

Consultation Statement :Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2033

Contents:

1. Introduction
2. Organisational structure of Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan
3. Consultation process
 - 3.1 2014 Consultation and engagement
 - 3.2 2015 Consultation and engagement
 - 3.3 2016 Consultation and engagement
 - 3.4 2018 Consultation and engagement
 - 3.5 2019 Consultation and engagement
 - 3.6 2020 Consultation and engagement
 - 3.7 2021 Consultation and engagement
4. How concerns were considered or addressed
5. Regulation 14 pre-submission and Consultation
6. Amendments after pre-submission consultation.

1. Introduction

The Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning regulations 2012 in respect of the Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan (CWENP)

The legal Basis of the Consultation Statement is provided by Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended) which requires that a consultation statement should:

- Contain details of the persons and bodies that were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan
- Explain how they were consulted
- Summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted
- Describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and where relevant addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.
- Demonstrate that the objectives and policies contained in the CWENP are the result of interaction and consultation with the community within the parish.

The process of developing the plan has involved community groups over seven years, as well as surveys, open days and public meetings. This work has been supported by Colchester Borough Council liaison officers, Charisma Planning consultant Anne Skipper, Rural Community Council for Essex (RCCE) and Copford with Easthorpe Parish Council

2. Organisational structure of the Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan

Copford with Easthorpe Parish Council as the qualifying body, set up a Neighbourhood Plan Group following a public meeting in October 2014, attended by 105 residents. The Parish Council considered the commentary from this meeting and written feedback provided, so that by December 2014 it was agreed to establish a Neighbourhood Plan Group to produce a plan for the whole of the parish

The Neighbourhood Plan Group consisted initially of twenty volunteers drawn from across the Parish including four Parish Councillors. Another ten or so volunteers helped with various specific tasks such as delivering, collecting and collating questionnaires, public engagement days, going into the local Primary School and businesses.

At various times during the process, smaller groups met to investigate topics such as environment, ecology, traffic flow, liaison with other neighbouring groups to share expertise, housing design, historic buildings and landscape character. All groups contained at least one Parish Councillor and reported back to the main group, who in turn under their terms of reference made suggestions to the Parish Council for discussion at full Council meetings to agree the way forward.

Throughout the process, the Neighbourhood Plan was funded via the Locality grant scheme, with the maximum grant awarded to move the plan forward. The technology corporation assigned to support neighbourhood planning; AECOM, were also used to provide a very comprehensive, detailed technical support document. This will provide the Parish Council and residents with technical reference notes to support housing design into the future.

Prior to the pandemic, Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Planning Group (CWEMP) met weekly, with meetings open to residents. Notes of the face-to-face meeting and regular virtual meetings during the pandemic are available on Copford with Easthorpe Parish Council website in the Neighbourhood Plan section.

In addition, residents were informed of progress through local publications; 'The Plainsman' and 'Stanway Life'.

3. Consultation Process

The following activities and actions were undertaken from 2014 to 2021.

- A Neighbourhood Plan Open day 27th September 2014. Questions raised by residents recorded, on post it notes and written comments, summary produced by then Parish Clerk, maps of area provided at venue, 105 residents attended.
- Expressions of interest in involvement collected at this meeting and named individuals invited September 2015
- Plan area agreed by group as Parish boundary and communicated to Colchester Borough Council by the Parish Council, November 2014
- Terms of reference for Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) approved by Parish Council March 2015
- Colchester Borough Council liaison officer appointed to support the Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan
- Volunteers and Councillors met, September 2015
- Parish-wide questionnaire sent to all residents January 2016. A 42% response from 600 households all of which were analysed. Tables and graphs of this information available as part of evidence.

Written comments in the consultation statement Details of questionnaire response made available to residents at subsequent Open Days and through local publications.

- Copford Primary School Council met with NP group and gave their views, January 2016, ideas collated. Part of evidence base.
- Parish Council motion proposed and passed to halt the Neighbourhood Plan process June 2016. Named vote, two Councillors objected to this, one abstention, five in favour. This led to the allocation of sites by Colchester Borough Council, rather than by local mechanism. More details available if needed.
- Independent 'VOICE' group set up by residents following the rejection of the Neighbourhood Planning Group by the then Parish Council to promote ideas gained from the Neighbourhood Plan Group August 2016. VOICE lobbied the Parish Council to re-start the Neighbourhood Plan. VOICE met many times August 2016 to April 2018 and produced a Village Report, circulated to councillors and senior planning officers. Voice report available as part of information.
- New Parish Council resolves to re-start the Neighbourhood Plan process May 2018
- Colchester Borough Council informed of the change and the plan area identified as the Parish Boundary, June 2018
- From 2017 to date regular updates on progress as part of public engagement with the Neighbourhood Plan were published in two local publications Stanway Life and The Plainsman. Samples of these are available in the evidence folder
- Open day and public consultation to show progress so far, maps, questionnaire responses from 2016 and tables/summaries/graphs available. Residents invited to provide further suggestions. 120 residents attended, held in the Village Hall, October 2018.
- All local businesses contacted by hand delivered letter and invited to contribute suggestions November 2018 with no response.
- February 2019. First of three Locality Grants applied for resulting in a grant of £1500 awarded to support the Neighbourhood Plan. Further grants were successfully applied for during 2019/20 and 2020/21. Full schedule for grants accepted, to cover hire of premises, printing, questionnaires and to fund Consultants, who were appointed in late 2019, after review of available consultancies. With the support of Colchester Borough, Ann Skipper of Charisma Spatial Planning was appointed.
- Photographic competition launched in the Parish to promote interest in the Neighbourhood Plan and advertised through the local press, July 2019
- Open day to view photos and ask questions about Neighbourhood Plan progress September 2019, residents' feedback received and recorded.
- Further questionnaire about issues of concern and interest hand delivered to all residents, results, November 2019. Results of the 45% response were collated and summarised in local publication, in the drop in session in November 2021, written comments within the Consultation Statement.
- Key results published in local magazine articles, enabling further objectives and policies to be drafted. published in both The Plainsman, which goes to all Copford and Easthorpe residents and Stanway Life, which Copford residents also receive
- Agendas and minutes of all Neighbourhood Plan Working Group meetings published on the Parish Council website during 2015 to February 2020
- Rural Community Council for Essex (RCCE) Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and approved by Parish Council. Completed March/April 2020 with 25% return. Extracts have been available in local publications and the full report signposted to the Parish Council website where it has been available since September 2020.

- Zoom meetings including all core Neighbourhood Plan Working Group volunteers from March 2020 until September/October 2021. Versions of the Plan as it is drafted are discussed and revised by the working group, with critical scrutiny by Charisma Planning Consultancy and Colchester Borough Council liaison officer. In parallel, a Landscape Character Assessment is edited and approved for inclusion.
- AECOM technical Housing Design Notes service offered by Locality organisation, September 2020 and agreed as an additional strategy to support the technical content of the Plan. Several online meetings with AECOM, including Google Maps 'Fly over' discussion, along with physical visits enable AECOM to produce an accurate, representative report about the character of the Parish and its built environment.
- November 2020. Graphic Designer appointed after consideration of different companies and costs. Costs adjusted as additional photographic work and layout work are commissioned and the draft amended.
- August 2021 final draft version of Plan and draft of AECOM document provided to Colchester Borough for comment. Legitimate comments are accepted and the draft amended.
- September 2021. Final version of the Neighbourhood Plan agreed by the working group in consultation with the designer and sent for printing.
- Final AECOM Housing Design Guidance and Codes agreed.
- Final version of Neighbourhood Plan and AECOM Housing Design Guidance and Codes placed on Parish Council website
- October 2021. Volunteers deliver the published plan to all residents of Copford with Easthorpe with an accompanying letter giving details of contacts for comments:
- copfordeasthorpenp@btinternet.com
- www.copfordwitheasthorpeparishcouncil.co.uk
- Postal comment to NPWG c/o Copford Village Hall
- Six week public consultation period runs from October 26th to December 7th
- November 13th drop-in session at Copford Village Hall 230-530 for residents to view online documents and ask any questions/make comments about the Plan. 35 residents attended the session.
- October 26th to December 7th initial Regulation 14 Public consultation
- From October 26th onwards all local registered businesses receive hand delivered copy of Neighbourhood Plan inviting comments.
- From 7th November all statutory consultees (from a list provided by Colchester Borough Council) and other interested parties receive on line copies of Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying AECOM Housing Design notes inviting comments
- December 7th to January 18th Regulation 14 Public consultation extended following no public notice on Copford with Easthorpe Parish Council website further 6 week period for consultation. Posted on Council website, local publications and Minuted item in Parish Council December 2021 minutes.
- Tuesday 7th December comments from Colchester Borough Council Neighbourhood Plan liaison officers, confined to minor wording changes of text without affecting policies.

- 14th December NPWG agree to adopt all suggested changes and will publish these in the online version by January 18th. These suggested minor wording changes in place by January 18th and published on Parish Council website
- From 14th December all known farmers/landowners in the Parish received a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan and invited to comment.

2014 Initial Consultation and Engagement on Neighbourhood Plan Meeting in Primary School 27th September

Attended by 105 residents, much interest in idea of Neighbourhood Plan.(Note the key issues are summaries of the written responses made at this meeting, all are available)

The key issues identified were:

Development and Development Sites:

The majority view is that new development should be by means of small scale infill...people are in favour of affordable housing but consider that homes for local elderly ...should be considered as well as homes for first time buyers.

Strong view that no development should be allowed on agricultural land and that existing open spaces and recreation land should be protected

Comment from NPWG : these issues are addressed in the Objectives and Policy sections of the Plan, pages 6-16.

Problem sites/Comments relating to roads and traffic

London Road, School Road and Copford Green identified as problem sites for traffic, parking, speeding, footpaths.

Comment from NPWG : Objective 4 and Policy CE5 address some of these issues. Parking in London Road has been addressed by restrictions and single yellow lines. A zebra crossing has been put in place in London Road. Regular Neighbourhood Speedwatch is in place throughout the Parish

Borough Location for development

Inconclusive results with people being split between suggesting use of brown-field sites, urban extensions and garden city type development

Comment from NPWG : Due to Parish Council decision in 2016, Colchester Borough Council allocated two sites in Copford. The data from evidence collected as part of this part of the consultation suggests other sites.

School Road Crossing

This has overwhelming support as an important local issue...the existing informal crossing is too far from the School...

Comment from NPWG: Not within the Plan remit.(Note there is a formal Crossing Patrol funded by Parish Council in place which may change location to be nearer the School subject to numbers)

Allotments

There is interest and support for local allotments although limited realistic ideas for where these could be sited.

Comment from NPWG: there is nothing specific in the Plan about this other than in Policy CE2 which supports enhancement of existing local spaces (See Page 9 Policy CE2 for further information)

Employment in the Village (Parish)

It is clear that no further employment sites are considered to be necessary in the Village (Parish) with a need for a clear vision when setting out policies related to existing employment sites.

Comment from NPWG: Policy CE8 (Page 16) provides a clear response in terms of encouraging a successful mixed economy.

Village Facilities

The highest priority for improving village facilities are: Improved cycle routes, improved public transport....improved broadband and suggestions for a Village shop...

Comment from NPW : Policy CE5 Transport and Getting around and Policy CE6 Infrastructure and Local Community Facilities set out what new development must do to meet cycling and broadband. Public transport and Village shop are aspirational but outside the control of the Plan but will be encouraged by other means e.g. Parish Council.

Vision for the future of Copford and Easthorpe

The villages (Parish) are and will continue to be dormitory villages because of the proximity to Colchester/Chelmsford/London making daily commuting possible....with protected green spaces between Colchester/Marks Tey/Stanway to prevent Copford with Easthorpe becoming a suburb of Colchester

Comment from NPWG: Policy CE1 Settlement Boundaries and Development (Page 8) Is very clear about the need to avoid coalescence of the Parish with other areas

Detailed Analysis and comments on the above key points from the 27th September 2014 Open Day are to be found in the evidence file

Consultation and Engagement during 2015

During this period the Parish Council established the formal terms of reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) following on from 2014 Open Day responses the group met . Agendas and minutes of these public meetings are in the evidence file.

Consultation and Engagement during 2016

During February 2016 a questionnaire which had been discussed and drafted, (agreed by Parish Council) by the NPWG during 2015/16 meetings was hand delivered to all residents of Copford with Easthorpe. The questionnaire received advice from the NPWG liaison officer from Colchester Borough Council

42% of all households responded and results were collated by NPWG volunteers and presented to the Parish Council –some key points were published in local publication and were displayed to residents at an Open Day in 2017.

The key points identified from the questionnaire were:

New Housing development:

Affordable homes, first time buyers' home for the elderly and family homes were preferred housing developments. Housing for young and elderly people were not thought to be currently met

The top response overall for where homes should be built was the Car Boot Sale field (London Road) Pits wood and open public spaces were areas that should not be used for housing. Current housing

density was considered appropriate and Village Design Statement for any future development was over welcomed as was developers contribution to village infrastructure.

Comment from NPWG

The priorities identified would be included within the Plan-see Policies CE3, CE4, CE6 and Copford Design Guidance and Codes.

Traffic, Roads and Parking

Concerns were expressed about speeds in many areas, notably London Road, Queensberry, School Road, Rectory Road and Easthorpe Road, as were parking problems and potential traffic calming measures. Issues relating to cycle paths, and alternative transport other than cars were raised.

Comment from NPWG

These points would be built in to the Plan (see Policy CE5) and housing design codes.(AECOM document) Other matters outside the control of the Plan would be passed to the Parish Council, Colchester Borough Council , Essex Highways and North Essex Parking Partnership.(Note as a result of this and other requests, parking restrictions have been put in place in three of the areas mentioned and new village entry speed signs erected)

Parish Facilities

There was strong support for protection of public open green spaces to prevent future development but limited support for any increase in open green spaces for recreation and leisure. GP/Dental services were most wanted (but when asked if there were adequate, accessible health facilities in the Parish by a ratio 2:1 more residents considered them adequate. There was a significantly high response in terms of 'happiness' with well over 80% of respondents being 'very' or 'quite' happy about living in the Parish.

Comment from NPWG

The points raised would be taken into account when drafting the Plan. The use of Section 106 money would also feature as a way of improving local facilities.

Further development

A significant number of respondents c70% were very concerned about further development in the Parish with less than 5% being unconcerned.

Comment from NPWG

The Neighbourhood Plan is not allocating sites but would prefer to see small scale developments which have less impact on the Parish, if brown field sites are available they should be used in preference to other green field sites.

Comment from NPWG on written comments attached to the questionnaire

There were a number of individual written questions arising from the questionnaire.

The question of the alterations to the village boundary (settlement boundary) and why one of the allocated sites was not originally on the 'call for sites' map were answered.

Some, such as those relating to the Garden Community at West Tey other sites such as Copford Place or school extension were not directly considered when drafting the Plan, however submissions were made by residents and the Parish Council at the time(and subsequently) about the disproportionate number of homes allocated to the Parish and the effect on the infrastructure. No other sites were being allocated outside the two brought forward from the call for sites process.

Further written comments promoted the use of the Car Boot Sale field in London Road and other disused commercial sites on London Road as better options, the former site will be mentioned in the Plan.

Comments were made about landscaping and greenery to improve air quality and sense of place (these will be included within the Plan)

Concerns about the two allocated sites in Hall Road and Queensberry related to significant issues with access to both sites and in the case of the former the loss of a rural site and view. Lack of sewage capacity for these sites was also highlighted. These matters have been addressed in Parish council and residents responses to Colchester Borough Council.

Impacts on parking, traffic, the environment, health and school numbers also featured in a number of written responses. These matters were within the control of the Plan will be addressed with objectives and policies.

Copford Primary School Consultation 4th June 2016

Two members of the NPWG met with Copford Primary School Council to seek their views. The School Council completed sections of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire and also gave some written feedback.

They wished to see more family homes, with a preference for Copford Green as the location, wooded and green areas should not be developed. They wanted to have safer paths and more trees. Speeding was a problem along School Road and some wanted to see a the right area to cross safely and a School Crossing. They wanted to see more public spaces , overall they were very happy to live in the area but were very concerned about any future development and did not want to see 24,000 homes. (West Tey Garden Community) They wanted to see more play areas with better equipment especially for 5s and under, also over 6s. and a basketball court.

Comment from NPWG Neighbourhood Plan.

Issues relating to safer routes to school, green spaces and housing numbers will be addressed in the Plan-and in the case of West Tey by the Parish Council.

This was due to be fed back to the next Parish Council meeting on June....

Some of the comments re School Crossing Patrol, speeding and play equipment can be dealt with by the Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan process halted by Copford with Easthorpe Parish Council 14th June 2016

The Parish Council resolved that 'by liaising with Colchester Borough Council'..it would be 'achieving a similar outcome to a Neighbourhood Plan but using less time and resources' 'Resolved to disband the Neighbourhood Plan project and group with immediate effect'

This vote was carried by 5 votes to two with one abstention.

(Note at this time the total cost of the Plan was £64, only two Councillors were actively involved in the Plan process with other volunteers, the then Parish Clerk had indicated she would not be supporting the Plan process after attending one Plan meeting. There was no liaison with Colchester Borough Council (CBC) as a result of this resolution. CBC allocated two sites which were not amongst those preferred in the 2016 questionnaire answered by residents)

Subsequent to this decision a number of residents and two Parish Councillors objected to this decision and lobbied the Parish Council to rescind this. The answers given by the Parish Council were unsatisfactory and as a result an independent group called VOICE (Villagers Opinion In Copford and Easthorpe) was set up and met a number of

times during 2016/2017. The VOICE Group prepared a 'Village Report' and met with CBC officials and Borough Councillors during this period in an attempt to maintain the momentum and interest that had been generated from the work to date. The VOICE report is included in the evidence folder.

Consultation and Engagement during 2017

An interim Parish clerk was appointed after the previous Clerk resigned when a new Parish Council Chair was elected. At a meeting on 18th October 2107 after discussion and advice from the interim Clerk there was some agreement that the Council should not proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan, this would be an Agenda item at the November 14th 2017 Parish Council meeting.

At the 14th November 2017 Parish Council meeting the Council having reflected on the October 18th NPWG meeting passed a resolution to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan.

The terms of reference for the NPAC were discussed at the 12th December 2017 Parish Council meeting when the new full time Clerk was present as an observer.

Consultation and Engagement during 2018

With the formation of a new Parish Council and the appointment of a new Parish Clerk, the new Council had already resolved to re-start the Neighbourhood Plan(14th November 2017) process and on 8th May 2018 Colchester Borough Council were informed of this and the Plan area was re-confirmed as the Parish boundary.

The terms of reference for the NPAC were approved by the Parish Council on 11th June 2018 and sent to all volunteers. They are in the evidence folder. A series of public meetings were held during the year to take forward ideas from previous work and follow up on Open Day work, the Agendas and Minutes are in the evidence folder.

During August/November 2018 working groups were set up to report back and details were finalised for an Open Day on November 3rd 2018 when details of the previous questionnaire from 2016 were available for residents to see. There were also a number of prompt sheets to focus residents views on the overall Vision and draft Objectives for the Plan, also where homes could be built and what type they should be and for whom. Other comments were also invited on post it notes.

Maps of the Parish were provided showing the two sites allocated by Colchester Borough Council.

The Open Day was attended by 72 residents and 12 volunteers.

The results of the Open Day were collated and were discussed on 29th November and then finally a summary was presented on 13th December.

The key points raised were:

- The Car Boot Sale Field for development
- Preserve the rural character and aspect of the village
- New housing should include smaller and affordable units for a range of different people
- Quality design. No high density housing, being inconsistent with the village character. Retain open spaces
- Required supporting infrastructure must be provided first before any houses are built

Other written comments related to:

Building homes on brown field sites, improved access to Queensberry Avenue site if developed, and disproportionate number of new homes proposed for the Parish.

New house should be a range of different types for different groups in keeping with village character.

Comments from NPWG

Many of these comments were similar to the outcome of the 2016 questionnaire but to check this a further questionnaire would be drafted and sent to all volunteers for their comments and then once agreed distributed in early 2019.

The Vision and draft Objectives will also be re-visited as a result of the comments from the Open Day-and follow up questionnaire.

Consultation and Engagement during 2019

The questionnaire to update information from the 2016 survey was agreed and hand delivered to all residents. It achieved a 42% return from the Parish.

Key Points arising from the questionnaire were:

The majority of residents liked the rural community and had no plans to move out, there was a sense of neighbourliness and community

The majority of respondents were homeowners and lived in detached or semi detached homes

Green spaces were seen as an important feature of the area, Hall Road, Queensberry Playing field, and Pits Wood were the most popular areas. More green spaces were desirable

The historic buildings in the Parish should receive protection

It was considered there were adequate amenities in the Parish, The Alma, Church and Village Hall were most used.

Cars were the most used transport link, speed reduction measures were most mentioned as being needed.

Parking overall was not acceptable.

The majority of residents were in full or part time employment most travelled 0-10 miles to work, although a large number commuted over 30 miles. Significant numbers were retired.

There was significant opposition to housing development in both Hall Road and Queensberry Avenue, although the allocation of 120 homes was acceptable. The Car Boot Sale Field was the most popular area for development

The most wanted type of new homes were 3 bedroom houses, flats/apartments and bungalows, no more rental properties were seen as necessary.

Off road parking was overwhelmingly seen as needed.

Some of this data is presented as tables and graphs in the evidence folder and has been presented to residents at an Open Day

Comments from NPWG

The preference for maintaining the Parish as rural will be built in to the Plan objectives and policy

The type of housing required will form part of the housing objective and policy.

Transport links will take note of comments on road use.

Accessible green spaces will be included within the policy relating to open spaces, views and the environment. A semi brown-field site, the Car Boot Sale field would be considered as a possible further site for development.

The existing heritage sites will be protected from development .

Further engagement during 2019

A photographic competition was promoted through local publications with views of Copford with Easthorpe as the theme. This successful competition was entered by over 40 residents was viewed by over 50 residents at the Village Hall, a prize awarded to the local resident who won.

The Parish Council website section for the Neighbourhood Plan was updated and more information, Agendas and Minutes posted. An early draft of the plan was published on the website

Note: during 2019/2020

To take forward the Neighbourhood Plan, further Locality Grants were applied for which enabled the NPWG to appoint Ann skipper of Charisma Planning as the consultant after considering an number of different organisations.

Consultation in 2020

RCCE were commissioned on behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan to carry out a Housing Needs survey to check if there had been any changes in 2019 housing data and to answer several other points. This was sent to all residents by RCCE in February 2020 and results returned by just over 25% of residents in April 2020. The results of the Housing Needs Survey were provided for the NPWG by July 2020 and subsequently to the Parish Council also published on the Parish Council website and the key points were also put in local publications.

The key points arising from RCCE Housing Needs Survey were:

- 78% of residents supported small scale development which is primarily affordable housing for local people
- There was a desire for adequate housing for local residents...in particular the elderly and the needs of younger local families
- Sustainability and suitability of developments were concerns
- Alternative accommodation for those who wished to move out was cited
- Affordable rented homes were needed-RCCE recommended 8 units based on CBC Housing Register.
- The full report is included in the evidence folder

The Consultant continued to work face to face (early 2020) and virtually to help the NPWG take forward the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

During March a DTP designer was appointed from a list of four designers to be ready to produce a draft Neighbourhood Plan document as part of the Regulation 14 Consultation.

Comment from NPWG

The key findings from the RCCE Housing Needs survey echo those from earlier questionnaires and Open Day responses and will be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan Housing and environment objectives and policies.

Note from NPWG

By late March 2020 with significant restrictions in place due to COVID-19 all NPWG meetings switched to on-line meetings via zoom.

During this period which effectively lasted the majority of 2020 from March until October the NPWG met regularly on line and spent time revising. By August 2020 the DTP designer had met the NPWG on line and face to face and commenced work of the draft Plan. This was funded from Locality Grant.

Brief notes of the zoom meetings for this period are in the evidence folder

Consultation and Engagement 2021

Work continued on line to complete the Plan such that the DTP designer could begin to compose it. Locality grants were finalised and allocated.

Locality offered further support from AECOM (see Zoom meeting notes) who met with NPWG group on line and organised fly-overs and actual views of the Plan area. They then produced a very comprehensive Copford Design Guidance and Codes which provided invaluable technical support for new developments. The AECOM document was published on the Parish Council website and offered as a hard copy to any resident who required it.

Once restrictions were lifted the NPWG met with the designer and a draft Plan was produced.

The draft Plan containing Vision, Objectives and Policies with a map of the area, was hand delivered to all residents during November 2021. The draft Plan and a longer version containing Landscape Character Assessment, HRA and SEA screening were both published on the Parish Council website at the same time.

With the draft Plan was an accompanying letter inviting residents to a drop in session at Copford Village Hall on November 13th it also contained details of where to find the AECOM and longer draft Plan and a dedicated email response line for comments as part of Regulation 14. The original date for Consultation on Regulation 14 was until 8th December, but on advice from Colchester Borough Council this was extended until January 18th 2022 and this date with a link to Regulation 14 was published on the Parish Council website.

The drop in session on November 13th was to view other Materials from previous questionnaires, the AECOM document, RCCE Housing Needs survey and the time line. Residents were able to discuss any matters arising from the draft Plan with NPWG members, attended by 45 residents some of whom left written comments which are shown below:

Tracie Jackson Way:

Thank you for the detailed brochure, as a resident of Copford we believe the input and information set out has made this understandable to those that may otherwise find it difficult. I would really like to see far more coverage of the safety and access to all public footpaths affected or rather would be if developments go ahead.

Sreeni Gali:

I really appreciated the content and long term thinking went into creating the neighbourhood plan. Thank you. Looking forward to supporting the community.

Derek Moore:

Congratulations to all involved. The neighbourhood plan is a superb document. Very professional and spot on. It is very well written –does not try to over sell the villages with hyperbole but just allows the photographs to sell the area. This has far more impact than words. It is summed up in the last sentence of the first paragraph of ‘The on-going story’-appealing yet vulnerable with an absolute need for careful sensitive planning-absolutely spot on. In particular, no development should be permitted in Hall Road which leads into open country, perfect for walkers and dog walkers. This use will increase noticeably when the new estate behind Turkey Cock Lane is built.

Light pollution would be noticeably lower by reducing the lighting in London Road either/and/or by reducing the brightness of the lights lowering the lights or having bigger shades to just direct the shades downwards.

Comment from NPWG

Objective 4, Policy CE5:Transport and getting around covers the points on footpaths, this has also be passed to the Parish Council for consideration.

Objective 7, Policy CE7c: Environment and Climate Emergency, particularly Dark Skies highlights the issue of lighting raised which will also be passed to the Parish Council for consideration.

There were three e-mailed comment for the consultation from Neil Gilbranch:

2nd November 2021

Requesting confirmation of the dates for Regulation 14 and the legal processes by which it will progress prior to examination and the appendices from the Plan which were not clearly shown in the on line Plan.

Comment from NPWG in response

To answer your questions, the full version of the Neighbourhood Plan is on line and contains all the information relating to the Appendices mentioned in the letter.

The evidence base for this Plan has already been outlined to, but for clarity:

Three Open Days, attended by significant numbers of residents who left many comments some summary information has been published in local publications

Two Parish wide-questionnaires, collated by the NPWG. One Housing -Needs survey carried out independently by RCCE in April 2020 and published on the Parish Council website. AECOM Housing Design notes for Copford, also published on the Council website.

Regulation 14 commenced on 26th October with the publication of the (draft) Plan and will continue for 6 weeks until 7th December, this is detailed in the up-coming Plainsman. (the consultation date was extended to 18th January 2022 to ensure full compliance particularly that the dates were published clearly on the Parish Council website)

The Local Planning authority have already seen much earlier drafts of the Neighbourhood Plan and have given helpful advice, the date for the submission to them will be no earlier than 8th December. You will doubtless be aware of this earlier version which has been on the Council website for at least a year as part of our engagement and on-going consultation process.

Neighbourhood Plans if passed have a powerful voice in shaping local developments. They cannot prevent development and have to be in conformity with the NPPF and Local Authority Plans, as you may be aware. Having a Neighbourhood Plan with specific Objectives and Policies, leads to more sustainable housing with better design features. We recommend the AECOM Housing Design note to you, specifically for these important features which should be seen as part of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Plan is based firmly on the evidence base mentioned earlier in the email and in a previous one to you. We cordially invite you to attend the NPWG drop in session on Saturday 13th November from 230 until 5 in Copford Village Hall when we will be pleased to answer any more questions you have about the Plan

9th November 2021:

Thank you for confirming Regulation 14 runs until 7th December (this date was extended to 18th January and communicated to all residents via local publications)

It would have been helpful had the evidence base been made public during the consultation period in order to see how this has informed the plan policies. I assume from your emails this won't be the case

Comment from NPWG in response:

As you will be aware the evidence base is from three open meetings, two parish wide surveys and the RCCE Housing Needs survey (HNS). The RCCE document is on the Council website and has been almost since it was completed (July 2020)

The evidence collected from the two Parish wide surveys was collated by the NPWG and has been on show at two Open Days (and one drop in session) which you may have attended, so along with the HNS this has been in the public domain for some time.

The evidence has been referenced through Council agendas/minutes and local publications. Individual comments from residents were collated, anonymised and are incorporated within the Neighbourhood Document. Comments will also be found in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement which will be completed after the consultation ends. You will appreciate that under GDPR we cannot release individual questionnaire responses or any written responses as they were collected and collated only for the purposes of producing the Neighbourhood Plan

Email dated 26th November 2021

I wish to make the following formal representation to two documents published on the Parish Council website.

1. Neighbourhood Plan documents

Reference is made to appendices which are not included.

This is a visually attractive document with good attention to visual design, written content is subjective in nature. The evidence base is not available to review in order to assist with providing an objective response. A clear analysis of the evidence would have been helpful in demonstrating how the evidence has been translated objectively into the numerous policies

It is relevant to refer to the following extract from the National Planning Framework Section 2(Sustainable Development) as follows:

The application of the presumption (for sustainable development) has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood Plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies: and should shape and direct developments that is outside of these strategic policies.

14. In a situation where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits provided all the following apply:

- a) the neighbourhood plan becomes part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made
- b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement:
- c) the local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites(against its five year housing supply requirements including the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 74);and
- d) the local planning authorities housing delivery was at least 45% of that required¹⁰ over the previous three years.

This Neighbourhood Plan reflects policies in the adopted and emerging Local Plans but appears not to shape and direct developments outside of these. It therefore has a high degree of redundancy

One implied reference to development is in support of the current Local Plan policies (H4 adopted plan; DM8 emerging plan) for rural exception sites. Information obtained from Colchester Borough Homes (26/11/21) does not demonstrate a clear demand for affordable homes with a local connection to Copford. This plan does not allocate sites for this purpose and there has been no public consultation regarding prospective site.

Greater emphasis on how evidence is linked to proposals and the publication and analysis of the evidence base will inevitably follow in the later stages of consultation. Hopefully this will make it possible to be able to support the proposed plan in the future.

2. AECOM Design Guidance Document

This report was produced by AECOM on behalf of their client, Locality.

The Neighbourhood Planning Officer for Locality made the following statement (by email to me) to clarify the purpose of the document: ‘there is a colour scheme and materials palette which are parameters you would find in a code. The aim of the document is to provide general guidance and help

influence the style and material of new housing in the area. This is an existing village with an existing character so a design code will be different to that for a new development site/master-plan area'

I struggle to understand the need for this document in the context of this draft neighbourhood plan which does not positively promote development or allocate sites for development

Comments from NPWG

The questions regarding the appendices have already been answered in previous communications to Neil Gilbranch

The analysis of evidence base for the Plan has been displayed on three occasions at well attended public meeting and much has been reference in local publications. The RCCE HNS is on the Parish Council website. Neil Gilbranch is recorded as being present on November 3rd 2019 when there was an Open Public Meeting to further consider Vision, Objectives and Policies. (**NOTE** Neil Gilbranch was a founder member of the NPWG IN 2015, he then left the group but later rejoined and was active during 2018/19 as can be seen from a group of emails for these dates and his name in minutes and against items he was working on)

The Copford with Easthorpe Neighbourhood Plan is in compliance with and supports NPPF and Local Plan strategic polices. It does not seek to influence areas outside of these documents. The Plan is not allocating sites, these two have been allocated by Colchester Borough Council, although the two sites were not preferred sites in any residents questionnaire or Open Day responses. The Plan does make a comment about a potential semi brown field site-the Car Boot Sale-in as much as it was the most 'preferred' site by residents in the public engagement and consultation.

Regarding affordable housing, no sites were identified by the NPWG as no sites were allocated by the Neighbourhood Plan, there has been extensive consultation about housing. The two questionnaires and RCCE HNS identified a clear need for affordable homes. Colchester Borough Council identified the need for 6 affordable homes from residents of Copford with Easthorpe who were on their housing needs register as of 6/12/21.

The AECOM Design Guidance and Codes was commissioned by the NPWG after this was offered by Locality to provide technical support for housing types, styles, materials, green spaces, suds and associated matters. It is specific to the needs of Copford with Easthorpe and is not designed to promote or allocate sites, rather to support best practice in taking forward any new developments.

Statutory and Non Statutory Consultees

In addition to public consultation and engagement in the manner outlined in this Consultation Statement a number of other stakeholders have been consulted by letter with a draft copy of the Plan included. These were hand delivered or posted from 26th October onwards.

Local businesses-all those registered locally (not working from home addresses as these are covered as residents) All received the draft plan and a letter asking for any response or comment.

Monthind-London Road Copford

KAT Graphics Rectory Road Copford

Blue Bear Animal rehabilitation London Road Copford

Hadleigh Glass London Road Copford

Smart Repairs London Road Copford

Sink and Tap Superstore London Road Copford

Eternal Bathrooms London Road Copford

Nevada Bobs London Road Copford

Wass's London Road Copford

Lily Mays School Road Copford
The Alma School Road Copford
Linden Lady Birch Road

There were no responses or comments from the listed businesses

Local landowners/farmers

Nat Sherwood/David Sherwood, Cantfield Farm Easthorpe and other local holdings
Susannah Harrison Hall Road land and other holdings in the Parish
D and S MC Cauley -land behind Copford Primary School
Nicholas Cottrel Birch Farms Bockingham Hall Copford
J and K Stratherne Mulberry Farm Fields Easthorpe c/o Park House Farm Layer Marney
John Bird Hill Farm Copford
Ian Melrose Scotties Farm Easthorpe and other local holdings
Peter O'Donnell Estates Manager Hill Farm Estates
Tim Folkard-35 acres in various locations

There were no responses or comments from the landowners/farmers named above

Further stakeholders consulted by email or letter with details of access to draft Plan. This list was provided by Colchester Borough Council liaison officer Laura Chase. (S) indicates Statutory (P) indicates Parish

Responses or comments from each stakeholder are given below.

Essex County Council No response
Marks Tey Parish Council (P) No response
Birch Parish Council (P) No response
Messing and Inworth Parish Council (P) No response
Stanway Parish Council (P) No response
Eight Ash Green Parish Council (P) No response
BT (S) No response
Aldham Parish Council (P) No response
The Coal Authority (S) Response 8/12/21 As Colchester Borough Council lies outside the coalfield there is no requirement for you to consult us and/or to notify us of any emerging neighbourhood plan
Plant enquiries/Telnettelia (S)Response 6/10/20 Our clients apparatus, Telia Carrier, is not located within the vicinity of the (CENP) reference and we therefore have no further interest in this current location
Cadent (S) No response
Homes England (S)No response
Highways England (s) Response 22/12/21 Welcome the promotion of sustainable development, provision of facilities and services and sustainable transport is promoted in your plan despite the challenges thrown up by the rural nature of your villages. One specific comment regarding Policy CE7 'Development of the Car Boot Sale land between London Road and the A12, including the effective bund and other appropriate measures to baffle noise and pollution from the A12 across this flat open site' Can I request a plan of the site in question to ensure there is no impact on the A12 to A120 Provisional Order
NPWG comment: response: Maps of the site are to be found in National Highways consultation documents for A120 to A12 improvement. National Highways acknowledged this.

UK Power Networks(S) Initial Response 25/11/21 no follow up
Sport England(S) Response 29/11/21 generic response including that new development 'should give consideration to how any new development will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities' **NPWG comments** refer to Policies CE2 , 5 and 6
Babergh Mid Suffolk Council(S) Response 13/12/21 I can confirm that we have no comments to make
Essex Police(S)
National Grid(S)
Forestry Commission(S) Response 30/11/21 general comments about importance of preserving existing woodland and sustainable management of woodland areas, and planting to help reduce carbon emissions. **NPWG comments** :refer to Policies CE2 and CE3
Langham Parish Council(P)No response
Network Rail(S) No response
Marine Management (S) No response
Anglian Water (S) No response
Woodland Trust (S) No response
NHS (S) No response
Maldon Council (S) District Council-as not adjacent to the District, no comment
Coppford and Easthorpe Parish churches. Acknowledged receipt of CENP
CCT (S) No response
Natural England (S)Response 2/12/21 Natural England does not have any specific comments on this draft neighbourhood plan.
Essex Wildlife Trust (S) No response

British Horse Society (S) Comments email January 17th 2022

Vision for Coppford with Easthorpe mentions improve connectivity....but one must not forget the other users of the on-road and off road network-equestrians-who appear not to be catered for within the Plan
We suggest that bridleways are also included within the aspirations for improved connectivity as they are true multi-user paths as they cater for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians
Under Objective 4 the bullet points ignore equestrians. There are no aspirations to improve PROW. Safe off road access for ALL vulnerable road users should be an aspiration within this Plan
Policy CE5 should mention the need for a joined up network for ALL vulnerable road users....it is discriminatory to consider the needs of some user groups and not others

Comment from NPWG

These comments are helpful and will be added to the revised Plan on-line version under Policy CE5 which will now be amended : **They include cycle ways, footpaths and bridleways which link into local networks and where possible improve connections between routes and places , or create local networks. We recognise the importance of PROW of ways and would seek to protect and where possible enhance these and the rights of all off road users including equestrians**

. It should be noted that there are very few Bridleways locally (only one we are aware of) and that the significant amount of traffic on most local roads means that very few horses are seen on the road, this does not invalidate the BHS comments.

Ted Gittins and Associates gave representations on behalf of Mr. I Melrose and Granville Developments

The submission related to the Car Boot Sale Field on London Road Copford (B1408) which is an area of land approximately 3.7 hectares which extends from within the Copford Parish boundary and crosses over into the neighbouring Parish boundary of Marks Tey.

This site has been the subject of much discussion over many years and was the most popular site for development in the questionnaires and open days held by CENP since 2014 to date..

Ted Gittins is seeking 'Neighbourhood Plan support to facilitate development through 'in principle support for the land use framework.'

He seeks 'a similar approach to Policy MT04 of the Marks Tey Neighbourhood Plan' –which is due to go to referendum shortly.

This would give Copford another thirty homes with a similar number in Marks Tey , there would be an area of 1.914 hectares between the two sites set aside as 'Community Open Space

Comment from NPWG

Within the draft Neighbourhood Plan there is already consideration of this site as a potential development site which would be in line with opinion expressed by the public during various consultations. The maps shown to the group show no coalescence between Copford and Marks Tey whilst the addition of further community space would be beneficial.

Accordingly the NPWG would support this representation **in principle** and consider the reference to this site in the existing draft Neighbourhood Plan are sufficient without the need for any specific policy amendments

