Area

Following an application to Colchester Borough Council to designate the parish of West Bergholt as a Neighbourhood Plan area, a statutory consultation was held in June 2013. No objections were forthcoming and the plan areas was confirmed and is shown below.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.5 A brief history of West Bergholt

West Bergholt is a small compact rural parish located to the north west of Colchester comprising an area of 929 hectares and dwellings. Dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century the village was originally known as Bercolta, later recorded as Bergholt Sackville, after the Sackville family who held the main manor from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The village is recorded in the “Doomsday Book”. It was finally named West Bergholt in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to distinguish it from East Bergholt in Suffolk.

The landscape surrounding the village is attractive and undulating and is bounded to the south and west by the sloping valleys of the river Colne and St Botolphs Brook. The north and east are arable farmlands interspersed with small woodlands. Indeed the name Bergholt is derived from the Anglo Saxon terms ‘beorg’ meaning hill and ‘holt’ meaning wood. There are seven local wildlife sites of importance for nature conservation including the famous Hillhouse Wood (administered by the Woodland trust) known to many as the ‘Bluebell Wood’.

The village has 34 buildings listed for architectural merit. The only grade 1 listed building is the Church of St Mary in Hall Road, adjacent to Bergholt Hall. Now redundant but the church is still consecrated and used for special services and village events. The building was originally Saxon in origin.

West Bergholt has evolved into its current form through circumstances to meet local needs and demands. Historical development has resulted in the broad shape of the village in terms of houses and amenities provided to meet the needs of residents, and has largely determined the shape of the village envelope.



*The Church of St Mary*



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.5 A brief history of West Bergholt continued.

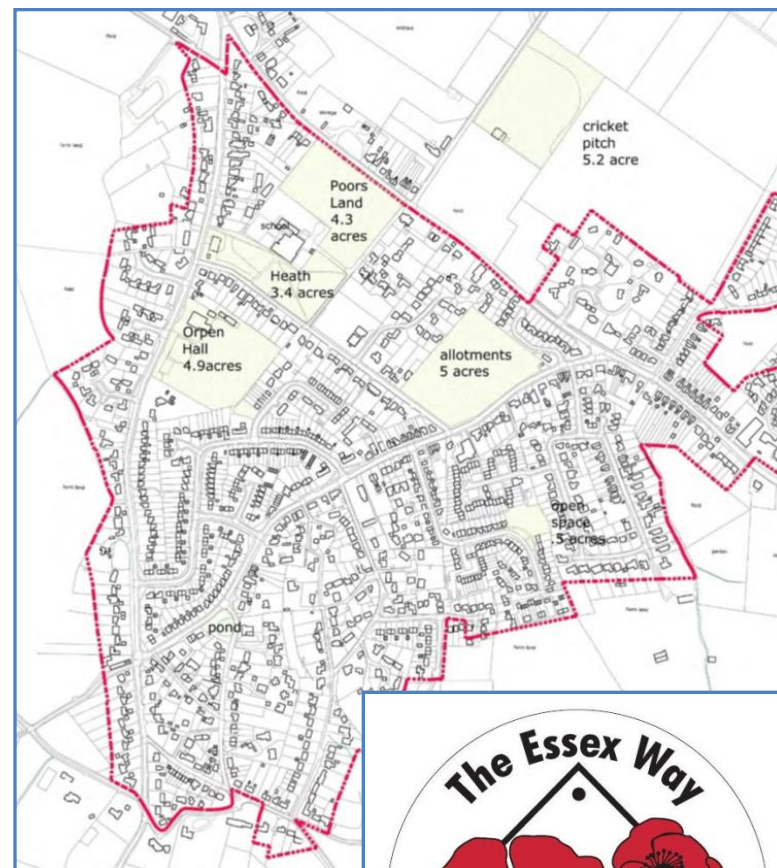
The village has had a largely agricultural heritage and the population settled at approximately 1200 from 1801 to 1961. During the 1800's the village was home to Daniell's brewery which operated successfully until the 1950's. The new owner, Truman's, operated from the site until 1989, when it was developed into houses and flats. The village expanded significantly in the 1960's and 1970's and currently has a population of 3344 residents and 1363 households. The growth in population was the result of new estates being constructed and a variety of styles mark this expansion such as those around Lexden Road , Mumford Road and those around Pirie Road as well as the development on the old brewery site.

A number of small scale business parks have developed in the following areas; Colchester Road, Patterns Yard, Armoury Road, Bourne Road and Fossets Lane. These house independent businesses as well as offering some office space. There is a showground located in Nayland Road which is used for events such as the annual historic vehicle show.

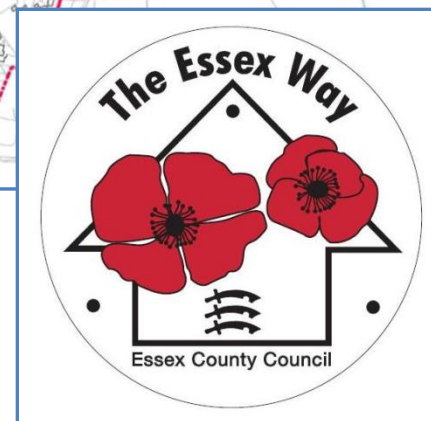
Nowadays, with the decline in agricultural employment, many residents commute to Colchester for work as well as towns such as Ipswich and Chelmsford because of the close proximity to the A12. It is also a desirable location for those commuting into London being only 2.5 miles from the main railway station.

The village has 3 main areas of open space, the Lorkin Daniell Field in Lexden Road with the Orpen Village Hall on site, the area of Heath land in Lexden Road, where the primary school is sited and Poors Land in Colchester Road. All areas are available for sport or recreation. There is an area of 140 allotments in New Church Road and a cricket pitch in Manor Road.

There are numerous areas of public rights of way in and around the village that can be used for access or recreation. The Essex Way, a long distance footpath from Epping to Harwich, passes through West Bergholt.



*The village envelope*



*The Essex Way logo*

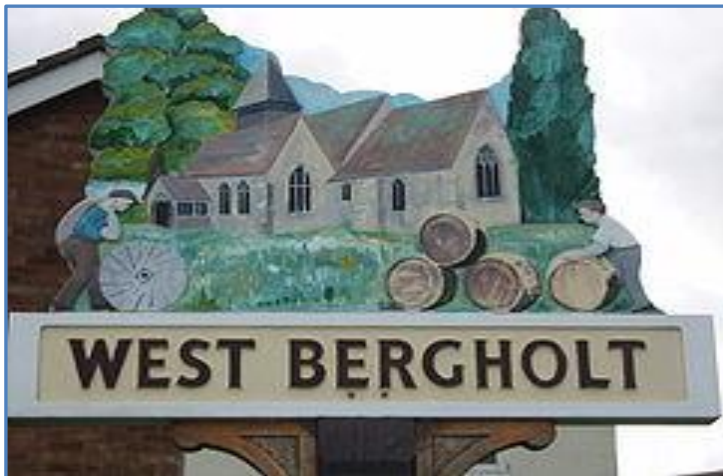
## 2.0 Our Future and Issues of Importance

### 2.1 A vision for our parish and village

We hope to influence the future for the better by our concerted actions. This will have an impact on West Bergholt as a Place and will similarly affect its community. We have tried to reflect this in our vision statement which was tested out through our consultations with the majority feeling it was appropriate for a plan lasting many years.

#### The West Bergholt Vision Statement

*“By 2032 West Bergholt will be a prosperous community which has taken control of its destiny through local decision-making, which has achieved a sustainable mix of development, and where the combination of the built and natural environment provides an attractive location for residents, businesses and visitors alike.”*



### 2.2 Aims of the Neighbourhood Plan

The main aims of the Neighbourhood Plan appear below. These are strategic and overarching covering the success of the plan in terms of getting it adopted as well as ;

- **To produce a conforming and legal Neighbourhood Plan for West Bergholt**, that fulfils the requirements needed for adoption of the plan by Colchester Borough Council.
- **To define neighbourhood planning powers**, to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the parish. These are described legally as ‘neighbourhood development plans’.
- To obtain information as necessary **to influence the statutory authorities and other decision-making bodies on planning considerations** which affect and are acceptable to village residents.
- **To allow all residents and businesses within West Bergholt an opportunity to have their say on all aspects of community planning, development and considerations**, that directly affect the community.

These Aims are important and vital elements of a Neighbourhood Plan. Achieving these aims comes with conditions which need addressing before the Neighbourhood Plan can be put to a community referendum and legally come into force.

The following general conditions ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is legally compliant and takes account of wider policy considerations (e.g. national policy).

- They must have regard to national planning policy;
- They must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. such as in a core strategy) or put simply do not contradict the core strategy which has been adopted by Colchester Borough Council;
- They must be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.



## 2.0 Our Future and Issues of Importance

### 2.3 Our Aspirations, expressed as Objectives

Our community, its residents, clubs, societies, organisations, businesses and individuals aspire for an ever improved quality of life. These aspirations are many and varied. We have grouped the main aspects under the overarching themes, set out below:

We wish to achieve the following objectives;

- *Creating a sense of community :*

To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups to interact and take part in a wide range of activities and improve communication between and across community groups

- *Caring for our environment:*

Maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of accessible open space.

- *Enhancing and expanding community amenities:*

Provide improved community facilities which support local groups especially in the areas of sport and recreation, community buildings, telecommunications and meeting areas.

- *Integrating sustainable communities throughout the parish:*

Support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing needs.



*The snow clearing volunteers*

## 3.0 Sustainable Growth for the Whole Community, Our Strategy Framework for the future of West Bergholt

### 3.1 What do we mean by sustainable growth?

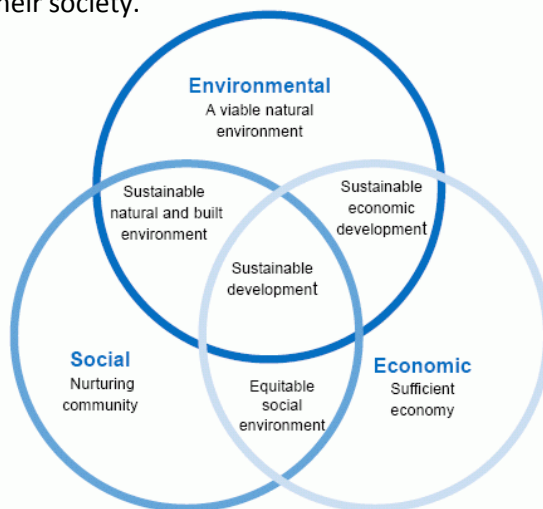
For most people sustainability relates to the use of the planet’s resources and the impact this has on the natural environment and the resultant quality of life for its inhabitants. Whilst this remains undoubtedly true, sustainability in planning terms has widened to incorporate all the factors that sustain communities. These include;

**Environmental** matters, the health and quality of our natural and built environments.

**Economic** outlook, the opportunities to enable a prosperous community and enabling aspects such as access to jobs, ability to successfully trade and the necessary infrastructure to maintain prosperity.

**Social** & Community wellbeing covering everything from our health to the ability of people to interact with their society.

In our Neighbourhood Plan we are taking a holistic view of our community and concentrating on what will be our needs going forward, not just our immediate requirements, but the needs of our children and even grandchildren. What sustains a community now cannot be assumed to be suitable for future generations.



### 3.2 The elements of our strategy

We have adopted a strategy to meet our vision and objectives. In order to do this comprehensively we have considered a framework of nine working areas which map directly or indirectly onto the four objectives:



- **Village society and community: (Section 6)**

**Scope:** To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities both recreational and as volunteers. Identifying vulnerable people in our society and ensuring they get the support they need. Promote and raise awareness of opportunities to increase participation and to maintain a thriving community support network.

**Activities:** clubs, societies, volunteering and mechanisms to strengthen the community and look after the vulnerable. To provide improved community facilities which support local groups especially in the areas of community buildings, telecommunications and meeting areas



- **Environment: (Section 7)**

**Scope:** maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of recreational open space.

**Activities:** the quality of our built and natural environment, its protection, enhancement and improvement.



### 3.0 Sustainable Growth for the Whole Community, Our Strategy Framework for the future of West Bergholt



- **Housing & Planning: (Section 8)**

*Scope:* support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing needs.

*Activities:* the quantity, quality, location and provision of new dwellings in the parish



- **Business & Commerce: (Section 9)**

*Scope:* creating opportunities to work and trade locally

*Activities:* Seek to examine controlled expansion of existing employment opportunities or new opportunities if scope exists; maintain and where practical enhance the existing offer of retail and eating and drinking facilities.



- **Sports and Recreation: (Section 10)**

*Scope:* promoting increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport.

*Activities:* Provide new areas of open space for formal and informal sport and recreation to promote healthy living and lifestyles.



- **Community Safety: (Section 11)**

*Scope:* create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low and where the chance of being the victim of a traffic related accident is minimised.

*Activities:* dealing with perceived and real safety issues, whether criminal or traffic related and working with the police, the community at large and highway authority



- **Communications: (Section 12)**

*Scope:* keeping the community informed through a wide range of media and promoting two-way dialogue and creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making

*Activities:* to improve communications through a range of activities with our website and social media at its core to provide residents with a means to be consulted on village affairs



- **Transport, Highways & Infrastructure: (Section 13)**

*Scope:* moving around in the parish on foot, on bikes, by horse, by car and by bus and ascertaining the wider infrastructure requirements

*Activities:* maintain and improve existing accessibility by bus, walking and cycling. Introduce 20mph zones or streets. Improve maintenance of our highways, bridleways, pathways and verges. Investigate the infrastructure of power, water and drainage

## 3.0 Our Strategy Framework for the future of West Bergholt to provide Sustainable Growth for the Whole Community

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### 3.3 How the Plan takes the strategy in action

In the chapters that follow each of the strategy elements is examined in some detail to ascertain:

- What the base line situation is. This **evidence base** is crucial to understand the starting point for assessing needs. The evidence comes from a number of sources:
  - Databases, inventories and reports already in existence and readily available
  - Surveys which have been undertaken during the Neighbourhood Plan's production, these may be factual or public perceptions
- From the evidence base a list of **issues & opportunities** has been produced both in terms of the present day and for **the future** and cross-checked with the community via surveys
- From the issues and opportunities a listing of **options** has been produced to tackle issues or realise the opportunity areas
- From the options some **priorities** have been produced.
- Finally each section has a robust set of **policies**. There will be typically two types of policy, a General Policy and Development Policy. To help highlight these they will be laid out in a grey box.

In this draft there are a number of proposed policies which will be taken forward in the final version of the plan as either Parish or Planning policies so as to distinguish those which we can enforce under planning law and those we would wish to move forward as a Parish Council.

### 3.4 Dealing with the Statutory and Non-Statutory aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan

It is realised that Neighbourhood Plan's need to conform to the requirements of the Planning System but they must also inspire the wider community, and so each of our strategy elements has been examined in terms of how it affects three important aspects:

- **Matters affecting land use:** aspects of the plan which change "place" through new land uses are a statutory planning matter in the main and so these are shown on our plans and maps and articulated in each section
- **Matters which may or not affect land use but which certainly require formal discussion** are covered by Neighbourhood Plan Policies, again articulated in each section
- **Projects and Initiatives:** those activities which a largely community aspirations are listed in each section separately



## 4.0 Strategic Context: Future development of our community

### 4.1 Village development and growth

The historic development of West Bergholt has fortunately resulted in growth that is of a more centralised manner than many villages across the borough of Colchester and Essex generally. Through the survey and consultation exercises undertaken over the last five years, one common message received from residents is the desire that West Bergholt remains as a discernible village.

West Bergholt is blessed by having natural and/or man-made boundaries to the south and west through the existence of the Colne Valley and the A12 arterial road, separating the village from Colchester Town expansion. To the north and north west of West Bergholt, are found significant areas of agricultural land providing separation from the villages of Great and Little Horkesley and Wormingford, which helps maintain a rural setting for our village.

Following natural building development, housing needs have been fulfilled organically by somewhat unplanned and random increases. Prior to the last 30 years however, the bulk of all housing has occurred in the areas directly linked by the three major roads – Colchester Road, Lexden Road and Chapel Road.

The current village envelope forms an irregular and somewhat random shape around these main roads with an estimated 60% of housing development occurring within the village envelope over the last 60 years. Historical planning development has resulted in some homes and most of the existing village business enterprise sites being located outside of the village envelope.

Over the last 30 years, growth has mostly consisted of new homes being built to infill the green spaces within the confines of the village envelope. A substantial portion of this development has occurred in the gardens of existing properties which has led to a concentration of housing within the tight village envelope, increasing the demand on the village utility infrastructure.

The one major exception to infill development has been the conversion of the old Truman's industrial site to mixed housing and limited business units in 1989. Although there was a recognised need for low cost housing within the village established in the 1990's this need has not been met largely because of changes to the economy and infill opportunities being used for family home development.



*The converted Truman building*

## 4.0 Strategic Context: Future development of our community

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### 4.2 Addressing our Children's Future

Currently West Bergholt benefits from a range of assets and an environment which suits many in the community, but the forward nature of our plan means we need to examine whether the “place” aspects and the “people” aspects are indeed well matched in the future. We have decided to do this by looking at the people aspects first, and to assist with this we have made some generalisations. No one family group or indeed single person household, has the same needs or characteristics but by looking at typical needs we can tease out at a strategic level the issues that need to be addressed.

To promote community wellbeing and village sustainability as a whole the needs of separate but often interlinked family types including any specific requirements for disabilities or special needs have been identified to ensure their needs are met where practical. The various family types are defined as;

- *Younger Families - Early years play, pre and primary schooling*
- *Developing Families – Families with children in teenage years*
- *Mature Families – All adult households*
- *Single / couple adult living*
- *Senior years (largely retired residents)*

We have further looked at the eight categories of our plan and made an assessment of the likely differing needs of each household type. This in turn gives an appreciation of the various facilities that will be needed in future years.

### 4.3 Matching Strategic Needs to Family Type Requirements

Currently West Bergholt has the assets needed to provide the facilities to support the current needs of the community. To a large degree this has come about as a direct result of the generosity and good planning by village benefactors

For example Mr O.G. Orpen, (director of Daniell's brewery) whose estate paid for the village hall known as Orpen Hall in the 1938 and Mr T.D. Daniell who donated 4 acres adjacent to the Orpen Hall in 1939 currently housing an adult football pitch, tennis courts and children's play area. The Parish Council as Trustees and sole management agents provide stewardship of these assets in addition to the green space areas provided under the Village Green (c. 4 acres), Poor's Field (c 5 acres) and the village allotments (c. 6 acres). Future benefactors with a willingness and financial ability to provide additional community assets such as those provided under the estates of Mr Orpen or Mr Daniell are most unlikely. In addition other facilities such as the various housing stock, the transport services, our roads, footpaths and pavements, the shops and business facilities have largely been either market-led, developed over hundreds of years or planned centrally by upper tier bodies.

Given the above and the seemingly endless directions in which our plan could lead us across our eight categories, the strategic building blocks of our plan can emerge in a way that makes sense not only in their own right but which will best suit the needs of the community. This will help enable a sustainable outcome for all.

## 4.0 Strategic Context: Future development of our community

### • Younger Families and Developing Families - Early Years Play, Pre and Primary Schooling

Whilst the needs of this family group are currently adequately provided for through existing facilities in the village some facilities are operating at maximum capacity.

In particular affordable housing for young families is scarce and as a result some may be forced to move away from the village even though other facilities such as the school would normally attract them. Children's play areas are located at;

- The Lorkin Daniel I Playing Field
- Earle Havard / Pirie Road
- Pocket Park - Maltings Park

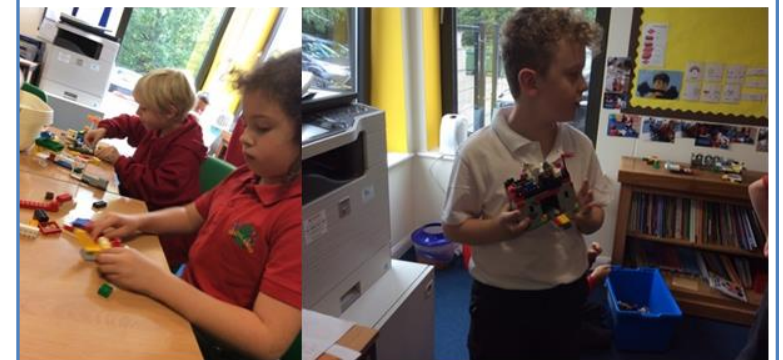
All three play areas are constrained by limited space for future expansion in their current form. Pre School facilities are provided by Blue Bells which almost fully occupies the Orpen and John Lampon Halls during the term time week days. A lack of storage space means that equipment used by this award winning group has to be moved and stored outside the Halls

Heathlands Primary School was extended to provide 50 additional spaces in 2014 for the children of West Bergholt and neighbouring villages. It is assumed this expansion will meet the schooling needs for the next 15 years. However no provision was made to ease the congestion caused by parents bringing their children to school by car.

Footways and cycle paths to and around the school are in need of improvement. A new footway on the south side of Colchester Road adjacent to the school would be highly beneficial to help promote walking to school and ease parking during school time. Dedicated cycle paths would help parents feel more confident in allowing their children to cycle to school.

#### **Summary of future needs:**

- Improved provision of affordable housing
- Expansion and updating of children's play facilities
- Measures to improve traffic safety around the school
- New footways and cycle paths to change means of travel to school.



*The children of Heathlands Primary School*



## 4.0 Strategic Context: Future development of our community

### • Developing Families with Teenage years

State funded secondary schools, grammar and comprehensive, are available outside of the village with some public transport available to and from Colchester schools. There are independent schools in the local area but also a small number of parents organise transport to schools in areas such as Ipswich. A few teenagers do cycle to school during term time when light and weather permits although there are no dedicated cycle paths between West Bergholt and Colchester or Lexden.

Various clubs and sporting activities are available for teenagers including football, cricket, tennis, scouts, girl guides, etc. Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) operates from within the village halls and weather permitting uses the Multi User Games Area and Lorkin Daniel Playing Field. This group has nearly 100 members and meets fortnightly. Holding additional club nights depends on attracting a sufficient pool of volunteer helpers. A youth shelter was constructed on the Lorkin Daniell playing field by the Parish Council and Essex County Council in 2012 but there is a growing need and demand to provide a venue, such as a café, for young people to meet socially.

Unfulfilled demand has existed over a number of years for a skate park to be provided however lack of suitable space and funding has meant this has not come to fruition. Facilities for adults within this group are met through clubs and recreational pursuits in the village. Neither an indoor nor outdoor gymnasium exists in the village nor is there a swimming pool. Adequate number of pubs, and restaurants exist to meet the needs of the future.

#### **Summary of future needs:**

- Provision of a venue with the facility for young people to meet socially
- An expansion and upgrading of sports facilities and opportunities.



*The West Bergholt football team*

### • Mature Families and couples, adult households

As West Bergholt is deemed a desirable place to live many younger adults continue to live in the village, sometimes with their parents, as they grow up and parents tend to stay in their family homes when children leave. For those wishing to downsize it is often not easy to find alternative suitable accommodation.

Shops, a Post Office and Pharmacy provide an invaluable service and residents consider themselves fortunate to have a well regarded Doctor's Surgery.

A pleasant environment is important to this group and so open spaces, including the Allotments, walks and woods need to be well maintained.

Facilities for adults within this group are met through clubs and recreational pursuits in the village but these need to be expanded and well publicised.

#### **Summary of future needs:**

- Maintain and develop the pleasant environment provided by the village open spaces.
- Improve sports facilities and encourage opportunities for involvement in a full range of activities

## 4.0 Strategic Context: Future development of our community

### • Single adult living

Adequate living accommodation exists to meet single adult requirements and is provided through flats and apartments in various locations including the Truman Building in Maltings Park. Many of the facilities needed for this group match those defined above but in particular there is a need to encourage involvement in clubs, societies and sports activities. At present the village has adequate pubs and restaurants but an alternative venue for meeting socially, especially the single adults, would be welcome.

#### **Summary of future needs:**

- Encourage opportunities for involvement in a full range of activities-
- Provision of a venue with the facility to meet socially

### • Senior Years, largely retired residents

Whilst some property downsizing does occur, many in this category choose to remain in the original family home. Sometimes there is a reluctance to leave the home where the family grew up and in other cases there is a lack of suitable or affordable senior years housing. Bungalows are sought after and desirable throughout the village and often change hands very quickly. There is no sheltered accommodation within the village which benefits from the presence of a resident warden.

Sufficient clubs and societies exist to meet most needs of this family type but may need to be better publicised. An adequate public transport system provides the means to shop in the Town centre or to travel further afield if desired. A well developed Care Network involving volunteers provides transport for those that need it, generally for medical appointments. A local Doctors' Surgery and Pharmacy provided a much appreciated service for this group of residents.

As a caring society it is essential that vulnerable residents in this group, especially those without local family and friends, are identified. A vulnerable residents register should be established and names shared with the volunteer organisations.

#### **Summary of future needs:**

- Make the village “senior friendly” both by providing a safe environment and sufficient well publicised recreational activities.
- Ensuring an adequate supply of appropriate accommodation
- Maintaining an efficient Care Network, well supported by volunteers
- Providing good appropriate communications with all senior citizens, especially the lonely and vulnerable.

#### **Matching Strategic Needs to Family Type Requirements and prioritisation**

Category	Younger Families Pre school	Developing Families	Mature families	Single adult living	Senior Years (largely retired residents)
Village society and community	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓
Environment	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Housing and planning	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
Business and commerce	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Sports and recreation	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓
Community Safety	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Communications	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Transport, highways and infrastructure	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓

✓✓✓ Highly relevant

✓✓ Moderately relevant

✓ Minor relevance

## 5.0 Consultation

- **What we set out to achieve**

The Steering Group overseeing the development and assembly of the Neighbourhood Plan was keen to establish the following

- Reaching the attention of as large an audience as possible
- Providing regular opportunities to participate at key stages in the plan's production
- Providing feedback opportunities
- Giving information
- Partnering with organisations which have a stake in the plan

The group set out to do this via: its meetings, workshops, surveys, exhibitions, face to face meetings and through a visible presence on the website, village notice boards and in the Village Bulletin. A full consultation and involvement summary is provided in the appendices.



- **Consultation Base 'the current situation'**

In Nov 2012 and then again throughout 2013 workshops and surveys were undertaken to establish how people felt about the village and to establish key lines of enquiry. Surveys of households, businesses, schools and colleges were undertaken. Results are included in the appendices but key points were recorded as follows:

- Nearly 500 households representing over 1000 people responded
- Key issues identified were;
  - Traffic issues and road maintenance
  - Road safety
  - More facilities for older children
  - Residents having a say in new development
  - Smaller starter or mixed use developments favoured
  - Minimum possible new development favoured
  - Better provision of broadband
- Other points identified were;
  - Strong degree of support for maintaining the identity of the village
  - Very strong support for preserving the environment
  - Residents feel safe in the village from crime or anti-social behaviour



## 5.0 Consultation

- **Consultation Base Issues and Options**

In April and May 2015, an issues and options exhibition and consultation was carried out. This took the information from the earlier surveys plus independent evidence from desktop research and played this out to the community through a range of scenarios and propositions. Results are included in the appendices but key points were recorded as follows:

- 98% of residents thought it was very important or important to have a Neighbourhood Plan
- 93% of respondents felt that giving residents a chance to influence and shape the plan and associated development was the most important reason to have one
- Over 80% supported the vision for the plan
- Support for the objectives, issues and proposals for the plan components were supported by well over 50% of residents.
- Option one restricting the amount of housing to 100 units over the Neighbourhood Plan lifetime emerged as the clear favoured option

- **Draft Plan**



At the time of writing a draft plan has been produced comprising:

- A description of the Neighbourhood Plan area, its strengths and weaknesses, issues and opportunities
- The strategic direction we are suggesting we need to take
- A range of proposals split by topic area
- Proposals for housing and other land use changes.





## 6.0 Village Society and Community

- **What we are seeking to achieve**

**To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities both recreational and as volunteers. To identify vulnerable people in our society and ensure they get the support they need. To promote and raise awareness of opportunities to increase participation and to maintain a thriving community support network.**

There is a need for all sections of the community to participate in activities that reduce social isolation, strengthen communities and create opportunities for interaction.

- **Evidence Base 'the current situation'**

The venues available for hire for groups to meet include the Orpen Hall and the attached John Lampon Hall, where there is ample parking available. There is a Social Club attached to the Hall that is open in the evenings and weekends. The Parish Church and the Methodist Church have meeting rooms for hire. All are well used.

The Lorkin Daniell field and Poors Land are available for recreation and are often used by the local West Bergholt Football Club and the Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club respectively.

The Cricket Club has the use of the cricket field off of the main Colchester Road. There is a Multi-Use Games Area on the Lorkin Daniell field which is available for hire for tennis and other sports. The Scout hut is situated on the Heath by the Primary School and is well used by different groups and activities. The green field areas can be made available for events. There are 3 areas of children's playground equipment and an area for 140 allotment plots.



*The Orpen Memorial Hall*



*The local youth football team*



## 6.0 Village Society and Community

- Evidence Base 'the current situation' cont.

The village features a primary school, BlueBells Pre-School and other child and baby care facilities. There are 2 churches (Church of England and Methodist) with an additional redundant church used on special occasions. We have a doctors' surgery and a pharmacy in the village and the general hospital is about 3 miles away. The village voluntary Care Network has over 20 members who can be contacted for transport when required.

There are two general stores, access to a post office and banking facilities, a gift shop, a hairdressers and three Public Houses.

There are other commercial outlets including a garage workshop and sales outlet.

The Parish has a large elderly population compared with Colchester Borough as a whole. In addition it has a slightly larger population of those aged 5 to 17 years. Approximately 20% (675) of residents are of retirement age compared with 15% at Borough level and approximately 17% (574) are aged 5 –17 years. This compares with approximately 14% at Borough level.



The White Hart Public house

- Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?

West Bergholt, and the wider Parish area, has a great number of clubs and societies which cater for a wide range of interests. There is also a good community spirit in the village which encourages residents to volunteer to support clubs and promote activities.

Meeting areas are at near full capacity. The village web-site is an excellent source of information for those who have a suitable broadband facility. There is a need for all sections of the community to be able to participate in activities that reduce isolation, strengthen the community and create opportunities for social interaction.

There are good social opportunities for retired people and a thriving Youth Group for 10-14 year olds which meets fortnightly run by local volunteers. Several young teenagers also volunteer to help and supervise at the Bergholt Youth Group.

Use of the allotments was a particular issue at the time of the survey and respondents wanted to maintain the allotments as currently sited. The annual Firework display organised by the Primary School is always well supported and is good for community involvement.

- Issues

- Meeting rooms are nearly always fully booked some time in advance.
- Poor or patchy broadband service.
- Public toilet facilities lacking in the village.
- No community centre, coffee shop or informal meeting area.
- Facilities for older children and young adults are lacking.
- St Mary's churchyard almost full.





## 6.0 Village Society and Community

### • Opportunities

- Further development of community facilities at the Orpen Hall complex.
- Provision of a centralised, coordinated booking system.
- Introduce enhanced and faster broadband service for the whole village.
- Provision of a community centre.
- Toilet facilities for users of recreational areas.
- A coffee shop.
- Enlarged children’s play areas e.g. adventure playground.
- Allotment shop/stall.
- Further development of website and use of social media.
- Provision of a new cemetery or burial ground.

### • General Village and Community policies

**VSC1:** The loss of existing community buildings will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.

**VSC2:** The village hall complex consisting of the Orpen and John Lampon Halls will be further developed as a community resource unless a new more appropriate site can be found to better fulfil the needs of the village.

**VSC3:** Village societies, clubs and other community based organisations will be actively promoted through a variety of communication channels. New community members will be informed how to participate in village and parish life through the website and notice boards.

### • Development focus

**VSCD1:** All development will be encouraged to enhance the quality of life and the wellbeing of the local community and promote diversity and enhance community cohesion.

### • Options and priorities

- The foremost issue arising in this section is the need for better Broadband facilities. The community has been involved with this matter for some years and through a forward funding arrangement and grant the Parish Council managed to secure improved broadband via local provider County Broadband. More recently other private providers have shown an interest. At the time of writing an independent Community Broadband Group is researching the alternatives and will work with any provider who can bring superfast broadband services to the village at an affordable price. See section on Communications for more details.
- Facilities for meeting places are stretched. A more centralised and coordinated booking system would enable groups to book halls more easily.
- Additional suggestions made for increasing social interaction were:- a farmers market, film nights, an annual village event, fun run, BBQ, a local “coffee” shop. This latter proposal received much support from the 10-16 year olds from a smaller questionnaire they completed.
- More publicity should be given to existing clubs/groups and funding opportunities could be investigated. A database or contact list should be created so that a growing pool of volunteers could be developed.
- There was overwhelming support from residents to leave the Allotments as sited currently.
- The need for toilet facilities generally will be investigated.
- Overall there is a need to improve and extend opportunities for all age groups to take part in a range of activities both recreational and as volunteers and promote and raise awareness of these to increase participation and maintain a thriving community support network.



## 7.0 Environment

- **What we are seeking to achieve**

To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of open space. This area of our plan considers both the rural and urban environments throughout the parish that are so valued by our community.

This area of our plan considers both the rural and urban environments throughout the Parish that are so valued by our community.

- **Evidence Base 'the current situation'**

The Parish has a wonderful mix of undulating farmland with a beautiful river valley accessed by a network of public footpaths including public access to ancient woodland. The vast majority of the parish is rural with agriculture the dominant feature (both arable and dairy). Within the village, there are numerous ponds, open spaces and vegetation that complements the built environment. As a result of a good network of local roads and Public Rights Of Way (PROW), there are numerous opportunities for the community to enjoy both local environments within the main village settlement and those close at hand in the surrounding countryside.

The rural landscape provides some accessible green space such as Hillhouse Woods and many PROW, including long distance paths such as the Essex Way. Also within the village envelope are the large playing fields by the Orpen Hall and the open space at Poor's Field, as well as the Village Green (The Heath), pockets of smaller green space generally within housing areas (amenity greens), the churchyards, allotments and three ponds.



*The Bluebells in Hillhouse woods*

The village does not have a formal public park or garden as such within its boundaries, however there are some older properties that have significant trees or hedgerows that contribute to the rural character and biodiversity value of parts of the village. A few trees are protected with Tree Preservation Orders. Hedgerows and verges within villages are generally not protected.

When considering the built environment although there is a mix of eclectic housing styles, the village has nevertheless a good range of older buildings of architectural value with many listed buildings including several of both architectural and historic importance.

The surveys conducted in compiling the Neighbourhood Plan overwhelmingly revealed that existing public open spaces and important landscape and wildlife areas were universally valued and as a result should be protected.



## 7.0 Environment

- **Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?**

There is no doubt that the village and its setting within a very rural parish, its degree of separation from the urban area of Colchester, its general lack of urban features such as dual carriageways, rail lines, pylons and industrial complexes, make the area a very desirable and pleasant place to live, and one where natural and human activity can thrive.

So whereas the environment is well maintained and looked after there are aspects which need careful attention if future generations are to continue to enjoy it. These may be classified as areas where protection is needed, enhancements to quality of man-made and natural environments and accessibility to environments.



- **Issues**

- Concern that future development proposals will adversely affect the urban and rural environments that we all enjoy.
- Litter and dog-fouling.
- The quality of the built, man-made and natural landscape cannot be taken for granted and may degrade over time.
- Lack of bridleways.
- Management of rural areas and open spaces required.

- **Opportunities**

- Setting policies to protect sensitive areas.
- Protecting vulnerable environments through community action.
- Increasing the available amount of public open space especially where new development is proposed.
- Enhancing our environment through planting and urban realm improvements.
- Improved access to rural environments through enhanced public rights of way.
- Sympathetic management of open spaces to promote nature.





## 7.0 Environment

- **General Environment policies**

**ENV1:** Existing areas of public open space will be managed, maintained and improved to promote regular use and community enjoyment.

**ENV2:** “Area of Special Landscape” will be declared for the part of the parish to the south east and west of the village envelope, as shown centred on **MAP A**. Changes in land use will be resisted and access to countryside will be improved through use of the existing public rights of way network.

**ENV3:** There will be a general presumption against the removal of mature native trees within the village envelope.

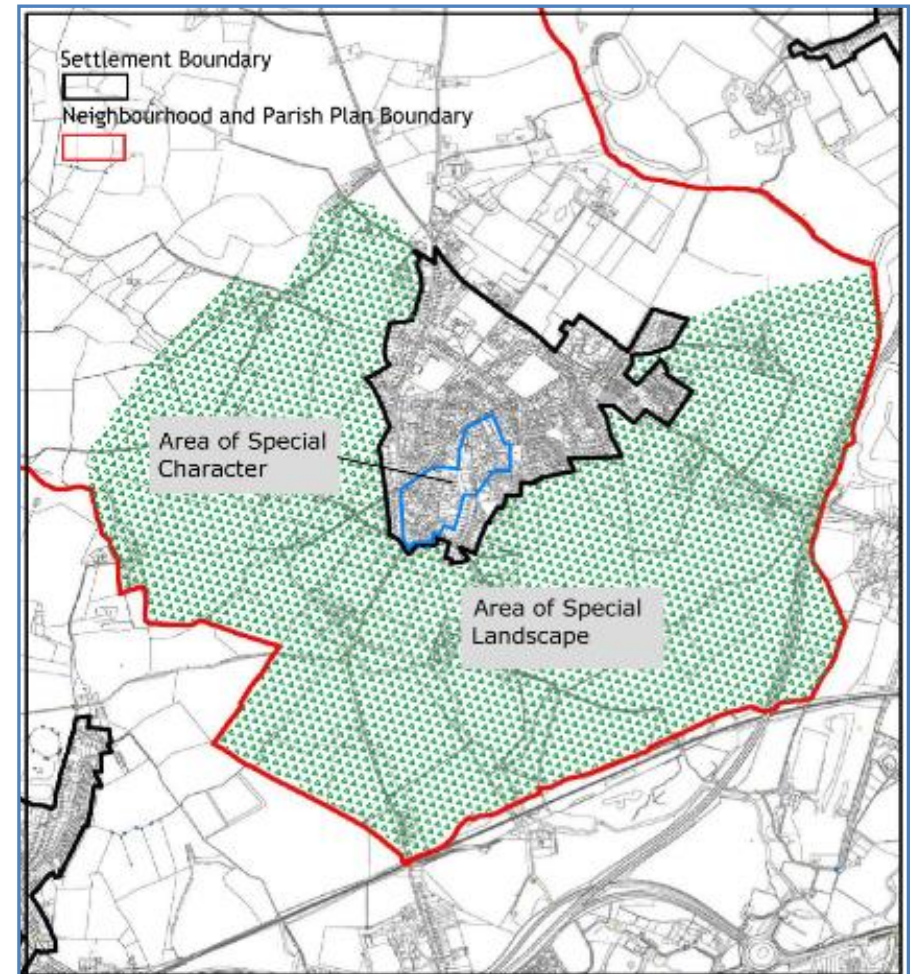
**ENV4:** Streetscapes will be enhanced through planting and good verge and hedge management.

**ENV5:** A “Character Area” of the village will be declared which will be protected from degradation through separate policies in the Village Design Statement.

**ENV6:** New areas of open space will be incorporated within the village and all open spaces will be enhanced through a biodiversity plan which seeks to improve the conditions for wildlife.

**ENV7:** Important historic and character buildings will be protected from changes which reduce or compromise their amenity value.

**ENV8:** Built and natural environments will be of high quality by controlling nuisances such as litter and dog fouling.



Map A



## 7.0 Environment

- **Development focus**

Various development site options have been identified in this plan, all of which are likely to have an impact. Whilst it is unclear whether development of these sites will take place, any new development proposals should be designed to meet the policies below:

**ENVD1:** New areas of development will incorporate areas of public open space within their curtilages and will allow and promote access to public rights of way.

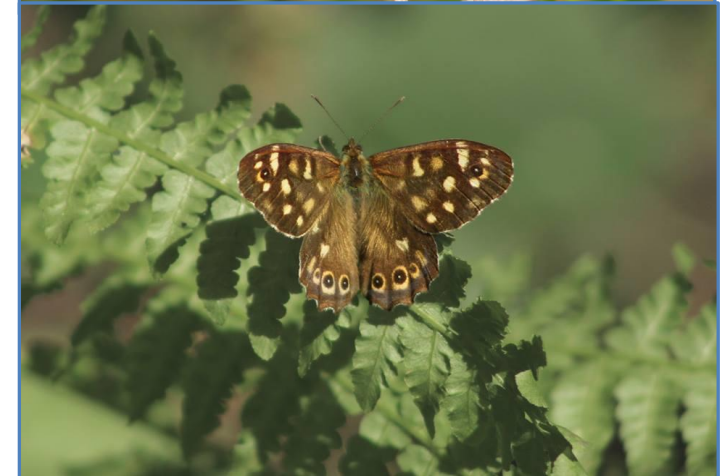
- **Options and Priorities**

Options available to progress the achievement of objectives for the environment and to deliver the policy areas above are split up into the following categories:

- Conserving, protecting and enhancing existing open spaces and the countryside.
- Conserve and protect existing buildings of importance and character.
- Promote access to the Public Rights Of Way.
- Maintain treescapes and hedges.
- Deal with environmental nuisances.



*Courtesy of Ian Jacqui Rowing*





## 8.0 Housing and planning

- What we are seeking to achieve

**To support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing. In doing so the existing character and environmental setting needs to be respected and protected.**

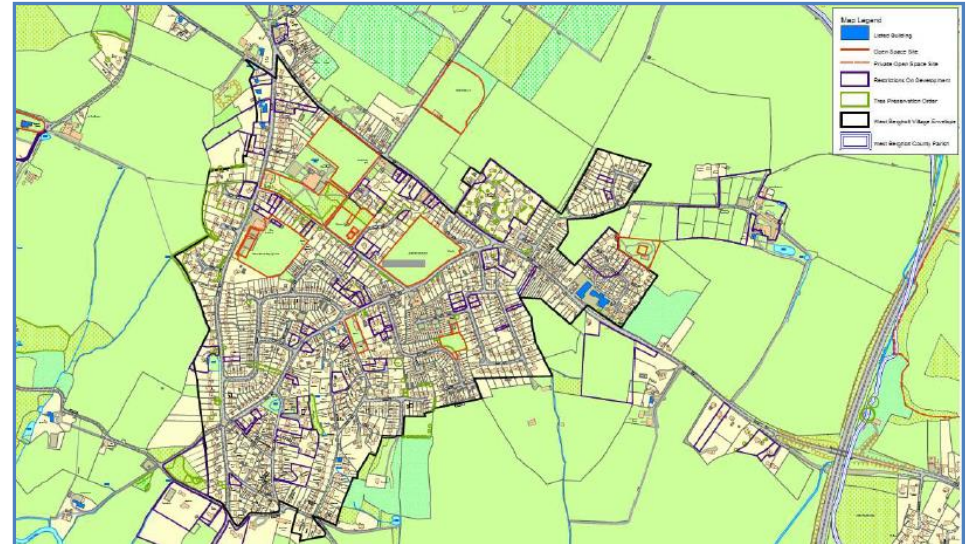
- Evidence Base 'the current situation'

West Bergholt remains a highly desirable village in which to live. It is situated just outside and to the northwest of Colchester – Britain’s Oldest Recorded town. West Bergholt has a population of c. 3,500 and approximately 1,400 households and its village amenities are some of the best in the area for a village of its size. The village is conveniently placed for those residents who work in Colchester and its close proximity to the A12 means that it is well placed for people who work in Ipswich or Chelmsford. Being only 2.5 miles from the main railway line into London has meant that West Bergholt has become an extremely desirable commuter location.

It was the land released for development in the 1970’s and 1980’s that marked the most significant increase in housing numbers within the village. Due to the location of most of them the village 'look and feel' was maintained whilst supporting improvements to facilities for the community. The, almost random, housing development continued wherever possible with little apparent relationship to the housing needs of the Parish.

The existing formal Village Envelope indicates the boundary inside which there is a presumption that development will be allowed (subject to planning permission). The opportunities for such development are reducing over time and therefore there is likely to be the need for some additional growth.

It is evident from the consultations undertaken so far, including the 2008 West Bergholt Parish Plan, that whilst some wish the village to stay exactly as it is without expansion, many more envisage a limited and appropriately planned increase in development providing the types and numbers of new housing to meet the needs of the Parish whilst maintaining the village character.



Village envelope





## 8.0 Housing and planning

### • Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?

There are a number of aspects to consider here including tenure type, number of dwellings required, wider sustainability issues and pressure from outside the village. As the population gradually ages, there is a need for limited housing to support new families, either from within the village or from outside. This helps maintain the balance of the age pyramid. Secondly there is a need to identify the right balance of housing type, and thirdly because there is little room inside the current village envelope there is a need to consider changes to its boundary.

The household neighbourhood plan survey indicated over 40% preference for the following types of development:

- *Starter/low cost homes for first time occupiers/young families*
- *Small, mixed group, developments*
- *Warden assisted or sheltered housing*
- *“Downsizing” housing*

Following this, the ‘Issues & Options’ Questionnaire indicated support for around an additional 100 new dwellings, of which the majority would be ‘of type, style and numbers deemed necessary to meet the Parish’s needs.’ Then in November 2015, a full ‘Housing Needs Survey’ was commissioned from the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE). Their report indicated that 53 people had given details of different local accommodation required in the next five years and beyond. Whereas some of this could be provided by the commercial sector as houses to buy (34%), there remained a need for rental accommodation and shared ownership.

Furthermore the timescales that this need was predicated on were:

Next 5 years: 25 units  
5 – 10 years: 28 units

The survey only covered up to 5 years or over. However we may assume that local need would be similar between year 11 and year 15 of the plan making a grand total of around 75 homes needed to satisfy local need. Whereas this would accommodate local need it is reasonable to assume that some additional housing would be required from people wishing to move into the village – say a further 25 units making a grand total of 100 units over the 15 year lifetime of the plan.

This equates to an average building rate of around 6 or 7 houses per annum.

### • Issues and Opportunities

The surveys conducted in compiling the Neighbourhood Plan overwhelmingly revealed that existing public open spaces and important landscape and wildlife areas were universally valued and as a result should be protected. Therefore any new housing development should have due consideration for maintaining these assets.

Whilst providing the right new homes is an important consideration for the village, this should not be a reason to introduce such housing in a manner that would compromise its character. For instance, trees and hedgerows line the main roads into the village promoting a country feel that extends in most cases into the village residential core. Therefore any new development should incorporate appropriate planting where practical so as to complement the existing rural setting.

There are a number of factors that need to be taken into account in relation to possible housing development areas. Such factors may relate to how transport matters will affect the development or vice versa – the location of the development may be able to reduce problems currently encountered such as crossing the road and slowing down speeding traffic.

In addition, development should be located to ensure sustainable pedestrian and cycleway links to principal village facilities are available.

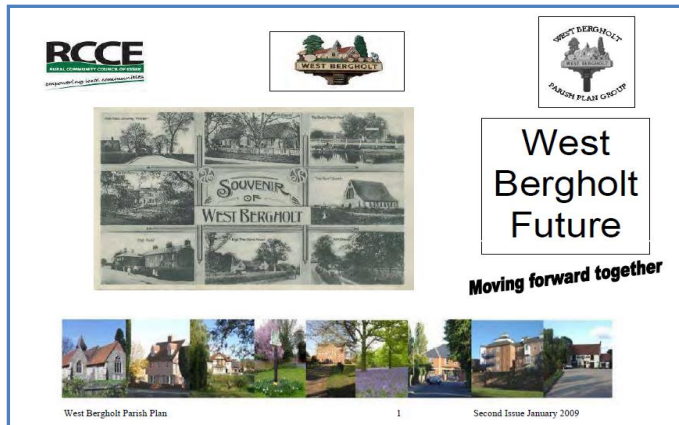


## 8.0 Housing and planning

### • General Housing and planning policies

The 2008 West Bergholt Parish Plan established the top areas to take forward from this area of the plan to be:

- Some controls over infilling
- Poor quality planning in the village
- Need for small family housing (Affordable housing)
- Provide housing for older residents



*The Parish Plan*

This created an Action Plan which resulted in the development of the West Bergholt Village Design Statement. A Village Design Statement (VDS) gives a detailed description of the existing character and main features of design in the village and guidelines for how this should be respected in any new development. Both these documents have been adopted by Colchester Borough Council as supplementary planning guidance. The Neighbourhood Plan is the culmination of the above and has produced guidance on aspects relating to future development sites.

**HP1:** New development in the parish will be sited within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope.

The number of dwellings will be no more than 120, of which 20 will be sited within the current village envelope.

**HP2:** Development sites within the expanded village area are to be centred on the areas marked by on **MAP B**.

**HP3:** Only a mix of 1,2 and 3 bedroom dwellings of varying tenure, including at least 12 dwellings for affordable rent and/or shared ownership, will be within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope.

**HP4:** No changes to the external envelope of any of the dwellings built within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope so as to maintain the availability and supply of the required mix.

**HP5:** A common landscaped area of at least 10m wide along the Colchester Road will be maintained to retain the existing semi rural nature of the village.

**HP6:** All new properties should be contemporary in design and built to high insulation standards.

**HP7:** Exception sites will be supported by the PC provided all relevant NP policies are met and such sites are outside the Special Landscape Area.



## 8.0 Housing and planning

### • Development focus

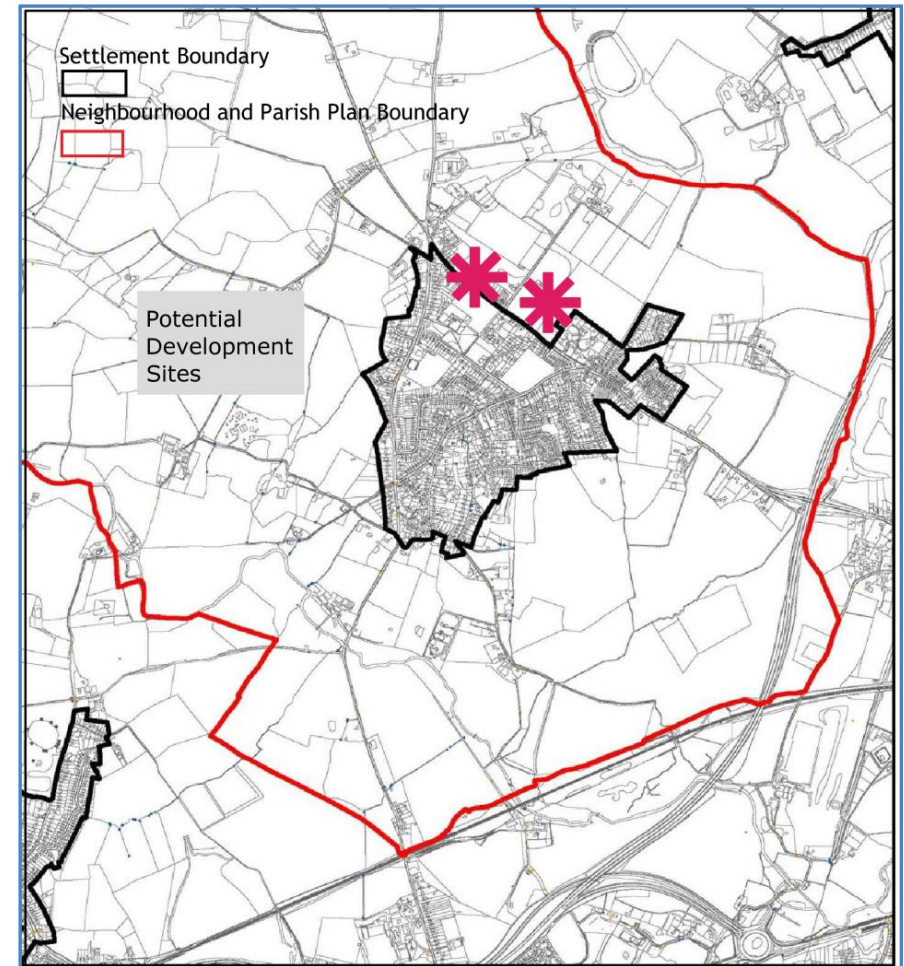
To assist the focus of where new housing might be developed a number of principles have been devised in consultation with Colchester Borough Council, in that development:

- should only be considered if abutting the existing 'Village Envelope'.
- should not reduce the separation of the village from Colchester.
- should not encroach on (or visually affect) the 'area of the parish to the south east and west of the village envelope'.
- should be close to the main village amenities.
- should be able to contribute to improving 'Transport, Highways and Infrastructure' problems.
- should be located such that any traffic impact can be mitigated
- may continue within the existing village envelope but only where a limited number of "windfall" sites present themselves.
- comprise of an extension of the village envelope as long as it can contain a mix of housing, and incorporate areas of open space.
- should consist of smaller housing units which respect the identified needs of the community including affordable housing, housing for downsizing and starter housing.

These principles have been applied to the areas of development put forward to date as part of Colchester's Local Plan preparation.

**HPD1:** All new development including extensions to existing dwellings will be carried out in accordance with the Village Design Statement.

**HPD2:** Any development within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope will be required to ensure provision of all the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development, or the additional infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan should be provided through developer contributions.



Map B





## 8.0 Housing and planning

- Options and Priorities

### Area 1 to the NW of the Village in the vicinity of Hall Road, Colchester Road and Nayland Road

This would be a substantial village extension and could contain many hundreds of houses. A site of this size is not required. Using the principles above the sites collectively have disadvantages of being remote from services with poor accessibility, and which intrude into open and attractive farmland. Certain parts of the site area (i.e. the smaller plots) may be suitable for recreational open space. We do not favour anything other than recreational use for sites in this area and even then only those sites closer to the village envelope.

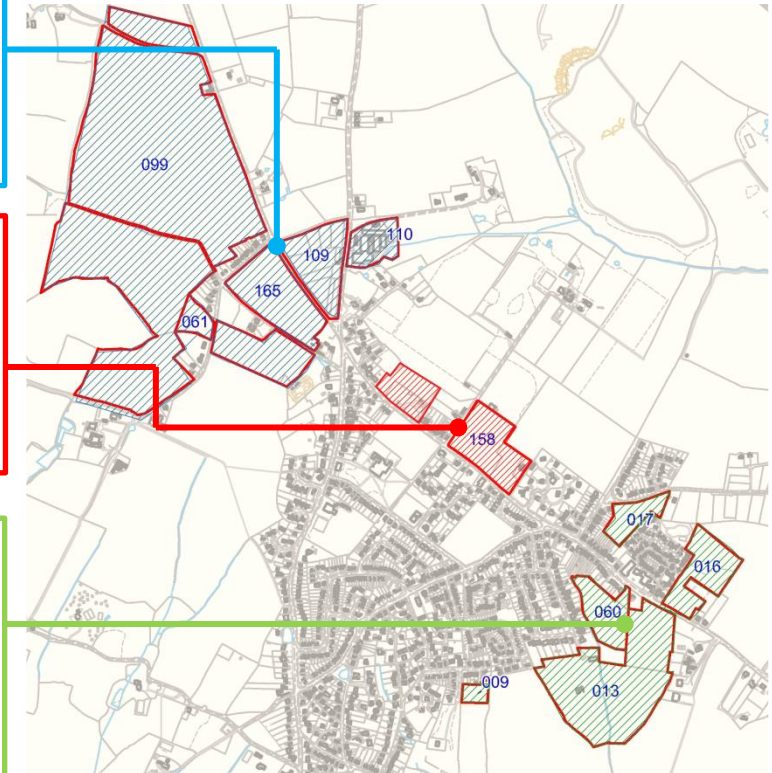
### Area 2 – roughly opposite the Treble Tile pub, on Colchester Road

This land is a smaller parcel and has more potential to supply the village with the housing needed. It is closer to the village centre and has the ability to be better integrated with other facilities such as the school and could assist in reducing the severance affect that the current road presents. It is a smaller more compact area more in tune with the requirements highlighted by the recent Neighbourhood Plan surveys. We favour sites in this area and indeed the surrounding land on this side of the B1508 may be suitable for recreational use.

### Area 3 to the SE of the Village, around the Brewery complex on both sides of the B1508.

Again these areas around the former brewery and adjacent to the former Head Brewers house would provide for more housing than is needed. Moreover when assessed against the principles above they have the following disadvantages: they start to encourage coalescence of development towards the A12 and Braiswick, intrude onto open farmland, and in the case of the former brewery complex remove a valuable area of open space. We do not favour anything other than open space use for sites in this area and even then only those sites on the same side of the road as the Brewery complex.

At this point in time, prior to the next set of consultations Area 2 is our preferred location, supported by Colchester Borough Council's draft Local Plan.





## 9.0 Business and Commerce

- **What we are seeking to achieve**

To encourage local employment opportunities through controlled expansion of existing employment located on, or adjacent to, the existing business parks in accordance with the general business and commerce policies.

- **Evidence Base 'the current situation'**

In most cases the commercial and employment areas have evolved over time. As well as two general stores (including a post office in the Coop), a pharmacy, a hairdresser's, an accessories shop, three public houses and other commercial premises there are business parks located in Colchester Road, Nayland Road, Bourne Road, Fossets Lane and at Armoury Farm. In addition, there are many small businesses which operate from people's homes. These all provide local employment whilst harmonising with village life.

It was found from the consultations with Parish businesses undertaken for the 2008 West Bergholt Parish Plan that there was:

- Lack of space to expand
- Lack of space for offices and parking
- Slow and sub standard broadband provided by BT

- **Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?**

From the Neighbourhood Plan consultations to date, the concerns expressed are:

- Some business park areas are at the limit of their existing footprints
- No zoned areas for expanded employment opportunities exist in the parish
- Pubs are at risk from closure without local support
- There is no real plan for influencing retail areas in the village



- **Issues**

- Limited retail facilities.
- Business areas are fragmented and isolated and may lack space.
- Access to business areas for employees by bus is poor.
- Businesses not integrated sufficiently within the community.
- Lack of knowledge of businesses.



## 9.0 Business and Commerce

### • Opportunities

- Policies to encourage limited expansion of commercial areas.
- Promotion of existing businesses through better publicity.
- Farm diversification schemes.

### • General business and commerce policies

**BC1:** No new business parks to be formed within the parish.

**BC2:** Any expansion of the existing business parks **MAP C** is to be sustainable, limited and appropriate for the location and associated infrastructure.

**BC3:** The conversion of commercial premises into residential property or the use of associated land for such purposes will be resisted so as to preserve the employment opportunities which exist in the village and wider parish area.

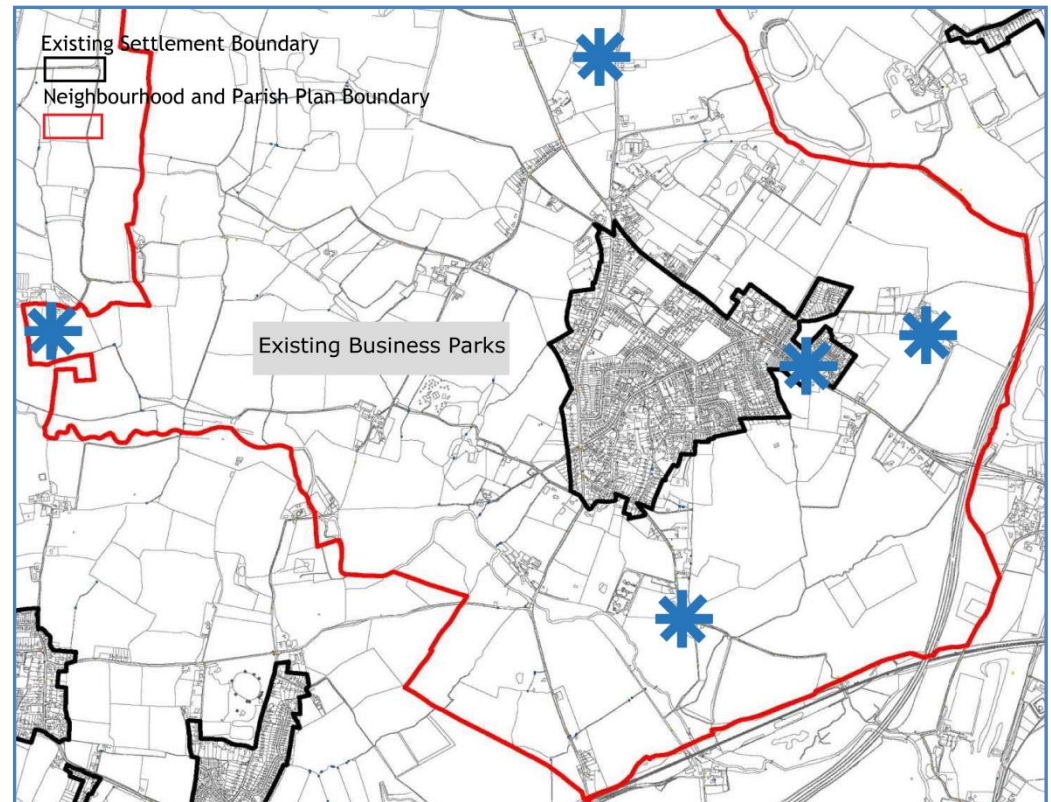
### • Development focus

Determine the extent of limited expansion that would appear acceptable for each business park.

**BCD1:** Any expansion of current business parks will be expected to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the parks and improvements to parking and access arrangements.

### • Options and priorities

To encourage controlled expansion of existing employment opportunities located on, or adjacent to, the existing business parks in accordance with the general business and commerce policies. Any expansion or change of use of a business park or part there of is to be in accordance with Class Use B1. The design of any new building on any business park shall have due regard to the Village Design Statement



Map C





## 9.0 Business and Commerce

### Pattens Yard - Nayland Road



This is a long established village business enterprise site, which provides mixed-use office space and storage type facilities. A number of business tenants operate from this site. In 2015 planning permission was granted for limited development of the buildings facing the entrance to the site which greatly enhanced the site appearance whilst providing expansion.

The site lies on Nayland Road with little if any on street parking occurring and vehicles are parked within the boundary of the business park.

### Issues and Expansion Possibilities

Site ownership changed in 2013 following planning and boundary rationalisation of the site. Conditions were placed on operating hours etc. at this time. This business park largely operates in harmony with the wider village community providing local mixed employment. The green space to the immediate west of the active building business area is under the same ownership and presents an ideal area for future expansion if required. Agricultural and private land is evident on all sides to the west of Nayland Road.

Ideally a footway/cycle path could be constructed along Nayland Road from Colchester Road which would benefit site users and the few residential homes along Nayland Road.

Regular bus services are routed along Colchester Road and can provide an alternative to private motorised access to the site.

This site is capable of being expanded to increase and enhance village business opportunities.



## 9.0 Business and Commerce

### Business Park – Armoury Road



This is a well-established business park formed initially as a family business and has developed to accommodate mixed business types for more than 40 years. The only road to the site is Armoury Road, which starts at Colchester Road as a public road and it then becomes a private road (un-adopted by the local authorities) at the north east end to feed the business park and some residential housing. The condition of the private road is maintained through private investment.

The site is surrounded by open space used for the stabling and exercise of horses to the west and farmland laid to crops to the north, east and south.

Low-density residential homes form part of the main site with the nearest properties making use of the stable facilities. A number of small mixed and diverse businesses operate from within the industrial units located on this site.

#### **Issues and Expansion Possibilities**

Lying to the north east of the village and on sloping ground towards the A12 this business park is capable of expansion without overly compromising the well being of nearby residents.

Some improvement to Armoury Road will be necessary if this site is expanded and any resulting increased traffic may have an impact on those residents that live in and off Armoury Road towards Colchester Road.



## 9.0 Business and Commerce

### Bourne Road – Business Park Bourne Farm



A small but well-established business-park is located at the bottom of Bourne Road operated as a family business. The business park provides mixed business accommodation originally from a set of farm outbuildings, which have been renovated and updated over the years.

#### Issues and Expansion Possibilities

Open space farmland surrounds the business park on three sides and expansion to the park in relation to open space available is possible. The area is located within the Colne Valley and any potential expansion must be considered in terms of erosion of the natural characteristics of the valley.

The site lies on Bourne Road, which is fed by Chapel Lane, Queens Road and Newbridge Hill (Lexden Road). Bourne Road is an adopted road maintained by Essex County Council and in places it narrows significantly as it passes through the more densely residential areas to the west of the site towards the village core. If the site is to be considered for expansion then traffic restrictions should be imposed for vehicular access to the site so as to retain the rural feel currently enjoyed by residents along Bourne Road.

Bourne Road becomes a dead end from a private vehicle perspective once the road meets Bourne Farm. There is a public right of way footpath that continues from Bourne Farm towards Braiswick and Play Golf course.





## 9.0 Business and Commerce

### Fossetts Lane – Business Park Chancers Farm



A small modern conversion of former poultry sheds this business park provides mixed business accommodation.

### Issues and Expansion Possibilities

Open space farmland surrounds the business park on three sides and expansion to the park in relation to open space available is possible. The area is located within the Colne Valley and any potential expansion must be considered in terms of erosion of the natural characteristics of the valley. The site lies on Fossetts Lane, which is fed by Church Road and Mill Lane (in Fordham) and Rams Farm Road leading toward West Bergholt village. Fossetts Lane is an adopted road maintained by Essex County Council and is extremely narrow making the business park unsuitable for HGV access. If the site is to be considered for expansion then the usage of Chancers Farm must remain of the service industry type/light or specialized manufacturing with minimal traffic movements in order to retain the rural feel currently enjoyed by residents. Although the site is in the parish adjacent fields to the west are in the neighbouring parish of Fordham.



## 10.0 Sports and recreation

- **What we are seeking to achieve**

**Promote increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport and informal recreation.**

**The village currently has use of the following building and land assets**

The Lorkin Daniell playing field and the Orpen Memorial Hall are village assets held in Trust and managed by the Trustees which is the Parish Council.

The John Lampon Hall constructed to the rear of the Orpen Hall in 2001, is owned and managed by the Parish Council. These assets are available for public use and hire.

Over the years the Parish Council has added to or enhanced the village hall buildings located in Lexden Road to meet the ever-increasing demands of a thriving and vibrant village. Booking demand for the village halls increases annually and these buildings are used at near full capacity. The expansion of the hall is essential if future demand over the next 15 years is to be met.



*Orpen Hall with John Lampon Hall to the Rear*

Other community buildings exist and are owned and maintained by different organisations, each being largely self financing. They include:

- St Mary’s Hall – administered by the Church of England Church committee
- Methodist Hall - administered by the Methodist Chapel committee
- Scout Hut - administered by the Scout group but located on Trust land

Village open spaces held in trust and managed by the Parish Council include:

- Lorkin Daniell Playing Field
- Village Green – to the south of Heathlands School
- Poors Land – to the north of Heathlands School
- The Allotments

The Cricket pitch and club house are located on privately owned land and is managed by the cricket club.



## 10.0 Sports and recreation

### Recreation Facilities - the current situation

The Lorkin Daniell Playing field hosts:

- The full-size adult football pitch
- The club house and changing facilities
- Training area for BHYFC
- The children's play area
- The Multi User Games Area (MUGA)

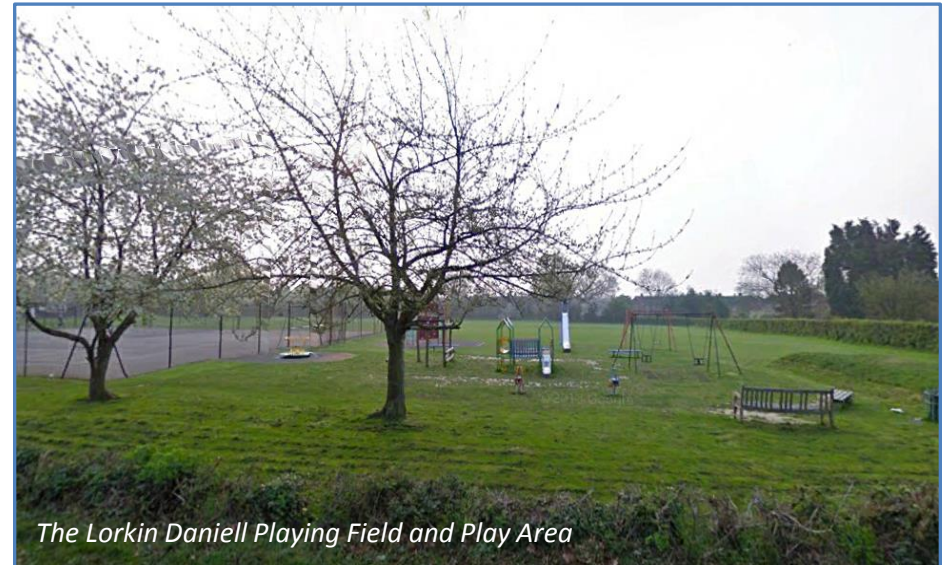
Poors Land provides a recreation area for:

- Junior football
- Dog walking
- Heathlands school sports day events
- Annual village fireworks display
- Visiting mobile attractions - circus etc.

### The issues relating to sports and recreation infrastructure

The adult football pitch together with its associated clubhouse dominates the Lorkin Daniell playing field limiting realistic expansion and enhancement of the village hall footprint, children's playground, MUGA and tennis facilities.

Relocation of the football pitch and associated clubhouse to a consolidated and centralised team and dedicated recreational sports area, would benefit the entire community by releasing a significant part of the Lorkin Daniell field for improved child, teenage play and generalised recreation use.



The Lorkin Daniell playing field is located close to the heart of the village. It is next door to the village hall which hosts Blue Bells pre-school care and is a short walk from Heathlands primary school; the location is perfect for family, children and teenage play and recreation.

New facilities such as a teenage zip wire, an adventure ground, out-door fitness gym, all-weather play surfaces could all be accommodated alongside enhanced play facilities.





## 10.0 Sports and recreation

- **Can we balance the needs of sports clubs and families from existing land assets?**

The people of our village should have access to the very best affordable facilities both now and in the future. However the location of the football pitch limits expansion and enhancement of family recreation and play facilities sited on the Lorkin Daniell playing field. West Bergholt FC has previously attempted to purchase land for a new site, and to enlarge and improve its clubhouse but has been unsuccessful due to the prohibitive cost.

- **Issues**

- Lack of informal recreational areas for ad hoc non team-based sports use.
- Too much emphasis on open spaces being used for football.
- Lack of good “clubhouse” facilities e.g. Poor’s Field.
- Lack of a skate park or teenage outdoor play areas.
- Tennis courts too few in number to form a tennis club.
- No adventure playground.
- Over-intensive use of existing sports fields.

- **Opportunities**

- New sports areas and purpose built facilities such as clubhouses and changing areas.
- Electronic booking systems for sports areas.
- More planting and seating in open space areas.
- Expanded provision of children’s play area equipment with zip-wires and similar provisions.
- Consolidation of sports and recreation areas to optimise usage.

### **The benefits of a consolidated team sports facility**

- ✓ Teenage and child play and recreational facilities could be expanded across that part of the Lorkin Daniell playing field currently occupied by the adult football pitch, allowing potential enhancement of facilities similar to those provided in Marks Tey, Great Horkesley or the Maldon children activity centre.
- ✓ Expansion and enhancement of the village hall facilities would be possible which are currently limited and unlikely to meet demands for the next 15 years.
- ✓ Allow dedicated areas of the village hall complex for pre-school activities .
- ✓ Allow more indoor club and pastime activities to operate from the village hall complex located centrally within the main village residential area.
- ✓ Allow expansion of the village halls car park to safely accommodate future needs for pre-school and Heathlands school drop-offs, use of the MUGA or for car parking whilst adults and their children enjoy the child and teenage play facilities.
- ✓ Future proof team sport within the village. New and existing sport needs can be met through a purpose designed and designated area.
- ✓ The junior football team can be relocated to the new area releasing Poor’s Field for more generalised recreational or school use activities as required. Poor’s Field is Trust property with the trust objective being that of general recreation provision.
- ✓ The future of the village cricket team would be secured in the event the current location being sold.



## 10.0 Sports and recreation

### Opportunities for development of an enhanced children's play area

Relocating the football pitch and club-house would open up the Lorkin Daniell playing field to more diverse family uses including providing space to expand the already heavily booked village halls. The children's play facilities could be vastly improved and expanded to appeal to children of all age groups.

The photo below indicates what the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field could look like if it can be fully given over to family outdoor activities.



*What the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field and Play Area could be like*

### First Steps Towards Shaping Our Sport & Recreational Future

As a fundamental first step towards future sustainable and planned village growth it is important to identify and reserve an area that can be dedicated exclusively for team or specialist sports. In meeting this objective any future potential housing and business development areas could be planned and implemented in a co-ordinated manner which would not compromise the earmarked village recreational areas. Any land chosen should be capable of meeting the immediate needs of football clubs in the village and be enhanced in phases to meet future sporting needs.

A number of sites have been identified which meet the requirement of a consolidated sports area. Each area is identified on the maps that follow together with the benefits afforded by each location.

### Consolidated Sports Site Options

Taking into account the nature and gradient of land in and around the village, it appears that suitable locations exist to the north and north west of the main village residential area; each being on the edge of the existing village envelope.



## 10.0 Sports and recreation

### Consolidated Sports Site Options

A number of sites have been examined to the north and north west which would be suitable as a site for the consolidation of team and specialist sports for the future.

Suitable sites are described in summary terms below.

#### Site 1 – Off Armoury Road

The image opposite shows an ideal location for any future consolidated team ball sports. This land is outside the village envelope and is used for arable farming.

There are several advantages to this site

- ✓ Within easy reach of the main residential areas which is largely located to the south and east of the site with agricultural land lying to the north
- ✓ Adjacent to the existing cricket club and cricket pavilion
- ✓ Road access is available off Armoury Road
- ✓ Site greater than 10 acres in area
- ✓ Space available for car parking
- ✓ Provides a secure future for cricket should the current owner of the land wish to sell the land for other use
- ✓ Site can be developed for sport in phases to meet evolving demand. Plenty of space to accommodate adult and junior football, rugby other team sports, practice facilities and teenage play facilities i.e. skate board etc.



*Land off Armoury Road*





## 10.0 Sports and recreation

### Site 2 – Between Colchester and Hall Roads

The site is approximately 10 acres of arable agricultural land. It lies between Colchester and Hall Roads and is within walking distance of the village centre. There is a storage barn at the south-east corner which is unused.

Low-density housing is located on three sides of this site which includes vehicular access. The site is large enough to accommodate parking needs on match days.

The road junction on Hall Road to the northwest does have some flooding issues, which could be remedied at reasonable cost by attention to ditch maintenance.

The advantages provided through this site include:

- ✓ Within reach of the main residential areas which is largely located to east of the site with open agricultural land lying to the south
- ✓ Large enough to accommodate multiple sports activities at the same time.
- ✓ The land is largely flat with surface water drainage to existing ditches along Colchester Road and parts of Hall Road.
- ✓ Access to the site is via Hall Road which although narrow has relatively low traffic
- ✓ Has expansion possibility using land to the south
- ✓ Existing building located on the east boundary thereby potentially simplifying sports pavilion planning considerations.



*Land between Colchester Road and Hall Road*



## 10.0 Sports and recreation

### Site 3 – Off Nayland Road

This site is approximately 10 acres located just south of one of the existing village business enterprise areas. Existing land use is for limited agricultural purposes. The land owner has decided that it is unsuitable for cropping.

Residential development is low density, and lies largely to the immediate east of the plot along Nayland Road with a few larger residential homes to the southwest on Colchester Road. Each of the properties on Colchester Road has significant land holding as part of their curtilage providing good separation from the site.

#### The advantages provided through this site include:

- ✓ Within walking distance of the centre of the village
- ✓ Large enough to accommodate multiple sports to take place at the same time.
- ✓ Already the site of the annual West Bergholt Historic Vehicle Show. The event is extremely popular and has been taking place at this location for more than 30 years.
- ✓ Expansion is possible using land to the south and west
- ✓ Not currently used for agricultural purposes



*Land between Colchester Road and Nayland Road*

#### Potential issues with this site

- Nayland Road experiences high traffic volumes during peak commute times.
- A footpath/cycle path would be required along Nayland Road from Colchester Road to the proposed site.



## 10.0 Sports and recreation

- **General Sports and recreation policies**

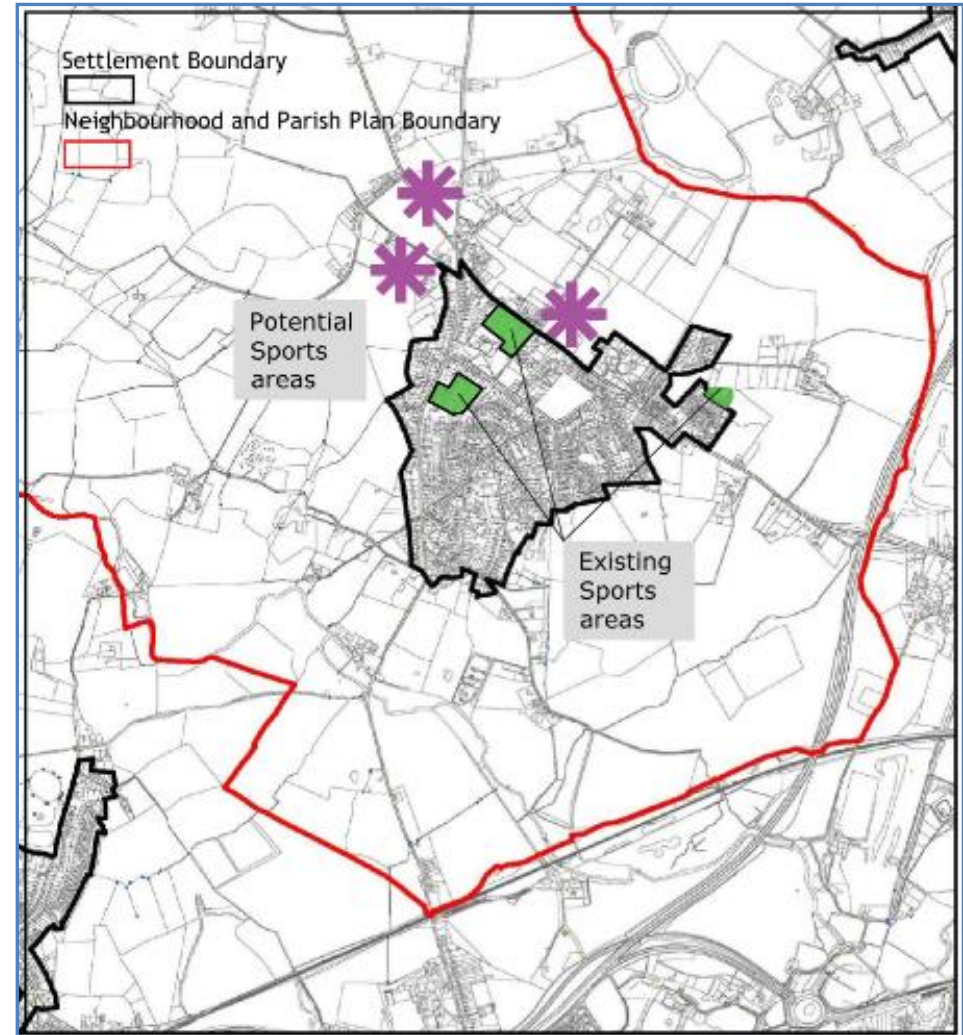
**SR1:** New sports activity areas will be developed as opportunities arise. Consolidation of sports activities may take place as a result. Favoured locations for new sports areas are shown on **MAP D**.

**SR2:** The Lorkin Daniell playing field will be increasingly managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.

**SR3:** The Poors Field will be increasingly managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.

- **Development focus**

**SRD1:** New consolidated sports areas will be expected to provide for a wide variety of sports. Clubhouse facilities and parking must be provided, and the facility must have good accessibility to other parts of the village.



Map D





## 11.0 Community Safety

- **What we are seeking to achieve**

**To create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low, and where the chance of being the victim of a traffic-related accident is minimised.**

- **Evidence Base 'the current situation'**

We no longer have an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village. As a result of neighbourhood policing changes there is no longer a regular mobile police presence where residents can seek advice or make their concerns known.

The village is part of Colchester Zone 3 Local Community Action Panel (L-CAP) meeting quarterly and attended by "Resolver Partners". Residents and businesses can report local issues and obtain progress feedback on resolution actions. The Police, Zone Warden, Youth Officers, Housing Officers and Councillors work towards suitable issue resolution initiatives. Village related Issues are reported to the L-CAP by Parish and Ward Councillors.

The village has a very active Community Speed Watch group (CSW) with resource and equipment being shared with Eight Ash Green. The CSW group is recorded as being in the top five most active groups in Essex.

Snow clearance volunteer teams are in place and the Parish Council maintain equipment and salt supplies for use by volunteers

An emergency plan for the village has been drawn up to support Colchester borough and the emergency services.

- **Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?**

- The Essex Neighbourhood Policing role is constantly changing. Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) roles have been cut. Dedicated PCSO's have to be 100% funded by the community. Alternate policing methods could be considered.
- Volunteer Special Constables are being recruited with full powers of arrest matching those of regular police officers. A further example of the volunteer sector meeting community needs of today and the future.
- Special Constables are a means of meeting community policing needs in the future.
- Occasional antisocial behaviour occurs and local police presence would help control such behaviour.
- A Traffic Safety Plan (TSP) for the village which concentrates on the roads around the school and the junction of New Church Road and Chapel Road. Appropriate expansion of the TSP should be a consideration for all new building development sites.

- **Issues**

Perceived community safety issues and concerns include:

- Speeding vehicles on village roads.
- Risk of accident or injury crossing the road.
- Anti-social parking around school, shops and footpaths.
- There is a perceived lack of visible police presence in the village.
- Litter and fly tipping are a constant issue.
- Many footway surfaces are in need of repair and are trip hazards.
- Vulnerable people in the village may need assistance.
- Need to be aware of trends in crime and disorder.

# 11.0 Community Safety

- Opportunities**

- 20mph maximum speed limit zones and streets.
- Elderly and vulnerable persons register.
- Neighbourhood policing or partnerships with police.
- Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- Online reporting tool for nuisances.
- Link ups with community safety partnerships and the Local Community Action Panel.
- Regular discussions at parish level with police.
- Further uses of community speedwatch.

- General community safety policies**

**CS1:** Neighbourhood Watch schemes including Speedwatch and Farm Watch will be encouraged and supported.

**CS2:** Road safety issues will be highlighted through regular monitoring of issues and plans of action developed with the relevant agencies to rectify problem areas. Particular attention will be paid to areas around the school, the Co-op and other areas of high pedestrian footfall.

**CS3:** Anti-social and other behavioural issues will be monitored and reported to the authorities and measures developed with the Police and the Community Safety Partnership to reduce their incidence.

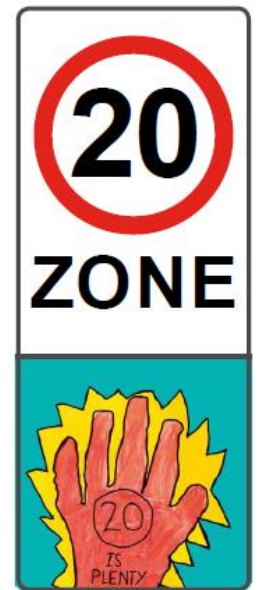
**CS4:** Crime and fear of crime will be monitored and remedial actions discussed and devised with the police and other community safety groups.

- Development focus**

**CSD1:** All areas of new development will be designed so as to reduce the incidence of burglary and other crime.

**CSD2:** Where new streets are proposed these should be 20 mph speed limit zones.

**CSD3:** Compliance with Essex parking standards will be sought with all new or adapted dwellings.



The children from Heathlands primary school have took part in a competition to design the new 20mph sign which is planned to be installed later this year. Here is Aaron Monks winning design.



# 12.0 Communications

- What we are seeking to achieve

To keep the community informed through a wide range of media, promoting two-way dialogue and creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making.

- Evidence Base 'the current situation'

Communication in this sense refers to “official” means of relating information that the Parish Council needs to undertake, as well as “unofficial” ways to get messages across from differing interest groups within the village to the population. The key objective was supported by nearly 98% of the neighbourhood plan questionnaire respondents.

There are 4 main channels in which the village communicates;

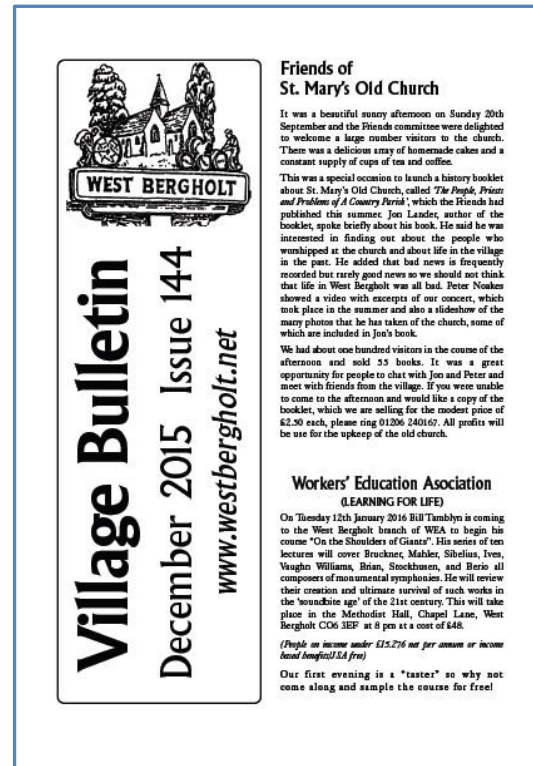
- Face to Face
- Bulletins and Newspaper form
- West Bergholt Website
- Social Media
- *Face to face*

The full Parish Council meets 10 times a year (excluding the months of August and December). There is always time set aside for villagers to air views, ask questions or make comments. The PC sub-committees meet as frequently prior to the main meeting. Village residents are welcome to attend the “Environment and Highways” sub-committee, the “Premises and Recreation” sub-committee and the “Planning” sub-committee.

The Co-op, pharmacy and schools are at the centre of village life and you will often see people passing the time with friends and family.

- *Bulletins and Newspaper form*

The Parish council supports the publication of a quarterly Village Bulletin which is delivered to all households. A brief, more up to date “Village News” is produced most months when there is no Bulletin and displayed in the notice boards and on other sites around the village.



The village Bulletin

The Parish Council also maintains a number of notice boards which are now kept up to date regularly. In addition the church and school have their own news letters.








# 12.0 Communications

- *West Bergholt Website*

West Bergholt.net – the website page for the village provides a calendar of events electronic copies of the bulletin, village updates and details of the parish councillors.

- *Social media*

There are a number of active sites for West Bergholt and the clubs that resound in them. The majority of the sites have a good number of followers. The village website is managed by a third party.

Face book  (note member numbers as of July 2016)


West Bergholt Neighbourhood plan page (232 members)– this provides updates to the community and the progress around the plan

West Bergholt Hub and community page (1046 members) – this provides advice, adverts ,questions and village updates.

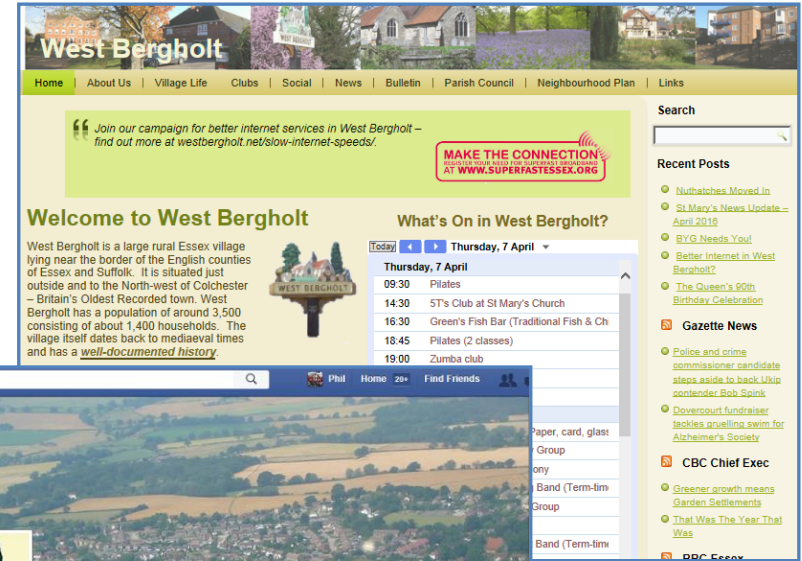
West Bergholt and surroundings selling page (864 members) - this provides a place for locals to see any second hand goods.

West Bergholt latest news (7 members) – this provides local village updates

There are also a number of Facebook pages for the cricket club, football club, parent and toddler group, Bergholt Youth Group and West Bergholt Pharmacy all totalling circa 850 members.

Twitter  (note member numbers as of July 2016)

- West BergholtPC (120 followers) – this provides latest news and updates
- West BergholtCC (255 followers) – this provides updates for the cricket club
- West BergholtFC (497 followers) – this provides updates for the football club



*West Bergholt Facebook page examples*

- **Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?**

We believe the various methods of communication we have in the village put us in a strong position for the future. The explosion of the internet and social media is growing year on year and our current platforms give us a great advantage to reach out to more locals. One critical point to reference is ensuring we have the right broadband capability to ensure this sustained.





## 12.0 Communications

- **Issues**

- Some residents may need support to access information, which is frequently on the web.
- Greater publicity is required for village and parish activities and how to participate.
- Less than half of the residents felt involved in decisions e.g. planning matters.
- Participation in village affairs via social media needs improvement.
- The Village Bulletin is published infrequently and is retrospective in nature.
- Lack of a welcome pack for new residents to the village.
- Unclear direction of provision of superfast broadband.

- **Opportunities**

- Electronic notice boards could be used by the village and sited appropriately. Suggestions included the Co-op site and the Orpen Hall.
- More frequent Village Bulletin with revised layout and new content.
- Set up a village forum for clubs and societies to join and participate in.
- More “whole village” events such as fetes and celebrations.
- More non-parish councillors on working groups and sub-committees.

- **General Communication policies**

**COM1:** A West Bergholt communications forum will be established consisting of a mixture of age groups and skills to help ensure all groups within the community are represented.

**COM2:** The Village Bulletin publication will be reviewed and improvements made.

**COM3:** Communications will be consistent and opportunities made available for residents to feed their thoughts back to other organisations.

**COM4:** The website will be developed as the principal means of day to day communication and information although printed information will be maintained via the Village Bulletin, monthly newsletters and traditional noticeboards.

**COM5:** Broadband services will be encouraged to expand and be developed.

- **Development focus**

**CDS1:** All new residents will receive an information pack to introduce them to the activities and organisations available in the village.

**CDS2:** All new dwellings to have the ability to receive fibre communications should the opportunity to introduce broadband services of this nature present itself.

- **Options and Priorities**

For a vibrant community, it is vitally important for residents views, news, achievements and aspirations to be heard, communicated and shared.



## 13.0 Transport, Highways and Infrastructure

- **What we are seeking to achieve**

**To make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safe.**

Transport in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan covers access to day to day household needs such as food shopping, employment and healthcare and mobility in terms of travel choices available. It also covers the general environment for people travelling. Finally it encompasses the impact transport has on householders and the built and natural environment. Please note that road safety, accidents and speeding is covered under Community Safety elsewhere in this document.

- **Evidence Base 'the current situation'**

The village has generally good main (B1508) and minor road connections to the A12, Colchester town centre, the rail station, Tollgate retail area and towards Sudbury and the rural Essex-Suffolk border area.

Bus services are provided by two companies, Chambers, providing an hourly service to Colchester and Sudbury, and First Bus that operates a 30 minute frequency peak and daytime service to the town centre via the Rail Station. On Sundays the frequency of buses drops to two hourly. School buses serve the main secondary schools whilst the Care Network and Community bus services offer a bookable service for those unable to use conventional public transport easily. Footways are generally provided adjacent to the majority of roads and the area is covered by 30mph speed restrictions. There are no cycle ways although a signed cycle route to the rail station using the main road has been provided in recent years and similarly the National Cycle Network route 13 skirts the village providing a means of accessing the wider countryside.

Information gathered during the Parish Plan established the following: General accessibility to a car: 92% have driving licences and 81% have access to a car

Typical usage of different modes of transport

Car	Bus	Train	Cycle	walk
86%	28%	23%	25%	64%

Popular destinations are: the rail station and adjacent retail park, town centre, the hospital, access to the A12 and the Stanway/Tollgate area for retail shopping.

In the surveys undertaken the following areas were identified as being of concern:

- Road maintenance
- Bus services
- Cycling and walking environments
- 20mph areas
- Parking concerns

- **Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?**

Although there has been some growth in the village there is nothing to suggest that major road infrastructure is required, rather it is likely to be the management of traffic and parking, together with the introduction of more bus services and the improvement of the walking and cycling environment that should be the focus.





## 13.0 Transport, Highways and Infrastructure

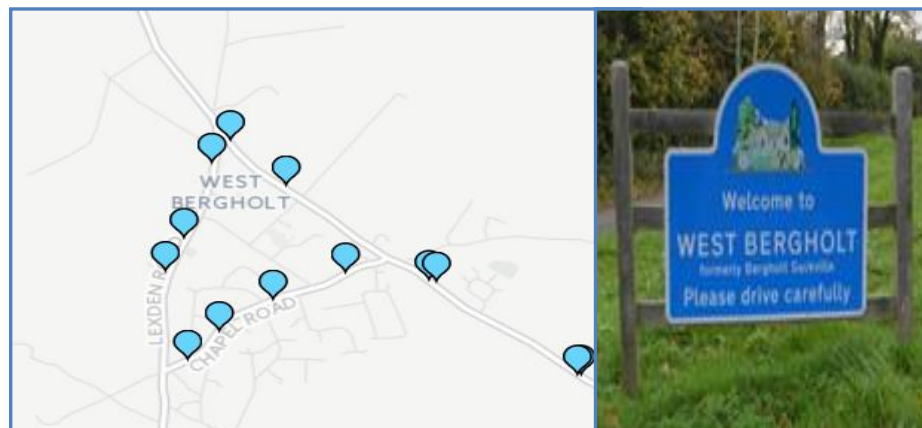
### • Issues

- Bus routes are reasonable but services are not frequent enough and do not serve the hospital.
- Bus routing around the village could be improved to ensure greater convenience
- Information about arrivals and departures is limited.
- Cycling environments are often undefined and hostile.
- Pedestrian environments lack basic facilities such as crossings and footways.
- Traffic calming is required where there is conflict between pedestrians and cars.
- Parking is problematic around popular destinations.
- Road maintenance issues occur if networks do not receive regular surfacing regimes.
- The public footpath and rights of way network requires promotion to encourage its use.

### • Opportunities

- Real time information on bus stops saying when the next bus will arrive.
- Some form of bus discount scheme linked to increased usage.
- Minibus scheme for trips to hospital, retail parks and rail station.
- Parking restrictions at key road junctions and possibly one way streets.
- Progressively introduce 20mph streets or better still 20mph zoning.
- A parish register of road defects to discuss with the highway authority.
- New footways along Chapel Lane, New Church Road and Nayland Road.
- New footway on Colchester Road adjacent to Poor's Land and School Lane.
- Promotional leaflet covering cycling and opportunities locally to cycle.
- Links to cycle routes in the area towards the station and Eight Ash Green.
- Circular cycle route for youngsters to learn cycle craft and cycle safely to school.
- Leaflets and guides of circular walks using public rights of way.

*The current 66 bus route and stopping points*



### **Opportunity areas have been identified as follows:**

#### *Possible bus service proposal:*

- Real time information on bus stops saying when the next bus will arrive.
- Some form of bus discount scheme linked to increased usage.

#### *Possible motorised transport proposals:*

- Parking restrictions at key road junctions and possibly one way streets.
- Progressively introduce 20mph streets or better still 20mph zoning.
- A parish register of road defects to discuss with the highway authority.

#### *Possible walking proposals:*

- New footways along Chapel Lane and New Church Road.
- New footway on Colchester Road adjacent to Poores Land and School.
- Promotional leaflet covering public rights of way and cycling.

#### *Possible cycling proposals:*

- Links to cycle routes in the area towards the station and Eight Ash Green.
- A quiet circular cycle route for youngsters to learn cycle craft and cycle safely to school.



## 13.0 Transport, Highways and Infrastructure

- **General Transport policies**

*In partnership with the highway authority and transport operators*

**T1:** Traffic management will be introduced to control parking and to improve the environment for cycling and walking in residential streets.

**T2:** Traffic will be channelled towards main roads.

**T3:** Cycling and walking will be promoted and will be considered as part of all infrastructure projects.

**T4:** Parish bus services will be promoted and improvements sought. New minibus services will be introduced where appropriate.

**T5:** Roads and pavements will be maintained to a high standard.

- **Development Focus**

Various development site options have been identified in this plan, all of which are likely to have a transport impact. Whilst it is unclear whether development of these sites will take place, any new development proposals should be designed to meet the criteria laid out in Policy TD1:

Transport development policy (TD1)

*New development should comply with the following:*

**TD1:** Developments must be safely located with regard to vehicular and pedestrian access, ensuring adequate visibility.

**TD2:** The developer should provide or contribute towards appropriate measures which will assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements to principal village facilities.

**TD3:** Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or inappropriate traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards village transport safety schemes.

**TD4:** Development proposals for new developments should include secure cycle storage and storage for children's buggies and mobility scooters where appropriate.

**TD5:** Development proposals to maintain and enhance existing public rights of way.

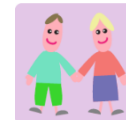
- **Options & Priorities**

The (appendix action plan) identifies the priorities and options available to progress the achievement of Transport objectives.

### Appendix



### Action Plans



Issue	Objective	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners	Pri
Overbooked Village Hall	To enable groups to book meeting rooms more easily.	Organise a centralised and coordinated booking system	Parish Council	Representatives from the 2 churches. Hall administrater.	
Communication using broadband	Increase opportunities for communication between residents and clubs/groups	Improved broadband in the village.	See section in NP on Communica tions		



Issue	Objective	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners	Priority
<b>Conserve and enhance existing Open Space</b>	To identify and improve the quality and accessibility of each major open space in the village	Identify resources to audit each major Open Space in the village and create management objectives for the next 5 years to secure enhancements for quality and bio diversity	Parish Council	User groups (school, football club etc.), CBC	4
		Identify resources to carry out an access audit of each major Open Space	Parish Council	User groups, CBC	
	To promote more multi-functional use of the existing open space	Explore enhanced shared use of green space for sustainable living, celebration, nature study, play and relaxation e.g. Green Fairs, Allotment Open Days, Composting, Bike trails, village nature trail, community garden etc.	Parish Council	MUGA Committee Allotment committee	
<b>Conserve and enhance the PROW network</b>	To promote the network to residents and visitors	Work with Local Access Forum, Ramblers etc to enhance promotional opportunities for West Bergholt PROW network	Parish Council	Local Access Forum, User groups	5
		Promote existing network, trails and guides on the website and in village pack			
	Identify responsibilities and options for specific maintenance issues	produce condition survey of local footpath network identify issues relating to care, maintenance and improving bio-diversity	Parish Council	ECC PROW officer, Ramblers, Landowners	3
<b>Ensure treescapes and hedgerows are maintained</b>	To keep an attractive mix of natural and man-made landscapes	Carry out a comprehensive tree survey and seek to add further TPOs to the existing register	Parish Council	CBC, Landowners	2
		Identify streets, open spaces, and other areas of land where new planting can be considered and introduced.	Parish Council	CBC, ECC, Landowners	3
<b>Conserve and enhance character areas in the village</b>	To maintain the distinctive settlement pattern that exists	Identify character areas and seek to incorporate these in a revised Village Design Guide	Parish Council	CBC, homeowners	2
<b>Reduce Nuisances</b>	To reduce dog-fouling	Produce survey of main locations of concern	Parish Council	User groups/ramblers	2
		Promote poop-a-scoop awareness to dog-owners through web, village pack, bulletin, school newsletter	Parish Council	User groups/ramblers and landowners	





TBC





TBC



TBC







TBC





Issue	Objective	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners	Pri
Village Bulletin	To create a new fresh looking bulletin that is more frequent and has more fun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate what the residents would like to see in the bulletin.</li> <li>Investigate what other villages do with their bulletins.</li> <li>Review colour vs black and white.</li> <li>Ensure the bulletin is aligned with web based communication.</li> </ul>	Communications group	Parish council	1
Training and upskilling	To get more of our community using social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask for volunteers to help upskill the community.</li> <li>Ask David Kingaby to prepare a masterclass on social media.</li> <li>Set up tech drop in centres for all ages to understand and use social media.</li> </ul>	Communications group	Parish council	2
Strategically placed village updates	To update all reference points to communicate to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review current locations where updates are placed.</li> <li>Ask the community where they believe are the best place for updates.</li> <li>Implement new communications update strategy.</li> </ul>	Communications group	Parish council	3
Drawing all updates from all the different clubs and organisations and utilise the Facebook and twitter West Bergholt home page.	To bring together all updates and communicate to wider community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review all current aspects of social media.</li> <li>Work with David Kingaby to prepare a new community website.</li> <li>Collate and bring all updates together and link with the village bulletin.</li> </ul>	Communications group	Parish council	4
Councillors to promote more open communication	The community get to know our Parish councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parish councillors to post/tweet once a week.</li> <li>Encourage the community to ask questions of their parish councillors.</li> </ul>	Communications group	Parish council	5
Increased community volunteer participation.	Through greater wider communication gain more support from the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote volunteer opportunities through our new wide range of communication plans.</li> <li>Encourage the children of the village and their parents.</li> </ul>	Communications group	Parish council	6



Issue	Objective	Action	Lead Organisation	Partners	Pri
Parking	Manage parking around popular destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate revised regulations and layouts and opportunities for off road parking around, school, Co-op and Scout Hut</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC and Police plus School, Co-op Scout Group	5
Traffic Management and Traffic Calming	Manage traffic conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate use of village gateways</li> <li>emphasize junctions on main routes</li> <li>Investigate one way systems</li> <li>Improve signing</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC and Police	4
	Create a pleasanter traffic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce traffic calming on certain roads</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC and Police	
Bus routes and services	Improve information about bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate real time information</li> <li>Place links about Public Transport and information on website</li> </ul>	Public Transport Representative	ECC, CBC, Bus Companies, CT	1
	Reduce bus fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate fare levels for young people with bus companies</li> </ul>	PT user group	ECC, CBC, Bus Companies, CT	
	Market bus services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce PT guide for village</li> </ul>	PT user group	ECC, CBC, Bus Companies, CT	
	Promote new routes and introduce better facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate demand responsive community bus and community transport services</li> <li>Improve bus stop environments</li> </ul>	PT user group	ECC, CBC, Bus Companies, CT	
Cycling environment	Introduce cycle tracks and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine opportunities to connect WB to nearby settlements and important places of attraction</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC, Cycle Groups	2
	Promote cycling for leisure and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce guides for cycling around the village and to the countryside</li> <li>Investigate off-road routes</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC, Cycle Groups	
	Introduce improved cycle parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine current provision and suggest improvements</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC, Cycle Groups, School	
	Cycle Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine cycle proficiency at Heathlands School and Adult cycling generally</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC, Cycle Groups, Schools	
Pedestrian Environment	Introduce improved facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine issues such as lighting, crossing facilities and new footways</li> <li>Produce list of improvements</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC, Police and Village Organisations	3
General Issues	Develop sustainable travel awareness and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote a low carbon and sustainable travel environment</li> <li>Encourage schools to have a travel plan</li> </ul>	Parish Council	ECC, Police and Village Organisations	6



### Policies

# Neighbourhood Plan Policies

## Section 6 Village and Community Policies

**VSC1:** The loss of existing community buildings will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.

**VSC2:** The village hall complex consisting of the Orpen and John Lampon Halls will be further developed as a community resource unless a new more appropriate site can be found to better fulfil the needs of the village.

**VSC3:** Village societies, clubs and other community based organisations will be actively promoted through a variety of communication channels. New community members will be informed how to participate in village and parish life through the website and notice boards.

**VSCD1:** All development will be encouraged to enhance the quality of life and the wellbeing of the local community and promote diversity and enhance community cohesion.

## Section 7 Environment Policies

**ENV1:** Existing areas of public open space will be managed, maintained and improved to promote regular use and community enjoyment.

**ENV2:** “Area of Special Landscape” will be declared for the part of the parish to the south east and west of the village envelope, as shown centred on **MAP A**. Changes in land use will be resisted and access to countryside will be improved through use of the existing public rights of way network.

**ENV3:** There will be a general presumption against the removal of mature native trees within the village envelope.

**ENV4:** Streetscapes will be enhanced through planting and good verge and hedge management.

**ENV5:** A “Character Area” of the village will be declared which will be protected from degradation through separate policies in the Village Design Statement.

**ENV6:** New areas of open space will be incorporated within the village and all open spaces will be enhanced through a biodiversity plan which seeks to improve the conditions for wildlife.

**ENV7:** Important historic and character buildings will be protected from changes which reduce or compromise their amenity value.

**ENV8:** Built and natural environments will be of high quality by controlling nuisances such as litter and dog fouling.

**ENV1:** New areas of development will incorporate areas of public open space within their curtilages and will allow and promote access to public rights of way.

# Neighbourhood Plan Policies

## Section 8 Housing and Planning Policies

**HP1:** New development in the parish will be sited within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope.  
The number of dwellings will be no more than 120, of which 20 will be sited within the current village envelope.

**HP2:** Development sites within the expanded village area are to be centred on the areas marked by on **MAP B**.

**HP3:** Only a mix of 1,2 and 3 bedroom dwellings of varying tenure, including at least 12 dwellings for affordable rent and/or shared ownership, will be within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope.

**HP4:** No changes to the external envelope of any of the dwellings built within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope so as to maintain the availability and supply of the required mix.

**HP5:** A common landscaped area of at least 10m wide along the Colchester Road will be maintained to retain the existing semi rural nature of the village.

**HP6:** All new properties should be contemporary in design and built to high insulation standards.

**HP7:** Exception sites will be supported by the PC provided all relevant NP policies are met and such sites are outside the Special Landscape Area.

**HPD1:** All new development including extensions to existing dwellings will be carried out in accordance with the Village Design Statement.

**HPD2:** Any development within the additional area formed by expanding the village envelope will be required to ensure provision of all the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development, or the additional infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan should be provided through developer contributions.

## Section 9 Business and Commerce Policies

**BC1:** No new business parks to be formed within the parish.

**BC2:** Any expansion of the existing business parks **MAP C** is to be sustainable, limited and appropriate for the location and associated infrastructure.

**BC3:** The conversion of commercial premises into residential property or the use of associated land for such purposes will be resisted so as to preserve the employment opportunities which exist in the village and wider parish area.

**BCD1:** Any expansion of current business parks will be expected to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the parks and improvements to parking and access arrangements.

# Neighbourhood Plan Policies

## Section 10 Sports and Recreation Policies

**SR1:** New sports activity areas will be developed as opportunities arise. Consolidation of sports activities may take place as a result. Favoured locations for new sports areas are shown on **MAP D**.

**SR2:** The Lorkin Daniell playing field will be increasingly managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.

**SR3:** The Poors Field will be increasingly managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.

**SRD1:** New consolidated sports areas will be expected to provide for a wide variety of sports. Clubhouse facilities and parking must be provided, and the facility must have good accessibility to other parts of the village.

## Section 11 Community Safety Policies

**CS1:** Neighbourhood Watch schemes including Speedwatch and Farm Watch will be encouraged and supported.

**CS2:** Road safety issues will be highlighted through regular monitoring of issues and plans of action developed with the relevant agencies to rectify problem areas. Particular attention will be paid to areas around the school, the Co-op and other areas of high pedestrian footfall.

**CS3:** Anti-social and other behavioural issues will be monitored and reported to the authorities and measures developed with the Police and the Community Safety Partnership to reduce their incidence.

**CS4:** Crime and fear of crime will be monitored and remedial actions discussed and devised with the police and other community safety groups.

**CSD1:** All areas of new development will be designed so as to reduce the incidence of burglary and other crime.

**CSD2:** Where new streets are proposed these should be 20 mph speed limit zones.

**CSD3:** Compliance with Essex parking standards will be sought with all new or adapted dwellings.



# Neighbourhood Plan Policies

## Section 12 Communication Policies

**COM1:** A West Bergholt communications forum will be established consisting of a mixture of age groups and skills to help ensure all groups within the community are represented.

**COM2:** The Village Bulletin publication will be reviewed and improvements made.

**COM3:** Communications will be consistent and opportunities made available for residents to feed their thoughts back to other organisations.

**COM4:** The website will be developed as the principal means of day to day communication and information although printed information will be maintained via the Village Bulletin, monthly newsletters and traditional noticeboards.

**COM5:** Broadband services will be encouraged to expand and be developed.

**CDS1:** All new residents will receive an information pack to introduce them to the activities and organisations available in the village.

**CDS2:** All new dwellings to have the ability to receive fibre communications should the opportunity to introduce broadband services of this nature present itself.

## Section 13 Transport, Highways and Infrastructure Policies

**T1:** Traffic management will be introduced to control parking and to improve the environment for cycling and walking in residential streets.

**T2:** Traffic will be channelled towards main roads.

**T3:** Cycling and walking will be promoted and will be considered as part of all infrastructure projects.

**T4:** Parish bus services will be promoted and improvements sought. New minibus services will be introduced where appropriate.

**T5:** Roads and pavements will be maintained to a high standard.

**TD1:** Developments must be safely located with regard to vehicular and pedestrian access, ensuring adequate visibility.

**TD2:** The developer should provide or contribute towards appropriate measures which will assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements to principal village facilities.

**TD3:** Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or inappropriate traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards village transport safety schemes.

**TD4:** Development proposals for new developments should include secure cycle storage and storage for children's buggies and mobility scooters where appropriate.

**TD5:** Development proposals to maintain and enhance existing public rights of way.

### Sources of Evidence

## Neighbourhood Plan Sources of Evidence

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### WBNP Sources of Evidence June 2016

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Essex Transport Strategy (2011)  
Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)  
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Colchester Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)  
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Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2005)  
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Rural Community Profile for West Bergholt (2013)  
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## Neighbourhood Plan Sources of Evidence

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### WBNP Sources of Evidence June 2016 cont.

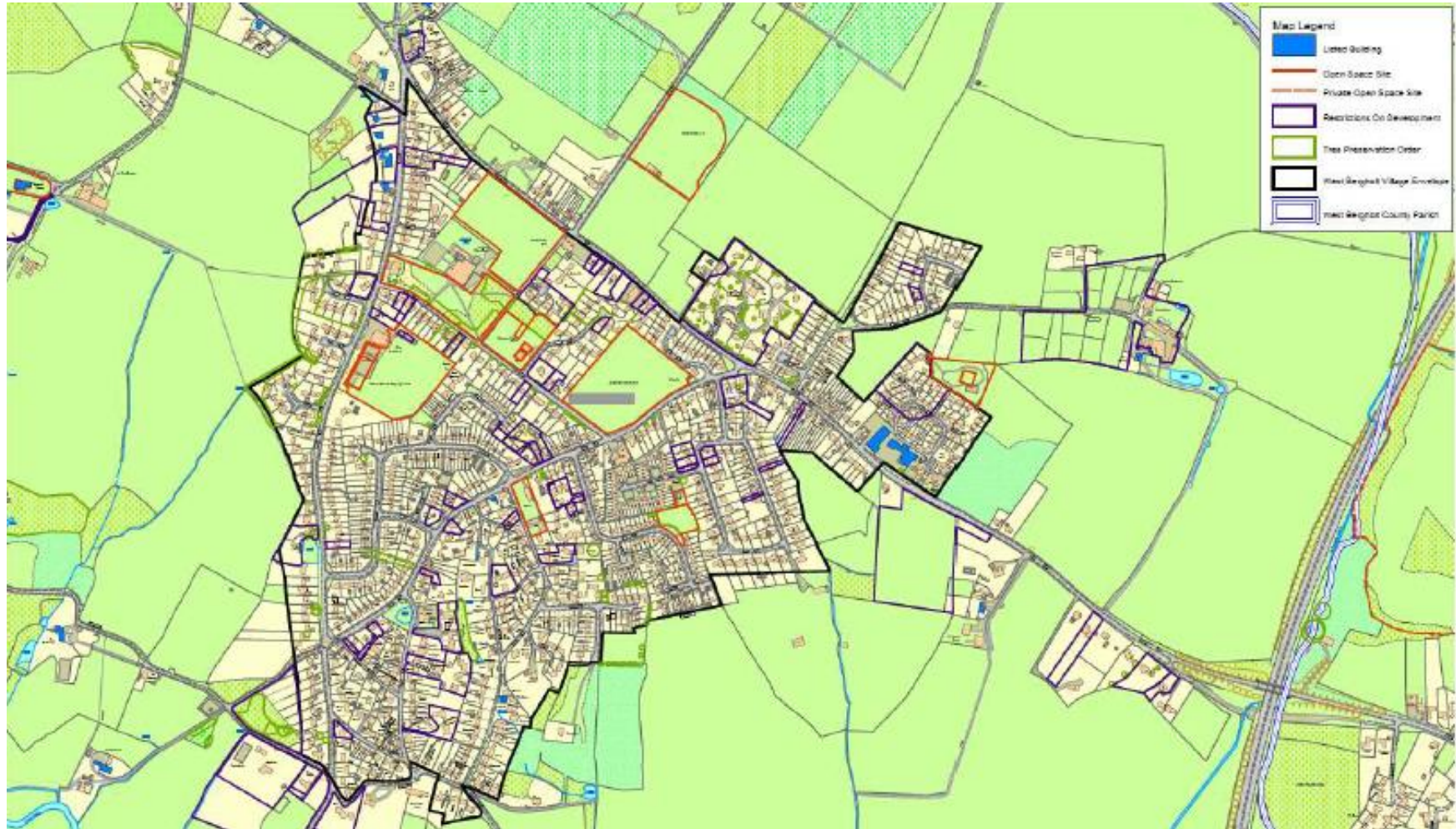
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Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, Colchester Borough Council, June 2011  
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### Maps

# Neighbourhood Plan Maps

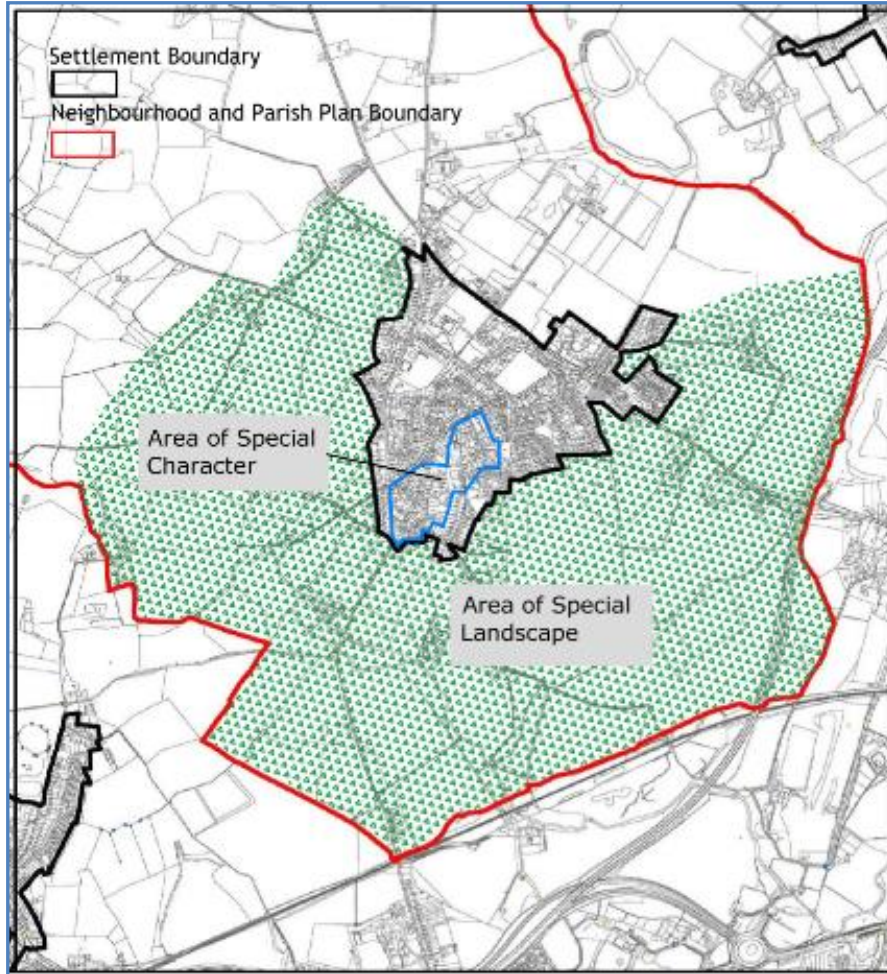
## Village Envelope Map of West Bergholt





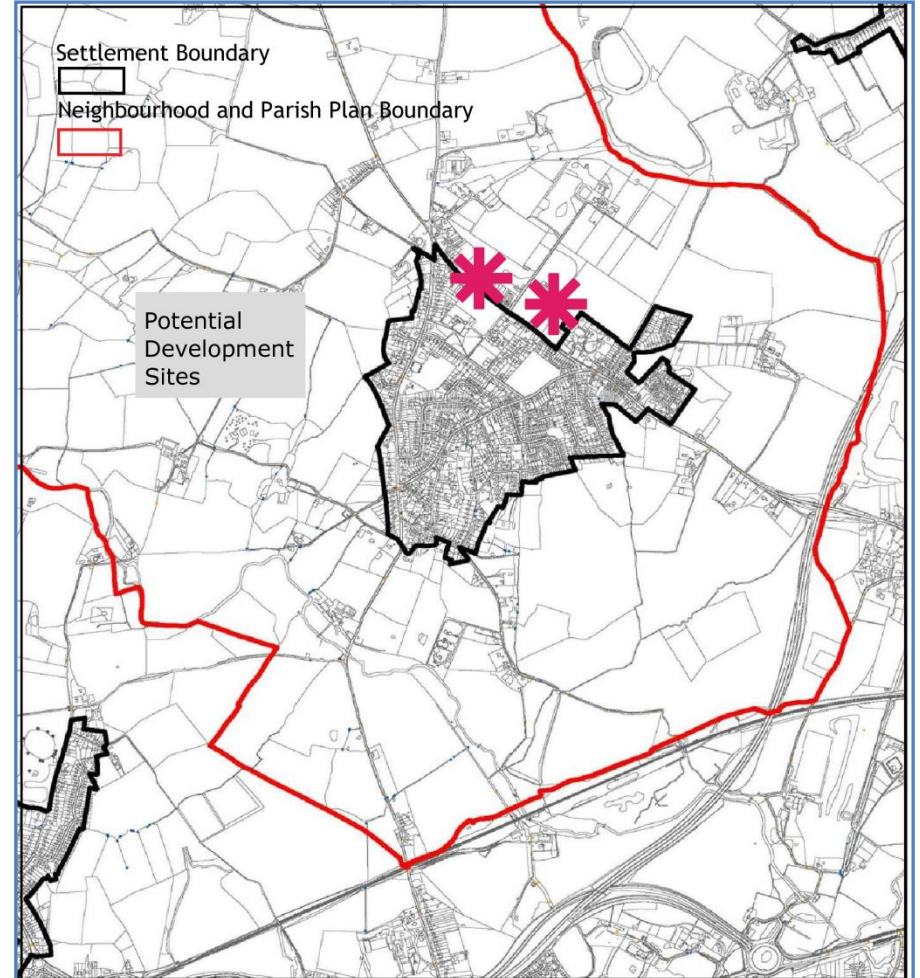
# Neighbourhood Plan Maps

## Section 7 Environment Map



Map A

## Section 8 Housing and Planning Map

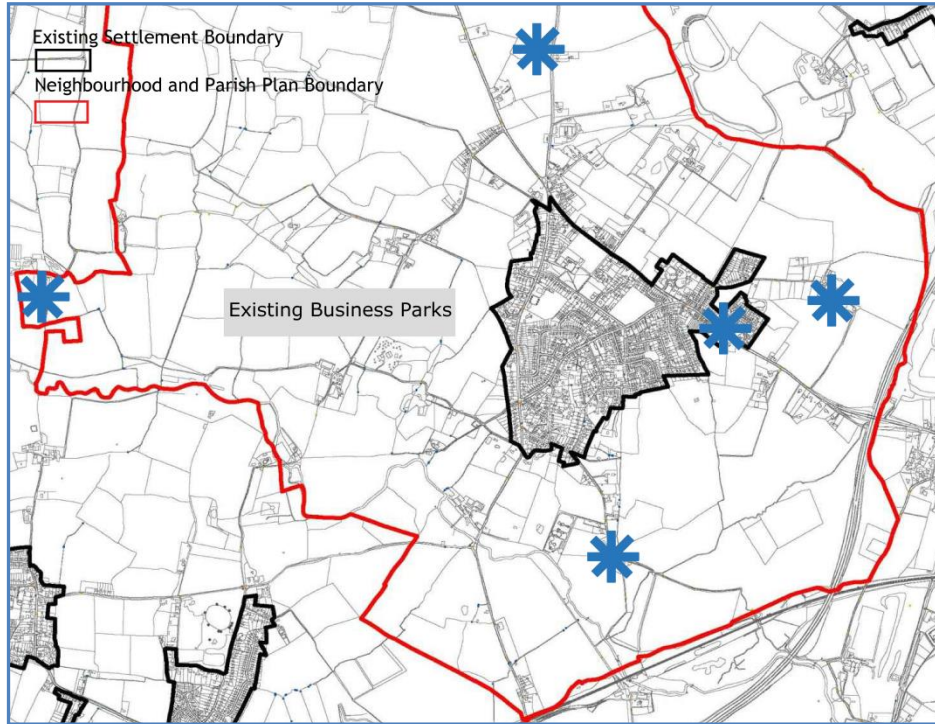


Map B



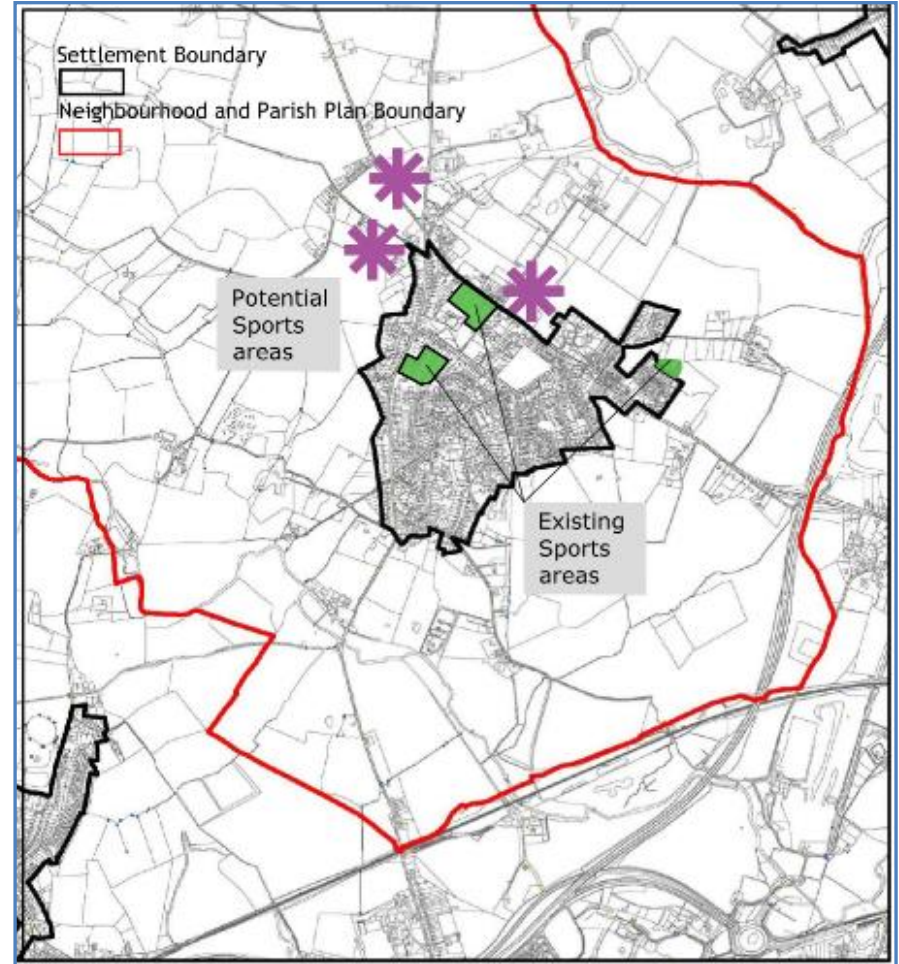
# Neighbourhood Plan Maps

## Section 9 Business and Commerce Map



Map C

## Section 10 Sports and Recreation Map



Map D