

## **West Bergholt Neighbourhood Development Plan Sustainability Statement**

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

### **Background**

Colchester Borough Council decided by resolution of Full Council on 16 October 2019 to make the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Development Plan under Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Development Plan covers the area designated by Colchester Borough Council as the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 29 July 2013.

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

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

Environmental considerations have been integrated into the neighbourhood plan. The neighbourhood plan protects 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 through the nature conservation policy. The neighbourhood plan will avoid and mitigate likely significant effects in terms of recreational disturbance on Habitats sites in-combination by requiring contributions towards the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. The neighbourhood plan includes a policy on avoiding settlement

coalescence, which will contribute to protecting landscape character. The neighbourhood plan will promote good design and sustainable transport.

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

The environmental report was prepared at a late stage in plan preparation. No mitigation measures were proposed in the report as the policies are well written and environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan.

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

Two representations were received in relation to the environmental report. One was from a site promoter and this representation was considered, with the conclusion that the SEA is a high level assessment.

The other representation was from Natural England who suggested a wider use of indicators. The local planning authority and qualifying body agreed that they would be happy to give further consideration to this as part of monitoring.

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

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

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

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

There were numerous alternative housing sites, which were appraised. The preferred 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.

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

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