



West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan  
Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Report

January 2019

# West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report

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## Non-technical summary

### Methodology

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to “provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”.

The SEA Directive requires an environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes. The environmental assessment must include the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan.

An SEA need not be done in any more detail, or using any more resources, than is useful for its purpose.

Whilst it is best practice for SEA to be started as early as possible this SEA is being prepared due to unusual circumstances. Colchester Borough Council drafted an SEA screening opinion which concluded that the neighbourhood plan will not lead to likely significant effects and therefore a SEA is not required. However, owing to changes to the basic conditions an SEA is now required for the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan. The advanced stage the neighbourhood plan had reached when it was established that an SEA is necessary has been the main difficulty in carrying out the assessment.

### Background

The plan objectives and SEA objectives are compatible.

### SEA objectives and baseline and context

The following is a list of documents that influenced the neighbourhood plan:

- West Bergholt Village Design Statement (2009)
- West Bergholt Parish Plan (2008)
- West Bergholt Village Appraisal (1998)
- RCCE Community Profile of West Bergholt
- West Bergholt Position Statement
- Consultation Report 2018 (Baseline Surveys)
- Consultation Report 2018 (Issues and Options)
- Consultation Report 2018 (Draft Neighbourhood Plan)
- West Bergholt Housing Needs Survey (2015)
- Housing Site Allocation Appraisal (2018)

The neighbourhood plan identified the key issues facing West Bergholt through a number of SWOT analysis on different themes.

The SEA Framework is set out below.

Objectives	Assessment Criteria	Indicators	SEA Themes
1. To support expansion of the village to meet the identified needs of the parish	Will it deliver the number of houses needed to support the existing and growing population?	The number of net additional dwellings  Affordable housing completions	Material assets Climatic factors
	Will it provide for a mixture of tenure types reflecting the housing needs of the community?	Percentage of residential completions that are two or three bedroom properties	
2. To support local businesses and retain local employment	Will it improve the delivery of a range of employment opportunities?	Amount of floorspace developed for employment, sqm	Material assets Population
3. To make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer	Will it reduce the need to travel?	% of new residential development within 30 minutes of public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre	Population Climatic factors Air Human health
	Will it improve sustainable transport infrastructure and linkages?	Percentage of journeys to work by walking and cycling and percentage of journeys to work by public transport	
4. To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities	Will it provide equitable access to education, recreation and community facilities?	Financial contributions towards community facilities  Contributions received towards open space	Population Human health Biodiversity Flora Fauna
5. To create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low	Will it reduce actual crime and fear of crime?	All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum	Population Human health
6. To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting,	Will it protect and enhance heritage assets?	Number of listed buildings demolished	Cultural heritage including architectural and

Objectives	Assessment Criteria	Indicators	SEA Themes
conserving and enhancing heritage assets		Number of locally listed buildings demolished Number of Buildings at Risk	archaeological heritage
7. To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural environment	Will it maintain and enhance the landscape character of the borough?	N/A	Landscape Biodiversity Flora Fauna Soil Water
	Will it protect and improve biodiversity?	Contributions received towards RAMS	

### Strategic Alternatives

The alternative housing sites were appraised and compared to the preferred allocation.

### Plan policies

The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive effects on all of the SEA objectives. Policy PP1 is the plan's overarching sustainable development policy and will result in many positive environmental effects. The neighbourhood plan protects open spaces and designates local green spaces, which will result in positive effects on the setting, identity and distinctiveness of West Bergholt. West Bergholt's heritage assets will be protected through the designation of a Character Area and expectation that any changes to heritage assets will be expected to be carried out sympathetically. Biodiversity, including hedgerows, trees and woods, will be protected and it is also likely that biodiversity will be enhanced. 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. Contributions will be secured throughout the lifetime of the plan and include all residential development, not just the allocated site. It is highly likely that contributions will be collected as this is an Essex wide strategy to meet the requirements of the Habitat Regulations. The policy will ensure positive effects on biodiversity by avoiding likely significant effects on Habitats sites. The neighbourhood plan includes policies on avoiding settlement coalescence, an area of separation and key views. These policies, individually and cumulatively, will add an extra layer of protection to areas outside the settlement boundary and will make it more likely that landscape character is protected. The neighbourhood plan will promote good design, which reflects local distinctiveness through various policies. The neighbourhood plan will, through the requirement for development to contribute towards appropriate measures to assist walking, cycling and public transport use, and requirements for speed reduction and

accessibility improvements, lead to positive effects on the objective to make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer. The neighbourhood plan supports the upgrading or extension of existing employment sites, will result in positive effects on the objective to support local businesses and retain local employment.

The allocated sites will cumulatively deliver the OAN in the plan period, cumulatively the sites are likely to deliver a wider mix of housing types. The sites are opposite the school and will likely provide a footway, which will promote sustainable transport and provide benefits to existing residents. The sites have good access to existing facilities but are unlikely to provide new facilities. There is a policy requirement to design out crime, which is likely under all alternative sites. There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the preferred sites. Development of greenfield sites on the edge of settlements is likely to affect landscape character through the introduction of a more urban environment. The preferred sites are agricultural land and the biodiversity value is unlikely to be high. Gardens can provide a biodiversity rich environment and biodiversity enhancement should be encouraged.

### Implementation

Once made, neighbourhood plans form part of the development plan. The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for Colchester.

### Methodology

#### Approach adopted in the SEA

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to “provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”.

The SEA Directive requires an environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes. The environmental assessment must include the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan.

An SEA need not be done in any more detail, or using any more resources, than is useful for its purpose. The SEA Directive requires consideration of the significant environmental effects of the plan and of reasonable alternatives that take into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan. Article 5 of the Directive lists factors to be considered in deciding what information to include in the environmental report:

- Information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment;
- The contents and level of detail of the plan;
- The objectives and geographical scope of the plan;
- The stage reached in the decision making process; and
- The extent to which it would be more appropriate to assess certain matters elsewhere in the decision making process.

Whilst it is best practice for SEA to be started as early as possible this SEA is being prepared due to unusual circumstances. Colchester Borough Council drafted an SEA screening opinion which concluded that the neighbourhood plan will not lead to likely significant effects and therefore a SEA is not required.

However, changes to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, which came into force on 28 December 2018 make it clear that neighbourhood plans can have an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive and meet the basic condition of no likely significant effects on Habitat sites.

Towards the latter stages of the neighbourhood plan development the draft Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) was circulated to Officers. Whilst this is still currently in draft form, the Essex Coast RAMS sets out Zones of Influence (Zol), which have been agreed by Natural England. Residential development falling within the Zol is likely to significantly affect Habitat sites through increased recreational disturbance. The whole of Colchester Borough is within the Zol, which means that all residential development in Colchester Borough is likely to significantly affect Habitats sites through increased recreational disturbance. The neighbourhood plan therefore needs to consider appropriate avoidance/ mitigation measures. Until recently this could be done through a screening opinion. However, a recent decision from the European Court of Justice (People Over Wind and Sweetman) requires avoidance and mitigation measures to be considered in an appropriate assessment rather than a screening opinion.

The implications of this are that an appropriate assessment is required for the neighbourhood plan, even though the effects are in-combination and relatively minor when considering that the neighbourhood plan allocates land for 120 dwellings and West Bergholt is not adjacent to a Habitats site.

The SEA Directive states that SEA is mandatory if an appropriate assessment is required.

#### Who was consulted and when

When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report the authorities with environmental responsibility must be consulted.

These authorities, or consultation bodies, are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.

These consultation bodies were consulted on the scoping report for a 5 week period.

Historic England responded to the scoping consultation. Their response is set out below:

Historic England are pleased to note that the history, and historic environment are included in the supporting text of the Scoping Report, and that the parish's designated heritage assets are considered as part of the baseline information. The selection of source material to be consulted regarding the historic environment appears to be appropriate, and we would suggest the Village Design Statement (2009) may be a useful part of the evidence base for the neighbourhood plan's policies. Very minor suggestions are related to style: grades of listed buildings, when typed in planning documents, are usually found written in Roman numerals (e.g. grade I / II\* / II), rather than Arabic numerals. The authors may also wish to correct 'Doomsday Book' to 'Domesday Book'.

We would suggest that more information on the non-designated below ground archaeology in the parish could be included if considered appropriate. This can either be obtained from the Essex County Historic Environment Record, or via the Heritage Gateway <<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>>.

For further information, we would refer you to the guidance in Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, which can be found here: <<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>>. This advice sets out the historic environment factors which need to be considered during the Strategic Environmental Assessment or Sustainability Appraisal process, and our recommendations for information you may need to include.

#### Difficulties encountered in compiling information or carrying out the assessment

The advanced stage the neighbourhood plan had reached when it was established that an SEA is necessary has been the main difficulty in carrying out the assessment.

The neighbourhood plan evidence base has been used to carry out the assessment and whilst the neighbourhood plan is at an advanced stage, having been submitted to Colchester Borough Council, it has been approached with an open mind.

Regard has been had to Article 5 of the Directive, which lists the following factors to be considered in deciding what information to include in the environmental report:



- Information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment;
- The contents and level of detail of the plan;
- The objectives and geographical scope of the plan;
- The stage reached in the decision making process; and
- The extent to which it would be more appropriate to assess certain matters elsewhere in the decision making process.

## Background

### Purpose of the SEA

The purpose of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive is to “provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”.

### Objectives of the plan

The plan objectives are set out below.

1. To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities.
2. To identify vulnerable people or groups in our society and ensure they get the support they need.
3. To promote and raise awareness of opportunities to increase participation and to maintain a thriving community support network.
4. To improve facilities for the community
5. To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations.
6. To explore opportunities to create new areas of open space.
7. To integrate new areas of development into the environment in a way which complements the built and natural environment.
8. To support expansion to meet the identified needs of the parish.
9. To involve the local community in all aspects of development planning through consultation and participation.
10. To provide for a mixture of tenure type reflecting the housing needs of the community.
11. To conserve and protect the existing character and environmental setting so that new development is satisfactorily integrated into its surroundings and new residents can take advantage of the characteristics of our location.

12. To support local business and retain local employment.
13. To encourage local employment opportunities through controlled expansion of existing employment located on, or adjacent to, the existing business parks.
14. Promote increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport and informal recreation.
15. To develop our recreational facilities to meet the needs of an expanding population.
16. To tailor facilities to the needs of all ages.
17. To make best use of our sports and recreational facilities.
18. To consider the need for new areas of land for organised sports.
19. To create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low, by ensuring new developments are designed so as to reduce the incidences of crime and fear of crime.
20. To see the traffic circulation and parking environment managed to minimise the chance of being the victim of a traffic-related accident.
21. To help protect vulnerable members of the community from harm in and around the home and from inclement weather.
22. To keep the community informed through a wide range of media.
23. To promote a two-way dialogue through creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making.
24. To enable the community to participate in forums and discussion groups about issues at large in the parish.
25. To make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer.
26. To ensure critical infrastructure is provided for new developments.
27. To enable wider transport infrastructure to be improved upon, especially to calm traffic, control parking and improve walking and cycling.

The plan objectives and SEA objectives are compatible, they were tested against each other and the results are set out in the table below.

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Obj.1</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Obj.2</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Obj.3</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Obj.4</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Obj.5</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Obj.6</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Obj.7	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.8	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.9	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.10	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.11	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.12	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.13	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.14	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.15	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.16	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.17	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.18	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.19	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.20	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.21	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.22	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.23	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.24	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.25	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.26	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Obj.27	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

## SEA objectives and baseline and context

### Links to other international, national, regional and local plans and programmes

A plan may be influenced in various ways by other plans or environmental objectives. It is important to understand the content and objectives of other plans.

The following is a list of plans and programmes which were identified, reviewed and considered as part of the emerging Local Plan Section 2 Sustainability Appraisal. Whilst they may not all be directly relevant to the neighbourhood plan this comprehensive list highlights the wide range of plans and programmes which may influence the neighbourhood plan. As expected for a neighbourhood plan, the locally specific plans have been extensively reviewed and have influenced this neighbourhood plan.

#### International

Review of the European Sustainable Development Strategy (2009)

European Community Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (2012)

Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice (2003)

#### National

Adapting to Climate Change: Ensuring Progress in Key Sectors (2013)

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

National Planning Practice Guide (2014)

DECC National Energy Policy Statement EN1 (2011)

DCLG: An Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning (2012)

JNCC/Defra UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2012)

Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystems services (2011)

Mainstreaming Sustainable Development (2011)

National policy for travellers (2012)  
PPS 5 Historic Environment Guide (2010)  
Flood and Water Management Act (2009)  
Safeguarding our soils (2009)  
Community Infrastructure Levy Guidance (April 2013)  
UK Marine Policy Statement, HM Government (2011)  
Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (2011)  
The Rights of Way Circular 1/09, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, October 2009  
Encouraging Sustainable Travel, Highways Agency  
A12/ A120 Route based strategy, Highways Agency (2013)  
East of England Route Strategy Evidence Report, Highways Agency (2014)

## Regional

Haven Gateway: Programme of Development: A Framework for Growth, 2008 -2017 (2007)  
Haven Gateway: Integrated Development Plan (2008)  
South East LEP Investment and Funding (March/April 2014)  
Anglian Water Business Plan (2015-2020) (2012)  
Draft Water Resource Management Plan (2014 – 2039) (2014)  
Anglian River Basement Management Plan (2009 and draft 2015)  
Catchment Abstraction Management Plan  
Haven Gateway Water Cycle Study: Stage 1 Report (2008)  
Atkins A120 Wider Economic Impacts Study (2008)

The draft Anglian River Basin Flood Risk Management Plan (2015)

The Combined Essex Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) (2013)

The Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (2014)

## County

Commissioning School Places in Essex 2014/19 (2015)

ECC developer contributions document (2010)

Education contributions guideline supplement

ECC Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017

Vision for Essex 2013 – 2017: Where innovation brings prosperity (2013)

Corporate Outcomes Framework 2014 - 2018 Essex County Council (2014)

Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan (2001)

Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Waste Local Plan (expected to be adopted 2016)

Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014)

Colchester draft Surface Water Management Plan (2014)

Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (2011)

Essex Transport Strategy: the Local Transport Plan for Essex (2011)

Highway Authority's Development Management Policies (2011)

Economic Growth Strategy (2012)

Integrated County Strategy (2010)

Essex Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes

Combined Essex Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2013)

Essex Design Guide (2005)

North Essex Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009)

Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (second phase) (2011)

Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Management Plan 2010 – 2015

Essex Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Essex County Council

Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Essex 2007 – 2032  
(2008)

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, Essex County Council (2013)

Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014)



## Local

Colchester Borough Publication Draft Local Plan (2017)

Colchester Borough Core Strategy (2014)

Colchester Borough Development Policies (2014)

Colchester Borough Site Allocations (2010)

Colchester Borough Local Plan Section 1 Sustainability Appraisal report (2017)

Colchester Borough Local Plan Section 2 Sustainability Appraisal report (2017)

Colchester Borough Local Plan Section 1 Appropriate assessment report (2017)  
(2017)

Colchester Borough Local Plan Section 2 Appropriate assessment report (2017)

Creative Colchester Strategy & Action Plan (2012)

Colchester Borough Council Strategic Plan 2012-2015 (2012)

PPG17 Open Space , Sport & Recreation (2008)

Safer Colchester Partnership: Strategic Assessment of Crime and Annual Partnership Plan 2012-2013 (2012)

Townscape Character Assessment (2006)

Landscape Character Assessment (2006)

Scott Wilson Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)

Affordable Housing SPD (2011)

Communities Facilities SPD (updated 2012)

Better Town Centre SPD (2012)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)

Colchester Borough Council Housing Strategy (2012)  
Local Air Quality Management Progress Report (2013)  
Colchester Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2014-2019 draft (2014)  
Colchester Borough Council's Comprehensive Climate Risk Assessment (2010)  
Colchester Borough Council Landscape Strategy (2013)  
Water Cycle Study (2008)  
Colchester Cycling Strategy SPD (2012)  
Core Strategy (2008)  
Development Policies DPD (2010)  
Site Allocations Policies DPD (2010)  
Habitat Regulations Assessment Survey and Monitoring Programme, Final Report, Colchester Borough Council (December 2013)  
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2014)  
Retail and Town Centre Uses Study Colchester Borough Council: Retail Update 2013 (2013)  
Colchester Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)  
Colchester Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project, Essex County Council, 2009

### Neighbouring authorities

Tendring economic development strategy (2013)  
Tendring's SHMA (2013)  
Braintree's Adopted Core Strategy (2011)  
Babergh Adopted Core Strategy and Adopted Policies (2011 – 2031) Local Plan Document (2014)

Braintree District Council Local Plan Issues and Options and Sustainability Appraisal (2015)

Braintree's SHMA (2014)

Maldon's SHMA (2014)

Braintree District Economic Development Prospectus 2013/2026 (2013)

### West Bergholt

West Bergholt Village Design Statement (2009)

West Bergholt Parish Plan (2008)

West Bergholt Village Appraisal (1998)

RCCE Community Profile of West Bergholt

West Bergholt Position Statement

Consultation Report 2018 (Baseline Surveys)

Consultation Report 2018 (Issues and Options)

Consultation Report 2018 (Draft Neighbourhood Plan)

West Bergholt Housing Needs Survey (2015)

Housing Site Allocation Appraisal (2018)

### Description of baseline characteristics and predicted future baseline

Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring environmental effects and helps to identify problems and ways to deal with them. The Environmental Report can focus on issues where significant effects are likely, it does not have to focus on every issue. A practical approach is needed as the collection and updating of baseline data could go on indefinitely.

This baseline data section is taken from the neighbourhood plan and includes a detailed description of West Bergholt and the environmental issues it faces.

## **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. 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 Botolph’s 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 ten local wildlife sites of importance for nature conservation, including the famous Hillhouse Wood (owned and 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 still consecrated, the church is 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 this has largely determined the shape of the settlement boundary which has remained unaltered for many years.

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.

### **Population**

The village expanded significantly in the 1960’s and 1970’s and currently has a population of 3,344 residents and 1,363 households. 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.

## **Village Life**

### ***Village Society and Community Facilities***

The village features the large 400 place Heathlands Primary School, Bluebells Pre-School and other child and baby care facilities. There is a Church of England, St Mary the Virgin, and an additional redundant church, St Mary's Old Church, used on special occasions. There is 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, one incorporating a post office with access to banking facilities, a gift shop, hairdressers, and three Public Houses. There are other commercial outlets including a garage workshop, shops and business parks.

The venues available for hire for groups to meet include the Orpen Hall and the attached John Lampon Hall, where there is parking available. There is a Social Club attached to the Hall that is open in the evenings and weekends and available for the public to hire during the daytime. The Parish Church also has meeting rooms for hire. All are well used. The Lorkin Daniell Field and Poor's 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 a 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.

### ***Environment***

The Parish has a wonderful mix of undulating farmland with the beautiful River Colne 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 Wood and many PROW, including long distance paths such as the Essex Way. Also, within the settlement boundary is the Village Green (known as The Heath), pockets of smaller green space generally within housing areas (amenity greens), the churchyards and three ponds.

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 modern 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.

### ***Housing and Planning***

The growth in population in the late 1960s and in the 1980's 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 Pirie Road, as well as the development on the former Truman's brewery site. More recently there have been smaller developments usually consisting of four or more bedroomed detached properties closely positioned on sites within the settlement boundary.

In preparing the Village Design Statement in 2011 the housing areas of the village were divided up into character areas to help distinguish the mixture of vernacular and modern housing styles and help assess the applicability of housing and extension proposals.

West Bergholt remains a highly desirable village in which to live. Being situated just outside and to the northwest of Colchester – Britain's *Oldest Recorded Town*, West Bergholt 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 1960's, 1970's and 1980's that marked the most significant increase in housing numbers within the village. Due to the location of most of the new estates the village 'look and feel' was maintained with some supporting improvements to facilities for the community. It has to be said though that the modern housing design was at odds with the older housing and although functional the design and style now looks dated and the housing no longer meets the needs of the Parish in terms of the mix of tenure and the lack of affordable housing.

The formal Settlement Boundary 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.

### ***Business and Commerce***

Nowadays, with the decline in agricultural employment, many residents commute to Colchester for work as well as travelling to 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.

In most cases the commercial and employment areas have evolved over time. As well as two general stores (including a Post Office in the Co-op), 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, Fossetts Lane and at Armoury Farm. These house independent businesses as well as offering some office space. In addition, there are many small businesses which operate from people's homes. These all provide local employment whilst harmonising with village life.

### ***Sports and 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 Parish Council as Sole Trustee. These assets are available for public use and hire.

Over the years the Parish Council in its capacity as Trustee for Charity land, 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.

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

- St Mary's Hall – administered by the Church of England Church 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
- Poor's 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

Recreational facilities, the current situation:

- The Lorkin Daniell Playing Field hosts:
  - A full-size adult football pitch
  - A club house and changing facilities
  - Training area for Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club
  - A children's play area
  - A Multi User Games Area (MUGA) used for tennis, 5 aside football and basketball
  - Annual Village Fete
- Poor's Land provides a recreation area for:
  - Junior football
  - Dog walking
  - Heathlands School inc. sports day events
  - Annual Heathlands PTA fireworks display
  - Visiting mobile attractions - Circus etc.

### **Community Safety**

Crime in West Bergholt is generally low but with the withdrawal of neighbourhood policing and regular PCSOs, crime has been rising. Current snapshots reveal the following incidence of crime and its composition:



Number of crimes: 3 per month

Typical composition: Theft from Vehicle, Burglary, Antisocial Behaviour

The parish has 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.

West Bergholt is served by the Local Community Meetings initiative (LCM) are multi agency problem solving groups, working alongside the local community to address crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues.

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.

The village also has a Traffic Safety Group educating and reminding drivers on the importance of safer driving and careful parking.

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.

### ***Communication***

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
- The quarterly Village Bulletin and the occasional Village Newsletter
- West Bergholt website
- Social media

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 committees meet as frequently prior to the main meeting. Village residents are welcome to attend the “Environment”, the “Premises” and the “Planning” committees.

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

### Village Bulletin and Village Newsletters

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

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

### West Bergholt Website

westbergholt.net – the website page for the village provides a calendar of events electronic copies of the bulletin, village updates, minutes of the council & committee meetings 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.

Facebook (note member numbers as of Nov 2018)

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 Clubs, Parent and Toddler Group, Bergholt Youth Group and West Bergholt Pharmacy all totalling circa 850 members.

Twitter (note member numbers as of Nov 2018)

- 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

### ***Transport and Highways***

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 voluntary Care Network helps patients attend clinics.

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 have been calculated from a travel diary survey conducted by Essex County Council some time ago. (ECC 2005)

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.

### **Environmental issues and problems**

Identifying environmental problems is an opportunity to identify areas that the plan should address. West Bergholt neighbourhood plan group have done this through a SWOT analysis for each of the neighbourhood plan themes. The SWOT analysis is based on the evidence base of the neighbourhood plan and consultation throughout the preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

## Village, Society and Community Facilities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A great number of clubs and societies which cater for a wide range of interests.</li> <li>• A good community spirit which encourages residents to volunteer to support clubs and promote village activities.</li> <li>• A range of social opportunities for retired people</li> <li>• A thriving Youth Group for 10-14-year olds which meets fortnightly run by local volunteers.</li> <li>• An oversubscribed School and Pre-school</li> <li>• Local doctor's surgery</li> <li>• A well-supported variety of village shops including a hairdressers &amp; Post Office.</li> <li>• Allotments right in the heart of the village.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting areas are nearly always fully booked some time in advance.</li> <li>• Poor or patchy broadband service.</li> <li>• Public toilet facilities lacking in the village.</li> <li>• No community focal point, coffee shop or informal meeting area.</li> <li>• Facilities for older children and young adults are lacking.</li> <li>• St Mary's churchyard almost full.</li> <li>• No Parish Council administration centre.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of community facilities at the Orpen Memorial Hall complex.</li> <li>• Provision of a centralised, coordinated booking system for rooms</li> <li>• Introduce enhanced and faster broadband service for the whole village.</li> <li>• Provision of a community focal point.</li> <li>• Toilet facilities for users of recreational areas.</li> <li>• A coffee shop.</li> <li>• Enlarged children's play areas e.g. adventure playground.</li> <li>• Provision of a new cemetery or burial ground.</li> <li>• Provide Parish Council administrative centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced village interaction and lack of village cohesion</li> <li>• Increasing social isolation particularly for certain age groups.</li> <li>• Closure of clubs and societies as a result of lack of volunteering.</li> <li>• Loss of key facilities to housing.</li> <li>• Lack of younger volunteers as a result of West Bergholt becoming more of a dormitory village.</li> </ul>

## Environment

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrounded by open countryside.</li> <li>• Attractive open farmland</li> <li>• Protected woodland and trees.</li> <li>• The Colne Valley.</li> <li>• Rural open spaces.</li> <li>• Some historic and listed buildings.</li> <li>• Historic character areas in residential neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Separation from Colchester's urban sprawl.</li> <li>• Area of wild heathland in the centre of the village.</li> <li>• Three ponds of differing ecological importance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time consuming and professional management of rural areas and open spaces required.</li> <li>• Litter and fly-tipping.</li> <li>• Lack of bridleways.</li> <li>• Legacy of poor-quality urban planning of previous large developments.</li> <li>• Need for biodiversity action plans for open spaces.</li> <li>• Dog fouling.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the available amount of public open space especially where new development is proposed.</li> <li>• Enhancing our environment through planting and urban realm improvements.</li> <li>• Protecting vulnerable environments through community action.</li> <li>• Improved access to rural environments through enhanced public rights of way (PROW).</li> <li>• Sympathetic management of open spaces to promote wildlife.</li> <li>• All planting programmes undertaken to enhance the natural &amp; visual environment.</li> <li>• Developing relationships with local land &amp; property owners to enhance the natural, visual environment (hedges &amp; verges).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that future development proposals will adversely affect the urban and rural environments that we all enjoy.</li> <li>• Natural landscape may degrade over time if not managed.</li> <li>• Overdevelopment leading to lack of wildlife corridors in the village.</li> <li>• Invasive species-related diseases altering the landscape for the poorer.</li> </ul>

## Housing

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character housing areas of a mixed style, age and tenure.</li> <li>• Popular facilities are conveniently located for existing housing.</li> <li>• Existing Village Design Statement.</li> <li>• Village separate from Colchester by natural and man-made boundaries.</li> <li>• All housing areas close to attractive landscapes.</li> <li>• Well established village character.</li> <li>• Green spaces well distributed amongst housing.</li> <li>• Active and experienced Parish Council Planning Committee.</li> <li>• Dedicated &amp; committed Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal opportunity for downsizing.</li> <li>• Limited opportunity for affordable housing.</li> <li>• Commuter village leading to overinflated property market.</li> <li>• Gentrification of the village affecting the availability of affordable homes.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of development sites available for consideration.</li> <li>• Local landowners willing to contribute to the village.</li> <li>• Opportunity to influence own destiny with Neighbourhood Plan.</li> <li>• Opportunity to redress the balance of housing types.</li> <li>• Chance to develop housing stock for younger people.</li> <li>• Chance for older people to downsize and free up family properties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tendency for new housing to be expensive, executive homes.</li> <li>• Land on all sides of the village vulnerable to speculative development.</li> <li>• Attractiveness of village leads to housing shortages.</li> <li>• Most new housing at inflated prices.</li> <li>• Most developments on small scale to avoid the requirement to build affordable homes.</li> </ul>

## Employment

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good mix of employment in the parish, both modern and traditional.</li> <li>• Several small business park sites.</li> <li>• Reasonable road access to employment sites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of space for shops to expand.</li> <li>• Poor accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking to business parks.</li> <li>• Lack of dedicated parking at shops.</li> <li>• Limited retail facilities.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three well-used village pubs.</li> <li>• Strong concentration of professional trades in the village.</li> <li>• Variety of shops.</li> <li>• Strong agricultural community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of integration of business parks with the village.</li> <li>• Poor or patchy broadband.</li> <li>• Lack of employment areas zoned in the Local Plan as employment sites.</li> </ul>
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<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All business parks have capability to expand.</li> <li>• Promotion of businesses through marketing and publicity.</li> <li>• New broadband connectivity.</li> <li>• Upgrading of business parks.</li> <li>• Further farm diversifications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pub companies altering tenancy agreements and pubs subject to short term closures and long-term threat of redevelopment for housing.</li> <li>• Business parks being developed as housing sites.</li> <li>• High business rates.</li> </ul>

## Sport and Recreation

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good recreational opportunities for popular organised sport.</li> <li>• Open spaces allow informal recreation.</li> <li>• Team sports and children's' play areas provided.</li> <li>• Network of PROW and cycle routes.</li> <li>• Popular allotments based at central location in the village.</li> <li>• Variety of indoor recreation clubs for various ages.</li> <li>• Well-established team sports clubs for all ages.</li> <li>• Floodlight Multi Use Games Area based at village hall.</li> <li>• Hillhouse Wood recreational facilities in local woods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporting areas often confined to single usage.</li> <li>• Sporting areas not available due to regular bookings.</li> <li>• Lack of changing and toilet facilities.</li> <li>• Poor vehicle access and parking inadequate at some sites.</li> <li>• Overuse of existing facilities leads to degradation.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New development areas may allow further areas of open space and opportunities for further sports pitches.</li> <li>• Possibility of amalgamating formal sports in one area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of opportunities for all members of the community.</li> <li>• Lack of facilities leading to depleted health of the community.</li> <li>• Requirement to travel away from the parish for some sport and recreational facilities.</li> </ul>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reallocation of space in the Lorkin Daniell and Poor's Land sites for informal recreation.</li> <li>• Development of PROW and cycle routes.</li> <li>• Development of Bridleways.</li> <li>• Online booking system for floodlight MUGA.</li> <li>• Purpose-built changing &amp; toilet facilities.</li> <li>• Parish Council uses expertise &amp; contacts to support clubs with grants and manoeuvring the bureaucracy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of volunteers running sporting clubs.</li> <li>• Vandalism of facilities.</li> </ul>

## Community Safety

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively low levels of crime.</li> <li>• An existing traffic and safety group and strategy.</li> <li>• Snow-clearing volunteers.</li> <li>• Emergency Plan.</li> <li>• Community Speed Watch.</li> <li>• Parish Council able to respond to emergency with retained staff.</li> <li>• Facebook Hub a good warning mechanism.</li> <li>• Strong community spirit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speeding and parking issues.</li> <li>• Large primary school results in many younger students walking around the village at peak time.</li> <li>• Oversubscribed school leads to increased parking pressures.</li> <li>• Lack of street lights may lead to a perceived feeling of vulnerability.</li> <li>• Lack of regular police presence.</li> <li>• Elderly population vulnerable to bogus callers and from dangers around the home and at times of inclement weather.</li> <li>• Trip hazards caused by poor footway condition.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic safety plan/20 mph zones and streets.</li> <li>• Special Constable Scheme.</li> <li>• Safety in the Home Fire Service Initiative.</li> <li>• Local Community Meetings</li> <li>• Online reporting tool</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Watch and possibility of using existing Safeland app.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Escalating crime.</li> <li>• Traffic speed and volumes increasing due to expansion of village with attendant risk of serious accident.</li> <li>• Rural hinterland difficult to police.</li> <li>• Difficult of recruiting volunteers.</li> <li>• Rural crime rapidly increasing.</li> </ul>



## Communication

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website.</li> <li>• Village Bulletin.</li> <li>• Facebook Hub and Community and NP Groups.</li> <li>• PC meetings.</li> <li>• Working Groups which encourage community participation.</li> <li>• Notice boards.</li> <li>• Communications Officer at PC.</li> <li>• Annual Parish Meeting and village events.</li> <li>• Community information from the Police.</li> <li>• Safeland app. For traffic safety issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information can be poorly sequenced and communicated.</li> <li>• Social media information based on opinion not facts.</li> <li>• Social media information not acted upon due to poor take up by various groups and ages.</li> <li>• Scattergun approach to information.</li> <li>• Data security.</li> <li>• Retention of useful information amongst special interest groups.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further use and development of website &amp; social media.</li> <li>• Further Facebook Groups.</li> <li>• Use of Twitter, Instagram etc.</li> <li>• Making more specialised information available e.g. crime.</li> <li>• Create a village forum.</li> <li>• Information pack for new residents</li> <li>• Developing the potential of the Village Bulletin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling that data is not used to good effect.</li> <li>• Hidden concerns only appearing within groups and not shared.</li> <li>• Suspicion.</li> <li>• Resentment of officialdom.</li> <li>• Poor participation in Council activities.</li> <li>• Socially isolated groups which do not use electronic media.</li> <li>• Threat of hacking.</li> <li>• Trolling threat on social media.</li> </ul>

## Transport

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compact main village with good accessibility on foot to many services.</li> <li>• Reasonably frequent bus services.</li> <li>• A B road affording access to Colchester, rail station and A12.</li> <li>• Local taxi company located in the village.</li> <li>• Community and Care Network transport for mobility impaired residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate on street real time information about bus service arrivals.</li> <li>• Lack of cycle ways and cycle parking.</li> <li>• Missing stretches of footway.</li> <li>• Poor residential road maintenance.</li> <li>• Lack of pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>• Poorly sited bus stops.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe cycle ways.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking spill-over onto narrow streets.</li> <li>• Traffic dominated streets.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footways leading the school and to the rural outskirts of the village.</li> <li>• Traffic management improvements to reduce the dominant effect of traffic.</li> <li>• New development links to the school and village centre.</li> <li>• Encouragement to use improved bus service.</li> <li>• A village mini-bus for community use.</li> <li>• 20 mph zones on streets.</li> <li>• School travel plan and cycle training.</li> <li>• Bus services to the hospital.</li> <li>• Improved PROW signing and information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speeding traffic.</li> <li>• Intimidating pedestrian and cycle environment.</li> <li>• Further degradation of highway assets including signing, road and footway condition and PROW.</li> <li>• Damage caused by agricultural machinery.</li> </ul>
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### SEA objectives, targets and indicators

Whilst not specifically required by the SEA Directive, SEA objectives are a recognised way of considering the environmental effects of the plan and comparing the effects of reasonable alternatives.

They serve a different purpose to the plan objectives, although there may be some overlapping of objectives.

The SEA objectives for the neighbourhood plan are derived from the review of plans and programmes and sustainability objectives, baseline data, environmental problems, neighbourhood plan objectives and the emerging Local Plan Section 2 sustainability appraisal objectives.

Objectives	Assessment Criteria	Indicators	SEA Themes
1. To support expansion of the village to meet the identified needs of the parish	Will it deliver the number of houses needed to support the existing and growing population?	The number of net additional dwellings Affordable housing completions	Material assets Climatic factors
	Will it provide for a mixture of tenure types reflecting the housing needs of the community?	Percentage of residential completions that are two or three bedroom properties	
2. To support local businesses and retain local employment	Will it improve the delivery of a range of employment opportunities?	Amount of floorspace developed for employment, sqm	Material assets Population

Objectives	Assessment Criteria	Indicators	SEA Themes
3. To make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer	Will it reduce the need to travel?	% of new residential development within 30 minutes of public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre	Population Climatic factors Air Human health
	Will it improve sustainable transport infrastructure and linkages?	Percentage of journeys to work by walking and cycling and percentage of journeys to work by public transport	
4. To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities	Will it provide equitable access to education, recreation and community facilities?	Financial contributions towards community facilities  Contributions received towards open space	Population Human health Biodiversity Flora Fauna
5. To create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low	Will it reduce actual crime and fear of crime?	All crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum	Population Human health
6. To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting, conserving and enhancing heritage assets	Will it protect and enhance heritage assets?	Number of listed buildings demolished  Number of locally listed buildings demolished  Number of Buildings at Risk	Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage
7. To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural environment	Will it maintain and enhance the landscape character of the borough?	N/A	Landscape Biodiversity Flora Fauna Soil Water
	Will it protect and improve biodiversity?	Contributions received towards RAMS	

## Strategic Alternatives

This chapter sets out the main strategic alternatives considered and how they were identified. An explanation is given where there are no reasonable alternatives. It

compares the significant environmental effects of the alternatives and includes justification for why alternatives were rejected.

<p><b>PP1: Sustainable Development</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our Neighbourhood Plan will take a positive approach to development where this brings forward a balance of housing, employment, retail and community development to ensure West Bergholt remains an attractive and vibrant place. Development located as specified in this Plan will be supported if it enhances the environmental assets in and around West Bergholt and improves access to the countryside and open spaces for residents and visitors wherever possible.</li> <li>2. Development will be supported where it can be shown that such proposals would support the continued sustainability of West Bergholt by meeting at least one of these criteria:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. new homes in locations allocated in the Plan of a size, type and tenure to meet local requirements; or</li> <li>b. affordable housing of size and tenure to meet the objectively assessed need; or</li> <li>c. housing that meets the local housing needs of the parish; or</li> <li>d. infrastructure associated with leisure, recreational pursuits and social and community activities within the parish; or</li> <li>e. new and expanded business premises within existing commercial locations.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. All development shall be designed and located having regard to the principles and advice set out in this Neighbourhood Plan and shall be located to ensure that the development does not adversely affect the             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. amenities of nearby residents; and</li> <li>b. the character and appearance of that part of the village in which it is located; and</li> <li>c. the social, built, heritage, cultural and natural assets of the parish.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. All planning policies are considered necessary to make Developments sustainable and acceptable, relate directly to the Development and fairly and reasonably relate to its setting.</li> </ol>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development and meeting the needs of the parish within the plan period.

<p><b>PP2: Protection of Community Facilities</b></p>	<p>All development must demonstrate an enhancement to the quality of life and wellbeing of the local community and, where appropriate, promote diversity and enhance community cohesion through the provision of new multiuse facilities or contributions to existing facilities, 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.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy protects existing community facilities. An option not to protect existing community facilities would not be sustainable and would be contrary to Colchester's Local Plan.

<p><b>PP3: New Community Facilities</b></p>	<p>Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, particularly those for younger and older age groups, will be supported provided that the development is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and is conveniently accessible for residents of the village. Provision for a parish office/community hub will be supported.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy supports the provision of community facilities. An option not to support the provision of community facilities would not be sustainable and would be contrary to Colchester's Local Plan. A location is not identified for a new parish office/ community hub and so it is not possible to appraise an alternative location.

<p><b>PP4: Open Spaces</b></p>	<p>All development proposals should ensure new open spaces are intrinsic to their proposals and not designated as single purpose use but deliver multiple functions and benefits, which link to the green infrastructure network, through green corridors, cycle or footpaths and demonstrate environmental gains. Development that results in the loss of open spaces or that results in any harm to their character, setting, accessibility or appearance, general quality or to amenity value will only be supported if the community would gain equivalent benefit from provision of a suitable replacement space.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<b>PP5: Local Green Spaces</b>	<p>The following areas designated as Local Green Space, are shown on Proposals Map PP5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGS1 - Hillhouse Wood</li> <li>LGS2 - Lorkin Daniell Field</li> <li>LGS3 - Poor's Land</li> <li>LGS4 - Heath/Village Green</li> <li>LGS5 - Allotments</li> <li>LGS6 - Mumford Close Oak Tree</li> <li>LGS7 - Churchyard: St Mary the Virgin Church</li> <li>LGS8 - Churchyard: Old St Mary's Church</li> <li>LGS9 - Pocket Park - Maltings</li> <li>LGS10 - Erle Havard Park – Pirie Road</li> <li>LGS11 - Queen's Road Pond</li> <li>LGS12 - Lexden Road Pond</li> <li>LGS13 - Hall Road Pond</li> <li>LGS14 - Village Sign/Beacon Area</li> </ul> <p>Proposals for any development on Local Green Spaces will be resisted other than in very special circumstances.</p>
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Alternative: an alternative option would be to not designate these sites as local green spaces and instead designate as open space.

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy</b>	O	O	O	+	O	O	+
<b>Alt.</b>	O	O	O	+	O	O	+

Reason for selecting preferred policy and rejecting alternatives: Both options will continue to protect open space as the local green spaces listed in the policy are all existing open spaces, which make a contribution to landscape character. The option of including local green spaces is the preferred option as it gives greater protection to open spaces.

<b>PP6: Character Area</b>	<p>A "Character Area" in the village has been designated as shown on Map PP6, this area, which reflects the built local distinctiveness of Essex's heritage, will be protected from degradation. Development proposals will be expected to respect its features and character in relation to the scale, design and setting of any development.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy seeks to maintain or where possible enhance heritage assets. An option not to maintain or where possible enhance heritage assets would not be sustainable and would be contrary to the NPPF and Colchester's Local Plan.

<b>PP7: Heritage Assets</b>	Any changes to heritage assets will be expected to be carried out sympathetically so that their character and appearance is preserved or enhanced proportionally.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy seeks to maintain or where possible enhance heritage assets. An option not to maintain or where possible enhance heritage assets would not be sustainable and would be contrary to the NPPF and Colchester's Local Plan.

<b>PP8: Trees and Hedgerows</b>	Any development that would result in the loss of trees or hedgerows of arboricultural and amenity value will not normally be supported. The retention of trees and hedgerows in situ will always be preferable. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable, replacement provision should be of a commensurate value to that which is lost.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy protects hedgerows, trees and woodland. An option not to protect hedgerows, trees and woodland would not be sustainable and would be contrary to Colchester's Local Plan.

<b>PP9: Natural Environment</b>	<p>All development should protect and where appropriate enhance biodiversity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Protecting designated sites, protected species and ancient and species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands; and</li> <li>b) Preserving ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna; and</li> <li>c) Protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value, or ancient woodlands; and</li> <li>d) Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and recreation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species; and</li> <li>e) Providing a net gain in flora and fauna; and</li> <li>f) Adopting best practice in sustainable urban drainage.</li> </ul> <p>Proposals must demonstrate that ecological considerations have been properly assessed in relation to the application site and those adjacent to it. Where necessary mitigation measures must be carried out.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy protects the natural environment. An option not to protect the natural environment would not be sustainable and would be contrary to Colchester's Local Plan and the NPPF.

<b>PP10: Recreational disturbance Avoidance &amp; Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)</b>	All residential development within the zones of influence of Habitat Sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast RAMS, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on Habitat Sites. In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, all residential development within the zones of influence will need to deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level HRAs, or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitat Regulations and Habitats Directive.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy is a requirement of the Habitat Regulations Assessment. An option not to include this policy would not be sustainable and would be contrary to the Habitat Regulations.

<b>PP11: Area of Separation</b>	An "Area of Separation" is designated for the part of the parish, as shown centred on Map PP11. Changes in land use and development that adversely affect the key landscape and visual characteristics of the area will be resisted.
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Alternatives: an alternative is not to include an area of separation whilst still maintaining the settlement boundary.

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
<b>Alt.</b>	+	0	0	0	0	0	-

Reason for selecting preferred policy and rejecting alternatives: The policy adds an extra layer of protection to areas outside the settlement boundary, which will make it more likely that landscape character is protected. Without this policy development is more likely to take place outside of the settlement boundary and so the delivery of more homes is likely, but to the detriment of landscape character. The policy has been selected as it protects landscape character and the neighbourhood plan allocates land to meet the OAN.



<b>P12: Key Views</b>	The views indicated on Map PP12 will be protected and wherever possible enhanced. Any development or alteration to an area within these views must ensure that the key features of the views can continue to be enjoyed including distant buildings, areas of landscape and the juxtaposition of village edges and open agricultural countryside.
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Alternatives: an alternative is not to include this key views policy.

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
<b>Alt.</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	-

Reason for selecting preferred policy and rejecting alternatives: The policy adds an extra layer of protection, which will make it more likely that landscape character is protected. Key views are based on evidence in the landscape character assessment. Without this policy development may impact on key views to the detriment of landscape character. The policy has been selected as it protects key views in West Bergholt.

<b>PP13: Housing Sites</b>	<p>The settlement boundary is shown on Map PP13/1. The minimum number of dwellings to be provided over the Neighbourhood Plan period will be 120. These dwellings will be provided on Site A and Site B as shown on Map PP13/2.</p> <p>Development on land on the North East side of Colchester Road and identified on Map PP13/2 as Sites A and B for one, two and three bedroomed dwellings suitable for first time buyers, homes for older people or small families will be supported.</p> <p>The density of the development should be within the range of 20-25 per hectare on average.</p> <p>A mix of housing tenure will be encouraged. It is expected that the development will include at least 30% affordable housing including affordable rent or shared ownership.</p> <p>Satisfactory access must be provided.</p>
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	<p>A 12-metre strip of land parallel to the highway boundary of Colchester Road will be retained and integrated into the design and layout of the scheme to respect the semi-rural village aspect.</p> <p>Landscaping will be an important and integral part of the design and layout of the scheme. It is expected that all principal roads will incorporate a minimum 1 metre wide green verge to each side and the development should include an appropriate amount of public open space.</p> <p>In order to ensure that a stock of smaller dwellings is retained to meet the village's needs, permitted development rights will usually be withdrawn for extensions through the imposition of conditions on any grant of planning permission.</p> <p>The provision of land for a cemetery indicated on Map PP13/2 will be supported.</p> <p>The provision of land to accommodate sports facilities adjacent to the cricket club as indicated on Map PP13/2 will be a requirement of the developer of this site.</p>
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Alternatives: 15 alternative housing sites, listed below, were considered as part of the preparation of the neighbourhood plan. These alternative sites are all appraised and are compared in the table below.

1. WBG01 Valley Crescent
2. WBG02 Colchester Road
3. WBG03 Colchester Road
4. WBG04 Armoury Road
5. WBG05 Colchester Road
6. WBG06 Hall Road
7. WBG07 Colchester Road
8. WBG08 Colchester Road
9. WBG10 High Trees Farm, Hall Road
10. WBG11 Land west of Lexden Road
11. WBG12 Land west of Orpen Close
12. WBG13 Coney Byes, Coney Byes Lane
13. WBG15 Land north of West Bergholt
14. WBG16 Cooks Hall Lane

## 15. WBG17 Nayland Road

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy</b>	+	O	+	+	+	+	-
<b>WBG01</b>	+	O	+	+	+	+	-
<b>WBG02</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	--
<b>WBG03</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	-
<b>WBG04</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	-
<b>WBG05</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	--
<b>WBG06</b>	+	O	+	+	+	-	-
<b>WBG07</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	-
<b>WBG08</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	--
<b>WBG10</b>	+	O	+	+	+	-	-
<b>WBG11</b>	+	O	+	+	+	-	-
<b>WBG12</b>	+	O	+	+	+	-	-
<b>WBG13</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	--
<b>WBG15</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	--
<b>WBG16</b>	+	O	+	+	+	-	-
<b>WBG17</b>	+	O	+	+	+	-	-

Reason for selecting preferred sites and rejecting alternatives: the allocated sites will cumulatively deliver the OAN in the plan period, cumulatively the sites are likely to deliver a wider mix of housing types. The sites are opposite the school and will likely provide a footway, which will promote sustainable transport and provide benefits to existing residents. The sites have good access to existing facilities but are unlikely to provide new facilities. There is a policy requirement to design out crime, which is likely under all alternative sites. There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the preferred sites. The preferred sites and alternative site WBG01 are likely to have a positive impact on heritage by avoiding development close to heritage assets. Historic England commented as part of the SEA screening opinion consultation that sites in Hall Road are likely to significantly affect heritage assets. Development of greenfield sites on the edge of settlements is likely to affect landscape character through the introduction of a more urban environment. A significant negative impact has been given to those sites located to the south of West Bergholt that are likely to lead to settlement coalescence with Colchester and affect the distinctive approach and key views into West Bergholt, which are part of the landscape character. The preferred sites are agricultural land and the biodiversity value is unlikely to be high. Gardens can provide a biodiversity rich environment and biodiversity enhancement should be encouraged. Not all of the alternatives are capable of delivering the OAN alone, however housing to meet local needs could be delivered by combining two sites and so all alternatives have been given a positive score on delivering housing. West Bergholt is a village and all alternatives are likely to provide future residents with

access to existing services and facilities. The preferred sites have been selected as they are accessible to the core area of the village, are closer to the primary school than other alternatives and will not lead to coalescence with Colchester.

<p><b>PP14: Design</b></p>	<p>All new development should be of a high-quality design and sustainable construction is encouraged. Account should be taken of the guidance and principles in the Village Design Statement, which seeks to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In particular new development and any additions or extensions to existing dwellings will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an acceptable visual impact on the valley sides; and</li> <li>• Give careful consideration to the impact on views across the village; and</li> <li>• Provide or retain garden sizes appropriate to the size of the development and reflective of the character of the area in which the development sits; and</li> <li>• Buildings must respect and be in harmony with their surroundings in respect of plot width, layout, building lines, materials, height, proportion and scale; and</li> <li>• Planning applications must show contextually the impact of their proposals on adjacent buildings by means of adequately detailed plans with accurate street elevations; and</li> <li>• There should be no unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential properties; and</li> <li>• Details of all boundary walls, fences and gates around the site shall be as submitted drawing but should not lead to urbanisation</li> </ul> <p>In addition, any infrastructure required for new development will be expected to be provided in a timely manner and before the development is substantially occupied.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<p><b>PP15: Energy Hierarchy</b></p>	<p>Developers will be required to demonstrate how they have followed the energy hierarchy in reducing energy demand before implementing renewable energy or make the most of solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation, layout and design of the development.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy supports the energy hierarchy. An option contrary to the energy hierarchy would not be sustainable and would be contrary to the NPPF and Colchester's Local Plan.

<p><b>PP16: Infill and Redevelopment Sites</b></p>	<p>Applications for residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites within West Bergholt village will only be supported subject to proposals being well designed and where such development meet all the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fills a small restricted gap in an existing frontage or on other sites within the built-up area of the village where the site is closely surrounded by buildings; and</li> <li>does not reduce the privacy or amenity of adjoining properties or is inconsistent with the character of the area; and</li> <li>where the scheme is for one dwelling, the proposal must be in keeping with its wider surroundings in relation to the historic development patterns or building/plot sizes.</li> </ol>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development and meeting the needs of the parish within the plan period.

<p><b>PP17: Dormers</b></p>	<p>Dormers should be used sparingly and be subservient in nature.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<p><b>PP18: New Agricultural Buildings</b></p>	<p>Any new agricultural buildings should have a high-quality design and be constructed from suitable materials and be sited appropriately within their setting taking account of the surrounding landscape.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<p><b>PP19: Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings</b></p>	<p>Change of use of agricultural buildings to residential must not have any adverse effect or cause any disturbance to the occupiers of any nearby properties. Buildings must be suitable for conversion without substantial rebuilding or expansion.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<b>PP20: Essex Parking Standards</b>	Compliance with Essex Parking Standards will be sought for new or altered dwellings. Designs that cannot satisfactorily show how parking cannot be accommodated on the site and which would result in spill over parking on the adjacent highway will be resisted.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<b>PP21: Rural Exception Sites</b>	Proposals for affordable housing on rural exception sites will be supported if it meets all of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Is justified by evidence of need through a local housing needs survey for the village</li> <li>b. Is located outside the shaded area on Map PP22</li> <li>c. Is appropriately located and designed to respect its surroundings and does not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the settlement.</li> </ol>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<b>PP22: Coalescence</b>	Development will not be supported in the area shown on Map PP22 if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between West Bergholt village and Braiswick, reducing their separate identity by reducing the separation between these two settlements.
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Alternative: an alternative option would be not to include a coalescence policy and rely on the settlement boundary.

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy</b>	O	O	O	O	O	+	+
<b>Alt.</b>	+	O	O	O	O	O	-

Reason for selecting preferred policy and rejecting alternatives: The policy adds an extra layer of protection to areas outside the settlement boundary, which will make it more likely

that landscape character is protected. Without this policy development is more likely to take place outside of the settlement boundary and so the delivery of more homes is likely, but to the detriment of landscape character and the setting of the village. The policy has been selected as it protects landscape character and the neighbourhood plan allocates land to meet the OAN.

<b>PP23: Sustainable Transport</b>	All new developments will provide on-site, or contribute towards, appropriate measures to assist walking, cycling, public transport use as well as other highway improvements and links to village facilities. All proposals are to include provision for electric vehicles.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<b>PP24: Highways Network</b>	Colchester Road (in the vicinity of the two development sites), will be the subject of speed reduction and accessibility improvements. New mini roundabouts are to be installed at the junctions of the new development areas with Colchester Road, and a new zebra crossing sited to allow access to the rest of the village safely including the school and sports fields. This is to be funded by the developers of Site A and Site B.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<b>PP25: Infrastructure</b>	Any planning applications for new development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area must demonstrate how they can contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure and other development projects prioritised by the community. This may be through planning conditions, via a section 106 agreement or through payment of any Community Infrastructure Levy.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development.

<p><b>PP26: Expansion of Employment Sites</b></p>	<p>Proposals to upgrade or extend existing employment sites will be supported provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the impact on the amenities enjoyed by occupants of nearby properties is acceptable; and</li> <li>• they do not compromise the character of the area or openness of the countryside; and</li> <li>• traffic impact is acceptable in terms of highway safety and living conditions for residents. Proposals may be required to submit a traffic impact analysis or transport assessment which is proportionate to the development and demonstrates traffic impact and any measures which may be taken to mitigate impacts.</li> </ul>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP27: Protection of Employment Sites</b></p>	<p>There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land which provide employment and are of demonstrable benefit to the local community. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the commercial premises or land in question have not been in active use for at least 12 months and there is little, or no prospect of the premises or land being reoccupied by an employment generating user. This must be proven through an independent sustained marketing campaign lasting for a continuous concurrent period of at least six months; and</li> <li>• the new use will enhance road safety and the living conditions of residents.</li> </ul>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP28: Farm Diversification</b></p>	<p>Development proposals for the diversification of farms will be supported where this enables production from the land to continue and where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. There are no significant negative effects upon the landscape.</li> <li>b. It does not result in significant increased traffic by way of Heavy Goods Vehicles on rural roads.</li> <li>c. There is sustained or increased local employment.</li> </ol>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP29: Rural Businesses</b></p>	<p>Proposals for new rural businesses, including the provision of tourism-related facilities, attractions &amp; accommodation, and homeworking will be encouraged when they meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. They do not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity; and</li> <li>b. They do not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape, tranquility or the Green Infrastructure network of the Parish;</li> <li>c. and they provide suitable access and appropriate car parking.</li> </ol>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP30: New Sports Facilities</b></p>	<p>Land to accommodate new sports facilities will be provided adjacent to the cricket club as indicated on Map PP13/2 as part of the development of Site B.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to the need to accommodate adult and junior football, rugby, other team sports, practice facilities and teenage play facilities. The site can be developed for sport in phases to meet evolving demand. The applicant will be expected to demonstrate how the proposal meets existing demand. Early discussions with Sport England and the Parish Council are encouraged.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP31: Designing Out Crime</b></p>	<p>All areas of new development are to be designed so as to reduce the incidences of crime and fear of crime.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP32: New Road Layouts</b></p>	<p>Design of new road layouts that discourages indiscriminate parking and promotes a safe pedestrian and cycling environment will be supported.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP33: Communications Network</b></p>	<p>Development of new, high-speed broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish will be supported.</p> <p>Proposals for new developments must demonstrate how they will contribute to and be compatible with, local fibre optic networks or high-speed internet connectivity. This could be demonstrated through a “Connectivity Statement” accompanying a planning application. Such statements should consider land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements, known public broadband infrastructure and their speed (fixed copper, 3G, 4G, fibre, satellite etc.) and a realistic assessment of connection potential or contribution to the expansion of any such networks.</p> <p>Where no high-speed internet connectivity is available, as a minimum and subject to viability, suitable ducting that can accept low-cost upgrade for Fibre to the Home or other cabling should be provided to the public highway, a community led local access network or another suitable location.</p> <p>Where possible additional ducting should be provided that contributes to a local access network for the wider community. The costs associated with this can be considered alongside any other requirements and be subject to viability testing.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP34: Access</b></p>	<p>Developers must demonstrate that developments are safely located with regard to vehicular and pedestrian access, ensuring adequate visibility.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<p><b>PP35: Traffic Congestion</b></p>	<p>Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or encourage through or additional traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards village transport safety schemes.</p>
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<b>PP36: Cycle Storage</b>	Development proposals for new developments should provide secure cycle storage and storage for mobility scooters where appropriate, minimising their visual impact through good design.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

<b>PP37: Sustainable Transport Connections</b>	Existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways provide a high level of amenity value and will be protected. New development should take every opportunity to enhance existing networks, create connections and provide new networks wherever possible.
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Alternatives: There are no reasonable alternatives as this policy looks at the principles of promoting sustainable development within the plan period.

### Plan policies

This chapter outlines each of the policies within the neighbourhood plan and discusses the significant environmental effects of each of the policies in the short, medium and long term. The chapter concludes with an appraisal of the plan overall.

<b>PP1: Sustainable Development</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our Neighbourhood Plan will take a positive approach to development where this brings forward a balance of housing, employment, retail and community development to ensure West Bergholt remains an attractive and vibrant place. Development located as specified in this Plan will be supported if it enhances the environmental assets in and around West Bergholt and improves access to the countryside and open spaces for residents and visitors wherever possible.</li> <li>2. Development will be supported where it can be shown that such proposals would support the continued sustainability of West Bergholt by meeting at least one of these criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>f. new homes in locations allocated in the Plan of a size, type and tenure to meet local requirements; or</li> <li>g. affordable housing of size and tenure to meet the objectively assessed need; or</li> <li>h. housing that meets the local housing needs of the parish; or</li> <li>i. infrastructure associated with leisure, recreational pursuits and social and community activities within the parish; or</li> <li>j. new and expanded business premises within existing commercial locations.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. All development shall be designed and located having regard to the principles and advice set out in this Neighbourhood Plan and shall be located to ensure that the development does not adversely affect the <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. amenities of nearby residents; and</li> <li>b. the character and appearance of that part of the village in which it is located; and</li> <li>c. the social, built, heritage, cultural and natural assets of the parish.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. All planning policies are considered necessary to make Developments sustainable and acceptable, relate directly to the Development and fairly and reasonably relate to its setting.</li> </ol>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP1</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Policy PP1 is the plan's overarching sustainable development policy and will result in many positive environmental effects.

<b>PP2: Protection of Community Facilities</b>	All development must demonstrate an enhancement to the quality of life and wellbeing of the local community and, where appropriate, promote diversity and enhance community cohesion through the provision of new multiuse facilities or contributions to existing facilities, 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.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP2</b>	0	0	0	+	0	0	0

Policy PP2 will make a positive contribution to the objective to improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities by protecting and seeking to enhance community facilities.

<b>PP3: New Community Facilities</b>	Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, particularly those for younger and older age groups, will be supported provided that the development is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and is conveniently accessible for residents of the village. Provision for a parish office/community hub will be supported.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP3</b>	0	0	0	+	0	0	0

Policy PP3 will make a positive contribution to the objective to improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities by seeking to enhance community facilities.

<b>PP4: Open Spaces</b>	<p>All development proposals should ensure new open spaces are intrinsic to their proposals and not designated as single purpose use but deliver multiple functions and benefits, which link to the green infrastructure network, through green corridors, cycle or footpaths and demonstrate environmental gains.</p> <p>Development that results in the loss of open spaces or that results in any harm to their character, setting, accessibility or appearance, general quality or to amenity value will only be supported if the community would gain equivalent benefit from provision of a suitable replacement space.</p>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP4</b>	0	0	0	+	0	+	+

Policy PP4 protects open spaces, which will result in positive effects on the setting, identity and distinctiveness of West Bergholt.

<b>PP5: Local Green Spaces</b>	<p>The following areas designated as Local Green Space, are shown on Proposals Map PP5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LGS1 - Hillhouse Wood</li> <li>LGS2 - Lorkin Daniell Field</li> <li>LGS3 - Poor's Land</li> <li>LGS4 - Heath/Village Green</li> <li>LGS5 - Allotments</li> <li>LGS6 - Mumford Close Oak Tree</li> <li>LGS7 - Churchyard: St Mary the Virgin Church</li> <li>LGS8 - Churchyard: Old St Mary's Church</li> <li>LGS9 - Pocket Park - Maltings</li> <li>LGS10 - Erle Havard Park – Pirie Road</li> <li>LGS11 - Queen's Road Pond</li> <li>LGS12 - Lexden Road Pond</li> <li>LGS13 - Hall Road Pond</li> <li>LGS14 - Village Sign/Beacon Area</li> </ul> <p>Proposals for any development on Local Green Spaces will be resisted other than in very special circumstances.</p>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP5</b>	0	0	0	+	0	+	+

Policy PP5 protects open spaces, which will result in positive effects on the setting, identity and distinctiveness of West Bergholt.

<b>PP6: Character Area</b>	A “Character Area” in the village has been designated as shown on Map PP6, this area, which reflects the built local distinctiveness of Essex’s heritage, will be protected from degradation. Development proposals will be expected to respect its features and character in relation to the scale, design and setting of any development.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP6</b>	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

Policy PP6 will result in positive effects on the village’s heritage assets and local distinctiveness of West Bergholt.

<b>PP7: Heritage Assets</b>	Any changes to heritage assets will be expected to be carried out sympathetically so that their character and appearance is preserved or enhanced proportionally.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP7</b>	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

Policy PP7 will result in positive effects on the village’s heritage assets and local distinctiveness of West Bergholt.

<b>PP8: Trees and Hedgerows</b>	Any development that would result in the loss of trees or hedgerows of arboricultural and amenity value will not normally be supported. The retention of trees and hedgerows in situ will always be preferable. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable, replacement provision should be of a commensurate value to that which is lost.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP8</b>	O	O	O	O	O	O	+

Policy PP8 will permanently protect hedgerows, trees and woods, and biodiversity throughout the plan period.

<b>PP9: Natural Environment</b>	<p>All development should protect and where appropriate enhance biodiversity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Protecting designated sites, protected species and ancient and species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands; and</li> <li>b) Preserving ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna; and</li> <li>c) Protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value, or ancient woodlands; and</li> <li>d) Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and recreation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species; and</li> <li>e) Providing a net gain in flora and fauna; and</li> <li>f) Adopting best practice in sustainable urban drainage.</li> </ul> <p>Proposals must demonstrate that ecological considerations have been properly assessed in relation to the application site and those adjacent to it. Where necessary mitigation measures must be carried out.</p>						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP9</b>	O	O	O	O	O	O	+

Policy PP9 will permanently protect and in some cases enhance biodiversity throughout the plan period.



<b>PP10: Recreational disturbance Avoidance &amp; Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)</b>	All residential development within the zones of influence of Habitat Sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast RAMS, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on Habitat Sites. In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, all residential development within the zones of influence will need to deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level HRAs, or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitat Regulations and Habitats Directive.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP10</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	+

Policy PP10 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. Contributions will be secured throughout the lifetime of the plan and include all residential development, not just the allocated site. It is highly likely that contributions will be collected as this is an Essex wide strategy to meet the requirements of the Habitat Regulations. The policy will ensure positive effects on biodiversity by avoiding likely significant effects on Habitats sites.

<b>PP11: Area of Separation</b>	An “Area of Separation” is designated for the part of the parish, as shown centred on Map PP11. Changes in land use and development that adversely affect the key landscape and visual characteristics of the area will be resisted.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP11</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	+

The policy adds an extra layer of protection to areas outside the settlement boundary, which will make it more likely that landscape character is protected.

<b>P12: Key Views</b>	The views indicated on Map PP12 will be protected and wherever possible enhanced. Any development or alteration to an area within these views must ensure that the key features of the views can continue to be enjoyed including distant buildings, areas of landscape and the juxtaposition of village edges and open agricultural countryside.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP12</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	+

The policy adds an extra layer of protection, which will make it more likely that landscape character is protected. Key views are based on evidence in the landscape character assessment.

<b>PP13: Housing Sites</b>	<p>The settlement boundary is shown on Map PP13/1. The minimum number of dwellings to be provided over the Neighbourhood Plan period will be 120. These dwellings will be provided on Site A and Site B as shown on Map PP13/2.</p> <p>Development on land on the North East side of Colchester Road and identified on Map PP13/2 as Sites A and B for one, two and three bedroomed dwellings suitable for first time buyers, homes for older people or small families will be supported.</p> <p>The density of the development should be within the range of 20-25 per hectare on average.</p> <p>A mix of housing tenure will be encouraged. It is expected that the development will include at least 30% affordable housing including affordable rent or shared ownership.</p> <p>Satisfactory access must be provided.</p> <p>A 12-metre strip of land parallel to the highway boundary of Colchester Road will be retained and integrated into the design and layout of the scheme to respect the semi-rural village aspect.</p> <p>Landscaping will be an important and integral part of the design and layout of the scheme. It is expected that all principal roads will</p>
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	<p>incorporate a minimum 1 metre wide green verge to each side and the development should include an appropriate amount of public open space.</p> <p>In order to ensure that a stock of smaller dwellings is retained to meet the village's needs, permitted development rights will usually be withdrawn for extensions through the imposition of conditions on any grant of planning permission.</p> <p>The provision of land for a cemetery indicated on Map PP13/2 will be supported.</p> <p>The provision of land to accommodate sports facilities adjacent to the cricket club as indicated on Map PP13/2 will be a requirement of the developer of this site.</p>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP13</b>	+	O	+	+	+	O	-

The allocated sites will cumulatively deliver the OAN in the plan period, cumulatively the sites are likely to deliver a wider mix of housing types. The sites are opposite the school and will likely provide a footway, which will promote sustainable transport and provide benefits to existing residents. The sites have good access to existing facilities but are unlikely to provide new facilities. There is a policy requirement to design out crime, which is likely under all alternative sites. There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the preferred sites. Development of greenfield sites on the edge of settlements is likely to affect landscape character through the introduction of a more urban environment. The preferred sites are agricultural land and the biodiversity value is unlikely to be high. Gardens can provide a biodiversity rich environment and biodiversity enhancement should be encouraged.

<b>PP14: Design</b>	<p>All new development should be of a high-quality design and sustainable construction is encouraged. Account should be taken of the guidance and principles in the Village Design Statement, which seeks to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. In particular new development and any additions or extensions to existing dwellings will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an acceptable visual impact on the valley sides; and</li> <li>• Give careful consideration to the impact on views across the village; and</li> <li>• Provide or retain garden sizes appropriate to the size of the development and reflective of the character of the area in which the development sits; and</li> <li>• Buildings must respect and be in harmony with their surroundings in respect of plot width, layout, building lines, materials, height, proportion and scale; and</li> <li>• Planning applications must show contextually the impact of their proposals on adjacent buildings by means of adequately detailed plans with accurate street elevations; and</li> <li>• There should be no unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential properties; and</li> <li>• Details of all boundary walls, fences and gates around the site shall be as submitted drawing but should not lead to urbanisation</li> </ul> <p>In addition, any infrastructure required for new development will be expected to be provided in a timely manner and before the development is substantially occupied.</p>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP14</b>	0	0	0	0	+	+	0

Policy PP14 promotes good design, which will help to create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety and will maintain the distinctiveness of the parish.

<b>PP15: Energy Hierarchy</b>	Developers will be required to demonstrate how they have followed the energy hierarchy in reducing energy demand before implementing renewable energy or make the most of solar gain and passive cooling through the orientation, layout and design of the development.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP15</b>	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

None of the SEA objectives are relevant to Policy PP15.

<b>PP16: Infill and Redevelopment Sites</b>	Applications for residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites within West Bergholt village will only be supported subject to proposals being well designed and where such development meet all the following criteria: d. fills a small restricted gap in an existing frontage or on other sites within the built-up area of the village where the site is closely surrounded by buildings; and e. does not reduce the privacy or amenity of adjoining properties or is inconsistent with the character of the area; and f. where the scheme is for one dwelling, the proposal must be in keeping with its wider surroundings in relation to the historic development patterns or building/plot sizes.						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP16</b>	O	O	O	O	+	+	O

Policy PP16 promotes good design for infill and development sites, which will help to create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety and will maintain the distinctiveness of the parish.

<b>PP17: Dormers</b>	Dormers should be used sparingly and be subservient in nature.						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP17</b>	O	O	O	O	O	+	O

There are few dormers in West Bergholt and Policy PP17 will help to maintain the distinctiveness of the parish.

<b>PP18: New Agricultural Buildings</b>	Any new agricultural buildings should have a high-quality design and be constructed from suitable materials and be sited appropriately within their setting taking account of the surrounding landscape.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP18</b>	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

Policy PP18 promotes good design for new agricultural buildings, which will help to maintain the distinctiveness of the parish.

<b>PP19: Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings</b>	Change of use of agricultural buildings to residential must not have any adverse effect or cause any disturbance to the occupiers of any nearby properties. Buildings must be suitable for conversion without substantial rebuilding or expansion.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP19</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

None of the SEA objectives are relevant to Policy PP19.

<b>PP20: Essex Parking Standards</b>	Compliance with Essex Parking Standards will be sought for new or altered dwellings. Designs that cannot satisfactorily show how parking cannot be accommodated on the site and which would result in spill over parking on the adjacent highway will be resisted.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP20</b>	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

Policy PP20 promotes good design in terms of parking, which will help to maintain the distinctiveness of the parish.

<b>PP21: Rural Exception Sites</b>	Proposals for affordable housing on rural exception sites will be supported if it meets all of the following criteria: a. Is justified by evidence of need through a local housing needs survey for the village b. Is located outside the shaded area on Map PP22 c. Is appropriately located and designed to respect its surroundings and does not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the settlement.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP21</b>	+	0	0	0	0	0	0

Policy PP21 is likely to lead to the provision of affordable housing on rural exception sites. The local housing needs survey provides evidence of what is required in the parish.

<b>PP22: Coalescence</b>	Development will not be supported in the area shown on Map PP22 if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between West Bergholt village and Braiswick, reducing their separate identity by reducing the separation between these two settlements.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP22</b>	0	0	0	0	0	+	+

The policy adds an extra layer of protection, which will make it more likely that landscape character is protected and local distinctiveness is maintained by avoiding coalescence with Colchester.

<b>PP23: Sustainable Transport</b>	All new developments will provide on-site, or contribute towards, appropriate measures to assist walking, cycling, public transport use as well as other highway improvements and links to village facilities. All proposals are to include provision for electric vehicles.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP23</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

Policy PP23, through the requirement for development to contribute towards appropriate measures to assist walking, cycling and public transport use, will lead to positive effects on the objective to make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer.

<b>PP24: Highways Network</b>	Colchester Road (in the vicinity of the two development sites), will be the subject of speed reduction and accessibility improvements. New mini roundabouts are to be installed at the junctions of the new development areas with Colchester Road, and a new zebra crossing sited to allow access to the rest of the village safely including the school and sports fields. This is to be funded by the developers of Site A and Site B.						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP24</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

Policy PP24, through the requirement for speed reduction and accessibility improvements, will encourage sustainable travel options.

<b>PP25: Infrastructure</b>	Any planning applications for new development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area must demonstrate how they can contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure and other development projects prioritised by the community. This may be through planning conditions, via a section 106 agreement or through payment of any Community Infrastructure Levy.						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP25</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



The provision of infrastructure will have many positive effects, however none are considered to be directly relevant to the SEA objectives.

<b>PP26: Expansion of Employment Sites</b>	Proposals to upgrade or extend existing employment sites will be supported provided that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the impact on the amenities enjoyed by occupants of nearby properties is acceptable; and</li> <li>• they do not compromise the character of the area or openness of the countryside; and</li> <li>• traffic impact is acceptable in terms of highway safety and living conditions for residents. Proposals may be required to submit a traffic impact analysis or transport assessment which is proportionate to the development and demonstrates traffic impact and any measures which may be taken to mitigate impacts.</li> </ul>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP26</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

Policy PP26, which supports the upgrading or extension of existing employment sites, will result in positive effects on the objective to support local businesses and retain local employment.

<b>PP27: Protection of Employment Sites</b>	There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land which provide employment and are of demonstrable benefit to the local community. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the commercial premises or land in question have not been in active use for at least 12 months and there is little, or no prospect of the premises or land being reoccupied by an employment generating user. This must be proven through an independent sustained marketing campaign lasting for a continuous concurrent period of at least six months; and</li> <li>• the new use will enhance road safety and the living conditions of residents.</li> </ul>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP27</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

Policy PP27, which protects existing employment sites, will result in positive effects on the objective to support local businesses and retain local employment.

<b>PP28: Farm Diversification</b>	<p>Development proposals for the diversification of farms will be supported where this enables production from the land to continue and where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. There are no significant negative effects upon the landscape.</li> <li>b. It does not result in significant increased traffic by way of Heavy Goods Vehicles on rural roads.</li> <li>c. There is sustained or increased local employment.</li> </ol>						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP28</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

Policy PP28 will result in positive effects on the employment objective, potential negative effects on landscape character are likely to be mitigated through the policy wording.

<b>PP29: Rural Businesses</b>	<p>Proposals for new rural businesses, including the provision of tourism-related facilities, attractions &amp; accommodation, and homeworking will be encouraged when they meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. They do not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity; and</li> <li>b. They do not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape, tranquility or the Green Infrastructure network of the Parish;</li> <li>c. and they provide suitable access and appropriate car parking.</li> </ol>						
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP29</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

Policy PP29 will result in positive effects on the employment objective, potential negative effects on landscape character are likely to be mitigated through the policy wording.

<b>PP30: New Sports Facilities</b>	Land to accommodate new sports facilities will be provided adjacent to the cricket club as indicated on Map PP13/2 as part of the development of Site B. Consideration will be given to the need to accommodate adult and junior football, rugby, other team sports, practice facilities and teenage play facilities. The site can be developed for sport in phases to meet evolving demand. The applicant will be expected to demonstrate how the proposal meets existing demand. Early discussions with Sport England and the Parish Council are encouraged.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
Policy PP30	0	0	0	+	0	0	0

The provision of land to accommodate new sports facilities will have positive effects on the objective to improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities. This is likely to be delivered as it is a requirement of one of the allocated sites.

<b>PP31: Designing Out Crime</b>	All areas of new development are to be designed so as to reduce the incidences of crime and fear of crime.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
Policy PP31	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

Policy PP31 will help to create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety through good design.

<b>PP32: New Road Layouts</b>	Design of new road layouts that discourages indiscriminate parking and promotes a safe pedestrian and cycling environment will be supported.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP32</b>	O	O	+	O	+	O	O

Policy PP32 will help to create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety and encourages sustainable modes of travel.

<b>PP33: Communications Network</b>	<p>Development of new, high-speed broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish will be supported.</p> <p>Proposals for new developments must demonstrate how they will contribute to and be compatible with, local fibre optic networks or high-speed internet connectivity. This could be demonstrated through a “Connectivity Statement” accompanying a planning application. Such statements should consider land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements, known public broadband infrastructure and their speed (fixed copper, 3G, 4G, fibre, satellite etc.) and a realistic assessment of connection potential or contribution to the expansion of any such networks.</p> <p>Where no high-speed internet connectivity is available, as a minimum and subject to viability, suitable ducting that can accept low-cost upgrade for Fibre to the Home or other cabling should be provided to the public highway, a community led local access network or another suitable location.</p> <p>Where possible additional ducting should be provided that contributes to a local access network for the wider community. The costs associated with this can be considered alongside any other requirements and be subject to viability testing.</p>
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP33</b>	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

The development of new high speed broadband infrastructure will have many positive effects, however none are considered to be directly relevant to the SEA objectives.

<b>PP34: Access</b>	Developers must demonstrate that developments are safely located with regard to vehicular and pedestrian access, ensuring adequate visibility.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP34</b>	0	0	+	0	+	0	0

Policy PP34 will help to create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety and encourages sustainable modes of travel.

<b>PP35: Traffic Congestion</b>	Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or encourage through or additional traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards village transport safety schemes.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP35</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

Policy PP35 will help to create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety and makes getting around the parish more convenient and safer.

<b>PP36: Cycle Storage</b>	Development proposals for new developments should provide secure cycle storage and storage for mobility scooters where appropriate, minimising their visual impact through good design.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP36</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

Policy PP36 will encourage sustainable modes of travel.

<b>PP37: Sustainable Transport Connections</b>	Existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways provide a high level of amenity value and will be protected. New development should take every opportunity to enhance existing networks, create connections and provide new networks wherever possible.
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	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP37</b>	O	O	+	O	O	O	O

Policy PP37 will encourage sustainable modes of travel.

#### Significant environmental effects of the policies and proposals

As the summary table, below, shows the neighbourhood plan will, cumulatively through implementation of all of the policies, result in positive effects on all of the SEA objectives. These effects will occur throughout the plan period and the effects will largely be permanent.

	SEA 1	SEA 2	SEA 3	SEA 4	SEA 5	SEA 6	SEA 7
<b>Policy PP1</b>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<b>Policy PP2</b>	O	O	O	+	O	O	O
<b>Policy PP3</b>	O	O	O	+	O	O	O
<b>Policy PP4</b>	O	O	O	+	O	+	+
<b>Policy PP5</b>	O	O	O	+	O	+	+
<b>Policy PP6</b>	O	O	O	O	O	+	O
<b>Policy PP7</b>	O	O	O	O	O	+	O
<b>Policy PP8</b>	O	O	O	O	O	O	+

Policy PP9	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
Policy PP10	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
Policy PP11	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
Policy PP12	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
Policy PP13	+	0	+	+	+	0	-
Policy PP14	0	0	0	0	+	+	0
Policy PP15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Policy PP16	0	0	0	0	+	+	0
Policy PP17	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
Policy PP18	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
Policy PP19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Policy PP20	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
Policy PP21	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Policy PP22	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
Policy PP23	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Policy PP24	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Policy PP25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b>Policy PP26</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP27</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP28</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP29</b>	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP30</b>	0	0	0	+	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP31</b>	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
<b>Policy PP32</b>	0	0	+	0	+	0	0
<b>Policy PP33</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP34</b>	0	0	+	0	+	0	0
<b>Policy PP35</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP36</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
<b>Policy PP37</b>	0	0	+	0	0	0	0

The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive effects on all of the SEA objectives. Policy PP1 is the plan's overarching sustainable development policy and will result in many positive environmental effects. The neighbourhood plan protects open spaces and designates local green spaces, which will result in positive effects on the setting, identity and distinctiveness of West Bergholt. West Bergholt's heritage assets will be protected through the designation of a Character Area and expectation that any changes to heritage assets will be expected to be carried out sympathetically. Biodiversity, including hedgerows, trees and woods, will be protected and it is also likely that biodiversity will be enhanced. 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. Contributions will be secured throughout the lifetime of the plan and include all residential development, not just the allocated site. It is highly likely that contributions will be collected as this is an Essex wide strategy to meet the requirements of the Habitat Regulations. The policy will ensure positive effects on biodiversity by avoiding likely significant effects on Habitats sites. The neighbourhood plan includes policies on avoiding settlement coalescence, an area of separation and key views. These policies, individually and cumulatively, will add an extra layer of protection to areas outside the settlement boundary and will make it more likely that landscape character is protected. The neighbourhood plan will promote good design, which reflects local distinctiveness through various policies. The neighbourhood plan will, through the requirement for development to contribute towards appropriate measures to assist walking, cycling and public transport use, and requirements for speed reduction and accessibility improvements, lead to positive effects on the objective to make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safer. The neighbourhood plan supports the upgrading or extension of existing employment sites, will result in positive effects on the objective to support local businesses and retain local employment.

The allocated sites will cumulatively deliver the OAN in the plan period, cumulatively the sites are likely to deliver a wider mix of housing types. The sites are opposite the school and will likely provide a footway, which will promote sustainable transport and provide benefits to existing residents. The sites have good access to existing facilities but are unlikely to provide new facilities. There is a policy requirement to design out crime, which is likely under all alternative sites. There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the preferred sites. Development of greenfield sites on the edge of settlements is likely to affect landscape character through the introduction of a more urban environment. The preferred sites are agricultural land and the biodiversity value is unlikely to be high. Gardens can provide a biodiversity rich environment and biodiversity enhancement should be encouraged.

### Mitigation measures

No mitigation measures are proposed. The policies are well written and already require development proposals to mitigate possible effects, such as effects on biodiversity, residential amenity and the transport network.

### Uncertainties and risks

Owing to the late stage in plan preparation there is a risk that the SEA will not be fit for purpose. However, the SEA has been prepared with an open mind in accordance with

the requirements of the SEA Directive. The SEA Report clearly sets out the likely environmental effects of the neighbourhood plan and reasonable alternatives.

### Implementation

Once made, neighbourhood plans form part of the development plan. The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for Colchester. The emerging Colchester Borough Local Plan includes a policy for West Bergholt which states that a neighbourhood plan is being prepared and this will allocate sites to meet the OAN in West Bergholt. The emerging Local Plan includes development management policies, which will apply to development in West Bergholt in addition to the neighbourhood plan.

A Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, has been prepared for the emerging Colchester Local Plan. This has not identified any negative environmental effects in West Bergholt.