



Local Plan Committee

Item

8 October 2012

Report of	Head of Strategic Policy and Regeneration	Author	Beverley McClean 01206 282480
Title	Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area		
Wards affected	Boxted		

The Local Plan Committee is asked to formally approve the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area

1. Decision(s) Required

1.1 To formally approve the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area.

2. Reasons for Decision

2.1 The Localism Act which received Royal Assent in 2011 introduced new rights to strengthen community involvement in the planning process. To deliver this the Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework introduced the concept of Neighbourhood Planning. Boxted Parish Council is developing a Neighbourhood Plan for their Parish. The Local Plan Committee is being asked to approve the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area to ensure conformity with Part 2 section 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and to enable Boxted Parish Council to progress its Neighbourhood Plan to the next stage. A map of the Neighbourhood Plan Area being proposed and the application letter are attached as Appendices A and B with this report.

3. Alternative Options

3.1 The alternative is for Boxted Parish Council and its residents not to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan or to prepare one for a different area. The production of a Neighbourhood Plan offers Boxted residents the opportunity to influence how Boxted should develop in the future and also get more directly involved in planning its development.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 The philosophy behind Neighbourhood Planning is to give local communities a much greater influence over how their neighbourhoods develop and to increase engagement in the local planning decision making process.

4.2 The concept of Community Planning is not new in Colchester. The Borough Council has actively encouraged local groups to produce Village Design Statements and Parish Plans since 2006. While Neighbourhood Plans are in effect another type of Community Plan they differ from Village Design Statements and Parish Plans in a number of ways;

1. They are community led by either the Parish Council or a constituted Neighbourhood Forum;
2. They are subject to formal examination and referendum; and

3. If adopted they carry weight within the planning system as they form part of the statutory Local Plan.

4.3 In November 2011 Boxted Parish Council approached the Borough Council's Spatial Policy team about producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Boxted. An application was submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government to secure funding for Boxted to become a Neighbourhood Plan frontrunner. The application was successful and £20,000 was awarded to take this work forward.

4.4 To date a Neighbourhood Plan working group has been set up led by Boxted Parish Council. Members of the group have attended Neighbourhood Planning Training. This training has developed the working group's knowledge about the stages involved in developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

4.5 An Open Day was held in July 2012 during which resident's views were sought about the key issues to be addressed, community aspirations and needs for the parish along with development opportunities in Boxted.

5. Proposals

5.1 An application of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area for Boxted was submitted to Colchester Borough Council for approval. Initially Boxted Parish Council was keen to prepare a plan for specific parts of the village only. However as their understanding of the Neighbourhood Plan process developed the decision was taken to widen the area covered. The Plan Area now includes the whole of Boxted Parish. This is considered to be an appropriate area as it corresponds with the administrative area the Parish Council is responsible for and this approach will enable all potential planning needs in Boxted to be fully considered. Boxted Parish Council is the appropriate body to prepare and develop the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.2 As required by the regulations, the Area was published on the Colchester Borough Council website, made available in the library and the Customer Service Centre. It was also published on Boxted Parish Council's website (www.essexinfo.net/boxted-parish-council) to bring the area application to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the area to which the area application relates. The website included the following information;

- a copy of the area application;
- details of how to make representations; and
- the date by which those representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the area application is first publicised.

5.3 The consultation ran from 21 August 2012 for 6 weeks until 2 October in accordance with the 2012 regulations. When this report was prepared no comments or objections had been received about the proposed Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area. A verbal update will be provided at the Local Plan Committee if any comments are received.

5.4 The committee is being asked to approve the Neighbourhood Plan Area now that the consultation has ended.

6. Strategic Plan References

6.1 The Strategic Plan Action Plan includes a commitment to regenerate the Borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure, improve opportunities for local business to thrive including retail, provide more affordable homes across the borough

and enable local communities to help themselves. The production of a Neighbourhood Plan for Boxted will help the Council meet these strategic objectives.

7. Consultation

7.1 Consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as detailed above.

8.0 Publicity Considerations

8.1 The Neighbourhood Plan for Boxted may generate publicity for the Council as it is one of the national Frontrunners along with Myland Community Council. It is a new initiative aimed at improving participation in the planning system.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 Colchester Borough Council is responsible for consultation costs and for organising both the examination and community referendum for the Boxted Neighbourhood Plan. These costs will be met from the DCLG Frontrunner grant and from an additional grant (if an application is successful) made available by DCLG to Local Authorities to cover the costs of consultation and the examination/referendum. An application will be submitted to DCLG for this second grant once the Neighbourhood Plan Area is approved.

10. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view on the Colchester Borough Council website by following this pathway from the homepage: Council and Democracy > Policies, Strategies and Performance > Diversity and Equality > Equality Impact Assessments > Strategic Policy and Regeneration > Local Development Framework.

10.2 There are no particular Human Rights implications.

11. Community Safety Implications

11.1 None.

12. Health and Safety Implications

12.1 None

13. Risk Management Implications

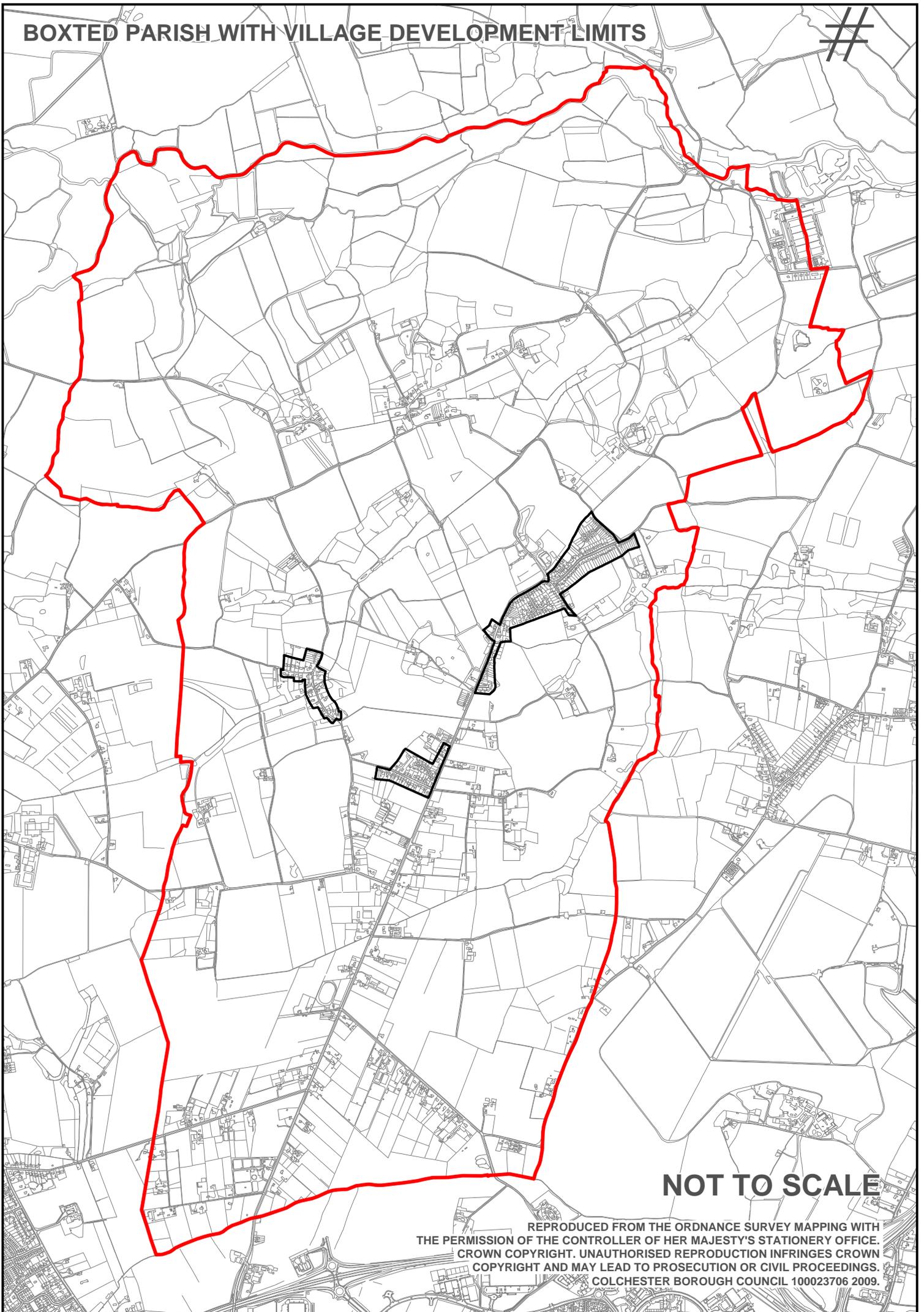
13.1 The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Boxted will ensure that the views and needs of all residents in Boxted are thoroughly considered in local planning processes reducing the risk of decisions being made against local wishes.

Appendices

Appendix A Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area map of Boxted

Appendix B – Boxted Neighbourhood Plan Area application letter

BOXTED PARISH WITH VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS



NOT TO SCALE

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Ms K Syrett
Spatial Policy Manager
Colchester Borough Council

7th August 2012

Dear Karen,

BOXTED NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Further to our request to become a Neighbourhood Plan Development Area, we have enclosed a map which identifies the area to which the area application relates.

This area is considered appropriate as it covers the whole parish of Boxted which is the administrative boundary and whilst we have considered possible cross border issues, we do not feel there is a need to extend the neighbourhood plan area beyond the parish.

We can confirm that Boxted Parish Council is a relevant body under section 61g of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

The Parish Council are requesting that Colchester Borough Council carry out the necessary publicity and designate the parish as the Neighbourhood Area.

Yours sincerely

Mrs D Humphris
Clerk to the Council
Boxted Parish Council