

## **Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Development Plan Sustainability Statement**

This Statement is required by Regulation 16(4) of the The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

### **Background**

Colchester Borough Council decided by resolution of Full Council on 5 December 2019 to make the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Development Plan under Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

The Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Development Plan covers the area designated by Colchester Borough Council as the Neighbourhood Plan Area in June 2015.

The Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Strategic Environmental Assessment report, the Decision Statement pursuant to Section 38A(9) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2010, and the Statement containing the particulars specified in Regulation 16(4) of the The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and accompanying documents are available on Colchester Borough Council's website: [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)

### **How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme**

Environmental considerations have been integrated into the neighbourhood plan. The neighbourhood plan protects areas of green spaces, which will result in positive effects on the setting, identity and distinctiveness of Eight Ash Green. Eight Ash Green's heritage assets will be protected through expecting that any listed building or heritage asset and their setting are maintained or where possible enhanced. Hedgerows which would be destructed or removed as a result of development, will be required to be replaced on the same site. The neighbourhood plan also protects existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways and supports new developments which integrates with the current green infrastructure network. The neighbourhood plan will avoid and mitigate likely significant effects in terms of recreational disturbance on Habitats sites in-combination by requiring contributions towards the Essex Coast Recreational

disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. The neighbourhood plan includes a policy on avoiding settlement coalescence, which will contribute to protecting landscape character. The neighbourhood plan will promote good design and sustainable transport.

### **How the environmental report has been taken into account**

The environmental report was prepared at a late stage in plan preparation.

Three mitigation measures were suggested in the report as follows:

- Additional criteria to policies FF2-FF14 requiring an application for development of the allocated site to demonstrate that the adjacent local wildlife site will not be adversely affected by development;
- 'heritage assets' to be used in policy Her 1 to reflect the NPPF and provide greater certainty over what is required; and
- Wording included in policies BP1 and BP2 to mitigate negative effects expansion of existing employment areas may bring.

This has been included in the Neighbourhood Plan, through the introduction of Policy FF10, reference to heritage assets in Policy Her 1 and an additional clause to Policy BP1 (through the examination Policy BP2 has been deleted in its entirety, so no update was required).

### **How opinions expressed in relation to the environmental report have been taken into account**

One representation was received in relation to the environment report. This was from Natural England who suggested a wider use of indicators and wider scope of one objective to include other aspects of the natural environment as opposed to conserving and enhancing biodiversity. The local planning authority and qualifying body agreed that they would be happy to give further consideration to this as part of monitoring.

### **How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account**

No consultations under regulation 14(4) were entered into.

**The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with**

There were a limited number of alternatives as the majority of policies look at the principles of promoting sustainable development and meeting the needs of the parish within the plan period.

There were numerous alternative housing sites, which were appraised. The preferred site has been selected as this site is able to accommodate the total Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN), is in close proximity to local amenities including the school, has direct access to the main road through the village and will not lead to coalescence with Stanway, Colchester.

**The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme**

Colchester Borough Council produces an Annual Monitoring Report, which monitors the implementation of planning policies. It includes a range of environmental indicators, which will be used to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan.